



**CIMSPA PROFESSIONAL STANDARD:  
TECHNICAL SPECIALISM**

# Qigong for Health and Wellbeing

(FULL STANDARD)

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# CIMSPA PROFESSIONAL STANDARD: TECHNICAL SPECIALISM

## Qigong for Health and Wellbeing

### Contents

	<b>Page</b>
1. Overview.....	3
2. Scope of Qigong for Health and Wellbeing .....	4
3. Terms of Reference .....	5
4. Summary of knowledge and skills .....	6
5. Product development guidance.....	7
6. Learning and development requirements (LDRs).....	9
7. Acknowledgements.....	14
Appendix .....	15

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## 1. Overview

### **Professional Standard: Technical Specialism Qigong for Health and Wellbeing**

This Professional Standard outlines the role and scope of the technical specialism for Qigong for Health and Wellbeing and the essential knowledge and skills that are needed to meet the requirements of the sector minimum deployment standards.

This full version of the standard is available to CIMSPA education and employer partners. It provides guidance for the development of educational products that will be endorsed by CIMSPA.

The Qigong for Health and Wellbeing Technical Specialism covers job roles that sit within the sport and physical activity sector as part of all industries.

The CIMSPA Technical Specialism allows you to demonstrate your expertise in delivering Qigong specifically in a Health and Wellbeing setting.

#### **This Professional Standard: Technical Specialism can be used as follows:**

1. Combined with an occupation standard to form an education product: e.g., Occupation: Coach; Technical Specialism: Qigong for Health and Wellbeing.
2. Combined with an occupation standard and additional specialism(s) to form an educational product: e.g., Occupation: Coach; Environmental Specialism: Working in the Community Environment; Technical Specialism: Qigong for Health and Wellbeing.
3. As a standalone product that can be completed as continuous professional development: e.g., Delivering Qigong to improve Health and Wellbeing

#### **Endorsed qualification logo**

Qualifications that meet the requirements of this CIMSPA Professional Standard will display this official CIMSPA endorsement logo.



## 2. Scope of the Qigong for Health and Wellbeing Technical Specialism

This Technical Specialism supports an individual who is specialising in delivering Qigong specifically in a Health and Wellbeing setting. This standard has not been designed to cover delivery of Qigong outside of this setting.

The standard is designed for professionals who teach, lead, and motivate groups and individuals through intentionally designed, Qigong based exercise classes. Instructors can provide class design and instruction according to the desired results of the participants.

Individuals that meet this standard will:

### **UNDERSTAND:**

- How to plan, deliver, and review Qigong classes to support the health and wellbeing of the individuals and groups they are working with.

### **HAVE DEMONSTRATED:**

- The ability to plan, deliver, and review Qigong classes to support the health and wellbeing of individuals and groups.

**This Professional Standard outlines the Technical Specialism's knowledge and skills.**

### 3. Terms of Reference

A large amount of the terminology used in this discipline, (including 'Qigong'), originates from Chinese languages, with no satisfactory direct translation into English – often the terms were derived from ancient Chinese dialects and are difficult to define even in Mandarin. These terms remain the topic of much interesting discussion.

This standard does not provide standardised definitions of any nuanced terms from this discipline, including 'Qigong'. However, it is important to be as clear as possible about the intended meaning of any term used within this standard. Where a concept is referred to that cannot be easily represented in English, the wording is used in its original language (transliterated using either Pinyin or Wade-Giles, according to widest usage).

The term 'Qigong' is used throughout this document (including its title) to refer to Chinese health and wellbeing exercises that involve the movement of 'qi'. Again, this is not intended to be a standardised definition of this term, rather it is the intended meaning of this term for this Technical Specialism.

A glossary of terms is provided in the appendix.

## 4. Summary of knowledge and skills

### Qigong for Health and Wellbeing

Topic	Knowledge and understanding	Skills
<b>Health and wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and define the terms health and wellbeing in relation to Qigong practice.</li> <li>• Understand the acknowledged benefits of regular Qigong practice to health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Know how to promote and support individuals' behaviour change to engage in regular Qigong practice.</li> </ul>	
<b>Technical knowledge and skills of chosen Qigong (chi-kung) system(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to define the terms 'qi' (chi) and 'Qigong' (according to your chosen system).</li> <li>• Know the conceptual principles of chosen Qigong system in terms of mind and anatomy / physiology of the physical and subtle bodies.</li> <li>• Know the key internal movements (physical, breath, mind, etc) that are used within the chosen system, the effect of these movements in terms of movement of qi through the physical and subtle bodies, and the basis on how this benefits health, wellbeing, and spiritual development</li> <li>• Know in detail, at least one complete exercise form from chosen system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed the conceptual principles of chosen Qigong system in all practice.</li> <li>• Accurately demonstrate the key internal (physical, breath, mind, etc) movements that are used within the chosen Qigong system.</li> <li>• Perform accurately at least one complete exercise form from chosen system.</li> </ul>
<b>Plan, prepare, deliver and review Qigong exercise sessions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to plan safe and inclusive sessions/programmes of Qigong exercise, tailored to the needs of a range of individuals within scope of practice.</li> <li>• Know the technical requirements to deliver Qigong exercise sessions.</li> <li>• How to adapt exercises to meet varying individuals needs during a session.</li> <li>• Understand how to review safe and inclusive Qigong exercise sessions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan safe and inclusive sessions/programmes of Qigong exercise, tailored to the needs of a range of individuals within scope of practice.</li> <li>• Deliver Qigong exercise sessions.</li> <li>• Adapt exercises to meet varying individual needs during a session.</li> <li>• Review the effectiveness of own performance when delivering Qigong exercise sessions.</li> </ul>

## 5. Product development guidance

This section is aimed at organisations developing formal educational products mapping to this Technical Specialism. The guidance should be considered in the development of all educational products seeking CIMSPA endorsement.

The CIMSPA Professional Development Board (PDB) has agreed any of the formal educational products listed in the table below can be developed for the Technical Specialism, Qigong for Health and Wellbeing. Where evidence that all elements of the Technical Specialism are included, CIMSPA endorsement can be sought.

<b>Educational product</b>	<b>Mapping requirements</b>	<b>Professional Standard Technical Specialism achieved on attainment?</b>
Regulated vocational qualification	Fully mapped	YES
Apprenticeship programme	Fully mapped	YES
HE programme/modules	Fully mapped	YES
CPD	Partially mapped	NO

All formal educational products which are seeking CIMSPA endorsement must be submitted to CIMSPA for endorsement and should include all elements outlined in the Technical Specialism and assessed in line with the intention of the Standard.

Education providers seeking CIMSPA endorsement for a product against this Technical Specialism are asked to consider the following:

- a) They determine and justify the level of the product they have developed, in line with regulator guidance. To ensure parity, the level for all educational products that fully map to this Technical Specialism should be the same.

The level assigned is determined by leading awarding organisations currently offering qualifications in the sector in which the role resides.

This is not a first-to-post exercise but one in which education providers are invited to submit their levelled units/full qualification for review as part of the CIMSPA endorsement process.

Once agreed by CIMSPA, all subsequent fully-mapped educational products must conform to the level set for this Technical Specialism.

Level descriptors set out the generic knowledge and skills associated with the typical holder of a qualification at a given level and it should be ensured that educational products fully mapping to this Technical Specialism are a 'best-fit' for the level assigned.

- b) Their quality assurance meets the appropriate regulator's guidance, including internal and external quality assurance, staffing requirements and assessment generation and evidence.

- c) They stipulate practical assessment must be conducted, where practically possible, in a real-world environment ideally 'on the job' or at work.

Where possible a practical end-point assessment is conducted with 'real participants'.

The use of peers for an end-point practical assessment is not deemed appropriate.

Reasonable adjustments can be applied where specific circumstances make this unviable

- d) They determine the total qualification time for the qualification/unit and outline the minimum requirements for assessment.



## 6. Learning and development requirements (LDRs)

The LDRs outline the key areas of learning and assessment that should be contained within any educational product seeking CIMSPA endorsement against a Professional Standard. There are 3 key areas of learning and development for the Technical Specialism: Qigong for Health and Wellbeing, of which all areas are interconnected and mandatory. The key areas are:

1. Health and wellbeing.
2. Technical knowledge and skills of chosen Qigong system(s).
3. Plan, prepare, deliver, and review Qigong exercise sessions.

N.B. Examples are given within the LDRs to provide an overview of the knowledge and skills most relevant to the role; it is not mandatory to assess learners against 100% of the examples provided, however, sufficient coverage to ensure occupational competence on achievement must be ensured. This will be reviewed as part of the CIMSPA endorsement process.

## 1. Health and wellbeing

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	An individual delivering Qigong for Health and Wellbeing must:
K1.1	Health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand the broad definitions for health and wellbeing and in relation to Qigong practice.</li><li>• Know when and how to signpost individuals on or refer to appropriate services, where it is deemed beyond scope of practice.</li></ul>
K1.2	Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know about the risks of inactivity and sedentary behaviour and how Qigong practice can improve individuals' health and wellbeing.</li><li>• Know the acknowledged benefits (Physiological, Psychological and Sociological) of regular Qigong practice to health and wellbeing.</li></ul>
K1.3	Behaviour change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand types of real and perceived barriers that affect engagement and participation in practising Qigong in the health and wellbeing setting.</li><li>• Identify the motivations for individuals participating in Qigong practice in the health and wellbeing setting.</li><li>• Know how to promote and support individuals' behaviour change to engage in regular Qigong practice in the health and wellbeing setting.</li></ul>

## 2. Technical knowledge and skills of chosen Qigong system(s)

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	An individual delivering Qigong for Health and Wellbeing must:
K2.1	Theoretical basis of chosen Qigong system(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know how to define the terms 'qi' (chi) and 'Qigong' (according to your chosen system).</li><li>• Know the conceptual principles of chosen Qigong system in terms of mind, anatomy / physiology of the physical and subtle bodies, and movement/vibration of those elements.</li></ul>
K2.2	Qigong technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know in detail, the key internal movements/vibrations (physical body, subtle body, and mind) that are used within the chosen system, the effect of this movement/vibration in terms of movement and transformation of qi throughout the subtle body, and the basis of how this benefits health, wellbeing, and spiritual development.</li><li>• Know in detail, at least one complete form from chosen system (see glossary/ appendix).</li></ul>

  

Ref	Skills:	An individual delivering Qigong for Health and Wellbeing must:
S2.1	Qigong technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Model the conceptual principles of chosen Qigong system in all practice.</li><li>• Accurately demonstrate the key internal (physical, subtle, and mind) movements/vibrations that are used within the chosen Qigong system.</li><li>• Perform accurately at least one complete form, from chosen Qigong system.</li></ul>

### 3. Plan, prepare, deliver, and review Qigong exercise sessions

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	An individual delivering Qigong for Health and Wellbeing must:
K3.1	Plan Qigong exercise sessions/ programmes	Understand how to plan and tailor safe and inclusive Qigong exercise sessions/ programmes for a range of clients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Explain the key principles of designing a programme of Qigong exercise sessions.</li><li>- Differences between Qigong exercises for physical fitness, physical health benefits, wellbeing, and spiritual development.</li><li>- Explain a range of safe and effective Qigong exercises.</li><li>- Know how to select the most appropriate Qigong activities to meet the needs and goals of the participant(s).</li><li>- How Qigong practice can support participants' health and wellbeing during stressful life-events and other acute periods of intense stress.</li><li>- Provision of alternative Qigong activities/exercises/participation options.</li><li>- How to minimise any risks from the perspective of the chosen Qigong system.</li></ul>
K3.2	Deliver Qigong exercise sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand how to deliver planned Qigong exercise sessions</li><li>• Know how to provide safe and effective exercise demonstrations.</li></ul>
K3.3	Adapt training for varying individual needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to adapt training to meet varying individual needs during a session.</li></ul>
K3.4	Review Qigong exercise sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to review safe and inclusive Qigong exercise sessions with individuals, considering:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reasons for temporary deferral of exercise.</li><li>- Importance of verbal screening and how to conduct it.</li></ul></li><li>• Methods of evaluating how well Qigong exercise sessions are meeting individual needs.</li></ul>

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Skills:</b>	<b>An individual delivering Qigong for Health and Wellbeing must:</b>
<b>S3.1</b>	Plan Qigong exercise sessions/ programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply knowledge to the planning of safe and effective exercise programmes for a range of individuals within scope of practice, using appropriate methods.</li> <li>• Show appropriate session content for Qigong practice.</li> </ul>
<b>S3.2</b>	Deliver Qigong exercise sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver safe and effective Qigong exercise sessions.</li> </ul>
<b>S3.3</b>	Adapt exercise for varying individual needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapt exercise to meet varying individual needs during a session as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>S3.4</b>	Review Qigong exercise sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appraise own performance in relation to the session.</li> <li>• Appraise participants' performance in relation to the session.</li> <li>• Assess the appropriateness of the session content in relation to the participants and environment.</li> <li>• Make changes/adaptations to future session planning based on the appraisal of own performance, participant performance and appropriateness of session content.</li> </ul>

## 8. Acknowledgements

This Standard has been produced by the Tai Chi & Qigong Union for Great Britain (TCUGB) with the kind permission and guidance from the Sport's Governing Body the British Council for Chinese Martial Arts (BCCMA) in recognition that a Professional Standard is required in the Health and Wellbeing sector.

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Chris Ellerker: British Council for Chinese Martial Arts (BCCMA)

Tony Swanson: British Council for Chinese Martial Arts (BCCMA)

Gareth Wilson

# Appendix

## Glossary of terms

**Qigong** - the term 'Qigong' is used throughout this standard and can be interchanged with qi-gong, chi-kung and any other accepted spelling. Although the term has a more onerous meaning in China (see notes below), in the West, we use the term to refer to Chinese health and wellbeing exercises that involve the movement of 'qi'.

**Form** – this term is used in this document to refer to any acknowledged sequence, (ie drill, or set), of movements. It is sometimes but not exclusively referred to as daoyin, zhan zhuang, and/or xing qi in some qigong systems.

**Movement** – this term is used in this document to refer to an individual posture or movement within a form, where there are normally a number individual movements that make up the set form.

**Daoyin** – this term means 'guiding' or 'pulling', and it refers to physical exercises that involve external and internal movements that guide and/or force qi along certain paths within the anatomy. The history of daoyin pre-dates qigong by some 4000 years. In common terminology in the West, daoyin exercises usually fall under the broader heading of qigong, with each daoyin corresponding to a form within a qigong system.

**Xing qi** – this term refers to Chinese meditation exercises, which involve movement of the mind, and breath, and other internal movements, that move qi along certain paths within the anatomy. It is also used to refer to certain qi-based healing practices that use a similar method to influence and move qi within the practitioner's patient. As with daoyin, in common terminology in the West, xing qi exercises usually fall under the broader heading of qigong.

**Zhan zhuang** – also written as Zhan Zhuan, or other variations, this term refers to standing exercises (standing post) that normally involve minimal (if any) external movement, but usually involve movement of the mind, and breath, and other internal movements. Certain zhan zhuang were developed for training and conditioning in martial arts such as tai chi chuan. As with daoyin, in common terminology in the West, zhan zhuang exercises usually fall under the broader heading of qigong.

**Instructor** – This term is used throughout this document and is interchangeable with the term "teacher" or "coach".

**System** – This term is used in this document to refer to any approach, style, or lineage through which a set of qigong forms have been developed and systematised. There is no standardised ordering, categorisation, or naming convention for these, but they may use, for example, family names or place names to differentiate from others.

## Notes for Technical Skills of chosen Qigong system(s)

**K3.1:** The first point is succinctly summarised in the following quotes.

Bing, 2011: *Qi Gong as a physical health practice, presented by the contemporary Chinese and Westerners, is a complex accretion of the ancient Chinese meditative practice xing qi 行氣 or "circulating qi," and gymnastic exercise daoyin 導引 or "guiding and pulling;" I Ching and occult arts; facets of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism; martial arts, and the chemical and magical tricks, which had a*

long history in Taoist practices; and foreign ideas such as the Hindu yoga theory and modern scientific concepts such as “field,” “energy,” “gene,” “molecular structure,” and so on. (Li, 341)

Although the characters *qi gong* 氣功 can be traced back in the Taoist literatures the early Tang dynasty (618-907), the current term of Qi Gong has no conceptual or semantic relationships to *qi gong* in the historical literatures. In fact, the term of Qi Gong that applies to the meditative practice and gymnastic exercise was first claimed by Liu Guizhen 劉貴珍 (1920-1982) in his book “Experiences in Healing with Qi Gong” in 1957.

Kohn, 2008 (p199): *While the term **qigong** in common Western parlance refers to a set of exercises that combine gentle body movements with deep breathing and a mental guiding of **qi**, used predominantly for healing and undertaken by groups of people in parks, in China **qigong** is very much a social phenomenon, consciously created by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), that evolved through a series of transformations over the past fifty years... In the wake of this politically motivated beginning, qigong has remained very much an artificially constructed phenomenon that has served various social needs in the course of the CCP. These needs, and with them the nature and quality as well as the political standing of qigong, have changed essentially with every decade.*

Hence, regarding the latter point in K3.1, in order to effectively teach any particular Qigong exercise system, it is important to understand its origins and developmental history within the broader context of Qigong.

### Three Regulations of Qigong

Regardless of the form or philosophical basis, all qigong has this much in common, they all require that the practitioner learns to regulate their body, breath, and mind, commonly called the Three Regulations (*sān tiáo*) or the Three adjustments: regulation of the body (*tiáo shēn*), regulation of the breath (*tiáo xī*) and regulation of the mind (*tiáo xīn*). The coordinated regulation of the body, breath, and mind helps to guide and regulate the chi (*qi*).

The details of the three regulations are specific to each qigong set and beyond the scope of this Technical Specialism. They are in the requirement of section 2. Technical knowledge and skills of chosen Qigong system(s) and must be evidenced.

### References

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