gym for all

First Gym Visit

Quick Start Guide for Exercise Professionals

Ask, don't assume.



1. Welcome

Help the person feel comfortable and included.

- Make the person feel welcome and build rapport.
- Speak directly to the person, even if someone attends with them.
- Ask how they prefer to communicate.
- Use accessible communication methods when needed.
- Give enough time for questions and responses.

> "Ask me how I communicate."



2. Ask & understand

Find out what matters and what will help.

- Ask why they have come and what they want to achieve.
- Ask what activities interest them: gym, classes or pool.
- Ask about access needs, support needs and reasonable adjustments.
- Ask before touching or giving physical assistance.
- Complete health screening and discuss relevant information for safe exercise.

> "Ask before touching me."

3. Agree next steps

Work together on what happens next.

- Agree what they want to do on this visit.
- Decide what support or adjustments will help.
- Explain options and work together on solutions.
- Stay within your role and refer on when needed.

> "Work with me to find a solution."

Avoid

- Assuming what someone needs or can do.
- Talking to a companion instead of the person.
- Asking for unnecessary personal or medical details.
- Starting with "you can't" or "we can't".
- Working outside your training or scope.

The individual is the expert in their own experience.

Listen, involve them in decisions, and focus on enabling participation.

Content for this quick start guide was developed with a co-design team. Illustrations were generated using artificial intelligence.