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## **PMA PILATES CERTIFICATION EXAM**

### **FACT SHEET**

#### **What is the PMA Pilates Certification Exam?**

The PMA made history in 2005 by launching the first 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification exam for the Pilates method.

The PMA exam is a 150 question multiple choice test, designed to measure skill and knowledge at the level of completion of a comprehensive Pilates teacher training program, comprising a minimum of 450 hours of lecture, observation, personal Pilates practice, apprenticeship, supervised student teaching, covering Pilates exercise repertoire in Mat, Reformer, Trapeze Table, Barrel, Chair and Ped-O-Pull. 'Completion' of the teacher training program means completing all final exams and assessments that the program may offer. The exam is intended to validate basic competency and safety in Pilates teaching, and to serve as a standardized credential for professionals upon entry into the profession.

The PMA exam is a 3<sup>rd</sup> party exam. A 3<sup>rd</sup> party exam is one that is designed to prevent any potential conflict of interest. The PMA, as the 3<sup>rd</sup> party, has no commercial relationship to Pilates teacher training businesses or exam candidates, and is therefore independent of both. The primary purpose of 'certification' is assessment, and the assessment process is independent of any specific course of study.

The first step in creating the exam was the creation of a Role Delineation document, specific to the Pilates method, which identifies the knowledge and skills required to be a competent Pilates teacher. Experts from a broad range of Pilates schools contributed to the development of this document, facilitated by a senior psychometrician from CASTLE Worldwide, Inc. CASTLE Worldwide, a testing company, acts as an agent for the PMA, in order to develop and maintain the exam according to standards set by the NCCA (National Commission for Certifying Agencies). Following the Role Delineation, numerous panels of Pilates teachers, supervised by CASTLE Worldwide, wrote exam questions.

#### **Why should I take it?**

- By taking the PMA Pilates Certification Exam, you establish that you meet the standard of basic teaching competency and safety established by a range of experts in the field. You also contribute to the acceptance of universal Pilates industry standards, which are independent of any particular teacher-training program.
- The PMA Pilates Certification Exam unifies Pilates professionals around a common competency standard, common nomenclature for exercise choreography, protects the public from unsafe Pilates instruction, and establishes the profession of Pilates teaching with its own psychometrically validated certification exam.
- The PMA Pilates Certification Exam helps to safeguard the Pilates method from being subsumed into 'personal training & group fitness instruction' within the health club industry. Pilates is a unique body of practice and should remain independent of regulation by parties unfamiliar with the Pilates method.



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- The PMA's credential establishes the definition of what a Pilates instructor is, based on the Role Delineation document. With clear professional competency standards, the Pilates community can present itself as well defined to the 'wider world' outside the Pilates community. This decreases the risk that regulation will be imposed on Pilates teachers from 'the outside'. It is critical that the Pilates community embraces and supports the definition of what a Pilates teacher is and does, rather than have this be dictated by others outside the profession.
- The PMA exam is the only psychometrically validated, independent measure of Pilates competency. PMA Certified Pilates Teachers (PMA-CPTs) should explain to prospective clients what the PMA and PMA certification is about, and advise them to ask whether the other teachers they are considering have this credential. PMA certification demonstrates a commitment to the profession and participation in the industry's professional association.

### **Can anyone take the exam?**

The exam is available to any Pilates teacher regardless of their Pilates training background who meets **ONE** of the following eligibility requirements:

- \* Documented completion of a minimum 450 hour comprehensive Pilates teacher training program
- OR-**
- \* Documented 720 hours of Pilates employment within the last 12-months

### **How do I apply for the PMA exam?**

Exam candidates can download the Candidate Handbook from the PMA website, (in English or Spanish). The Application Form is at the end of the Handbook. Attach either Form A (documenting 450 hours of education) or Form B (documenting 720 hours of employment as a Pilates instructor in the last year). CPR is no longer required for eligibility. The application must be mailed or faxed to our test administration company, CASTLE Worldwide, Inc. as per the instructions on the form. Please note that teacher training certificates will not be accepted as proof of completion of a program. You must use the forms provided, and obtain the signature of the Director of the training program verifying that you completed the course.

[http://www.pilatesmethodalliance.org/newdocs2\\_09/pma\\_cert\\_booklet\\_and\\_app.pdf](http://www.pilatesmethodalliance.org/newdocs2_09/pma_cert_booklet_and_app.pdf)

[http://www.pilatesmethodalliance.org/newdocs2\\_09/Spanish\\_pma\\_manual\\_y\\_solicitud.pdf](http://www.pilatesmethodalliance.org/newdocs2_09/Spanish_pma_manual_y_solicitud.pdf)

### **Do I have to be a member of the PMA to take the exam?**

No. The exam is open to any Pilates teacher that meets one of the aforementioned eligibility requirements. However, members do receive a discount on the exam fee.

### **How much is it?**

PMA members pay \$250.75 (USD). Non-members pay \$295.00 (USD).



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### **How do I take it?**

There are two ways to take the 150 question multiple-choice exam:

- a) Using the 'Paper and Pencil' format
- b) Using the computerized 'On-Demand' format

#### **Paper and Pencil format:**

The paper and pencil format is normally offered at the PMA's International Educational Conference in November each year, and at other approved host sites worldwide. Locations and dates vary from year to year. Pencil and paper test sites are always listed at the end of the Candidate Handbook, on the second page of the Application.

**-OR-**

#### **Computerized On-Demand format:**

The exam is offered at computer centers worldwide. Locations and times vary. The exam candidate selects an available location, and then is offered a choice of dates and times to choose from. Please note that if you live in a rural area you may need to travel a few hours to an exam location. Testing centers are generally in urban centers. For more specific information go to:

[www.castleworldwide.com/mainsite/ibtsites/](http://www.castleworldwide.com/mainsite/ibtsites/)

### **How do I prepare for it?**

It is highly advisable to consult the PMA Pilates Certification Exam Study Guide for an overview of what the exam covers. Please note: the Study Guide is NOT a teacher training manual. It is available for purchase from our on-line store on [www.pilatesmethodalliance.org](http://www.pilatesmethodalliance.org). The price is \$39.95 USD plus shipping & handling.

Exam candidates may also take our online 50-question Practice Test for \$50.00 (USD). The Practice Test can be taken on any computer where high speed Internet is available. Ordering is easy, go to [www.castleworldwide.com/pma](http://www.castleworldwide.com/pma) and select practice tests, PMA Practice Test. The Practice Test is NOT designed to help you gauge your exam preparedness or Pilates knowledge. Rather, it's designed to give you an experience of computerized testing and answering multiple-choice questions.

### **What is the passing score?**

The score is a 'scaled score' with passing ranging from 500-800 points. Please note this isn't a percentage score and shouldn't be compared to that style of scoring.

### **What if I don't pass the exam?**

The PMA Certification exam boasts a high pass rate. The educational / experience requirements to sit for the exam provide highly skilled candidates that, for the most part, pass on their first attempt. There is however a procedure in place for a retake. Candidates that do not pass on their first try may reapply following a 30 – day waiting period from initial test date. The Retake application can be downloaded from our website and the fee is \$150.



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### **When do I receive the results?**

If you choose an On-Demand exam, you will see your results on the computer screen immediately after you complete the exam. If you choose a Paper and Pencil exam, it can take 3-4 weeks for your results to be delivered to you by mail.

You will receive your personalized certificate, which is suitable for framing, and a wallet card directly from CASTLE Worldwide, and you will be listed on the PMA website as a PMA Certified Pilates Teacher within 6-8 weeks.

### **I've taken the exam. Why am I not on the website?**

If you recently took the exam your name will appear in the website in approximately 6-8 weeks. If you aren't listed after 8 weeks, please call Amy Bloom Havlin toll free at +1 866 573 4945 x205 (or +1 305 573 4946 x 205) or email amybh@pilatesmethodalliance.org.

### **How do I promote myself as a PMA Certified Pilates Teacher (PMA-CPT)?**

You may say that you are a 'PMA® Certified Pilates Teacher', or, 'PMA®-CPT'. If you are looking for more verbiage add, "PMA Pilates certification is the only 3<sup>rd</sup> party Pilates certification in the Pilates industry".

### **How do I maintain my PMA certification?**

PMA certification is valid for two years. During the course of the two years, PMA-CPT's must complete 16 hours of PMA-approved continuing education credits (1 hour = 1 CEC) in order to 're-certify' at the end of their two year term. A great way to achieve this is by attending the PMA's International Educational Conference, where a large number of CECs can be earned at one time. Attending the conference is a wonderful way to network, attend presentations from industry leaders and connect with equipment and educational providers all under one roof.

You may also attend PMA-approved CEC workshops if they are available in your area, take college level anatomy and physiology courses, or attend other conferences like Balanced Body University's *Pilates On Tour, Body Mind Spirit, or Inner IDEA*. If there is an event you want to attend but it isn't PMA approved, you may petition for credit for a small fee. Be aware that in order for the PMA to approve Pilates-content workshops, the workshop teacher must be a PMA-CPT. For non-Pilates-content workshops, the workshop teacher must have a degree or credential relevant to the workshop content, which must be relevant to teaching Pilates.

Taking a CPR course, or renewing your current certification will earn 3 PMA approved CECs. Find a class at [www.americanheart.org/cpr](http://www.americanheart.org/cpr).

For more information on the recertification process, please see our **CEC Requirements for Recertification**.