



SETTING THE STANDARDS
FOR THE EUROPEAN
HEALTH AND FITNESS SECTOR

EHFA Standards EQF Level 4 Pilates Teacher



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Introduction and Background

The Pilates Method has its origins in the work of Joseph Pilates.

He began developing his 'Contrology' method more than 90 years ago, yet it was only at the end of the last century that Pilates came to wider public awareness. It has enjoyed particularly strong growth in the last two decades. This development looks set to continue as the applications and benefits of Pilates become ever more well-known.

The numbers of people who attend regular Pilates sessions is thought to be at an all-time high and Pilates teachers remain in strong demand. Yet, with probably at least 250 European training providers offering a Pilates teaching certification, it is critical that standards are put in place to ensure that the integrity of the Pilates Method is maintained and that clients across Europe can attend Pilates classes safe in the knowledge that their teacher has the ability to teach Pilates safely and effectively whilst, at the same time, respecting the original work and principles of Joseph Pilates.

The objective of this document is to detail the minimum knowledge, skills and competencies that are considered essential for someone to teach Pilates matwork on a 1:1 or group class basis. These include a teacher being able to demonstrate some competence at performing selected exercises, thus reflecting that they have absorbed the principles of Pilates in their own body and practice.

It is the strong belief of the Pilates Technical Expert Group (TEG) that any Pilates teacher training course that wishes to meet this Standard should include a minimum of 150 face-to-face direct contact hours between student and tutor.

The members of the Pilates Technical Expert Group (TEG) were drawn from five different countries and from a mix of different training approaches and philosophies. TEG Members have a combined total of more than 100 years' Pilates teaching experience and come from organisations that directly represent more than 2,500 independent Pilates teachers. This has been an important element in ensuring the objective of the TEG that the achievement of the EHFA Pilates Teacher Standard is as accessible as possible to all responsible training providers in Europe and that the quality of Pilates teaching is underpinned into the future.

Leigh Robinson
Pilates TEG Leader



Executive Summary

This document supports the development of new and specific new Standards for Exercise Professionals working with Pilates. As in the review and update of the original EHFA Standards in 2010, the original B1 Competence Framework and the essential Skills and Knowledge have been updated as Learning Outcomes, based on job purposes, for exercise professionals working with Pilates. These are based on the European Qualification Framework (EQF) Level 4.

These Pilates Standards and the Education associated are purpose and outcome driven, and are aligned with the sector main goal to get: **'More People, More Active, More Often'**.

The booklet containing the new EHFA Standards for Pilates is organised in the following chapters, trying to offer to the reader a comprehensive approach to the requested knowledge, skills and competences for the health & fitness sector:

- Chapter 1: Introductory statements about the update of the EHFA Standards from 2005 and addition of new standards in 2012.
- Chapter 2: The essential Skills and Knowledge written as Learning Outcomes, based on job purposes, required to work as a Pilates Teacher in the European Health and Fitness Sector at the EQF-Fitness Level 4, where EQF 3 Instructor knowledge is a prerequisite.
- Chapter 3: The EHFA Competence Framework and the essential Competences, associated to Skills and Knowledge written as Learning Outcomes, based on occupational purposes, required to work as a Pilates Teacher in the European Health and Fitness Sector at the EQF-Fitness Level 4.

Finally, it is to be noted that a qualified group of technical experts across Europe representing the different stakeholders of our sector volunteered to assist with the development of the EHFA Standards, and that relevant experts around the world have been involved on the external consultation process.

TEG Members for the new European Standards Pilates Teacher (EQF level 4):

- Leigh Robinson, Body Control Pilates, UK (TEG Leader)
- Ana Luis Martins, ALM Pilates, Portugal
- Charlotte Dean, Careers in Fitness, UK
- Kelly McKinnon, Corpus Studios, Belgium
- Philippa Satchwell, Body Control Pilates, UK
- Sophie Monpeyssen, French Federation of Professional Pilates Teachers (FF3P), France
- Stefanie Plümper, Deutscher Pilates Verband e.V., Germany
- Verena Geweniger, Deutscher Pilates Verband e.V., Germany

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SETTING THE STANDARDS
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Introductory statements about the update of the EHFA Standards from 2005 and addition of new standards in 2012



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

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What is the EQF and what are its benefits?

The Standards that are agreed by EHFA are based upon the European Qualification Framework (EQF) which is a common European reference framework which links countries' qualifications systems together, acting as a translation device to make qualifications more readable.

This will help learners and workers wishing to move between countries, or to change jobs, or to move between educational institutions at home.

Why does the EQF use learning outcomes?

The EQF uses 8 reference levels based on learning outcomes (defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences). The EQF shifts the focus from input (lengths of a learning experience, type of institution) to what a person holding a particular qualification actually knows and is able to do. By shifting the focus to learning outcomes it helps to:

- Support a better match between the needs of the labour market (for knowledge, skills and competences) and education and training provision.
- Facilitate the validation of non-formal and informal learning.
- Facilitate the transfer and use of qualifications across different countries and education and training systems.
- Transfer units of learning outcome, based on a credit system (ECVET).

It also recognizes that Europe's Education systems are so diverse that comparisons based on inputs, such as a length of study, are impracticable.

What does the EQF mean for the Fitness Sector?

Raising and developing skills for exercise professionals is more important than ever with new opportunities and responsibilities for the fitness sector to play its part in getting **more people, more active, more often**. Training organisations must adapt and develop to deliver the skills that the industry and employers want and expect. Importantly, individual exercise professionals want their achievements recognised through an independent process based on accepted European standards. If there are common standards and processes then the outcomes can be the same and transferable. As a European solution, the EQF is the backbone of this process.

The diverse start point for VET across Europe requires a central referencing point and the EQF with fully referenced EHFA standards provides the answer. All EU member states are adopting the EQF with their implementation in 2010-2011. This will bring about the end of input driven training and learning, and now EHFA needs to take the lead for the fitness industry.

As part of the review and expansion of its standards EHFA is developing its own 8-level sector framework which will be referenced to the EQF. This will make national referencing easier for VET and higher education providers, and better for national government understanding.

The fitness sector needs more openness and transparency in the content and processes used for training its workforce. At present there are wide variations so better consistency is required. With a complete sector framework it will be more transparent for the awarding of national recognition of qualifications that are in compliance with pan-European standards.



The reality is already upon us as some member states have already referenced their national frameworks against the EQF. DG EAC (European Commission) sees this as an important principle to help improve the mobility of workers. The fitness industry is already effectively borderless. For workers and learners to move between different countries we need to understand different qualification systems – and the EQF acts as the central “leveller”. The lead in standards development being taken by EHFA opens the prospect of the fitness industry determining its own framework. This will help everyone to better understand the actual occupations in the industry and therefore the training requirements to support these roles.

The challenge for EHFA and the industry is to identify and collectively agree on what are the jobs and skills required for today and then to look into the future.

The positive impact of EHFA standards and the application of the EQF through the SQF

With the ratification of the **Lisbon Treaty** came the European Commission agreeing to the competencies for workers in sport, which includes the fitness sector. If we are organized as an industry in our approach and can determine our own competencies for workers we will effectively be able to self-regulate. Creating competency standards based on the structure of the EQF and with our own sector qualification framework across all 8 levels demonstrates to other occupations and professions that not only is fitness well-organised, but it is also self-regulated through the measure of individual competencies by the European Register of Exercise Professionals (www.ereps.eu) This helps other occupations and professions – and consumers – to better understand the relationship of job roles and purposes.

The new standards and sector framework help to raise the credibility and accountability of the sector. Every training provider certificate and EREPS registration information will contain the relevant EQF level making qualifications and achievement against the EHFA standards much more understandable and transferrable.

With better understanding it will be possible to provide detailed labour market intelligence, giving evidence on skills gaps and shortages, and helping to direct the industry towards trends so that the skills of the workforce can match expectations and demands. Training providers – in both VET and in HE – will be better placed to understand the needs of the industry.

Job Purpose as the Foundation for Fitness Qualifications

In the current fitness sector, some occupational qualifications are not aligned with the sector purpose of ‘more people, more active, more often’. This has happened predominantly as the result of a focus on input (amount of learning, product oriented learning) instead of output (work outcomes, customer oriented) learning.

To achieve its purpose the sector needs to become more market oriented, which means that it should listen to its users (customers) and to deliver according to their needs. It should therefore shift from an inward, product focus, to an outward, customer focus. For fitness occupations this means they should aim at delivering the experiences and results that people need, giving these jobs a real purpose. Job qualifications – that is the knowledge, skills and competencies – should enable the achievement of these job purposes.



The focus for the future should not be on qualifications, but on the outcomes of the work. Education should become more purpose or output driven instead of qualification or input driven. The learner should be central to the process.

What a person should know and be able to do in a certain fitness occupation depends on an understanding of the purpose of that role. This can only be achieved through delivering certain work outcomes and in meeting expectations of performance. In other words, learning outcomes should be determined by desired work and customer requirements delivered in a quality controlled way. A job is only performed well if it achieves what it's supposed to achieve.

Therefore, the correct way to determine the content of specific job qualification is:

1. To define the purpose of the occupation.
2. To determine which work outcomes (output) lead to achieving that purpose.
3. To determine which qualifications (knowledge, skills, competencies, range of application) are necessary to be able to deliver those outcomes.

Any definition of occupational purpose should include the interests of the major stakeholders, which in case of the Fitness Sector are:

- For the participant: fitness results from safe, effective exercise.
- For the professional: meaningful work, and recognition of achievement.
- For the business/facility: more participation/members/profit.
- For the Sector: 'more people, more active, more often'.

These together form the desired work outcomes of an occupation.

Qualifications for fitness occupations should be solely based on the achievement of their purpose. This also applies to all other occupational content (roles, tasks, etc.).

The quality of a professional's work is determined by its outcomes, not by whether they meet the qualifications. So when we say someone is "good at their job", we should not mean they meet all the qualifications for the job, but that they deliver the desired outcomes. Certificates and diplomas are not a measure of quality but of a standard for the minimum quality required. It is just like having a driver license. By itself it doesn't make you a good driver, it merely allows you to drive and to possibly develop and practice to become one. So, for example, delivering safe and effective exercise is not only about a qualification that needs to be met, but are the purpose of the fitness job.

Occupational purpose can strongly impact the growth of businesses and the sector by providing a new context and impetus to fitness professionals and to help them achieve the desired outcomes of their work. These purpose-driven professionals in turn will better lead customers to achieve the desired experiences and results that they seek. Occupational purpose should drive occupational standards and help recruit people with the right motivation and skills, who can help us to create value and acquire and retain more members or customers.

Qualifications should be based on the everyday practice in which people visit fitness centres and want to participate in activities to achieve their desired fitness results.

We need people that love their work if we want to attract and retain members.



For any facility or club the number one purpose of a fitness occupation should be in contributing to the success and profitability of the business. This applies to commercial as well as not-for-profit facilities and operations.

Based on this new thinking and with agreement from the technical experts contributing to the review of the original 2005 EHFA Standards an "evolution" was formally approved in 2010, the development of new Standards for EQF level 2 in 2011 was completed and approved, and this document contains the new proposed EHFA Standards for EQF level 4 (Pilates).

Following the same methodology than in the EHFA Standards for levels 2, 3 and 4, the new ones EQF Level 4 Pilates Teacher have been referenced in a detailed way to the EQF level descriptors.

The focus for the future of the sector should not be on qualifications, but on the outcomes or results of work. Wherever new people are recruited into the Sector, this should be based on their motivation and people skills instead of only on their technical qualifications and exercise related knowledge. The change is that education and the new Standards should be purpose and outcome driven, and not qualification or input driven.

Brussels, April 19, 2013

EHFA Standards Council



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EHFA EQF Level 4 Skills and
Underpinning Knowledge for Pilates
Teachers as part of the EHFA
Learning Outcomes Framework



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

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EHFA Pilates Teacher

This chapter supports the EHFA Competence Framework and contains the essential Skills and Knowledge written as Learning Outcomes, based on occupational purposes, required to work as a Pilates Teacher in the European Health and Fitness Sector at the EQF-Fitness Level 4. These Standards and the Education associated are purpose and outcome driven, aligned with the sector main goal to get 'more people, more active, more often'.

All Teachers will require both Basic Core Knowledge and specific knowledge related to the context in which they work: Fitness or Group Fitness and must hold an EQF Level 3 or equivalent EHFA accredited certification. The Level 4 Pilates Teacher knowledge, skills and competences build on those achieved at Level 3 to enable instructors to safely and effectively adapt their delivery for Pilates sessions.

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Introductory information

As explained in the introductory chapter, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is a common European reference system, which will link different countries' national qualifications systems and frameworks together. In practice, it will function as a translation device making qualifications more readable. This will help learners and workers wishing to move between countries or change jobs or move between educational institutions at home.

Why does the EQF use learning outcomes?

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- Supports a better match between the needs of the labour market (for knowledge, skills and competences) and education and training provision.
- Facilitates the validation of non-formal and informal learning.
- Facilitates the transfer and use of qualifications across different countries and education and training systems.

It also recognizes that Europe's education systems are so diverse that comparisons based on inputs, say length of study, are impracticable.

What does level 4 mean in the EQF?

Level of the EQF	Knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.	Skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).	Competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.
The learning outcomes relevant to Level 4 are	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change. Supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities.



What does level 4 mean for the Fitness Sector QF?

EQF Level	Occupation	EHFA Standards	Target Audience
Level 4	Pilates Teacher	EHFA Pilates Teacher Level 4	General Population

EQF Level 4

Skills and Underpinning Knowledge for Pilates Teachers, part of the EHFA Learning Outcomes Framework

Occupational Title

Pilates Teacher

Occupational Purpose

To teach clients individually or in a group, using matwork exercises based on the work of Joseph Pilates. To adapt these exercises according to the client's needs and abilities.

Occupational Description

A Pilates matwork teacher's role includes planning, teaching and adapting Pilates programmes for 1:1 and group matwork sessions across a range of clients. Information will be collected and analysed for each client, on a regular basis, to ensure that programmes are safe, appropriate and effective. As well as knowing the history of Pilates, a teacher must fully understand the Pilates Principles and apply these in their lesson planning and in their teaching. A Pilates teacher should teach in a supportive, non-competitive environment and have the skills to motivate and encourage clients to ensure their adherence to regular sessions.

Occupational Roles

A Pilates Teacher should be able to:

1. Build rapport with, and collect information, from current and new clients. All such information to be treated in confidence.
2. Implement appropriate pre-participation screening for new clients.
3. Collect and analyse health and lifestyle information.
4. Make the appropriate decisions relating to a client's stated health status and goals and, where required, refer the client to a more appropriate professional.
5. Provide a range of Pilates exercise programmes in accordance with the needs of clients by applying Pilates' principles, combined with consideration



of common biomechanical and physiological knowledge. Review and adapt these programmes (progression/regression) as needed.

6. Develop and apply strategies to motivate clients to join and adhere to a Pilates exercise programme.
7. Deliver Pilates exercise sessions to individuals or groups drawing on Pilates principles, and tailor these sessions to their individual and collective needs
8. Whilst teaching, observe clients' technique and correct as needed. With this in mind, ensure that class sizes are kept to a level which allows the teacher to give sufficient personal attention to clients.
9. Deliver good customer service and be a positive role model at all times, keeping up to date with sector developments.
10. Promote Pilates as part of a healthy lifestyle.
11. Provide emergency aid during or following a session, if required, and should hold a current qualification in Basic Life Support (CPR).

**EHFA Level 4
Pilates Teacher
Knowledge Areas**

Level 4 Core Knowledge		
Psycho-social Aspects of Participation in Pilates Sessions	History, Principles and Practice of Pilates	Functional Anatomy and Physiology
Client Enrolment & Assessment		Programming, Delivery and the Client Relationship

Knowledge Requirements

Section 1: Psycho-social aspects of Participation in Pilates Sessions

Section Overview

Learners will:

- Communicate and build rapport with clients in a way that makes them feel valued.
- Use different styles of communication (verbal, tactile, visual) to facilitate body awareness and optimal movement, taking account any sensory impairments that the client may have.
- Explain Pilates exercises and other technical information in terminology that is familiar to, and can be understood by, the client, thereby facilitating independent exercise on their part.
- Explain how language can facilitate a positive relationship to movement and exercise.
- Create a link between Pilates exercise and activities of daily living, facilitate efficient movement and healthy postural patterns as part of the client's everyday life.
- Know the importance of understanding the different reasons why people come to class and the importance of offering a supportive environment which facilitates social interaction in classes and sessions through programme planning and delivery.
- Develop and apply strategies to motivate clients to join and adhere to a Pilates exercise programme, with consideration to possible barriers to exercise and methods to help overcome these.

Section Headings

1.1 Psychological Considerations

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Effective types of communication and avoid reinforcing negative belief models from the client ("I can't, I never could") and so generate self-efficacy and positive expectations of their Pilates sessions.
- How to take into account factors which may include age, sex, ethnicity, socio-demographic and values, in creating an atmosphere in which clients feel comfortable and confident to exercise.
- Knowledge of appropriate models for behavioural change such as the 'Prochaska & DiClemente' models and the characteristics of an individual at each stage and the appropriate interventions/strategies at each stage.

1.2 Social Considerations

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- The importance of social interaction in maintaining health and independence
- How to facilitate social interaction through delivery of group exercise programmes
- The value of keeping attendance records and of contacting regular clients who miss a session

Section 2: History, Principles and Practice of Pilates

Section Overview

Learners will:

- Show knowledge and understanding of key events and dates in the history and development of the Pilates Method.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the original principles created by Joseph Pilates.
- Apply practical and technical competence in performing Pilates matwork exercises drawn from, or modified from, the original 34 exercises created by Joseph Pilates as detailed in 'Return to Life through Contrology'.

Section Headings

2.1 History and Development

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following key episodes from the history of Joseph Pilates (1883-1967):

- Childhood/Youth in Germany
- Sickly child
- Influences included yoga, gymnastics, martial arts, self defence
- 1912: UK
- 1914: World War I: Interned in camps, including Isle of Man
- 1924: Patent granted in Berlin for Reformer
- 1926: Travel to the USA, meeting Clara
- 1929: Studio Opening in New York
- 'Contrology' original name of the Method
- 1934: wrote 'Your Health'
- 1945: wrote 'Return to Life'
- 1967: Death
- 'Contrology' became known as the Pilates Method after Joseph Pilates' death

and of the "First Generation" Teachers:

- Carola Trier
- Eve Gentry
- Bob Seed
- Ron Fletcher
- Romana Kryzanowska
- Kathy Grant
- Lolita San Miguel
- Bruce King
- Mary Bowen

- Robert Fitzgerald

2.2 Pilates Principles

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the original principles created by Joseph Pilates:

- Concentration
- Control
- Centring
- Flowing Movement
- Breathing
- Precision

2.3 Pilates Practice

Learners should demonstrate practical and technical competence by being able to pass a practical assessment in which they perform a minimum of 12 exercises, drawn from or modified from, the original 34 exercises. To meet the learning outcomes of this programme students will have to fully demonstrate their achievement against the standards, which could typically involve a minimum of around 150 hours of taught contact time within an overall programme of development of 250-350 hours of student study and practice.

Section 3: Functional Anatomy & Physiology

Section Overview

Learners will:

- Provide knowledge about anatomy and physiology as relevant to the assessment of clients.
- Know how to plan to plan of a safe, appropriate and effective programme.
- Be able to deliver and adapt Pilates exercises.
- Know the effects of exercise on the body's systems.
- Be aware of the contribution that exercise and nutrition can make to a healthy lifestyle.

Section Headings

3.1 Functional Kinesiology/Biomechanics

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- The body's three anatomical axes and planes including the terms Frontal (Coronal), Sagittal and Transverse.
- The classification of joints in the human body (Fibrous, Cartilaginous and Synovial) focusing on their functional significance including examples of each type and sub-types of joint.
- The importance of ensuring that movement at all joints is kept in the correct planes throughout exercise performance for prevention of ligament strain and potential risk of injury (e.g. at shoulder joint, inappropriate biomechanics can place a strain on the rotator cuff muscles increasing risk of osteoligamentous injury). Stability and movement within each type of joint.

- Classification of bones – to include long, short, flat, irregular, sesamoid, relating structure to function.
- Role of osteoblasts and osteoclasts, hormonal contribution in bone density.
- Bone density and its relation to resistance training activities.
- Long- and short-term effects of exercise on bone, to include osteoporosis.
- Articulations and the joint movements possible. To include the following movement terms with examples: flexion, extension, hyper-extension, adduction, abduction, elevation, depression, protraction, retraction, upward and downward rotation, lateral flexion, horizontal flexion and extension, plantar flexion, dorsi-flexion, internal and external rotation, circumduction, pronation, supination, eversion and inversion.
- The main bones and their implications for vital functions and movements.
- The vertebral column: structure and function – role of curves.
- The importance of maintaining the correct degree of spinal curvature at the cervical, lumbar and thoracic vertebra regarding weight-bearing and biomechanical efficiency and for the transmission of stress, caused by impact, through the pelvic girdle, kinetic chain and muscle synergies.
- Abnormal degrees of curvature in the spine (lordosis, kyphosis and scoliosis) and their importance to exercise safety and the design of appropriate activities.
- The importance of good skeletal alignment in starting position, throughout the performance of an exercise, and at the finishing point.
- The high risk of shoulder joint displacement and increased scapular stabilising role of the surrounding synergistic musculature and ligaments.
- The potential for sprains and ligamentous damage increased by excessive nonfunctional movement during exercises.
- The main structural and physiological characteristics and functions of the osseous connective tissues to include the periosteum, ligaments (dense regular collagenous/elastic fibres), joint capsule (dense irregular, elastic, collagenous), fasciae.
- The structure of ligaments and their tensile strength related to fibre direction and their sensitivity to shearing forces and tearing.
- Simple biomechanical knowledge of levers.
- Biomechanical implications of different centres of gravity in relation to posture.
- Open and closed chain kinetic movements with examples of each and a consideration of their advantages and disadvantages.

3.2 Muscles

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- The three types of muscle in the human body (skeletal, smooth, cardiac).
- The gross anatomy and structure of a skeletal muscle and its connective tissue.
- The connective tissue of muscle merging into tendons composed of regular collagenous filaments.
- The role of proprioceptors of tendons.
- The interaction between the contractile filaments of muscle (actin and myosin).
- The role of a motor unit (i.e the nerve and the muscle fibers which it innervates) in providing an 'action potential' to create fine or coarse muscle

- control.
- The structural features and characteristics of Type 1 (slow twitch) and Type 2A (fast twitch/intermediate) and Type 2B fibres and the implications of exercise intensity on the recruitment sequence of different motor unit types.
 - The different types of muscular contractions (concentric, eccentric, isometric, isotonic and isokinetic).
 - The major muscles of the body defining their starting points in terms of the bones they originate from (though in most cases NOT the exact anatomical part of the bone), the joints that they cross and the bones that they insert onto (finishing point).
 - The joint actions as a result of muscular action.
 - A range of actions and activities, the agonists, antagonists, main synergists and fixators.
 - The functional role of abdominal muscles in synergy with other muscles on the trunk, rib cage, pelvis and vertebral column.
 - Short and long term effects of exercise on muscles including: Increased endurance capacity in muscles developed between by the acquisition of increased numbers of mitochondria, oxidative enzymes and capillaries leading to increased oxidative ability within muscles.
 - The role of the muscle spindle cells and the golgi tendon organs.

3.3 Cardiorespiratory System

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- The anatomy of the heart to include the names and location of the heart valves, muscular component and flow of blood through the heart.
- The cardiac cycle and the terms stroke volume (amount of blood pumped per beat) and cardiac output (amount of blood pumped per minute = stroke volume x beats per minute).
- The structure, function and characteristics of arteries, arterioles, veins, venules and capillaries.
- The effect of physical activity on cardiovascular system.
- Understanding the effect of medication for the cardiovascular system and their impact on training.
- The respiratory system: description and function.
- The relationship between the cardiovascular system and respiratory system and how regular physical activity impacts them.
- The passage of inhaled air from the atmosphere to cellular level and back.
- Healthy lifestyle choices and their positive effect on cardio-respiratory tissues, e.g. the effects of smoking or alcohol consumption.
- Short and long term effects of exercise on the cardio-respiratory system to include short term – increase in heart rate, increase in breathing rate, effects of building up of CO₂ in bloodstream; and long term effects including increase in stroke volume, lower resting heart rate, reduced risk of heart disease, reduction of high blood pressure, improved blood cholesterol, reduction of body fat and increased every day function etc.
- Coronary Heart Disease and risk factors that can manipulate it such as smoking, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, physical inactivity, diabetes mellitus, family history, age, stress, obesity.

3.4 Nervous and Endocrine System

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- The main responsibilities of the nervous system to include:
 - Sensory Input – monitoring events in and outside the body
 - Interpretation – analysing data
 - Motor Output – response to incoming data
- The two parts of the nervous system – the Central Nervous System (CNS) incorporating the brain and spinal cord and the Peripheral Nervous System (PNS) consisting of all nerves extending from the spinal cord, to include:
 - The role of the CNS in receiving input from the sense organs and receptors about the state of both the external and internal environment, collating all of the information and sending out messages via the motor neurons of the PNS to effectors (muscles and glands).
 - The PNS and its divisions into Somatic and Autonomic branches.
 - The Somatic branch terminating at the neuromuscular junction controlling movement under voluntary control.
 - The role of the Autonomic Nervous System in controlling cardiac and smooth muscle, the endocrine glands that secrete hormones and other organs, thereby regulating their activity.
 - The two opposing branches (to include the neurotransmitters and receptors) and their roles e.g. Sympathetic nerves speed up responses (e.g. heart rate) and mobilise energy stores to get us ready for action. Parasympathetic nerves slow things down and are more active during periods of calm and relaxation.
- Regular activity for the nervous system, which enhances hard wire neuromuscular connections and improves all of the features of motor fitness such as reaction times, balance, spatial awareness and coordination etc.
- Description of hormonal response to exercise and their catabolic and anabolic role.
- Link between type of exercise intensity and hormonal reaction for specific goals like weight loss programme, muscle building and wellness programme.
- Role of cortisol and side effects of too high production.

3.5 Nutrition

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- The dietary role and common dietary sources for each of the six main nutrients (carbohydrate, fat, protein, vitamins, minerals, water).
- Balance between saturated and unsaturated fatty acid and effects on health.
- The importance of right intake of essential fatty acids (Omega 3 and 6) and their effects on health.
- The role of vitamins and minerals in cells metabolic process.
- The role and desirable levels of total cholesterol, HDLs and LDLs in the body, including the total cholesterol/HDL ratio.
- The role of carbohydrate, fat and protein as fuels for aerobic and anaerobic exercise.

3.6 Adaptations to Exercise

In addition to adaptations mentioned above, learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- The effects of health-related physical activities, e.g. improved posture, reduced risk of joint and soft tissue injuries, increased bone density, improved neuromuscular efficiency, and range of motion training

Section 4: Client Enrolment and Assessment

Section Overview

Learners will:

- Know how to gather relevant information from a client.
- Know when to refer a client to another exercise professional or medical practitioner, as appropriate.
- Understand the need for informed consent from the client before exercise
- Know how to agree goals with the client.
- Understand what may prevent a client from regular attendance (barriers to exercise) and define strategies for overcoming these.
- Understand the requirement to keep all client-related information securely.
- Understand the need for client confidentiality with regard to all information provided.

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- An appropriate pre-participation screening process to identify any considerations, or contraindications to any Pilates exercises (e.g. PAR-Q and interview).
- When and how to refer a client, potential or existing, to a medical professional to gain consent for exercise, both on an initial and, where necessary, ongoing basis.
- Static and dynamic postural evaluation.
- How to agree and set appropriate short and medium term goals with the client.
- The need for goals to be measurable, achievable and realistic.
- The importance of gaining the client's agreement to these goals, and of the client agreeing to work within their own physical limits, ensuring that they will inform the teacher of any changes that have occurred that may impact on these or on their ability to exercise.
- Best practice and legal requirements, if any, governing the storage of confidential information.
- How to adapt class or session delivery to accommodate a client's limitations and ensure safety.

Section 5: Programming, Delivery and the Client Relationship

Section Overview

Learners will:

- Know how to plan a balanced Pilates class covering the three main phases and incorporating Pilates principles.

- Know how to take the short and medium term goals of the client into account in developing programmes.
- Know when and how to adapt a programme according to the client's needs.
- Be able to draw on a variety of techniques in order to be able to teach a safe, appropriate and effective class or session.
- When and how to correct a client.
- Understand the need to teach in a safe environment.
- Understand the importance of a professional relationship between teacher and client.
- Understand the need to keep records of all classes and sessions taught.

Section Headings

5.1 Pilates Programme Design

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Incorporating Pilates principles.
- Including three appropriate phases of class: preparation/main/closing.
- Including all planes of movement.
- The principles of training, including specificity, reversibility, adaptability, individuality and recovery time.
- How to use gravity and lever length to modify exercises according to the ability of the client(s).
- How, and when, to adapt a programme, and/or exercises within the programme, according to the needs of the individual or group
- Being able to plan a programme taking into account appropriate short and medium term goals and with appropriate time frames, either agreed with the client or according to the common goals of a group.
- Reviewing and adapting goals according to changes in a client's needs.
- Recognise the needs of special populations and being able to adapt as necessary, or refer on to a properly qualified professional.
- Working within the constraints of both the client(s) and teacher's ability, and ensure safety at all times
- The ability to adapt a Pilates programme through:
 - Choice of exercises
 - Sequence of exercises
 - Number of repetitions
 - Variation of pace and rhythm
 - Type of muscle contraction
 - Duration and frequency of sessions
 - Rest and regeneration between classes and sessions.
- Current ACSM (or other recognised international) guidelines for developing the different components of fitness.
- The importance of adequate rest phases between training loads and the signs and symptoms of overtraining.
- The principles of Frequency Intensity Time Type for health- and skill-related components of fitness.

5.2 Programme Delivery

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- How to use language and terminology that is easily understood by the client.
- Providing clear instruction and corrective exercise cues to enable the achievement of good technique during execution of exercises.
- Ensuring that the client is comfortable with hands on correction.
- The appropriate balance between stability and mobility.
- Recognising correct exercise technique, to include appropriate positioning and general safety considerations.
- Using visual and verbal assessment of client performance.
- Using different teaching strategies to enhance individual/group performance.
- The difference in techniques between teaching a group or an individual.
- Adapting teaching methods to communicate effectively, taking into consideration clients' learning needs i.e. visual, intellectual, kinaesthetic, imagery or other learning styles.
- Adapting exercise session and timing to ensure the session is safe, appropriate and effective.
- The signs and symptoms of excessive effort that would indicate a need to change the intensity.
- Incorporating supervised, and appropriate unsupervised, exercise into a programme i.e. homework activities, and how to build these into a timetable.
- The different types of environment within which sessions may take place, and how to make the best use of these, i.e. home, gym, studio.
- Considering specific health and safety issues about delivering classes or sessions in an environment not specifically designed for physical activity training.
- The signs indicating that a client should stop exercising immediately or requires medical attention
- Being able to manage an emergency situation when teaching a client or group.

5.3 The Client Relationship

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- The need to allow the client the opportunity to give feedback at the end of the class or session.
- The importance of maintaining frequent contact with the client, including between sessions when needed.
- The importance of keeping an appropriate professional relationship between teacher and client.

5.4 Record Keeping

Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- The importance of keeping appropriate records of exercises taught in a class or session.
- The benefit of keeping records as a way of reviewing a client's progress.
- The importance of having accurate records in the event of any claim for damages by a client.



EHFA PILATES TEACHER EQF L4 STANDARDS & COMPETENCIES FRAMEWORK

This document describes the EHFA Competence Framework and contains the essential Competences, associated to Skills and Knowledge written as Learning Outcomes, based on occupational purposes, required to work as a Pilates Teacher in the European Health and Fitness Sector at the EQF-Fitness Level 4. These Competence Framework, the Standards and the Education associated are purpose and outcome driven, aligned with the sector main goal to get 'more people, more active, more often'.

The Units in the document are broken down in to competencies, skills and range. This document should be read in conjunction with the **EHFA European Level 4 Pilates Teacher Knowledge Requirements** which describe the knowledge that underpin the skills of the Fitness and Group Fitness Instructor working specifically with Pilates content.

Contents

Section 1: Psycho-social aspects of Participation in Pilates Sessions

Section 2: History, Principles and Practice of Pilates

Section 3: Functional Anatomy and Physiology

Section 4: Client Enrolment and Assessment

Section 5: Programming, Delivery and the Client Relationship

Section 1: Psycho-social aspects of participation in Pilates sessions

WORKPLACE COMPETENCY Learners should be able to demonstrate the following competencies	SKILLS Learners should be able to demonstrate the following skills	RANGE Learners should be able to cover the following range	UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:
Assess lifestyle factors which may impact the client's ability to commit to a regular programme of exercise and develop strategies to motivate clients to adhere to a programme	a. Explain the benefits of Pilates in improving posture and health, to potential clients b. Explain the link between Pilates principles and activities of everyday living c. Encourage independent exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written records • Verbal communication • Review progress • Enrolment process (PAR-Q) • Conditions which would preclude a client from regularly participating in Pilates 	1.1 Psychological Considerations 1.2 Social Considerations 4.1 Client Enrolment
Design a realistic and sustainable programme for exercise which recognises and works with these limitations.	a. Create a safe and pleasant environment which welcomes and encourages new participants. b. Review progress and adapt exercise programmes according to individuals needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of enrolment form (PAR-Q) • Assess clients to place them in a group appropriate to their movement experience and level of fitness • Record session content • Regular communication and review of programme with client, incorporating client feedback 	1.1 Psychological Considerations 1.2 Social Considerations 5.1 Pilates Programme Design 5.3 Client Relationship
Support confidence and self-esteem of clients.	a. Provide opportunities for positive reinforcement and encouragement during classes and sessions. b. Be aware of non-verbal communication, such as body positioning and language, tone and pitch of speech, volume of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess clients to place them in a group appropriate to their movement experience and level of fitness • Provide praise and positive reinforcement • Maintain group sizes within appropriate size to ensure a safe exercise experience 	1.1 Psychological Considerations 1.2 Social Considerations 5.3 Client Relationship

WORKPLACE COMPETENCY Learners should be able to demonstrate the following competencies	SKILLS Learners should be able to demonstrate the following skills	RANGE Learners should be able to cover the following range	UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:
	speech		
Create a relationship between teacher and client that supports independence and encourages a sense of self-responsibility for the client's health and fitness.	Adapt an appropriate style of communication with clients, facilitating dialogue and encouraging feedback about the exercise experience (intensity, discomfort, enjoyment, achievement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide praise and positive reinforcement 	1.1 Psychological Considerations 1.2 Social Considerations 5.3 Client Relationship

Section 2: History, Principles and Practice of Pilates

WORKPLACE COMPETENCY Learners should be able to demonstrate the following competencies	SKILLS Learners should be able to demonstrate the following skills	RANGE Learners should be able to cover the following range	UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:
Know the history of Joseph Pilates	a. Know the key events in the history of Joseph Pilates b. Know the names of the 'First Generation' Pilates teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key episodes of Pilates development 	2.1 Pilates History and Development
Know and understand the 'original' Pilates principles	a. Name and describe the six principles of Pilates b. Apply these principles in a balanced class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balanced matwork 	2.2 Pilates Principles 5.1 Programme Design 5.2 Programme Delivery
Know the original 34 exercises	Name the original exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joseph Pilates' original matwork repertoire 	2.1 Pilates History and Development 2.2 Pilates Principles
Demonstrate practical and technical competence in performing Pilates matwork exercises	Perform a recommended minimum of 12 exercises or modified exercises derived from the original exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginners to Advanced 	2.2 Pilates Principles 2.3 Pilates Practice

Section 3: Functional Anatomy & Physiology

WORKPLACE COMPETENCY Learners should be able to demonstrate the following competencies	SKILLS Learners should be able to demonstrate the following skills	RANGE Learners should be able to cover the following range	UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:
Ability to apply knowledge and understanding of Functional Anatomy and Physiology whilst teaching the Pilates Method	Modify and adapt the client programme and individual exercises according to the client's ability/limitations by applying knowledge of Functional Anatomy and Physiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regress exercises from Beginners to Advanced Mat • Progress exercises from Beginners to Advanced Mat 	3.1 Functional Kinesiology/Biomechanics 3.2 Muscles 3.3 Cardiorespiratory system 3.4 Nervous & Endocrine System 3.6 Adaptations to Exercise
Teachers should have a basic working knowledge regarding nutrition.	Recognise and address significant signs of poor nutrition that will impact on client's ability to perform Pilates exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation of client appearance and performance 	3.5 Nutrition

Section 4: Client Enrolment and Assessment

WORKPLACE COMPETENCY Learners should be able to demonstrate the following competencies	SKILLS Learners should be able to demonstrate the following skills	RANGE Learners should be able to cover the following range	UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:
Build rapport and collect information from a client to facilitate planning a Pilates programme	<p>a. Initiate conversation on relevant topics</p> <p>b. Use appropriate body language to put the client at ease and encourage communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positioning of teacher Posture of teacher Empathetic listening 	<p>1.1 Psychological Considerations</p> <p>4.1 Client Enrolment</p> <p>5.1 Programme Design</p> <p>5.2 Programme Delivery</p> <p>5.4 Record Keeping</p>
Make appropriate decisions relating to health status and goals, and refer as appropriate	<p>a. Follow a structured confidential consultation process that creates a sense of security</p> <p>b. Discuss health and lifestyle factors that may influence programme design</p> <p>c. Evaluate information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questionnaires Interview Note taking 	<p>1.1 Psychological Considerations</p> <p>4.1 Client Enrolment</p> <p>5.1 Programme Design</p> <p>5.2 Programme Delivery</p> <p>5.4 Record Keeping</p>
Implement appropriate pre-participation screening	<p>a. Administer and analyse information</p> <p>b. Review current health status</p> <p>c. Obtain client consent for Pilates programme</p> <p>d. Obtain medical consent where necessary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Par-Q Enrolment Form Exercise history Lifestyle Short term goals Client consent Medical consent Static and dynamic postural evaluation Mobility and stability through simple exercises 	<p>5.1 Client Enrolment</p> <p>5.1 Programme Design</p> <p>5.2 Programme Delivery</p> <p>5.4 Record Keeping</p>



	e. Carry out static and dynamic postural evaluation		
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Section 5: Programming, Delivery and the Client Relationship

WORKPLACE COMPETENCY Learners should be able to demonstrate the following competencies	SKILLS Learners should be able to demonstrate the following skills	RANGE Learners should be able to cover the following range	UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE Learners should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:
Ability to plan a safe and effective Pilates programme incorporating a preparation phase, a main phase and a closing phase	Adapt programme according to the level and competency of the client(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall structure and duration appropriate to client(s) - Beginners to Advanced Pilates • Short hand or pre prepared exercise sheets 	5.1 Programme Design
Ability to regress/progress exercises or programme appropriately and safely	Adapt programme according to the level and competency of the client(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher's professional development • Consideration of safety 	5.1 Programme Design
Build rapport and collect information from clients relevant to planning, delivering and progressing a Pilates programme	<p>a. Incorporate a variety of teaching methods to accommodate different learning styles e.g. visual, verbal & kinesthetic</p> <p>b. Adapt exercises according to the level & competency of client(s)</p> <p>c. Initiate conversation and engage in topics relevant to classes and sessions</p> <p>d. Use appropriate body language to enhance communication</p> <p>e. Discuss health and lifestyle benefits of a structured and consistent Pilates programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher positioning • Posture • Empathetic listening and acknowledgement of client readiness • Body language, visual cues and demonstrations • Variation in voice, pitch & tone • Appropriate tactile cues, with consent • Observation and attentiveness to gestures and body language of client(s) • Questionnaires • Interview (phone/email/live observation) • Note taking • Updating of information • Consideration of safety 	4.1 Client Enrolment 5.1 Programme Design 5.2 Programme Delivery

	<p>f. Seek client feedback</p> <p>g. Give meaningful and effective feedback to the client(s)</p> <p>h. Maintain a professional relationship with client(s)</p>		
Deliver a class or session	<p>a. Teach a balanced class across the three main phases</p> <p>b. Teach exercises appropriate to the client's ability</p> <p>c. Correct clients as needed to ensure safe, effective exercise</p> <p>d. Use a range of teaching methods</p> <p>e. Use a range of cueing techniques</p> <p>f. Recognise signs in a client needing a change of intensity or programme</p> <p>g. Adapt exercises as necessary</p> <p>h. Encourage client feedback</p> <p>i. Manage an emergency if it arises</p> <p>j. Ensure a pleasant and safe environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review enrolment forms and session records • Client goals • Pilates Principles • Session plans • Teaching styles • Use of language • Tactile cueing • Verbal cueing • Visual/demonstration • Planes of movement • Range of exercises Beginners to Advanced as appropriate • Updated session records • Positive reinforcement of client progress • Client feedback 	<p>2.2 Pilates Principles</p> <p>3.1 Functional Kinesiology/Biomechanics</p> <p>3.2 Muscles</p> <p>5.2 Programme Delivery</p>