

“Scope of practice” describes procedures, actions and processes an instructor is permitted to undertake. The scope is limited by the specific qualifications, education, experience and competency of the instructor.

“Standards” include any criteria, protocols or specifications for conduct, performance or services and are considered to be mandatory and may be accompanied by an enforcement mechanism.

“Guidelines” are statements that include recommendations intended to optimise client care.

Introduction

Pilates is a mind-body exercise modality that enhances efficient movement habits, postural awareness, coordinated strength and flexibility and respiratory function. Its benefits, when taught as a system, include:

- restoring and improving optimal physical function for health and fitness
- preventing and managing injuries and sub-acute/chronic conditions to reduce pain, improve function and mitigate musculoskeletal degeneration
- improving strength, flexibility, alignment, balance, range of movement and breathing function for ongoing health and rehabilitation purposes
- pre- and post-surgery rehabilitation
- improving performance through specific training and countering sports/muscular bias
- managing the effects of underlying systemic health conditions especially those impacting on activities of daily living
- improving mental health through mindfulness and purposeful movement

To achieve the benefits above, Pilates classes require an environment that enables mindful motor learning. This includes:

- consistent repetition and structured progressive exercise programming
- exercise modifications and variations tailored to each client’s conditions and goals
- high levels of supervision best achieved in small group settings
- postural and movement instructions specific to each client
- responsiveness to each client’s learning style and biopsychosocial needs

Note: Individuals who hold a bachelor degree, postgraduate or doctoral degree in fields such as Physiotherapy, Pilates, Exercise and Sport Science or have completed additional studies related to musculoskeletal functioning are acknowledged as having a broader ‘Scope of Practice’ specific to their field of specialisation, but are still required to have completed comprehensive Pilates training.

Competencies

All PAA Group Pilates Instructors are competent in designing and delivering sessions for lower risk individuals. For more complex conditions and disorders, evidence of further study and relevant experience is required.

Client profile	Lower risk individuals
Intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved fitness, physical well-being and mental health Performance enhancement Prevention and correction Supervised guidance Improve functional activities of daily life
Targeted populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy or low risk individuals which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional and amateur athletes, movement specialists and performers Individuals at risk of musculoskeletal injury due to occupation, repetitive activity and/or general deconditioning Individuals with muscular or structural conditions eg mild scoliosis, osteoporosis Aging population
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve suboptimal postural patterns and movement strategies by-addressing range of movement, strength and flexibility, breathing and stabilisation strategies Improve performance of everyday activities Reduce injury risk, including adverse effects of repetitive movements and/or postures Indirectly address balance, gait and falls risk Postural awareness and improvement strategies, for hyperlordosis, hyperkyphosis, scoliosis and other musculoskeletal conditions
Education level of instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certificate IV in Contemporary Pilates and Teaching Methodology (52855WA) or A Statement of Attainment for completion of specific units from the Diploma of Professional Pilates Instruction (10838 NAT) or Diploma of Polestar Pilates Comprehensive Instruction Method (10828 NAT) or Full matwork and/or reformer training through a PAA recognised course
Group size (recommended)	<p>Reformer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No more than eight participants to one instructor if the participants are healthy, have no major conditions and are injury-free, (This may be varied dependent on team size if teaching athletes.) No more than six participants to one instructor if the participants are population specific eg all with low back pain No more than four participants to one instructor if the participants include a mixture of different conditions <p>Mat: No more than 12 participants to one instructor</p>

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Contents

PAA Standards of Practice	1
Member Requirements	1
Service Provision	2

PAA Standards of Practice

The PAA uses a competency-based model for training standards, ensuring instructors’ skills, knowledge, and experience are adequate for the variety of client conditions that present in a Pilates class. The PAA oversees professional standards by:

- setting education standards for course content, minimum study hours and work experience
- setting standards for training providers and the qualifications and experience of their faculty
- reviewing training courses to ensure ongoing quality assurance
- setting standards for entry level PAA membership and upgrades in membership levels
- setting standards for ongoing professional development
- addressing complaints raised against training providers through investigation and mediation
- addressing complaints against individual members through investigation and mediation
- reserving the right to audit members to ensure they are operating within the scope and standards of practice

Member Requirements

PAA Group Pilates instructors must have a qualification that demonstrates knowledge, skills and industry experience in the Pilates Method. Membership as a PAA Group Pilates instructor requires:

- holding a PAA recognised qualification with a minimum study period of 175 hours
- current certification in Provide First Aid
- current Professional Indemnity and Public Liability insurance
- current financial membership of the PAA and agreement to abide by the PAA Code of Conduct and Ethical Practice
- maintenance and elevation of industry knowledge, skills and practice through relevant, research-based professional development courses that meet PAA requirements. A minimum of 15 points is required every two years. For more details, refer to <https://www.pilates.org.au/education/pdp/>
- continuity of teaching practice as specified by the PAA (a member must maintain a minimum of 200 hours of Pilates work over any two-year period, otherwise they are deemed ‘non-current’ and require refresher education)

Service Provision

PAA Pilates Group Instructors will be guided by the following provisions:

1. Work with clients whose functional movement capacity or condition is within the instructor's level of competency. This is limited to healthy and lower risk participants.
2. Conduct physical activity readiness assessment/pre-exercise screening to determine each participant's suitability to begin a Pilates exercise program.
3. Evaluate participant's static and dynamic posture and movement function.
4. Identify exercise and programming goals for each group class, with modifications for participant's varying abilities or restrictions.
5. Identify and apply contra-indications and modifications for participants musculoskeletal conditions.
6. Understand how and when to exclude a participant when a particular condition falls outside the instructor's Scope of Practice.
7. Provide and supervise Pilates classes according to program design and participants presentation at each session. Classes range from 45 minutes to 60 minutes but may be varied depending on the capacity, health and wellbeing of the group.
8. Constantly evaluate the groups movement patterns and technique and provide exercise regressions/ progressions/modifications as appropriate.
9. When using Pilates apparatus, ensure the safety of participants and instructors through participant education and diligent supervision.
10. Collaborate with medical or allied health professionals and refer where appropriate (out of scope).
11. Promote participants' understanding of movement function and body awareness to enhance overall health.
12. Maintain notes on program updates and significant changes in client health status and progress.