



Professional Standards and Learning Outcomes for Group Fitness Instructors

Core Knowledge (What someone is taught)	Range of Knowledge (What someone learns)	Learning Outcomes (What knowledge has been assessed)	Skills of Practical Competency (What practical skills have been assessed)
A. Principles of Fitness, Health and Wellness Concepts	Candidates should know and understand: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The difference between the primary and secondary components of fitness. The concepts of health and wellness. Factors that affect physical fitness. The relationship between physical fitness, health related exercise, sports specific exercise and health. Canada's Food Guide, how to identify the food groups, how to describe the main principles of the guide, and the recommended servings per day for adults for each food group. Their limitations when discussing nutritional information with participants. The principles of training. The role of hydration in exercise and long-term health. canfitpro's and Health Canada's recommended guidelines for physical activity. 	Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The primary and secondary components of fitness and how physical activity can increase both. The concepts of health and wellness and can list the non-physical benefits. Explaining the basic principles of planning a healthy, balanced diet. The principles of training and how the principles of training apply to each component of fitness. The role of hydration in exercise and in long-term health. How the recommended guidelines for physical activity relate to not only group fitness classes but also increasing physical activity in everyday activities. 	Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and instructing a fitness class to music using appropriate exercise activity for health and fitness benefits, ensuring that each component of fitness is addressed correctly (bpm, duration, and purpose).
B. Bioenergetics Concepts	Candidates should know and understand: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The need for energy for muscular contractions. Immediate energy – the ATP-CP system; short-term energy – the glycolytic system; long term energy – the aerobic glycolysis and fatty acid oxidation systems. The role of Adenosine Diphosphate, Adenosine Tri Phosphate (ATP) and Creatine Phosphate in energy production for muscular contraction. The waste products of various forms of physical activity. The operation of the energy system in physical activity. The Oxygen debt, steady state, VO2 Max. Food fuels used to provide different types of energy. The role of intensity and time and individual fitness levels in determining which energy system is used predominantly during exercise, The ability of the body to burn fat throughout a range of intensities, The muscle fibre types used in relation to aerobic and anaerobic work. 	Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Describing the source of energy for exercise. Defining homeostasis and metabolism. Describing the structure of ATP. Explaining the differences between aerobic and anaerobic production of energy. Explaining how the energy systems produce ATP. The characteristics of aerobic and anaerobic activities for example; running, walking, sprinting, and jumping. How to design a class that uses all energy systems and that takes into account the byproducts of anaerobic and aerobic work. The body's ability to burn fat throughout a range of intensities. 	Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Instructing the warm-up and cardio components of a fitness class. Monitoring intensity using RPE while motivating participants to execute safe, effective movement and range to ensure training effects for all energy systems. Allowing sufficient recovery time between intervals.

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<p>C. Cardiorespiratory Concepts</p>	<p>Candidates should know and understand:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The passage of oxygen through the nose, mouth, windpipe and air sacs, 2. How oxygen and carbon dioxide change places and how oxygen travels to the muscles via the blood at rest and in response to exercise, 3. The anatomy of the heart and how blood is pumped and collected. 4. The link between the heart, the lungs, and the muscles. 5. The structure and function of arteries, veins, capillaries, mitochondria, and the flow of blood around the body. 6. Blood pressure and the effects of exercise. 7. The major benefits of cardiorespiratory training and the short and long term effects of exercise on the heart, lungs, and circulatory system, 8. The major issues that affect the design of cardiorespiratory training based on the FITT formula. 9. How to determine appropriate exercises for cardiovascular recovery. 10. canfitpro's and Health Canada's recommended guidelines for cardiorespiratory activity. 11. How the heart rate training zones relate to rate of perceived exertion and heart rate monitoring. 12. The physiological and health related changes that occur as a result of cardiorespiratory conditioning. 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describing the anatomy of the heart. 2. Explaining the flow of blood from the heart to the body and back again and the mechanics of the cardiovascular system and its response to exercise. 3. Identifying the major benefits of cardiorespiratory training. 4. Identifying basic differences in developing cardiorespiratory training programs for beginner, intermediate, and advanced participants. 5. Explaining the major issues that affect the design of cardiorespiratory training based on the FITT formula. 6. Discuss the concepts of cardiorespiratory recovery. 7. The short and long term effects of exercise on the heart, lungs, circulatory system, and of arteries, veins, capillaries and mitochondria. 8. Identifying the effect exercise has on blood pressure 9. Explaining the function and anatomy of the respiratory system its mechanics and response to exercise. 10. Gaseous exchange and how oxygen travels to the muscles via the blood. 11. Addressing oxygen debt, oxygen deficit, steady state and VO2 max. 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instructing the cardio component of a fitness class to include the 3 phases (pre cardio, cardio, cardio recovery) and including interval training. 2. Monitoring intensity using RPE while motivating participants to execute safe, effective movement and range ensuring to the best of their ability that cardiorespiratory training takes place.
<p>D. Skeletal Anatomy</p>	<p>Candidates should know and understand:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The primary functions of bones. 2. The structure and function of the skeleton. 3. How to identify the classifications of bones, joints and types of synovial joints. 4. How to locate and name the major bones and joints in the body. 5. How to define anatomical position. 6. How to locate important structures in the body using correct anatomical terms. 7. How to identify movements that occur in the major joints. 8. Basic structure of synovial joints and the short term effects of exercise on them. 9. The effects of exercise on bones and joints. 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listing the primary functions of bones. 2. Describing the structure and function of the skeleton. 3. Identification and classification of bones, joints and synovial joints and the short term effect of exercise on them. 4. Locating and naming major bones in the body. 5. Demonstrating anatomical position. 6. Locating important structures in the body, and using correct anatomical terms. 7. Describing joint movement using correct terminology. 8. Identifying movements that occur at the major joints. 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning and instructing a fitness class to music using appropriate exercises that ensure the body is moving and working through a safe range. 2. Ensuring that participants are executing safe, effective movements and range of motion.

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<p>E. Muscular and Flexibility Concepts</p>	<p>Candidates should know and understand:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The major muscle groups of the body. 2. The basic structure of muscles including: <i>muscle fibres, actin & myosin, their role in muscle contraction, connective tissue</i> 3. Muscle fibres types (slow, fast, intermediate). 4. How fibres are recruited in muscle contraction. 5. The principles of muscle contraction, for example: <i>Muscles cross joints; Muscles only pull;contraction along the line of fibres; Working in pairs.</i> 6. Basic muscle contraction for example: <i>Concentric/Eccentric/Isometric (Static), Prime Mover, Antagonist and Fixators,</i> 7. The origins and insertions of the major muscles. 8. Joints crossed by muscle groups. 9. The principles of paired muscle actions. 10. Joint actions brought about by specific muscle group contractions and movements for example: <i>Adduction/Abduction, Flexion/Extension, Pronation/Supination</i> 11. How to differentiate among types of muscle contractions, and name the muscles that produce all possible movements in the major joints. 12. The physiological and health related changes that occur as a result of muscular conditioning. 13. Define flexibility and its relationship to fitness. 14. The physiological and health related changes that occur as a result of stretching. 15. The different types and methods of stretching (dynamic and static) and (active and passive). 16. Desensitization and lengthening of muscle tissue (muscle creep). 17. Factors affecting an individual's potential range of movement. 18. Activities that improve range of movement. 19. canfitpro's and Health Canada's recommended guidelines for Flexibility Training. 	<p>Candidates have knowledge and understanding in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifying the major muscle pairs and the origins and insertions. 2. Describing the sliding filament theory of muscular contraction. 3. Differentiating among types of muscle contractions. 4. Naming the muscles that produce all possible movements in the major joints. 5. Describing the FITT formula for muscle conditioning. 6. Describing the changes that occur after regular muscular conditioning. 7. Defining flexibility and its relationship to fitness. 8. Describing the FITT formula for the flexibility component. 9. Identifying joint mechanics and explain how stretching promotes flexibility. 10. Describing the changes that occur after regular stretching. 11. Identifying the purpose of flexibility training. 12. Determining appropriate durations for flexibility training. 13. Performing various techniques that promote flexibility. 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning and instructing a fitness class to music using appropriate exercises that ensure the body is moving and working through a safe range of motion. 2. Instructing the muscle conditioning component of a fitness class (with or without equipment) working muscle groups in pairs educating participants on the purpose and benefits of the exercises. 3. Monitoring intensity using RPE while motivating participants to execute safe, effective movement and range of motion ensuring to the best of their ability that muscle conditioning takes place. 4. Planning and instructing the flexibility component of a fitness class using appropriate exercises to ensure that the body is moving and working through a safe range.
<p>F. Pre-Exercise Screening</p>	<p>Candidates should know and understand:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The reason for using health screening with participants. 2. The necessity for having all participants complete and sign a PAR-Q form. 3. As a Fitness instructor when to refer participants to more qualified health care providers. 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explaining the reason for using health screening. 2. Discussing the necessity for having all participants complete and sign a PAR-Q form. 3. How to refer participants to more qualified health care providers when discussing medical conditions. 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring that participants attending their class have completed a PAR-Q.

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G. Injury Recognition Concepts	Candidates should know and understand: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How to handle participants with undiagnosed pain and when to refer to more qualified health care providers. How to distinguish the two types of pain a participant could experience. How to define and describe the two types of musculoskeletal injuries a participant could experience. How to describe and differentiate an acute musculoskeletal injury from an overuse musculoskeletal injury. How to define and differentiate the signs of an injury and the symptoms of an injury. 	Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How to respond appropriately to a medical emergency. Defining the goals and action steps you should take, as a group fitness instructor, in the immediate management of an acute or chronic injury. Distinguishing between the two types of pain a participant could experience. Defining and describing the two types of musculoskeletal injuries a participant could experience. Describing and differentiating an acute musculoskeletal injury from an overuse musculoskeletal injury. Identifying what to do if a participant approaches them for their recommendations on undiagnosed pain or how to treat a current injury. Identifying and differentiating the two categories of risk factors for common musculoskeletal injuries. Identifying the steps to be taken in preventing acute and overuse injuries. Ensuring appropriate health and safety checks are in place (environment, participants and equipment). 	Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Producing a valid CPR certificate to the assessor at their practical exam. Demonstrating that any equipment used is safely selected and put away, while giving participants advice on correct weight etc for their fitness level. Giving appropriate health and safety checks (environment, participants, and equipment).
H. Special Populations	Candidates should know and understand: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Why working with special populations requires more information than working with the general population. The benefits of exercise during pregnancy and for older adults and the need for modifications. How to work with beginners in choosing appropriate exercise activities and levels. 	Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Working with special populations, identifying the benefits of exercise during pregnancy and older age and how to modify classes, enabling special populations to continue in a healthy lifestyle. Working with new exercisers and how offering multilevel classes will help in retaining participants. 	Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and instructing a fitness class to music using appropriate exercises with multiple levels and options suitable for special populations. Demonstrating options and modifications for exercises as well as previews of moves and patterns. Creating an environment where everyone is welcomed and made to feel successful.
I. Group Fitness Design Fundamentals	Candidates should know and understand: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The structure of a fitness class, to include: <i>Warm up, Cardio, Muscle Conditioning, Cool down/flexibility/relaxation,</i> How to use the components of fitness to assist them with class formatting, The industry standards for class design. 	Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Designing a class that reflects industry standards for warm-up, pre-cardio, cardio, cardio recovery, muscle conditioning, cool down/flexibility/relaxation. 	Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and instructing a 45 or 60minute fitness class to music working on the beat and phrase of the music while using appropriate exercise activity for health and fitness benefits, ensuring that each component of fitness is included as well as bpm, duration and purpose.

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<p>J. Components of a Fitness Class</p>	<p>Candidates should know and understand:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to apply the theoretical function and practical application to each component, 2. Why warm-ups are required and how to apply benefits, function, and structure to the component, 3. The three distinct phases in the cardio component as well as the benefits and primary functions, 4. How enhanced metabolic activity and functional stability can be achieved with muscle conditioning, 5. The benefits of the final cool down as well as the functions and phases. 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning a warm up component taking into account factors that may affect the structure of a warm up including the need for specificity while using the FITT formula. 2. Planning a cardiorespiratory component that develops participant's energy systems through interval conditioning while allowing for the physiological and health related changes that occur as a result of aerobic /anaerobic training using the FITT formula and the overload principle applied to aerobic /anaerobic training. 3. Identifying that the cardiorespiratory component within a fitness class has to include – pre-cardio, cardio and cardio recovery. 4. Planning a muscle conditioning component allowing for participants physiological and health related changes which occur as a result of muscle conditioning also highlighting the benefits of muscle conditioning (functionality) and factors affecting an individual's ability to achieve benefits while using the FITT formula and the overload principle applied to muscle conditioning. 5. Identifying the need for a balanced whole body approach in the muscle conditioning component. 6. Planning a flexibility/cool down/ relaxation component that allows for participants physiological, health related changes that occur as a result of stretching also highlighting the benefits of stretching and factors affecting an individual's potential range of movement while using the FITT formula and thinking about the possible need for specificity. 7. Being able to apply different types and methods of stretching (dynamic and static) and (active & passive) while taking into account the stretch reflex, desensitization and lengthening of muscle tissue (muscle creep) 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instructing the warm-up component of a fitness class that gradually increases in intensity while displaying dynamic range of movement, muscle and skill recruitment. 2. Instructing the cardio component of a fitness class using appropriate movement patterns, monitoring RPE, recommending changes in technique when required and effectively motivating participants to execute safe, effective movement and range of motion. 3. Instructing the muscular conditioning component of a fitness class using appropriate movement patterns, monitoring RPE, recommending changes in technique when required and effectively motivating participants to execute safe, effective movement and range. 4. Instructing the final-cool down component of a fitness class ensuring that all the major muscles worked during the class are stretched for 20 secs or more if flexibility gains are the purpose, also that participants are educated on the muscles being stretched and the benefits.
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<p>K. Teaching Group Fitness</p>	<p>Candidates should know and understand:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The foundational elements of choreography. 2. How to apply teaching formulas when organizing movement into sequence and patterns. 3. Multi-sensory learning and how to coach effectively to participants. 4. How to apply the three key types of cueing to basic choreography. 5. How to select music based on bpm and phrasing. 6. National legal requirements and responsibilities relating to the use of music 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Designing a fitness class that includes ways to vary basic movement patterns by using the elements of balance and variation. 2. Understanding a variety of methods of choreography and their advantages and disadvantages. 3. Planning layers of options during the class to enable participants to feel confident and successful as well as allowing for the class to progress over time to achieve physiological change. 4. Planning to use appropriate music, tempo, beat (bpm) and rhythm for different components. 5. Cueing and coaching using a variety of teaching methods and styles. 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning and instructing a fitness class to music using appropriate choreography that can be increased or decreased in intensity as necessary. 2. Instructing the class using different forms of communication to include: <i>use of visual cues (body language), use of verbal cues/precise explanations, use of voice projection, use of teaching points, change of teaching position, visual previews/rehearsals, asking for feedback, and correction of participants form or technique.</i> 3. Working on the beat and phrase of the music using either 32 count phrasing or verse chorus movement choreography, ensuring the bpm meet recommendations for tempo and that music volume is appropriate. 4. Planning progressive changes that can be offered to achieve overload in all components while identifying alternatives and adaptations for any of the following: <i>Individual fitness level, individual range of movement, body type, comfort of position, temperature, speed of activity, stability of position, skeletal alignment and previous injury.</i> 5. Choreography provides variety and creativity with transitions being smooth and movements flowing well. 6. Coaching participants with kinesthetic, action, adjustment, motivational and encouragement cues.
<p>L. Trends in Group Fitness</p>	<p>Candidates should know and understand:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A typical group fitness schedule, 2. The variety of fitness classes available and the type of participant taking part. 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Being able to discuss the current trends in group fitness and having an understanding of how a group fitness schedule is put together. 	<p>Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing accurate information to participants upon request.

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M. Professionalism in Group Fitness.	Candidates should know and understand: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How to become organized and prepared.2. How to become a successful Group Fitness Instructor.³3. How to remain certified and educational opportunities in the fitness industry4. How to educate participants within a class environment.5. How to assess their skills6. How to set goals for improving their instructing abilities.7. How to engage participants and increase class participation.8. How to give and receive feedback.	Candidates have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Being prepared for class by arriving early, being dressed appropriately with correctly formatted music and lesson plan completed.2. Incorporating I-N-T-R-O in their lesson plan.3. Planning a fitness class that motivates and educates participants on how to be successful.4. Creating an environment in the class which encourages participant feedback.	Candidates have demonstrated practical skills by: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Being organized and prepared with music and lesson plan completed.2. Introducing themselves with enthusiasm, naming the class, talking about the components of the class, reassuring newcomers, organizing the group, and equipment.3. Using motivational cues, teaching with energy and enthusiasm, instructing the class facing participants creating connection.4. Understanding the importance of a Group Fitness Instructor being an inspiring role model by demonstrating and coaching strong technique, movement quality, and body alignment.5. Asking for and receiving feedback and comments at the end of the class as well as being able to provide feedback to participants when required or asked.
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