Accredited Exercise Scientists in the Fitness Industry

ESSA
EXERCISE & SPORTS SCIENCE AUSTRALIA

Exercise professionals in the fitness industry

Accredited Exercise Scientists are one of the best placed professions to work in the fitness industry. Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA) has produced this prospectus to highlight the benefits for businesses, gyms, and clients in the fitness industry of employing a university-qualified Accredited Exercise Scientist.

There are several study routes available to work in the fitness industry. These include, but are not limited to, a Certificate III and IV in Fitness as well as a university degree in Exercise Science or similar. Any of these qualifications enable a graduate to become registered or accredited. This resource outlines the differences between each qualification and explains the difference between registration and accreditation.

Benefits of Accredited Exercise Scientists in the fitness industry

- Professional expertise
- Higher-value service offerings
- Improved service quality
- Expedited client outcomes
- Enhanced client loyalty
- Improved client retention

What is an Accredited Exercise Scientist?

An Accredited Exercise Scientist, or AES, is a university-qualified exercise professional whose approach is **person-centred** and individualised. AES services are underpinned by innovation and **evidence-based** practice. An AES applies the science of exercise to design and deliver physical activity and exercise-based interventions to improve health, fitness, well-being, and performance, and assist in the prevention of injury and chronic conditions.

An AES coaches and motivates to promote self-management of physical activity, exercise, and healthy lifestyles. They account for individual factors, and social determinants of health when working with people at an individual, community and population level.

The skills and techniques used by an AES include:

Expert exercise programming and delivery

Health coaching for disease prevention

Injury prevention and return to activity

Coaching strategies which optimise results

Health screening, movement and fitness assessments

General nutritional advice in line with national guidelines

Goal achievement and long term behavioural change

What is the difference between qualifications in the fitness industry?

The table below depicts the most prevalent levels of qualification for exercise professionals working in Australia's fitness industry. It highlights the difference in the standards required to achieve and maintain accreditation and registration status.

	CERTIFICATE III IN FITNESS	CERTIFICATE IV IN FITNESS	UNIVERSITY DEGREE IN EXERCISE SCIENCE OR RELATED FIELD
ACCREDITING/ REGISTERING BODIES	› Fitness Australia (FA) › Physical Activity Australia (PAA) › FITREC		› Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA)
ACCREDITED/ REGISTERED INDUSTRY TITLES	› Australian Registered Exercise Professional (AusREP: FA) › Group Exercise Leader (PAA)	› Australian Registered Exercise Professional (AusREP: FA) › Exercise Trainer (PAA)	› Accredited Exercise Scientist (AES)
AVERAGE COURSE DURATION	7 months*	6 months*	3 years
INDUSTRY PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS	Optional 30 hours	Optional 30 hours	140 hours of supervised practice demonstrating competency in the AES scope of practice (includes 80 hours in exercise design, prescription, and delivery)
ACCREDITATION/ REGISTRATION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	› Course transcript (FA, PAA) › Qualification certificate (FITREC) › First Aid and CPR (FA, PAA)		› Degree transcript › Evidence of 140 hours of professional practice › Requirement to show Professional Standards for accreditation have been met

CONTINUING ACCREDITATION/ REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**	› 10 PD points per year (FA)
	› 3 PD points per year (PAA)
	› First Aid and CPR (FA, PAA)
			› 20 CPD points per year
			› First Aid and CPR
			› Accrue 1,000 hours of practice over 5 years, ensuring:
			  › No more than 2 consecutive years without practice
			  › 200 hours practice within the last 3 years
			› Professional indemnity insurance
			› Abide by ESSA's Code of Professional Conduct & Ethical Practice

INDIVIDUAL PRACTITIONER ACCOUNTABILITY	› Audit every two years (FA) › None (PAA, FITREC)		› Annual audit
SCOPE OF PRACTICE *(based on course content of the qualification)*	› 1:1 and indoor group training › Healthy populations	› 1:1 and outdoor group training › Healthy populations	› All training environments › Healthy populations › Design and deliver physical activity and exercise-based interventions to manage risk factors for chronic conditions › Deliver exercise-based interventions that have been prescribed by a health professional › Qualified to deliver clinical exercise interventions for people with medical conditions, injuries or disabilities

*Data derived from: www.myskills.gov.au | **Professional development points required pro rata

How does an Accredited Exercise Scientist work with other health professionals?

The scope of practice for an AES allows them to independently design and deliver physical activity and exercise-based interventions to manage risk factors for chronic conditions. In addition to this, it is also within the scope of practice for an AES to deliver exercise-based interventions that have been prescribed by a health professional qualified in clinical exercise prescription, for people with medical conditions, injuries or disabilities.

CASE STUDY: THE VALUE OF AES IN THE FITNESS INDUSTRY

Delivering higher-value services and increasing client retention

Emily visits her local gym for personal training services. She has a comprehensive training background including running, boxing and twice a week group exercise. Emily is experiencing knee pain while training for a 10km event and consults an Exercise Physiologist about this. She then starts seeing the gym's in-house AES twice a week for qualified guidance and monitoring of the implementation of the exercise program that the Exercise Physiologist has prescribed, which includes a series of mobility exercises and specific activation drills to be done at home and prior to exercise in the gym. The AES independently delivers, monitors and guides Emily's progress and addresses questions to build Emily's self-confidence with the prescribed exercises, and to expedite her recovery. The AES also communicates directly with Emily's Exercise Physiologist to provide updates and advice on when to evolve Emily's program to enable her to run without knee pain.

This interprofessional approach between the AES and an allied health professional enabled Emily to reach her goal, without pain or injury, within two months of starting the program. It also increased Emily's loyalty and motivation to attend that gym because of the high quality, tailored service she had received from the AES. She referred several friends from her running group to the gym for personal training services with the AES.

Find an AES near you

To find an Accredited Exercise Scientist, visit ESSA's directory at essa.org.au/find-aep.

Who is ESSA?

Founded in 1991, ESSA is the peak professional body and accrediting authority for over 8,000 university qualified Accredited Exercise Physiologists, Accredited Exercise Scientists, Accredited Sports Scientists and Accredited High Performance Managers.

Our Vision	All Australians use exercise and sports science to improve their health and performance
Our Purpose	Provide industry leadership through advocacy, research, education and regulation to support exercise and sports science professionals and the Australian community in becoming a more active nation
Our Values	Quality – Responsibility – Leadership – Passion – Customer Service

Want to know more?

Visit the ESSA website: **www.essa.org.au** and checkout our Exercise Right website for up-to-date information from accredited exercise professionals: **https://exerciseright.com.au**