



Candidate Application Handbook for the
National Pilates Certification Exam



A. INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of the National Pilates Certification Program (NPCP) is to establish, maintain, and promote professional standards in the teaching of Pilates, and to award the title of Nationally Certified Pilates Teacher (NCPT) to the comprehensively trained Pilates teacher who has provided evidence that they meet these standards.

For the public, employers, government agencies, and other professionals in allied fields, the NPCP credential provides assurance that the NCPT is competent in the provision of services. To achieve certification, candidates must pass a 150 item, multiple-choice examination. Candidates are allowed three hours to complete the exam. The examination is offered at testing centers worldwide in a computer-based format and at a limited number of events in a paper and pencil format.

B. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

The eligibility requirements are as follows:

- Candidates must be at least 18 years of age.
- Candidates must provide verification of comprehensive Pilates training.

Comprehensive training for NPCP certification eligibility is defined as a minimum of 450 hours of training including lecture, self-practice, student teaching, observation, and all requisite exams on mat and all apparatus minimally to include: Reformer, Trapeze Table, Wunda Chair, Ladder Barrel, Spine Corrector, and Magic Circle.

Candidates who received their comprehensive training from more than one school/ mentor and need assistance obtaining verification should contact the Certification Manager for guidance on how to complete the online application.

C. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

Candidates must provide all required personal information as well as the name and contact information of the school or mentor that provided the comprehensive training. Candidate's name must be their legal name as it appears on government issued forms of identification. Once completed, candidates must attest to the accuracy of all information on their application.

The application fee is \$295; this includes application processing, test administration, and the first two years of certification. Current members of the Pilates Method Alliance (PMA) are eligible for a 15% discount (\$250.75). Payments can be made in U.S. Dollars using Visa, MasterCard, or American Express. The application fee is non-refundable.

*Please note that there is an additional \$100 fee for computer-based testing outside of the US and Canada.

Applications for the NPCP exam may be refused for the following reasons:

- Incomplete application
- Failure to meet eligibility requirements
- Falsification and/or misrepresentation of application data

D. APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND EXAM SCHEDULING FOR COMPUTER-BASED TESTING (CBT):

PSI Services Inc. is the test administration company that processes initial applications and administers all (CBT) examinations for the NPCP.

Applications for computer-based testing are online and available on the NPCP website www.nationalpilatescertificationprogram.org. Candidates will be redirected to the PSI website to create a sign in and password. Once signed in, a candidate may save the application and return to it at a later date.

Submission of the online application requires payment. Once payment is processed, the candidate is directed to a page to schedule their exam location, date and time. Candidates may choose to schedule their exam at a later time, but scheduling must be completed within 30 days of application submission. Candidates are sent verification of their application via email. For a receipt, candidates must select the "Receipt" link on their home page of the online application account.

Scheduling is available 24 hours a day. After scheduling an exam date, candidates will receive an email confirmation that contains the test date, time, site address and directions.

E. APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND EXAM SCHEDULING FOR PAPER AND PENCIL TESTING:

For paper and pencil testing, candidates complete an application available on the NPCP website www.nationalpilatescertificationprogram.org. Applications for paper and pencil events are processed by the NPCP. Scheduled paper and pencil dates are available on the NPCP website.

NPCP will send candidates an email to make payment once the paper and pencil event is confirmed. Once payment is processed, candidates are emailed a receipt for payment and

confirmation of eligibility to present at the testing site.

F. Rescheduling a CBT Examination

- Candidates may cancel or reschedule an examination appointment without forfeiting their fee if notice is received 48 hours before the scheduled examination date via the candidate's online account at www.goamp.com or by calling 833-333-4754.
- If the candidate does not show for a testing session and has not rescheduled prior to the scheduled test date, the testing fee will be forfeited.
- Exceptions to this policy will be made only for substantiated emergencies. Notification of emergencies should be directed to 833-333-4754 or certification@natpcp.org.

For questions regarding the application process, please contact: certification@natpcp.org

G. RESCHEDULING A PAPER AND PENCIL EXAMINATION

- If a candidate needs to reschedule their testing date, he or she must contact the NPCP at certification@natpcp.org at least thirty (30) business days prior to the paper and pencil event date.
- If the candidate does not show for the testing session and has not rescheduled at least thirty (30) business days prior to the scheduled test date, the testing fee will be forfeited.
- If a paper and pencil exam is cancelled, applicants will be given the option to:
 - Cancel their application and receive a full refund
 - Reschedule for a different paper and pencil exam
 - Transfer to CBT testing

NOTE: No applicant for NPCP certification will be denied on the basis of race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Candidates are expected to provide truthful and complete information.

H. AUDITING

The NPCP monitors candidate compliance with established certification requirements through the random auditing of 10% of initial applications. The audit must be completed prior to the candidate scheduling their exam. If selected for auditing, candidates will be alerted immediately after payment submission in the online application. An email will also be sent with instructions on the steps involved in the audit process.

If audited, the NPCP will verify proof of age and comprehensive training.

- The NPCP will contact the candidate to obtain proof of age, verified with a copy of any government issued form of identification that includes the date of birth.
- The **NPCP will contact the school** or mentor identified on the application to verify

comprehensive training.

Once all requirements for the audit are satisfied, an email will be sent to the candidate to schedule a testing date.

- If the candidate is deemed ineligible during audit, the candidate will be notified by email and the application will be closed.
- If the required verifications are not obtained within 30 days, the candidate will be notified by email and the application will be closed.
- If an application is closed, candidates must re-apply for initial certification and pay the required fees to be reconsidered.

Appeals

Candidates desiring to appeal the results of an audit must comply with the following:

1. An appeal must be made in writing (via email) and received by the Certification Manager within 15 calendar days of the adverse decision. Appeals are sent to appeals@natpcp.org.
2. The candidate is responsible for demonstrating that the appeal should be considered by providing all details supporting their request for the reversal of the adverse decision.

The Certification Commission Chair and two other commissioners appointed by the chair will review the appeal. The appeals committee will investigate all details related to the appeal and report its findings and recommendation to the Certification Manager who will notify the candidate of the decision. Decisions regarding candidate appeals are final.

I. TAKING THE EXAM

Candidates must bring photo identification with signature to the examination site. Acceptable forms of identification include driver's licenses, passports, and government issued identification cards.

The examination consists of 150 multiple-choice questions. Candidates will be given three (3) hours to complete the examination. Candidates should arrive at the testing center at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the testing session. Those who arrive late may not be allowed to test.

Candidates are prohibited from bringing the following items to the examination room:

- Cameras, cell phones, optical readers, or other electronic devices that are enabled to photograph, photocopy or otherwise copy test materials
- Notes, books, dictionaries or language dictionaries
- Book bags, purses, handbags or luggage
- Headphones, calculators, computers, or other electronic devices

- Pencils, pens, or highlighters
- Watches
- Food or beverage
- Hats, hoods, or other headgear
- Coats and jackets (sweaters and sweatshirts without pockets or hoods are permitted)

If it is determined that a candidate has brought any prohibited item to the test site, the item may be held by the testing staff. The test administration company, the examination host, and the test administration staff will not be held liable for lost or damaged items brought to the examination site.

Candidates who choose to opt-out of the exam must surrender all testing materials to the proctor. These candidates are not permitted to re-enter the controlled testing area once they have departed.

Prohibited actions:

- It is illegal and unethical to memorize and share questions that are on any NPCP certification exam. Memorizing and sharing questions from the exam violates the confidentiality agreement and Federal Copyright Laws. At exam registration, candidates are required to agree to a confidentiality statement attesting to their intent to keep the contents of the exam confidential. Violation of this security agreement may result in suspension or revocation of certification and suspension or denial of eligibility for future exams.
- Cheating, disruptive behavior, and refusal to cooperate with exam proctors may result in revocation of certification and denial of eligibility for future exams. Notification of such behavior is forwarded to the Certification Commission Chair for review. The candidate is contacted with a determination based on the circumstances.
- Test site supervisors complete a summary report following each test administration. The report describes any irregularities that arose, their resolution, and recommendations for improvements.

J. EXAM RESULTS

- Scores are derived from the number of questions answered correctly and reported as a raw score with a minimum passing score set at 94.
- A score report with a candidate's exam results will be printed and given to them at the testing site.
- Paper and pencil results will be sent via email within two weeks after the testing session.
- Examination results will not be released by telephone.
- Candidates that do not achieve a passing score will receive a breakdown by major content area to assist them in their exam retake efforts.

Candidates that pass the exam will receive three emails.

- Welcome email with password to access electronic badge.
- Access email with the link to the electronic badge that can be used on websites, emails, and social media as well as a personalized certificate and a wallet card for printing purposes.

- Informational email that provides renewal information, and a username and password that will enable them to update their profile on the NPCP website. All emails will be sent within seven business days of passing a CBT exam and within 2 weeks of passing a paper and pencil exam.

Current exam statistics may be viewed on the Certification page:

www.nationalpilatescertificationprogram.org/statistics

K. APPEAL OF EXAM RESULTS

Candidates wishing to appeal their test results must submit a written request to appeals@natpcp.org care of the Certification Commission Chair. This request must clearly indicate the basis for the appeal. Appeals must be received by the NPCP no later than 30 days following the release of examination results.

To protect the integrity of the certification examination, exam materials are not available for review. In addition, NPCP or PSI staff members will not discuss specific questions on any section of the examination.

The Certification Commission Appeals Committee will review all appeals. Candidates may be given the following options:

- For paper and pencil exams, the committee may review scoring of the answer sheet. An additional fee may apply.
- For CBT, the committee may review the candidate's responses using the exam answer key. An additional fee will apply.
- The Certification Commission Appeals Committee will inform candidates of their determination; the Certification Commission Appeals Committee's determination is final.

L. RETAKING AN EXAM

Candidates who do not pass the exam and wish to schedule a retake must contact the NPCP at certification@natpcp.org for directions. The retake fee is \$150.00 (plus \$100 if testing outside US and Canada).

Candidates not passing the examination after three attempts will be required to submit a new application.

M. REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS

Reasonable accommodations are provided for candidates who have any sort of impairment e.g. walking, talking, hearing, reading, performing manual tasks, etc. To apply for reasonable accommodations, the candidate must submit documentation provided by an appropriate licensed professional on the professional's letterhead. The documentation must include a diagnosis of the disability and specific recommendations for accommodations. Reasonable accommodations are considered based on the candidate's request, disability, documentation submitted, and appropriateness of the request. Reasonable accommodations do not include steps that fundamentally alter the purpose or nature of the examination.

Steps for special accommodation requests:

1. Candidate contacts NPCP with request and provides necessary documentation.
2. NPCP instructs candidate to complete online application and payment- but not schedule.
3. PSI will make scheduling arrangements for the candidate.
4. PSI will work with candidate to find a date, time, location where the special accommodation is available.

N. EXAM INFORMATION

The National Pilates Certification Exam was constructed following established norms that include the development of a “Role Delineation” or “Job Analysis” that clearly establishes the role of a Pilates teacher. The Role Delineation for Pilates identifies three domains and the tasks associated with each domain. It is the percentages associated with these domains and tasks that serve as a “blueprint” for the exam’s construction. For more information on the 2012 Role Delineation, go to: www.nationalpilatescertificationprogram.org

The current blueprint is as follows:

Domain I: Assessment/ Evaluation 35.4%

- Task 1: Obtain medical, health, exercise history, and lifestyle information using questionnaires, interviews, and other records provided voluntarily by the client (e.g., medical records, former fitness records, previous Pilates programs) in order to evaluate the client and design a safe Pilates exercise program or to determine the need for a medical referral prior to commencement.
- Task 2: Identify risk factors and comorbidities (e.g., medications, surgeries, injuries, systemic illness, physical disabilities, psychological disabilities) by reviewing information gathered that might preclude or limit participation in a Pilates exercise program without a medical release.
- Task 3: Evaluate, discuss, determine, and prioritize goals with the client, based upon both subjective and objective information provided from assessment to create an effective Pilates exercise program.
- Task 4: Identify muscular imbalances and asymmetries that may affect a client’s posture, movement, balance, and coordination using observation and movement assessment skills in order to develop an appropriate Pilates exercise program.
- Task 5: Identify information that pertains to the special conditions of a client with a medical release in order to develop and design an appropriate Pilates exercise program.

Domain II: Teaching 46.3%

- Task 1: Develop and design a client’s program incorporating Pilates methodologies (e.g., repertoire, philosophy) and movement science utilizing information gathered during the assessment to deliver a successful Pilates exercise program.
- Task 2: Implement, progress, and modify a client’s program, incorporating Pilates methodologies (e.g., repertoire, philosophy) and movement science to optimize Pilates benefits for clients.
- Task 3: Use individual and/or group Pilates teaching skills (e.g., verbal and tactile cueing, imagery, pacing, spotting, demonstration) to educate clients in appropriate and efficient exercise and movement technique as it pertains to the Pilates method.
- Task 4: Employ comprehensive Pilates syllabus and philosophy to provide a healthy and

safe movement session.

- Task 5: Record the client's ongoing progress using subjective and objective measures (e.g., chart, notes) to assure the Pilates program matches client's status.
- Task 6: Continually assess the client's current status, adjust the Pilates program using observation and communication, and modify exercises for any special circumstances.
- Task 7: Evaluate and adjust Pilates exercise environment (e.g., light source, noise level, room temperature, home programs) for client's optimal learning experience.

Domain III: Reassessment 18.3%

- Task 1: Periodically reassess and realign short and long-term Pilates program goals and content, using movement assessment skills and interactive discussion to match program with client's level.
- Task 2: Reassess client's status following a hiatus from program (e.g., illness, accident, trauma, general deconditioning and/or change of teacher or studio) using movement assessment skills for both subjective and objective measures and conduct new intake, medical release, history, and evaluation as appropriate to establish current goals and to revise the program for a safe and effective Pilates exercise experience.
- Task 3: Reassess client's status and progress using subjective and objective measures to redirect client, if needed, toward a different learning environment (e.g., group classes, private instruction, home programs) in order to improve the learning experience.

O. SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS

The following 5 questions serve as samples of the question type and question content found on the NPCP examination. Please see section "Q" for the answer key.

1. The information obtained in a postural screening includes which of the following?
 - a) Overall symmetry, height, weight, and balance
 - b) Overall symmetry, muscle development, and alignment deviations
 - c) Pelvic symmetry, muscular patterns, and movement deviations
 - d) Overall symmetry, alignment deviations, and proprioception
2. The Pilates Reformer exercises Rocking, Grasshopper, and Swimming are:
 - a) Performed holding the straps or rope handles
 - b) Performed at the beginning of a Reformer workout
 - c) Easily performed by participants with spinal stenosis
 - d) Extension exercises performed on the long box
3. The primary muscles/muscle groups that make up the core are:
 - a) Transverse abdominis, abdominal external oblique, iliocostalis, and adductors
 - b) Hamstrings, rectus abdominis, abdominal internal oblique, and tensor fascia latae
 - c) Diaphragm, transverse abdominis, multifidus, and pelvic floor.
 - d) Transverse abdominis, gluteus maximus, multifidus, and pelvic floor
4. An example of assisted retraction and resisted protraction on the Pilates apparatus is:
 - a) Pulling straps on the Reformer
 - b) Swan from floor on the Chair
 - c) Swan on the Ladder Barrel

- d) Swan on the Chair
5. Which of the following describes the muscular contraction in which the muscle shortens to produce force and accelerate movement?
- a) Concentric
 - b) Isometric
 - c) Eccentric
 - d) Isotonic

P. PRACTICE TOOLS

For candidates who have been out of school for a while, or even recent graduates who feel they need additional preparation, several tools are recommended:

- The NPCP Pilates Certification Exam – Study Guide
- The NPCP Pilates Certification Exam – Practice Questions
- Return to Life by Joseph Pilates

All three texts are available on Amazon (Europe included.)

An online practice test, which simulates the actual testing experience, is available on the NPCP website: www.nationalpilatescertificationprogram.org

The practice test includes 60 multiple-choice questions that reflect the content areas, level of difficulty, and format of the actual certification examination. The practice test fee is \$60 and must be paid by credit card (MasterCard, Visa or American Express).

Q. GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The National Pilates Certification Program may refuse to certify, suspend, or revoke an existing certification or otherwise act with regard to the application or certification of an individual in the event of any of the following:

- Ineligibility for certification or certification renewal.
- Irregularity in connection with any certification exam.
- Unauthorized possession, use, or distribution of exam score reports, trademarks, logos, written materials, answer sheets, certificates, certificant or applicant files, or other confidential or proprietary materials (registered or otherwise) of the National Pilates Certification Program or the testing body.
- Material misrepresentation or fraud in any statement to the National Pilates Certification Program, to an employer or potential employer, or to the public, including but not limited to statements made to help the individual apply for, obtain, or retain certification.
- Any physical, mental, or emotional condition of either temporary or permanent nature, including, but not limited to, substance abuse, which impairs or has the potential to impair competent and objective professional performance.
- Negligent and/or intentional misconduct in professional work, including, but not limited to, physical or emotional abuse, disregard for safety, or the unauthorized release of confidential information.
- The timely conviction, plea of guilty, or plea of nolo contendere in connection with a

felony or misdemeanor that is directly related to public health and/or Pilates instruction or education and that impairs or has the potential to impair competent and objective professional performance and/or public confidence in the profession. These include, but are not limited to, rape, sexual abuse, actual or threatened use of a weapon or violence, or the prohibited sale, distribution, or possession with intent to distribute of a controlled substance.

- Cheating, disruptive behavior, or breach of confidentiality agreement at a testing center or paper and pencil event.
- Non-compliance with the Code of Ethics and Scope of Practice.

R. QUESTION ANSWER KEY

Answer	Examination Content	
1	B	Domain I, Task 4
2	D	Domain II, Task 1
3	C	Domain II, Task 4
4	D	Domain II, Task 4
5	A	Domain II, Task 4

S. CERTIFICATION RENEWAL

The NPCP requires all certificants to renew their certification every two years. To renew, certificants must earn 16 CECs during the 2 years, submit a Certification Renewal Application, and pay a renewal fee. For details regarding renewal, see “renew” page on the NPCP website.

T. CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The National Pilates Certification Program maintains an online registry of NPCP certified teachers on its website.

Certificant data is also reflected on the US Registry of Exercise Professionals™ (USREPS.)
<http://www.usreps.org>

It is the policy of the NPCP to publish only that information necessary to determine whether an individual is currently certified. No information related to a certificant’s scores are reflected on the certificant registry. All certification staff members are required to sign acknowledgement of this policy as a requirement for employment.

Confidential information will not be disclosed without the written consent of a candidate or certificant. The following is considered confidential information:

- Application status
- Certification exam score
- Phone number(s), email and residential address(s).

The following is NOT considered confidential information and is held in the public domain:

- Certification status
- Certification number
- Country and City

Certificants may login to the NPCP database and add their contact information, additional information regarding their training or experience, and a photo to their listing.