

# FAQ Personal Trainer Minor

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## 1. What is this Personal Trainer Minor all about? (And what not?)

The Personal Trainer minor is (of course) all about becoming a Personal Trainer!

You will learn all the skills you need as a personal trainer; from knowledge about the musculoskeletal system to motivational strategies and from training skills to medical issues such as obesity and diabetes in conjunction with training. So you will be trained to give expert advice both as a fitness guide as well as a personal trainer to assist your clients.

This minor is not about 1 element of the wide scope of practice of a Personal Trainer. For instance, some students expect that Nutrition will play a major part, but Nutrition only plays a small role. The full name of this minor is *Nutrition & Health Promotion Personal Trainer*. The faculty where this minor originates from is called Nutrition and the subdivision is Health Promotion. Hence the name. But it all revolves around becoming a Personal Trainer.

So, instead this minor is very broad, from testing and assessing to discovering psychological influences, biomechanics, anatomy, kinesiology, nutrition, balance, speed, designing programs, resistance training techniques, plyometrics etc. etc. The end goal is always to become a better Personal Trainer.

## 2. What kind of background do I need?

Students are expected to live a healthy lifestyle and be familiar with exercise or training. Students should be comfortable in sport scenes in general and in particular the fitness scene. In addition we expect students to have affinity towards coaching of their clientele.

Is this all? Yes, it pretty much is. We start from scratch, but the pace is pretty high so that we can cover all of the material. So if you are not into sports, or if you are not eager enough to learn, you will fail.

## 3. Any requirements?

All 3<sup>rd</sup> year students are welcome. The Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences uses SiS. SiS-requirements are that you have scored 100 points at the start of the minor, including your propedeuse (completion of first year). Be aware! ESP students or other high speed programs, need to have the entire 120 points (no 2<sup>nd</sup> year exams left) when they want to combine this minor with their thesis.

#### 4. What kind of students do enter this minor?

We have a wide variety of students that enrol in this program. However, in the first semester – September till February – most students come from the faculty of Health. Physiotherapy students, Mensendieck-students, ESP-students, some students from Nutrition, and some from Economics, Social Care but also students studying Math, Fashion or other interesting subjects. In the second semester most students come from Nutrition and they are mixed with students from various backgrounds like stated above.

#### 5. What is the difference between being a AUAS-student, a KOM-student, or a student from abroad?

Well, not much. Most students are within their third year of study and all have their interests in sports, one way or the other. The only difference is the way they (need to) enrol. See the next question.

#### 6. How do I register for this minor?

For regular students from the Amsterdam university of Applied Sciences (AUAS): register through SiS. There are ± 35 spots available and students can enter on a first come, first serve basis. Check [HERE](#) how and when to enrol and [HERE](#) is a direct link to SiS.

For higher education students outside the AUAS (so for instance from RUG, HAN or HU) : use the KOM site. <https://www.kiesopmaat.nl/> switch to English if necessary. We keep only a couple of spots available for KOM students and chances are likely that it is difficult to enrol. However, we have had a couple of KOM-students before so you won't be the first KOM-student and you probably won't be the last either.

If you are a student at a partner university wanting to enrol this minor, please contact your university's international office. Your international office must first formally nominate you before you are allowed to enrol. The deadline for nominations is April 1st for semester 1 and September 20<sup>th</sup> November for semester 2. The deadline for applications to enrol in the minor is May 1st for semester 1 and November 1<sup>st</sup> for semester 2. For information on how to apply, please check and read <http://www.amsterdamuas.com/exchange-sn>

## 7. What if the minor is full?

Well, in that case it is bad luck! Full is full and we are not allowed to keep a record of students that would like to join but cannot due to the fact that all spots are taken. However, it has occurred that students do enrol first but they unsubscribe at a later stage. Students that have shown interested before will be notified if we have some drop-outs.

## 8. How much work will it be? And is it difficult?

Most students find this minor a tough cookie. Not because of the difficulty (it is not rocket-science), but mostly due to the amount of effort that students have to put into it. It is time consuming, quite some homework AND reading a 650+ pages book in English that is very dense in information. Plus, the rate at which the information is provided is very high. So, yes, this will not be an easy-peasy minor, but the reward will be tremendous! ;o)

*Required literature:* J.W. Coburn & M.H. Malek (eds). NSCA's Essentials of Personal Training; Human Kinetics, 2012. 678 p. (ISBN : 978-0-7360-8415-4)

## 9. There are extra costs involved, why is that?

The extra costs involve two aspects; a Medic First Aid (MFA) course combined with an international certificate and an international Personal Trainer certification through the NSCA.

Some students already have a MFA certificate which is obligatory if you want to work in the sport and coaching scene. Within the first part of the minor the lectures and exams regarding the MFA course are extra, as well as the book and the (international) MFA certificate. We keep the costs as low as possible and our rates are far below commercial MFA providers. You have the possibility to get your MFA certificate elsewhere if you wish. Just make sure your course will lead up to a (preferably) international certificate including the use of AED and the act of Life Saving events.

This minor also leads up to an international certificate from the National Strength & Conditioning Association, the NSCA. This is an internationally wide respected association and one of the world leaders regarding the certification of professionals within the fitness and coaching industry. As a student you have to become a member of the NSCA in order to get access to their knowledge database and to sit for the NSCA-CPT exam. Student membership is about 65 USD\$. (2018) If you do not pass this exam the first time, you have to pay an extra fee of 300 USD\$ again to sit for a retake. Yes, for students this is a lot of money, but if you manage to get 1 client (after your internship) who would like 10 PT-sessions with you, you'll break even.

## 10. Why an international certificate?

In Holland there is no such thing as a (high) clear standard that you can pursue if you want to become a Personal Trainer. Most people working in the fitness and health industry are either self-educated, self-employed, or have a middle degree in education. Since high standards are our middle name, collaboration with the international oriented and highly respected NSCA was a logical step. Next to that, we have quite a few international students, so a Dutch middle education degree would be of no practical use for these students.

## 11. Why the NSCA?

As stated before, the NSCA is world leader in the certification of professional working in the fitness and health industry. The NSCA collaborates with universities, have a huge knowledge base, have their own scientific journals and are widely recognized.

## 12. What is the success rate of the students so far?

Of course, success rates differ. They differ within years and even within semesters as well. On average, the success rate of students passing the whole minor is 92%.

Taken into account that we have a huge range of differences in background, I think that is a pretty good score. Surprising fact might be that a high percentage of those 8% students that fail, (either a part of the minor, or as a whole) are the students with the 'best' backgrounds. Probably because they underestimate the amount of work that they still have to put into it.

## 13. How about the internship?

A huge and probably the most important part of this minor, is your internship period. No matter how much we as lecturers are trying to teach you, the practical implementations are always the best learning experiences for students. You are expected to be intern at a company for at least 375 hours. Usually this comes down to a 15 weeks internship of 3 days per week of 8 hours. Some students are intern for 13 weeks, 4 days per week with 7,5 hours per day.

## 14. What is expected from me during my internship?

Well, that differs a lot from the one internship company to the next. Some companies are quite protective to their customers and it takes a while for them to consider the student to be qualified

enough to handle PT-sessions. Other companies really like to through their students in at the deep end. Some companies nearly only provide PT-sessions, some are considering to add PT into their portfolio for their customers, but are uncertain how to do that.

Basically, the average student works 70% on the floor, being a fitness guide or acting as a personal trainer. The other 30 % they are working on a certain program, standing behind the counter or the bar, doing some cleaning, working on their internship report etc.

### 15. I live about 1,5 hours' drive (or more) from AUAS. Can I study at home and do the whole internship in my own town?

Nope. You are expected to have an attendance percentage of at least 80%. The answer to your internship question is below.

### 16. Can I choose my own Internship company? And are there any rules involved?

No, you can't choose your own internship, just for yourself. In the past we had some issues with students being intern at a company where they already knew a trainer who worked there, or the owner, or were even working at the same company themselves. Since this causes all sorts of unwanted impartiality and objectivity issues, this is prohibited. This is seen as fraud by the exam committee and students will be expelled from the minor immediately. So please do stay away from that.

We have a list of about 35 clubs (about 70 internship spots) in an around (wide) Amsterdam that provide internship spots for our students. Students can state their preferences, and then they get feedback from us at which 2 or 3 companies they are allowed to write their letter of application to. Indeed, we – as AUAS - do not place any students, you have to apply – just like a job in the 'real' world - and you can be accepted or rejected.

However, it is possible to be intern at a company of your choice. You can submit a company. This company needs to have at least 400 members that can be invited to train on a personal basis. There need to be place for you and at least one other student. The guidance is important as well. The company needs to make sure that you will be guided by a guide who is either educated at a higher level of education or have a master degree, or has a middle education PLUS have been working independently within the industry for at least three years. The company needs to be within a range of 30 minutes' drive from AUAS as well. Otherwise it is nearly impossible for us to come and visit. See for an estimation of this area the next figure:



## 17. How many classes per week can I expect? And where can I find the time-schedule?

We collectively start with the first part of this minor which include 7 lecture weeks, three days a week,  $\pm 5$  hours per day, in which we have both theoretical and practical lessons. This first period of lectures ends with a theoretical mid-term exam. You will learn all the basic skills you'll need to be productive from the first day on, at your internship.

The official AUAS time-schedule will not be visible until about 2 weeks before the start of the next block. However, you can expect a lecture day to last from about 9 o'clock in the morning until 16 o'clock in the afternoon. Sometimes it is from 08:30 till 17:30, sometimes it is from 10:00 till 15:00.

The second part of the minor only has one day at school. That is usually the Monday. The other days you are busy being intern and prepare your homework and your internship report.

## 18. When are the exams and the deadline for the internship report?

A minor comprises 1 semester, either semester 1 or 2. Each semester comprises 2 blocks, so either block 1 and 2 from semester 1, or block 3 and 4 from semester 2. Each block consists of 10 lecture weeks. Holidays are no lecture weeks.

The first exam (named mid-term exam) is due at the end of the first block. So either the end of block 1 or at the end of block 3. This exam is held during the regular exam week, which is usually at the Monday of lecture week 10.

The end exam, the NSCA-CPT exam, is held at the end of block 2 or 4, depending on which semester you have enrolled. We set a collective date, which is also dependent on availability at the extern facility.

The internship report is also planned at the end of the second block.

## 19. I am a professional athlete, can I skip some classes?

While you might have some privileges being an athlete, it is most wise to make an appointment with the coordinator of this minor. He or she can decide what would be the best solution in those cases.

## 20. I am dyslectic, does that cause a problem?

No, not really. Besides the fact that you most likely have to calculate more hours for reading the NSCA book, you are fine. You will get some extra time for the mid-term exam as well as the end NSCA-CPT exam.