

Personal trainer Job Description

A free job description template for the Fitness industry

Company Name: _____

Location: _____

Employment Type: _____

Reports To: _____

Date: _____

DISCLAIMER

This personal trainer job description template is designed to reflect Australian workplace standards and fitness industry practices at the time of publication. Confirm the applicable modern award for your business and ensure compliance with all relevant employment laws.

1. Position overview

A personal trainer designs and delivers individual and small-group exercise programs, coaches clients through safe and effective workouts, and tracks their progress towards fitness goals. The role blends technical exercise knowledge with motivation, client care and the commercial side of retaining members and booking sessions.

In Australia, personal trainers are typically classified under the Fitness Industry Award 2020 (MA000094) as fitness employees, usually around Level 4 or 4A as advanced instructors and trainers, depending on qualifications, autonomy and responsibility.

This template provides a foundation for creating clear, compliant job descriptions that attract qualified trainers while setting appropriate expectations for the role. Once hired, manage your team efficiently with rostering software.

2. Key responsibilities

Program design

Creating tailored training programs based on each client's goals, fitness level, health history and any injuries or limitations.

Session delivery

Coaching one-on-one and small-group personal training sessions, demonstrating correct technique and adjusting exercises safely in real time.

Fitness assessment

Conducting initial and ongoing assessments, screening health and readiness, and setting measurable, realistic goals with clients.

Progress tracking

Recording results, reviewing progress against goals and updating programs to keep clients engaged and improving over time.

Client care and retention

Building rapport, following up between sessions, and encouraging clients to maintain consistent attendance and healthy habits.

Safety and hygiene

Ensuring the training area and equipment are safe and clean, following WHS procedures and responding appropriately to incidents.

3. Skills and attributes

- Exercise expertise: Sound knowledge of anatomy, programming and safe technique across strength, cardio and mobility training.
- Coaching ability: Skill in motivating, correcting and adapting sessions for clients of different ages, abilities and goals.
- Communication: Clear, encouraging communication that builds trust, explains programs and keeps clients accountable.
- Client focus: Genuine interest in client wellbeing, strong rapport-building and a supportive, professional manner.
- Safety awareness: Consistent attention to health screening, correct technique and WHS to prevent injury during sessions.
- Business acumen: Ability to retain clients, promote sessions and contribute to membership and session-package sales.

4. Qualifications and requirements

Personal trainer requirements combine formal fitness qualifications with current safety certifications. Some are mandatory, while others are preferred or desirable.

- Certificate IV in Fitness (required) — A Certificate IV in Fitness (or equivalent) is the standard qualification for personal trainers in Australia
- First aid and CPR (required) — Current first aid and CPR certification is required to coach clients safely
- Working rights (required) — Eligibility to work in Australia
- Professional registration — Registration with AUSactive (formerly Fitness Australia) is preferred by many employers
- Public liability insurance — Relevant for trainers operating on a contractor basis rather than as employees
- Specialty qualifications — Additional certifications in areas such as strength, pre/post-natal or rehabilitation are advantageous

5. Working conditions

- Split and broken shifts covering peak early-morning and evening demand
- Active, on-your-feet work demonstrating exercises throughout the day
- Weekend and public-holiday sessions are common in fitness
- A mix of gym floor, studio and outdoor training environments
- Client bookings that vary week to week and by season

- Compliance with WHS, hygiene and health-screening procedures

6. Award information

Fitness industry award 2020

Most personal trainer positions in Australia are covered by the Fitness Industry Award 2020 (MA000094). This modern award sets minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for employees in gyms, studios and health clubs. View current Fitness Award pay rates.

The award classifies employees across Levels 1–7 (including 3A and 4A). A personal trainer is typically classified around Level 4 or 4A as an advanced instructor or trainer. For FY2026/27, a Level 3 qualified instructor earns about \$27.97/hr full-time/part-time and \$34.96/hr casual, with higher levels above that. Use award interpretation software to calculate pay accurately.

Penalty rates and allowances

Under MA000094, full-time and part-time staff receive Saturday at 125%, Sunday at 150% and public holidays at 250%. Casual employees instead receive a 25% loading on ordinary weekday hours and a single flat rate of about 130% of the base for ordinary hours worked on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday — an unusual feature of this award.

Because trainers often work split sessions, a broken shift allowance of about \$18.07 per day may apply, plus a first aid allowance of about \$3.40 per day. Confirm the current rates and check whether an enterprise agreement applies in place of the award.

7. Frequently asked questions

About the role

Q: What does a personal trainer do?

A personal trainer designs individual exercise programs, coaches one-on-one and small-group sessions, assesses client fitness and tracks progress towards goals. They demonstrate correct technique, adjust workouts safely, motivate clients between sessions and help retain members. It is an active, client-facing role that blends exercise expertise with coaching and client care.

Q: What award covers personal trainers in Australia?

Most personal trainer positions in gyms and studios are covered by the Fitness Industry Award 2020 (MA000094), which sets minimum pay, penalty rates and conditions. Sporting clubs and council leisure centres may fall under different awards, and some businesses may instead be covered by an enterprise agreement. Always confirm which instrument applies.

Q: What classification level should I use for a personal trainer?

Under the Fitness Award, personal trainers are typically classified around Level 4 or 4A as advanced instructors or trainers, above the Level 3/3A qualified instructor level. The award runs from Levels 1–7. See our Fitness Award pay rates guide for current rates at each level.

Q: Do I need to include pay rates in a job description?

It's not legally required, but including indicative pay rates can attract more applicants and set clear expectations. You can reference the applicable award rate or use phrases like 'Award rates plus penalties' or 'Competitive hourly rate based on experience.' Check the current Fitness Award rates for guidance.

Qualifications

Q: What qualifications does a personal trainer need?

The standard qualification is a Certificate IV in Fitness (or equivalent), along with current first aid and CPR certification and working rights in Australia. Many employers also prefer registration with AUSactive and specialty certifications in areas such as strength, pre/post-natal or rehabilitation.

Q: Do personal trainers need first aid certification?

Yes, current first aid and CPR certification is a standard requirement for personal trainers because they coach clients through physical activity. Track expiry dates so certifications stay current — HR software makes this easy to manage across a team.

Q: What qualifications should I require vs prefer for a personal trainer?

Mandatory requirements usually include a Certificate IV in Fitness, current first aid and CPR, and working rights in Australia. Preferred qualifications include AUSactive registration and specialty certifications. Avoid over-qualifying the role, as it can narrow your candidate pool unnecessarily.

Q: Should personal trainers be employees or contractors?

Both models are common in fitness. Employees are covered by the Fitness Award with its pay rates and penalties, while contractors typically run their own business and carry their own insurance. Getting this classification right matters for compliance, so confirm the arrangement carefully before hiring.

Employment

Q: Should I hire casual or permanent personal trainers?

This depends on your demand. Casual trainers offer flexibility for variable session bookings but attract a 25% casual loading under the Fitness Award. Permanent part-time or full-time staff provide consistency and stronger retention. Many gyms use a mix — permanent staff for core hours and casuals for peaks and classes.

Q: What penalty rates apply to personal trainers?

Under the Fitness Award (MA000094), full-time and part-time staff receive Saturday at 125%, Sunday at 150% and public holidays at 250%. Casual staff instead get a 25% loading on weekday hours and a flat rate of about 130% of the base for ordinary hours on weekends and public holidays. Use award interpretation software to calculate rates accurately.

Q: What is the broken shift allowance for trainers?

Broken shifts are common in fitness — for example, an early-morning and an evening block. Under the Fitness Award, a broken shift allowance of about \$18.07 per day (plus about \$2.15 for excess fares) applies on top of the rates for the hours worked. Confirm the current amount in the Fitness Award pay guide.

Q: What should I include in a personal trainer employment contract?

Key elements include: position title and classification level, employment type (casual, part-time or full-time), hourly rate, applicable award, reporting structure, main duties and required certifications such as Certificate IV in Fitness and first aid. For casuals, include the 25% loading. Use our digital employment contracts to simplify this process.

Rostering

Q: How far in advance should I provide rosters to personal trainers?

Award and agreement rostering rules vary, so confirm the notice period that applies to your business. As a general practice, providing rosters at least 7 days in advance gives trainers visibility of their sessions and shifts. Using rostering software helps ensure compliance and reduces last-minute changes.

Q: How do I roster trainers around peak gym times?

Fitness demand peaks in the early morning and evening, so roster your most in-demand trainers across those windows and use split shifts where appropriate. Use rostering tools to track hours, monitor coverage and adjust when trainers are unavailable. See our guide on how to roster fitness staff.

Q: What breaks are personal trainers entitled to?

Break entitlements are set by the applicable award or agreement and generally include a meal break for longer shifts. Because trainers work active, back-to-back sessions, set clear break policies and ensure staff record their time accurately. Use time and attendance tools to support compliance.

Q: How do I manage trainer availability for rostering?

Collect availability preferences during onboarding and update them regularly. Use HR software and rostering tools to track when each trainer can work and which classes or specialties they cover. Clear availability policies simplify session planning and reduce gaps in coverage.