

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Senior Fitness Trainer

Reports to:	Health and Fitness Manager
Division:	Development & Event Services
Tenure:	Permanent
Location:	UniRec/Sport & Wellbeing
Date:	October 2025

Vision

Ko te tangata

A research-intensive university providing a globally connected, innovative and inclusive studenty experience in an environment characterised by a commitment to diversity, respect for Indigenous knowledge, and high levels of community engagement.

Values

Ko te mana o Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato ka herea ki tō tātou:

- Tū ngātahi me te Māori
- Mahi pono
- Whakanui i ngā huarahi hou
- Whakarewa i te hiringa i te mahara

The University of Waikato places a high value on:

- Partnership with Māori
- Acting with integrity
- Celebrating diversity
- Promoting creativity

1. GENERAL

The Sport and Wellbeing Group develop and manage high quality, relevant sport and wellbeing programmes and facilities that support students, staff and the wider community to be active and healthy, enhancing the University of Waikato experience. Sport and Wellbeing managed facilities and services include UniRec, Wellbeing Hub, Esport Arena, and university sports fields, events and clubs.

The Group is part of the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, the university's executive leadership

office, and is led by the Associate Director, Sport and Wellbeing

2. POSITION PURPOSE

The Senior Fitness Trainer plays a pivotal role in delivering high-quality fitness services within the sport and recreation facility. This position is directly responsible for supporting gym members through regular engagement, expert advice, and hands-on assistance to ensure a positive and safe exercise experience. The Senior Fitness Trainer designs and delivers safe, effective exercise programmes and assessments tailored to individual needs, while maintaining a vigilant focus on member safety and wellbeing within the gym environment.

In addition to core responsibilities, the Senior Fitness Trainer may group fitness classes, or initiatives that contribute to the growth and innovation of the facility's fitness offerings.

This position is particularly responsible for coordinating and delivering LifeFit (functional ageing and seniors) and WellFit (mental and physical wellbeing) programmes, alongside other population-specific initiatives as identified by UniRec. The Senior Fitness Trainer provides leadership in programme development, assessment, and reporting, while mentoring Fitness Trainers to build capability in this specialised area.

3. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal: Health and Fitness Manager
Associate Director, Sport and Wellbeing
Customer Operations Manager
Marketing Coordinator
Group Exercise Coordinator
Other UniRec/ Sport and Wellbeing staff
University Staff and Students

External: Members of the local community, programme participants, healthcare professionals, community wellbeing partners

4. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Programme Leadership and Delivery

- Lead and deliver LifeFit and WellFit programmes, ensuring safe, inclusive, and progressive exercise experiences for participants with diverse needs.
- Design, review, and adapt exercise sessions for seniors, students, and special populations in alignment with current research and clinical guidelines.
- Provide one-to-one and group exercise support, progressing individuals safely and monitoring outcomes.
- Collect and analyse participant feedback and data for reporting and continuous improvement.
- Liaise with external health professionals when required to ensure continuity of care and safe participation.

4.2 Engagement

- Proactively offer individualised exercise programmes and assessments to gym members, ensuring they are fully inducted and informed of UniRec products and services.
- Respond promptly and professionally to client enquiries and feedback.
- Promote excellent customer service by monitoring member progress and scheduling timely re-programming opportunities.
- Engage and support members through in-person and online interactions, including delivering small group training when required.

- Follow up with clients flagged by PAR-Q responses to ensure appropriate consultation and support.

4.3 Exercise Prescription

- Keep exercise knowledge current and provide ongoing support to gym members.
- Collect and report data relevant to specific program responsibilities, maintaining regular communication with the Health & Fitness Manager regarding outcomes and initiatives.
- Participate in ongoing professional development and training.

4.4 Facility & Equipment Support

- Maintain cleanliness and tidiness of gym equipment and exercise areas.
- Set up and pack down equipment to support UniRec's services, including events and sports hall bookings.

4.5 Health and Safety

- Participate in emergency response training and lead emergency responses when required.
- Uphold gym etiquette and the trainer code of conduct, ensuring members comply with gym rules.
- Maintain a safe work environment and comply with the University's Health and Safety Policy.
- Report incidents, hazards, and risks promptly.
- Participate in the maintenance of a safe and healthy work environment for self and others including students. Comply with and undertake responsibilities set out in the University's Health and Safety Policy.

4.6 Contribute to a Positive Team Environment and Mentorship

- Work effectively as a member of the Sport and Wellbeing team (UniRec) to support colleagues and provide coverage of functions as required.
- Actively contribute to UniRec's vision and development by participating in team meetings and collaborative initiatives.
- Share information openly to encourage transparency, build positive relationships, and support a high-performance culture.
- Support other UniRec areas as needed, including group exercise classes, instructors, reception cover and equipment setup/pack-down
- Promote professionalism, safety, customer focus, and positive team morale, in line with the University's Health and Safety Policy

4.7 Continuous Improvement

- Actively contribute to the ongoing development and improvement of UniRec systems and processes.

NOTE: Staff have an annual Objectives, Development and Reflection (ODR) meeting with their manager.

5. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Senior Fitness Trainer will be performing satisfactorily when:

- They are punctual and reliable.
- Positive client feedback is received.
- A professional image is always projected to clients.
- Member engagement and retention is evident through amply booked consultations and re-programs.
- Equipment is clean and tidy & equipment downtime is kept to a minimum.

- Commitment to external training is undertaken and knowledge shared.
- Clients are well informed of the products and services that are available to them.
- Programmes (LifeFit, WellFit, and others) are well-attended and receive positive participant feedback.
- Exercise sessions are safe, inclusive, and aligned with best practice guidelines.
- Reports and data are accurate, timely, and support evidence-based improvement.
- Participants demonstrate measurable progress in functional ability and wellbeing.
- Incidents are reported in the correct manner, and the relevant people are advised of the hazard/problem.
- Safe and healthy work practices are followed that comply with University policies and procedures, relevant work standards and statutory obligations.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

- Bachelor's degree in Sport and/or Exercise Science, Human Performance, or a similar discipline.
- Current CPR and First Aid Certificate.

Desirable

- Mental Health First Aid Training (or equivalent).
- De-escalation Training (or equivalent).
- Specialist Qualification in Exercise for Older Adults, Clinical Exercise or Mental Health and Wellbeing.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE and EXPERIENCE

Essential

- At least two years' experience working within a gym, recreation facility, or similar environment.
- Proven experience delivering exercise programmes for older adults, rehabilitation clients, or individuals with health challenges.
- Demonstrated expertise and understanding in exercise training principles and techniques, specifically chronic conditions, injury management and/or safe exercise progressions.
- Extensive knowledge of health assessments, including contraindications to exercise and when to refer to medical professionals.
- Functional knowledge of a wide range of exercise equipment.
- Proven ability to design and deliver advanced exercise prescription.
- Sound knowledge of customer service principles and practices.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Commitment to equal opportunity and to the University's partnership with Māori as intended by the Treaty of Waitangi. Demonstrated awareness of Māori and Pacific cultures.

Preferred

- Experience supporting mental health and wellbeing within a gym or coaching context.
- Experience applying de-escalation strategies in client or member interactions.
- Knowledge of trauma-informed care or neurodiversity-aware coaching principles.
- Experience in tertiary or community wellbeing sector.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Problem-solving and decision-making skills, with initiative in dealing with varied situations.
- Ability to build rapport and trust with a diverse range of people.
- Collaborative team player who thrives in a values-based environment.
- Flexible, adaptable and able to work effectively in a high-energy, busy environment.
- Enthusiastic, motivated, and committed to personal health and professional standards.
- Empathetic and compassionate, with a client-centred approach.
- Effective verbal and written communication skills.
- Commitment to diversity principles and the University's partnership with Māori as intended by the Treaty of Waitangi.