

iUSP166 – Programming a Pilates teaching session

URN – D/617/5661

Guided Learning Hours: 50

Learning outcome	Assessment criteria	Taught content to include
LO1 Be able to plan for a Pilates teaching session	1.1. Prepare the environment and range of resources required to deliver a Pilates teaching session	• Clean floor • Padded surface or exercise mat of adequate length • Space • Chair • Stretch band or long scarf • Pilates ring • Mirror • Large pillow • Room - Warm, well ventilated and without draughts - Clean and uncluttered • Lighting • Floor - Firm - Smooth - Non-slip - Sprung - Protective exercise mats • Space • Weights and apparatus - In good condition with no rough edges or sharp protruding parts that could cause injury - Stored neatly away from the working area • Fire exits • First aid box • Water and fluids - Kept away from working area

		- No eating or drinking within the exercise area • Mirrors
LO2 Be able to understand the importance of long term behaviour change for Pilates teaching	2.1. Explain the role and qualities of a Pilates teacher	• Role - Teacher - Advisor - Supporter - Motivator - Counsellor - Negotiator • Qualities - Empathy - Respect - Warmth - Trust - Non-judgemental - Ethical - Embracing diversity - Discreet • Leadership qualities - Punctuality - Professionalism - Dedication - Sensitivity - Willingness to prepare for the unexpected - Taking responsibility for any problems - Role model - Communication - Resolving disagreements and conflicts
	2.2. Explain the benefits of Pilates	• Improves flexibility • Improves strength and muscle tone • Develops the body's core abdominal strength • Increases balance and co-ordination • Increases energy and vitality • More efficient respiratory, lymphatic and circulatory systems • Enhances muscle control without causing tension • Gives an increased sense of well-being • Lengthens and stretches the body to make it look leaner

		• Reduces stress levels and fatigue • Helps to form a flatter stomach and trimmer waist • Improves posture • Tones buttocks and thighs • Tones shoulders and arms • Reduces the incidence of injury and strain • Relieves tension, stiffness and pain • Relieves headaches and can help eliminate the cause of stress/tension/posture-related headaches • Less incidence of back pain • Boosts the immune system • Increases bone density • Develops greater stability and joint mobility • Is suitable for almost anyone regardless of age or level of fitness • Less incidence of injuries • Provides safe, efficient and economical movements • Improves performance • Assisting with rehabilitation • Muscular alignment
	2.3. Explain the importance for a Pilates teacher to work together with clients to agree goals, objectives, programme and adaptations	• Goals - Short, medium and long-term - Physical - Psychological - Lifestyle-related - Socially-related - Adherence-related • Objectives - Healthy eating - Weight gain - Weight loss - Improved flexibility • Programme and adaptations - Providing exercises adequate for the whole class (lowest common denominator) - Providing pre-Pilates exercises or easier exercises as modifications for clients with medical/postural issues - Selecting proven safe and sound modifications

		- Providing challenges by increasing intensity and providing variations for clients with high level of fitness - 15 to 20 exercises selected per class hour (increase or decrease depending on level of ability in class) - Well-rounded workout according to chronology of Pilates repertoire - Keep smooth flow of movements adding or decreasing speed - Groups ▪ Offer physical demonstration of correct form and incorrect form ▪ Verbal instruction ▪ Visualisation ▪ Discussion ▪ Recap the main points of the exercise/session • Experienced • Inexperienced • Mixed ability • Low fitness • Individuals • Groups
	2.4. Explain the importance of long-term behaviour change in developing client fitness	• Structure realistic expectations • Client's preferences, needs, habits and history • Provide a programme to suit the client's particular objectives • Set appropriate goals • Provide alternative Pilates exercises and progressions • Identify short-term benefits • Promote the positive rewards, decrease negative rewards • Provide regular feedback • Provide client(s) with simple home-based Pilates exercises • Train client(s) in self-management strategies to continue exercising wherever they are • Prepare the client(s) for inevitable lapses • Utilise as many types of social support as possible • Seek out opportunities to promote an overall healthy lifestyle • Empower client to take ownership of their goals and programme • Map the road to long-term goals by providing check points

LO3 Be able to understand the principles of collecting information to plan a Pilates teaching session	3.1. Explain the principles of informed consent	• Issue of consent • Any appropriate legislation e.g. Data Protection Act/GDPR • Confidentiality • Questionnaire interview • Observation • Verbal screening
	3.2. Demonstrate methods of consultation and how to complete the Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PARQ)	• Informed consent from the client before the start of the collection of data • Private comfortable area • Positive body language • Positioning of the client (no barriers between themselves and client) • Good communication skills (asking open rather than closed questions) • Trust • Professionalism, confidence and enthusiasm • Confidentiality • Any contra-indications to the Pilates programme • Client lifestyle • Client profile • Client activity history, preferences, fitness • Client's personal goals, e.g. healthy eating, weight loss, weight gain, improved flexibility • Dietary history and preferences • Use of supplements • Importance of planning a programme bearing in mind the client's religious, moral and social beliefs • Determining the nature and extent of the client's needs • Agreement to the course of action for short-term, medium-term and long-term • Obtain the client's consent to the programme • Explain any possible side effects to the programme • Explain how the programme will be evaluated and the review process • Where applicable clarify with the client information which may be available to others, e.g. relevant health care workers • Obtain the client's signature

		• Explain strategies to prevent drop-out • Explain benefits and obstacles of physical program • Understand when referral to GP/other health care professional/fitness professional is necessary • Encourage and motivate clients for long-term commitments • Understand national guidelines regarding the interpretation of collected data
	3.3. Explain the correct procedures for collecting participant information	• Good communication skills (asking open and/or closed questions where appropriate, listening/hearing) • Barriers to effective communication • Demonstrate appropriate body language at all times • Interpersonal distance • Trust • Professionalism, confidence and enthusiasm • Confidentiality • Personal effectiveness • Ensuring the correct information is taken from the participant • Ensuring the participant gives sufficient detail regarding their health and background
LO4 Understand how to use participant information to plan a Pilates teaching session	4.1. Explain the factors, based on client screening which, affect safe exercise participation	• Any recent injuries including fractures, strains, sprains, ruptures or tears • Any contagious infection or disease • Fever • If feeling unwell • Under the influence of recreational drugs or alcohol • If taking strong pain killers • After a heavy meal • Whiplash • Slipped disc • Chronic joint problems • Vomiting • Diarrhoea • Cardiovascular conditions • Any neurological conditions, e.g. stroke, multiple sclerosis • Any condition being treated by a GP

		- Any inflammatory joint conditions, e.g. arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis or cervical spondylosis - High blood pressure - Trapped/pinched nerve (sciatica) - Back pain - Diabetes - Clinical depression - Pregnancy (unless the client has been exercising with Pilates prior to pregnancy) - If there has been any past difficulty with exercise
	4.2. Justify the reasons for temporary deferral of exercise	- Only working within their own parameters and professional boundaries - Injuries - Any health related issues
	4.3. Explain how and when Pilates teachers should refer participants to other professionals	- Understanding when to refer participants to others - Understanding when a participant may be contra-indicated to Pilates and at what point GP's permission should be sought - Referral procedures
LO5 Be able to communicate effectively	5.1. Explain the importance of effective communication	- Verbal cues - Non-verbal cues - Tactical and practical - Visualisation - Interaction - Question and answer - Simple explanations - Feedback - Body language - Through feedback, analysis and observation check clients' comprehension of material transmitted and provide positive feedback - Home practice - Make sure clients can perform the workout without supervision - Provide information and advice if appropriate - Agree to the nature of information needed - Keep information in layman's terms

		• Seek advice from other professionals if information is out of your level of competency • Referral if appropriate • Rapport - Interpersonal communication skills - Empathy - Listening - Attending - Verbal and non-verbal responses • Investigation - Information gathering skills • Planning - Problem solving or decision-making skills - Setting goals - Generating and exploring alternatives - Evaluating • Action - Behavioural change skills - Multi-sensory input - Modelling - Contracting • Feedback - Observation - Adaptation of teaching style
LO6 Understand the fundamentals of Pilates teaching sessions	6.1. Explain the history of Pilates	• Joseph Pilates • First World War – UK • Rudolph von Laban – Germany • New York • Present day • Evolution of Pilates - Pilates stance versus parallel legs - Flat back versus neutral spine and pelvis - Use of Swiss balls, elastic bands, foam rollers - Pilates standing and sitting - Fusion of Pilates and other disciplines, e.g. Yogilates
	6.2. Explain what is meant by the holistic approach	• Greek term holos • Importance of exercising the whole body and mind

		• Muscle memory
	6.3. Explain the term integral biology	• The way in which our physical environment affects us • The way in which social, economic and environmental factors affect our health and social well-being • Computers • Mobile phones • Processed foods • Lack of fresh air • Stress • Lack of sleep • Financial problems • Poor ventilation • Lack of exercise • Chemicals • Pollution • Repetitive strain injuries • Flying
	6.4. Explain the concept and vital elements of the principles of Pilates within each exercise of the Pilates method	• Concentration • Breathing • Centring • Control • Flow/movement (including eccentric, concentric and isometric movements) • Precision/postural re-alignment • Verbal explanation and physical demonstration of inclusion of all principles of Pilates in all 34 exercises and mini-exercises • Exclusion of one or more of the principle results in a movement only, not a Pilates exercise • Integration of all principles lead to safe and efficient Pilates exercises • Assessment of clients' understanding of inclusion of all principles through feedback • Illustrate how principles merge with the fundamentals/techniques in each exercise
	6.5. Explain and demonstrate the breathing engagement concept	• Breathing techniques - Differences between diaphragmatic and thoracic (lateral or ribcage breathing)

		• Use of and why thoracic (lateral) breathing is preferred in Pilates - Method of thoracic breathing - Use of hands on lower ribcage and abdominals - Inhalation through the nose directed to the ribcage - Exhalation through the mouth in the lower abdominal facilitates engagement of the Pelvic floor, transverse abdominus and multifidus muscles - Exhalation facilitates flexion - Inhalation facilitates extension - Breathing in all positions - Specific breath pattern with mat work - Breath reversal - Breath holding problems - Breath promoting relaxation and increasing energy • Pelvic floor/transversus abdominus/multifidus engagement promoting stabilisation/protection of the spine - Pelvic floor engagement alone - Transversus abdominus/multifidus engagement alone - Synchronizing pelvic floor/transversus abdominus/multifidus engagement • Linking breathing to engagement of pelvic floor/transversus abdominus/multifidus muscles in all positions and Pilates movements and mat work - Action requires no change in postural alignment - Remind client of activation at beginning of each exercise and throughout session
	6.6. Explain and demonstrate the techniques of Pilates within each exercise of the Pilates method	• To include verbal explanation and physical demonstration how all phases need to be included and respected within each exercise: - Show the uninterrupted flow of processes from stabilisation phase to end of movement and transition to the next exercise (for all exercises) - Demonstrate the “right way and wrong way” - Illustrate how principles merge with the fundamentals/techniques in each exercise - Stabilisation before mobilisation - Stabilisation of head/neck, scapulae, ribcage, pelvis and lumbar, thoracic and cervical curves in neutral, arms and legs in all starting positions - Head positioning and cervical curve in neutral

		▪ In all starting positions - Scapula positioning and thoracic curve in neutral ▪ In all starting positions - Ribcage positioning and thoracic curve in neutral ▪ In all starting positions - Pelvis positioning and lumbar curve in neutral ▪ In all starting positions - Arms, legs (parallel and rotated) positioning in neutral ▪ In all starting positions - Mobilisation ▪ Full range of movement of joints and tissue - Head, neck, ribcage, shoulder girdle, pelvic girdle, arms, legs (parallel and rotated) in all planes of movement - Spine articulation ▪ Spine/pelvis positions in all planes of movement - Planes of movements ▪ Sagittal ▪ Frontal/coronal ▪ Transverse/horizontal - Movements – single and combination ▪ Flexion ▪ Extension ▪ Abduction ▪ Adduction ▪ Rotation ▪ Lateral flexion ▪ Dorsiflexion ▪ Plantar flexion ▪ Circumduction ▪ Pronation ▪ Supination - Pilates posture ▪ Tension-free starting positions - Functional posture ▪ Lifestyle/professional - Modification/adaptation/progression/regression ▪ Increase/decrease challenge and assistance ▪ Breakdown of exercises into easy components ▪ Increase in range of movements
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		▪ Variable speed ▪ Increase/decrease in range of movement (ROM) ▪ Adding of small props for alignment and modifications • Division of each exercise into many safe steps to many mini-exercises • The many mini-exercises multiplied by 34 increase the Pilates repertoire • Increased menu of options facilitate the choice of a safe and appropriate programme or class for individuals and group classes
	6.7. Explain the factors affecting physical fitness and posture	• Principles of fitness - Frequency - Intensity - Duration - Type of exercise - Sequence of exercise - Specificity - Reversibility - Adaptability - Individuality - Recovery time • Flexibility - Static - Ballistic - Dynamic - Proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF) - Contract-relax-agonist-contract (CRAC) technique • Factors affecting physical fitness - Smoking - Diet - Gender - Age - Pregnancy - Health - Level of fitness • Factors which may influence posture - Hereditary - Injury

		- Illness – mental and physical - Work-related factors – type of job - Standing - Sitting - Lying - Hobby/sport related influences - Emotional - Environmental - Sleeping position - Beds and pillows - Sustained positions - Repetitive movements - Trend • Different postural conditions - Dowager’s hump - Round shoulders - Winged scapulae - Midriff bulge - Protruding abdomen - Knock knees - Bow legged - Flat back - Sway back - Kyphosis - Lordosis - Scoliosis - Stress-related weight changes and postural defects - Upper and lower cross syndromes • Postural positioning for different everyday situations - Postural analysis - Sitting at the desk/computer/watching TV - Standing incorrectly - Lying in bed - Driving – correct mirror positioning/wheel grip - Functional professional posture
	6.8. Explain developments within the industry	• New techniques • New teaching methods

	6.9. Explain the techniques of the original Pilates exercises, how they have evolved/been adapted to meet current theories and best practices	• Pelvis and spine positioning • Stability through activation of transversus abdominis and pelvic floor muscles • Head/neck positioning • Arms level and positioning • Hip/legs positioning • Feet positioning • Breathing • Breakdown of exercises versus full exercises • Props • Variation of speed • Increase/decrease number of exercises within one class • Speed and range of movements • Adaptation of exercises content to meet clients' specific needs • Designing a safe and balanced class for a whole group • Awareness • Integration • Visualisation • Stamina • Co-ordination • Isolation • Routine • Balance • Relaxation • Pilates as taught by Joseph Pilates still being used • The values of new fundamentals/techniques • Values and drawbacks of original fundamentals/techniques • Reconciliation/recognition of "old" and "new" through education, alliances and standards
	6.10. Explain the 34 original Pilates exercises and their goals including adaptations and modifications for each exercise	• Experienced • Inexperienced • Mixed ability • Low fitness • Individuals • Groups • Kyphotic • Lordotic

		• Swayback • Flat back • Military • Scoliosis • Neutral and structural alignment • For a class - Balanced workout • For one-to-one - Balanced workout without exercises that exacerbate medical issues or negatively reinforce postural issues • Goals for each of the 34 exercises to include: - Anatomy - Principles - Techniques
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LO7 Be able to adapt, evaluate and review a Pilates session	7.1. Explain and demonstrate how to adapt Pilates exercises for different clients/participants in the class	• Giving alternative exercises for the less/more able participants within the class • Breaking down movements to their component parts
	7.2. Evaluate the Pilates programme	• On-going feedback • Changes in health or fitness • Observation of class • Analysis of mood of class • Evaluation of reasons of client's drop-out rate • Motivation • Use of all principles and fundamentals • Evaluate group and individual progress/regress with reasons • Question own teachings
	7.3. Explain how to review the Pilates programme	• Recording reactions • The following areas should be monitored: - Outcomes achieved - Effectiveness and variety of movements - Any change in demands from client - Any changes needed to enhance the programme for each particular client - Whether the routine met with the client's needs - Longer term wishes of the client

Assessment

MCQ

Portfolio of evidence

Containing 20 case studies

Guide to taught content

The content contained within the unit specification is not prescriptive or exhaustive but is intended to provide helpful guidance to teachers and learners with the key areas that will be covered within the unit, and, relating to the kinds of evidence that should be provided for each assessment objective specific to the unit learning outcomes.

Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
v1	13/08/2019	First published	Qualifications and Regulation Co-ordinator
v2	25/06/2026	Rebranding	Development Administrator