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Pilates Teacher Association Scope of Practice, Code of Conduct and Ethics

Pilates Teacher Association Limited

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PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

I am pleased to present the Pilates Teacher Association scope of practice, code of conduct and ethics document (The Code). We began creating The Code in 2012 drawing on guidelines, codes and standards from professional bodies related to health fitness and Pilates ¹. In addition, we reflected on what should be common sense good practice so that when our Register opened in December 2013, we had a sound professional base from which to work. In setting up the Association we have formed an independent body to promote and advance standards of conduct, practise and continuing development in the Pilates Profession. The PTA have been guided by the Scottish Government Patients, Public and Health Professions directorate towards applying to the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) for Health and Social Care recognition as an Accredited Voluntary Register (AVR) ¹

The primary role of PSA (registered under the Health and Social care Act 2012 of the United Kingdom) is to oversee the statutory bodies that regulate health and social care professionals in the UK. Examples of such professionals who have statutory bodies (i.e. Occupations whose roles are regulated by law) are Doctors, Dentists, Chiropractors, Osteopaths, Pharmacists, Optical Professionals, Nurses and midwives, Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists. Working alongside these professionals can be Allied Health Professional Assistants who are employed in a healthcare setting e.g. hospitals and provide exercise classes such as exercise to music, Tai chi, boxercise etc. for patients in hospital.

As Pilates Teachers we are often involved with reciprocal referrals with Medical, Health Professionals and Allied Health Professionals in addition to healthy people attending for exercise. Clear professional boundaries are essential to ensure that we can maintain a high degree of professional integrity and that the statutory bodies know that they can refer with confidence to a member of the PTA. Some private healthcare providers have stated to PSA that they will only recommend professionals who are members of an Accredited Voluntary Register.

Professions who have already completed the Accredited Voluntary Regulation process include British Acupuncture Council, Play-therapy UK- who have members from around the world- and an umbrella body called Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC)² The Alexander technique and a branch of Yoga have their voluntary register under CHNC.

Because the Pilates method is a distinct and individual exercise technique which has health related benefits requiring specialist skills and knowledge the PTA board have agreed that an AVR is the best route for the Pilates Profession. The professional level of accreditation will be important for negotiating with other professional bodies throughout our worldwide community.

Our goal was to make sure that the code was fit for purpose and meet the expectations of the public (service users), members and other professional bodies with whom we will be working. The code and standards will be subject to review over time and be led by the need of service users and members.

The Code should

- Focus the Association as promoting the health, safety and well-being of service users and generating confidence in the register
- Provide guidance to registrants based on our expectations of their personal behaviour;
- Promote good standards of technical competence and maintaining skills
- Encourage communication and team work among members and other professionals

PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

- Assist members in providing clear information to service users to enable them to make informed decisions
- Be sufficiently broad take account of changes in best practice, technology, the law and wider society in the future.
- Be suitable for application in any country where a member might live or work.

The Code sets out the principles of practice for Members of the Pilates Teacher Association (PTA). Additional professional guidelines are provided for approved schools and providers of continuing professional development and student teachers. All registered members of the PTA will, as a part of their membership of the Register, be always bound by the provisions of the Code and each be expected to adhere to The Code. The Code is having been written in order to enhance and preserve the integrity and reputation of the profession.

The Code cannot list every possible situation that you will face in practice. If you need advice on a professional or ethical matter which is not addressed by the Code, you are advised to consult PTA.

If you have any questions or are unsure how to apply the code you should contact the PTA on pilatesteacherassociation@gmail.com or by telephone 07904 526750

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Code has been written and published in the English language. If English is not your first language you should ensure that you obtain a translation service in order to ensure that you can fully understand and comply with the provisions of the Code. You should also be able to explain the main requirements of the Code to service users for whom English is not a first language so that they can be given explanations of the Code in their native tongue.

We are confident that the standards are fit for purpose, reflect both professional and public expectations of the behaviour of registrants and have clear application to any country of work.

Welcome to the Pilates Teacher Association

Don McPherson
Director Pilates Teacher Association

**PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS**

CONTENTS

| Section number | Description | Page number |
|-----------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Mission statement and goals | 4 |
| 2 | Scope of Practice | 5 - 6 |
| 3 | Principles of the Code of Conduct and Ethics | 7 |
| 4 | The Code of Conduct and Ethics | 8 - 11 |
| 5 | Code of Conduct Committee | 12 |
| 6 | References and Document Control | 12 |

PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

PTA members are reminded that our mission statement is

“Protecting the Public- Protecting the method”

The goals of the **the Pilates Teacher Association (PTA)** are to protect the public by promoting and advancing standards of conduct, practice and continuing professional development in Pilates by:

- Developing, through committees that are broadly representative of practitioners and educators, agreed definitions and standards in relation to the Pilates method
- Recognising comprehensive schools and the qualifications of teachers, and maintaining a public register
- Representing the interests of Pilates teachers and Pilates teacher training schools.

We will work to achieve this by:

- a) Providing a Register of Approved Schools, Pilates Teachers and Pilates Matwork Teachers.
- b) Maintaining the integrity of the method also known as Contrology – exercises, apparatus and writings - created by Joseph Pilates. This includes the teaching of the method continued by Clara Yeuner Pilates and their first-generation teachers including the late Bruce King, Eve Gentry, Carola Trier, Bob Seed, Bob Fitzgerald, Kathleen Stanford Grant, Ron Fletcher, Romana Kryzanowska, and the living first generation teachers Mary Bowen, Lolita San Miguel and Jay Grimes.
- c) Positioning the Comprehensive Teacher occupations as a distinct profession with specific training standards.
- d) Developing and maintain high professional, ethical and educational standards for those involved in Pilates.
- e) Representing the Pilates method nationally and internationally building relationships with (including and not exclusively) Governmental bodies, voluntary registration sectors, Universities, Schools, medical professional and allied healthcare professionals, Fitness Industry, and any other appropriate bodies/associations/organisations.
- f) Providing services to the Pilates Industry that cannot easily be provided by anything other than a specialist organisations.
- g) Growing the awareness of the Pilates Businesses of our members by developing awareness of the PTA in the wider healthcare, leisure and business communities.
- h) Encouraging evidence-based practice and the promotion of research into Pilates.
- i) Any other activity which is approved by the board which is the best interests of the public, the method and our members.

PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Scope of Practice of a PTA Teacher (Full, Associate or Matwork)

Scope of Practice means applying what you have learned from any approved Pilates school in terms of knowledge, understanding and application after you have completed your training and have been assessed as proficient to deliver Pilates exercise to the public. Your certificate from your school will state what you are qualified to teach. This can be defined as **scope of practice**. Once on our Register you must work within your scope of practice.

Extension of scope of practice - the ability for you to safely, knowledgeably, and confidently share and teach further exercises on mat or apparatus to the public - should be certificated following an objective and summative assessment process of practical and theoretical skills.

Examples:

- 1) If you are a mat teacher from any approved comprehensive school and take a one- or two-day workshop on a chair provided by another approved comprehensive school or fitness led organisation this **does not** increase your scope of practice unless there is an objective and summative assessment process.
- 2) If you are a comprehensively trained teacher and take a one- or two-day workshop on the arm chair from an approved comprehensive school this is within your scope of practice.

Application of Scope of Practice of a Pilates teacher

A member of the PTA register must:

- Advise that a Pilates teacher is not a substitute for a Physiotherapy or other medical treatment
- Know the limits of practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional
- Screen all service users and record consent to participate in Pilates exercise.
- Recognise where a member of the public cannot participate in Pilates exercise and must be referred to a health or social care profession.
- Recognise conditions that would preclude a service user from safely participating in Pilates.
- Receive exercise guidelines and clearance from medical practitioners, when appropriate, to ensure service user safety.
- Maintain strict professional boundaries.
- Identify and meet the needs of service users and design a Pilates exercise programme according to their needs.
- Provide general information on the Pilates method and the application of the method to daily activities.
- Document service user progress and co-operate with referring medical practitioners.
- Promote exercise to improve overall health.
- Request permission to touch service users and use appropriate touch to facilitate movement, position the service user, and prevent injury or damage.

PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

The following is beyond the scope of practice of a Pilates teacher

A member of the PTA register must **NOT**:

- Use the terms clinical, therapy, therapeutic, treat, remedial, rehabilitate, consult, diagnose, prescribe or use any term which may infer a medical qualification or quality related to Pilates exercise.
- Continue to train a service user who has a condition that is beyond your knowledge without appropriate medical guidance and/or written permission from a Medical Professional.
- Prescribe or advise on diets or recommending supplements.
- Offer counselling.
- Offer to provide Pilates programmes beyond the limits of your assessed certifications.

Where a Member holds additional Professional qualifications -which may be covered by statutory regulation - they must consult with their appropriate professional body for clarification on the application of Pilates exercise to their regulated Profession.

The Member should ideally make clear and distinct appointments for any service user to avoid blurring of Professional boundaries.

PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Principle of the Code of Conduct and Ethics

As part of these principles PTA members should seek to ensure that the contractual arrangements, they have with their service user are clear, transparent and unambiguous e.g. availability of Teaching certificates, certificates publication of price lists, terms and conditions of service etc.

The PTA cannot and will not seek to adjudicate or deal with private contractual disputes (which should be dealt with by members and their service users) we will seek to ensure that members do maintain a simple policy regarding concerns or complaints raised by their service users. If there is a dispute between a service user and a PTA member the service user should firstly seek to resolve that dispute with the PTA member. The PTA has no authority to resolve such a dispute. If, however the matter reveals a lack of proper professional conduct under the code the PTA would seek dialogue with the member to correct any lack of professionalism shown.

There are five principles to the Code of Conduct and Ethics and in writing the code we have considered they should:

- Assist members in providing clear information to service users to enable them to make informed decisions
- Be suitable for application in any country where a member might live or work
- Be sufficiently broad take account of changes in best practice, technology, the law and wider society in the future.

PRINCIPLE 1: Health safety and well - being of service users and safe working practice

PRINCIPLE 2: Personal responsibilities and behaviour including communication and teamwork.

PRINCIPLE 3: Professional standards and technical competence.

PRINCIPLE 4: Protecting and providing information

PRINCIPLE 5: Business practice:

PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

PRINCIPLE 1:

The health, safety and well-being of service users and generating confidence in the register

Compliance with this principle requires members to maintain a standard of fairness, respect and dignity appropriate to their dealings with all service users and other professionals and to responsibly demonstrate that they:

- Have awareness of the requirements and responsibilities under the rules for equality appropriate to their country.
- Are Respectful of individual difference and diversity.
- Understand the requirement to adapt practice to meet the needs of different groups and individuals.
- Are aware of good practice in challenging discrimination and unfairness.
- Practise within the scope of their expertise and understand their limitations.
- Ensure that they do not in any way jeopardise the health, safety or interests of service users.
- Do not continue to practise or work when they are not fit to operate effectively and professionally.
- always Maintain an appropriate ratio of instructors to service users within any group sessions to ensure that the safety of all service users is paramount. We recommend no more than 12 in a group mat class and 8 on group apparatus.
- Maintain an accident book and comply with health and safety policies appropriate to the location of work.
- Teach service users how to prepare for their lesson for their personal safety including the use of apparatus and accessories.
- always Maintain a safe and hygienic environment for Pilates exercise for all service users and to responsibly demonstrate regular maintenance on apparatus and any other equipment.
- Complete a risk assessment for your workplace relative to the activities you teach.
- Have an absolute duty of care to be aware of their working environment and to be able to deal with all reasonably foreseeable accidents and emergencies
- Act promptly if a patient complains about any aspect of professional practice and keep a record of the complaint and any actions taken.
- Adhere to the laws of the country in which they work relative to legal obligations.
- Ensure that suitable public liability and professional indemnity cover is in place.
- Declare any insurance claims made against them in the past 5 years and the outcome.
- Act promptly and appropriately if you become aware of an error in practice which may cause harm or issues to a service user.

PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

PRINCIPLE 2:

Personal responsibilities and behaviour

The well-being of their service users is of paramount concern. To develop a relationship with service users and other professionals based on openness, honesty, trust and respect Members must demonstrate that they:

- Conduct themselves in such a way that brings credit to their occupation.
- Do not exploit relationships with service users or other professionals for personal gain or gratification.
- Remain totally unbiased and objective in their practices and actions.
- Respond, with all due expedition, to any enquiry for any service user, any other member OR Professional.
- Do not intentionally solicit other Pilates professionals' service users.
- Respect intellectual property and agree not to use in practise or teaching any recordings, books, videos, magazine articles, photographs or any other original works from another school or method without first obtaining consent from the owner of the intellectual property
- Avoid misrepresentation or any conflict of interest arising between service users and own professional obligations
- Not do any act or thing, or omit to do any act or thing, which in any way brings, or is likely to bring PTA or the Pilates Profession into disrepute.
- Declare a criminal offence or police caution for anything other than a minor motoring offence
- Advise the PTA of any discipline, suspension or restriction to practice from any other regulator or professional body
- Be respectful of location of Pilates businesses to promote co-operation between professionals
- Avoid misrepresentation or any conflict of interest arising between service users and own professional obligation
- Clarity in all forms of communication with service users, professional colleagues and other professionals, ensuring honesty, accuracy and cooperation.
- Know legal responsibilities and be honest and accurate when promoting their services to the public by any means of media or contact.

PRINCIPLE 3: PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND TECHNICAL COMPETENCE

PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

To retain a high level of competence through qualifications and a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice, referring to other colleagues and Professionals where appropriate. Compliance with this principle requires members to commit to the attainment of:

- Appropriate qualifications and ongoing training to responsibly demonstrate competence to teach Pilates.
- Actively seeking to update knowledge and improve their existing scope of practice in order to maintain a quality standard of service
- Reflecting on their own practice, identifying development needs and undertaking relevant development activities.
- Willingness to accept responsibility and be accountable for professional decisions or actions.
- Be willing to seek evaluation of their work and recognise the need when appropriate to refer to a more qualified colleague or professional specialist.
- Keep within your scope of practice i.e. the knowledge and skills which you have been assessed as competent to deliver to the public.
- Adequately supervise any tasks you have delegated to any other person/trainee/apprentice to commence or complete on your behalf.
- Extension to scope of practice by undertaking appropriately designed courses which have objective and summative assessments of theory and practical components.

PRINCIPLE 4: PROTECTING AND PROVIDING INFORMATION

Compliance with this principle requires members to comply with best practice in the protection of data both on paper, media and technology. You must be aware of the rules for Data Protection in your location of work. Maintaining records is an essential part of teaching Pilates. You should ensure that you have:

- Clear and legible documents if completing documents by hand.
- The service user's personal details (name, address, e-mail, telephone number and date of birth)
- Relevant medical history (including the GP's name and address and any other recent Medical Professional)
- Details of an emergency contact available during the time of each lesson
- Details of any exercises prescribed by a medical professional
- Obtained the service users consent by signature to participate, or the consent of their parent.
- Recorded Progress or regress of exercises and any issues reported
- Updated the information as you are advised on changes or as a minimum annually and the date recorded for each change.
- Protected the data against loss or damage or use by unauthorised individuals.
- Completed back-ups of technology and stored the back-up securely and safely.

PRINCIPLE 6 BUSINESS PRACTICE

PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

To comply with this principle a Pilates Teacher requires to be open and honest in all legal and financial matters and must ensure that:

- The fee structure must be prominently displayed in your workplace and website. This notice, and any advertisement quoting fees, must quote charges for both initial and subsequent sessions and must make clear what each fee covers
- You comply with all the accounting and taxation laws appropriate to your location of work.
- The PTA logo is not used in any advertising without the explicit authority of the PTA.
- All advertising is legal, decent, honest and truthful and must conform to Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) Codes <http://www.cap.org.uk/> or the advertising Code relative to your country of work. Your advertisements may include information about any Pilates qualifications and special interests that you may have but must not make claims of superiority or that your skills, equipment or facilities are better than those of any other professionals.

PILATES TEACHER ASSOCIATION
SCOPE OF PRACTICE, CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

By becoming a member of the PTA, you have agreed to be bound by the provisions of the Code and agree to comply with the jurisdiction of the PTA Conduct Committee. The Committee has the power to judge as unethical any behaviour which breaches this Code, and which reflects badly upon the practice or teaching of Pilates or the PTA. The Code applies to both employed and self-employed members and where members are employed the PTA accepts that employed members will in addition be subject to the Codes of practice and employment rules of their employers. In determining compliance with the Code, the PTA conduct committee will have careful regard to any such employment rules and whether, in the case of any complaint being made the member concerned has or will be subject to any internal investigation by his or her employers

If the PTA Conduct Committee (or the PTA Board) find that a member on the Register is guilty of a breach of The Code, the PTA Conduct Committee or, as the case may be, The PTA Board may take Disciplinary action. Any alleged professional mis-conduct or avoidance of compliance with the terms of membership will be referred to the Conduct Committee which will consider any need for sanctions against an individual instructor, coach, trainer or teacher. The appropriate authority (ies) will deal with any criminal allegations. In terms of any disciplinary action taken the PTA may after due inquiry: -

- a. Suspend or terminate the membership of any member;
- b. Reprimand or issue a formal warning; or
- c. Take such other action as considered an appropriate and proportionate to the issues raised
- d. Where we feel there is a risk to the public, we can share our concerns with other agencies as appropriate

If there is a complaint against the decision of the action recommended by the conduct committee from any party to an alleged mis-conduct or avoidance of compliance with the terms of membership they appeal in writing against this decision to the Board of the PTA. An appeal to the Board must be lodged within 21 days of a decision of the conduct Committee. The complaint will be acknowledged within 48 hours of receipt (excluding weekends) and discussed at the next quarterly meeting.

REFERENCES

1. www.exerciseregister.org, www.pilatesmethodalliance.org, www.pilatesalliance.net, www.hpc-uk.org , www.professionalstandards.org.uk
2. www.cnhc.org.uk
3. <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/>