Working in Fitness Survey 2016

SkillsActive
More People, Better Skilled, Better Qualified

emd insight
Understanding Exercise, Movement & Dance
Introduction

In 2015, SkillsActive and EMD Insight conducted the Working in Fitness survey. The aim was to gain an understanding of the professionals working in the fitness industry; their training, motivations, likes and dislikes, pay, and future plans. A great range of professionals responded to the survey, including:

- Dance fitness instructors
- Group exercise instructors
- Gym managers
- Yoga / Pilates instructors
- Personal trainers
- Specialist group instructors

The research was conducted via the online survey provider SurveyMonkey, between 2nd November – 11th December 2015, with a total of 1,958 respondents.
62% of people whose activities are limited have a physical impairment.
Section One

Employment
Roles of respondents

**Question:** What roles do you carry out in the fitness industry?

**Base:** 1,958 (Data displayed in percentages)

Respondents could select more than one answer so the total will be above 100%
Main roles of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group / Area / Regional Manager</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Manager</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club / Duty Manager</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant (club) Manager</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio or Fitness Manager / Supervisor</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team or Group Leader</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frontline / Customer service / Receptionist</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Attendant / Assistant</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Training Instructor</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gym Instructor (Level 2)</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Instructor (Level 3)</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Trainer (Level 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Exercise or Aqua Instructor / Teacher (Level 2)</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Coach</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swim Teacher</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance Fitness / Exercise, Movement and Dance Teacher</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga and / or Pilates Teacher</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeguard</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise Referral / Clinical Exercise / Active Programme Manager</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Physiotherapist</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership, Marketing or Sales Manager</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Sector Worker</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Lecturer / Teacher</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question**: Of the roles you selected earlier, which would you say is your MAIN role in the fitness industry?

**Base**: 1,707 (Data displayed in percentages)
Roles with the largest difference between gender

Question: What roles do you carry out in the fitness industry?

Base: 1,958 (Data displayed in percentages)

Respondents could select more than one answer so the total will be above 100%
Number of classes taught per week

- Average number of group exercise classes taught per week: 5
- Average number that are dance fitness classes: 1.8
- Average number of participants in each group exercise class: 15

44.7% of group exercise instructors reported an increase in class attendance in the last year

**Question:** How many group exercise classes, if any, do you currently teach each week? / How many of these classes are dance fitness? / On average, how many participants do you have in each class?

**Base:** 1,724, 1,204, 1,351
**Type of employment**

- Working full time (30 or more hours per week): 19.8%
- Working part time (1-29 hours per week): 21.7%
- Self-employed / Freelance: 57.2%
- Contract / Agency labour: 1.9%
- Seasonal / Casual / Holiday worker: 3.6%
- Unpaid volunteer: 4.5%
- Full time student: 1.2%
- Retired: 1.2%
- Unemployed: 1.2%
- Prefer not to say: 1.1%
- Other: 1.0%

**Question:** Thinking about ALL your roles in fitness, how are you employed?

**Base:** 1,958 (Data displayed in percentages)

Respondents could select more than one answer so the total will be above 100%
Types of employment

- **46.2%** are self employed or freelance
- **32.1%** are working full time
- **16.2%** are working part time
- **61.4%** are self employed or freelance
- **14.9%** are working full time
- **23.9%** are working part time

**Question:** Thinking about ALL your roles in fitness, how are you employed?

**Base:** Male – 554; Female – 1,398

Respondents could select more than one answer so the total will be above 100%
Working outside fitness

43.6% of people who work in fitness don’t do any other type of work

16.1% also work in a technical or higher profession (e.g. doctor, teacher etc.)

Question: Which of the following options best describes the nature of the work that you do outside of the fitness industry?

Base: 1,710
Working outside fitness

**Question:** Which of the following options best describes the nature of the work that you do outside of the fitness industry?

- **43.6%**
  - I do not do any other form of work

- **16.1%**
  - Professional or higher technical work (e.g. doctor, accountant, social worker)

- **9.4%**
  - Manager or senior administrator (e.g. company director, finance manager)

- **6.7%**
  - I’m retired other than the work I do in fitness

**Base:** 1,710
Question: Which sector do you MAINLY work in?

Base: 1,692

65.8% of respondents work in the **private sector**

20.9% of respondents work in the **public sector**

9.5% of respondents work in the **charity / voluntary / community sector**
Dance and dance Fitness

**5.4%** of male respondents teach **dance fitness**

**2.7%** of male respondents teach **dance**

**91.9%** of male respondents teach **neither**

**34.3%** of female respondents teach **dance fitness**

**7.5%** of female respondents teach **dance**

**72.2%** of female respondents teach **neither**

**Dance fitness:** e.g. Zumba®, BODYJAM™, street dance, dance aerobics
**Dance:** e.g. ballroom, Latin, country and western, folk

**Question:** Which of the following group exercises do you teach?
**Base:** 1,689
Respondents could select more than one answer so the total will be above 100%
Dance fitness styles

**Question:** Which of the following dance and dance fitness styles do you teach?

**Base:** 555 (Data displayed in percentages)

Respondents could select more than one answer so the total will be above 100%
Group exercise styles

Question: Which of the following group exercises do you teach?

Base: 1,519; males – 423; females – 1,092 (remainder did not disclose gender)
Respondents could select more than one answer so the total will be above 100%

- Strength and conditioning (e.g. BODYPUMP™, body conditioning): 52.9% (males), 53.5% (females), 51.5% (overall)
- Cardiovascular (e.g. Spinning®, step aerobics, BODYATTACK™): 47.1% (males), 45.6% (females), 50.8% (overall)
- Holistic (e.g. yoga, Pilates, BODYBALANCE™, tai chi): 27.8% (males), 34.1% (females), 12.1% (overall)
- Water workouts (e.g. Aqua Zumba®, aqua aerobics): 11.1% (males), 13.5% (females), 4.7% (overall)
Question: How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your job?

Base: 1,445 (Data displayed in percentages)
Question: How long have you been in your current fitness role? / How many years have you worked in the fitness industry? / How long do you expect to continue working in the fitness industry?

Base: 1,443 / 1,443 / 1,441 (Data displayed in percentages)

62.8% of all fitness professionals expect to be working in the industry for at least another 5 years.
Life before fitness

Question: Previous to teaching in the fitness industry, what environment would best describe your circumstance?

Base: 1,433 (Data displayed in percentages)

- I was a full time parent / carer: 4.3%
- I was a student in a fitness-related subject: 12.0%
- I was a student in a non fitness-related subject: 5.4%
- I was unemployed: 1.3%
- I worked in an environment away from the fitness industry: 67.7%
- I worked in an environment that was linked to the fitness industry (e.g. receptionist in a leisure centre): 8.4%
- Other: 0.8%
Question: What factors first attracted you into the fitness industry? (Please select your TOP THREE) / What are the reasons that you continue to work in the fitness industry? (Please select your TOP THREE)

Base: 1,433

Reasons for joining
- I have a passion for fitness: 66.8%
- I wanted to help other people: 54%
- Personal physical health and fitness: 35.1%

Reasons for staying
- I have a passion for fitness: 64.1%
- I wanted to help other people: 62.3%
- I want to work for myself and do it in this industry: 37.9%
Reasons for wanting to leave the industry

**Low pay**
46.1%

**Lack of work / clients**
31.3%

**Unsociable hours**
25.3%

**Question:** What factors would make you leave the fitness industry? (Please select your TOP THREE)

**Base:** 1,433
I find it a challenge to maintain my classes and keep them running because.....

- **32.8%** Irregularity of participants
- **31.1%** Low income from the classes
- **29%** Additional costs (e.g. insurance)
- **26.4%** Cost of facility hire
- **23.6%** Availability of facility hire
- **22.5%** Other work responsibilities

*Question:* I find it a challenge to maintain my classes and keep them running because...

*Base:* 1,404
Question: How important is your group exercise instructing to you amongst your other life priorities?

Base: 1,404 (Data displayed in percentages)

Importance of instructing amongst other life priorities

71.7% of people who work in fitness consider teaching group exercise to be important or very important amongst other life priorities.
Section Two

Hours and Pay
Question: What is the average number of hours that you spend working in fitness in a typical week?

Base: 1,687

20.9% of male respondents work less than 10 hours per week

43.1% of male respondents work more than 30 hours per week

39.1% of female respondents work less than 10 hours per week

18.9% of female respondents work more than 30 hours per week

Workers aged under 35 are almost twice as likely to work over 30 hours a week compared to those over 35.
How do you get paid?

- 37.8% get paid per hour
- 23.4% get paid per participant
- 14.6% get a salary per annum

**Question:** How do you normally get paid for your fitness role?

**Base:** 1,681 – Responses also included a combination of the above (18.7%) and other (5.5%)
The average* earnings per hour of employees in the fitness industry: £21.08

The average* charge per participant by employees in the fitness industry: £5.50

The average** earnings per annum of full time employees in the fitness industry: £20k-£24.9k

The average** earnings per annum of part time employees in the fitness industry: Less than £10k

Question: What are you paid per hour? (If this depends on class attendance, please provide an average) / What do you charge per participant? / What is your basic salary? (please exclude all salaries obtained outside the fitness industry)

Base: 591 / 350 / 244

*Median average is provided **Modal average is provided
Earnings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Per hour</th>
<th>Per participant</th>
<th>Per annum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charity / Voluntary / Community sector</td>
<td>£5.00</td>
<td>£5.00</td>
<td>£20,000-24,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector (includes self employed)</td>
<td>£25.00</td>
<td>£6.00</td>
<td>£20,000-24,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector (including NHS and Armed Forces)</td>
<td>£20.00</td>
<td>£7.00</td>
<td>£20,000-24,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other sector</td>
<td>£22.05</td>
<td>£5.00</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question: What are you paid per hour? (If this depends on class attendance, please provide an average) / What do you charge per participant? / What is your basic salary? (please exclude all salaries obtained outside the fitness industry)
Base: 591 / 350 / 244
*Median average is provided **Modal average is provided
### Change in salary in the last year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>Have had an increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>Have had a decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64.3%</td>
<td>Have had no change in pay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of those who have had an increase, **60.7%** reported a rise of **5%** or less.

**Question:** In the last year, have you received an increase, decrease or no change in pay? / What % increase did you receive?

**Base:** 1,665 / 414 - Responses to the first question also included don’t know (5.2%)
Section Three

Training and Qualifications
Question: What is your HIGHEST level of education? (this may not necessarily be a fitness qualification) / Is your degree or doctorate sport / fitness related?

Base: 1,658 / 701 (Data displayed in percentages)

Of those with degrees or doctorates, 67.8% are **not** sport or fitness related.
Question: What is the highest fitness qualification you hold that is most relevant to your main job?
Base: 1,653 (Data displayed in percentages)
Interest in further training

6.5% Not at all interested → 12.5% Not that interested → 33.1% Quite interested → 47.8% Very interested

**Question:** How interested would you be in further training / qualifications that supported you in teaching group exercise?

**Base:** 1,645
Types of training interests

65.3% Strength and conditioning training
47.7% Cardiovascular training
57.7% Holistic training
26.3% Dance fitness training
19.8% Water workouts training
17% Dance training

Question: In the NEXT 12 MONTHS, would you be interested in further training / qualifications in...
Base: Range from 1,536 – 1,527
What would attract you to a particular training offer?

- **73.4%** Cost / value for money
- **58.4%** Appropriate location
- **31.6%** Ability to utilise training to enhance current delivery

**Question:** What would attract you to a particular training offer?  
(Please select your TOP THREE)  
**Base:** 1,527

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Reasons for not undertaking training in the last 12 months

Question: What are the main reasons why you have not undertaken more training in the last 12 months?

- **Cost / value for money**: 60.2%
- **Cannot find time to train**: 34.3%
- **Lack of suitable training provision**: 27.8%

Base: 1,612
Reasons for not training in the future

- **76.2%** Financial cost
- **38.8%** Lack of suitable training provision
- **33.1%** Cannot find time to train

**Question**: Which of the following statements best describes why you may not undergo training in the future? (Please select your TOP THREE)

Base: 1,527
Training in the last 12 months

Question: How many courses or training days have you attended in the last 12 months? / What has been the total approximate cost of attending these courses / training days?

Base: 1,616 / 1,312 (Data displayed in percentages)
Who paid for training?

- **70.2%** self-funded their training
- **16.7%** have training funded by their employer
- **10.3%** pay for training with a mix of both

**Question:** Who paid for your training?

**Base:** 1,422

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Question: Overall, do you consider that you have been given / completed sufficient training to do your job?

Base: 1,613 (Data displayed in percentages)
Question: Do you work with any of the following clients? (Please select all that apply)
Base: 1,612 (Data displayed in percentages)
### Appropriate training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Partly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children and young people (base: 459)</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older people (base: 1,003)</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients referred by GPs (base: 293)</td>
<td>75.3%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients with physical disabilities (base: 451)</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre- and post-natal clients (base: 391)</td>
<td>64.6%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with mental health problems (base: 354)</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People who have experienced or are at risk from falls (base: 279)</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question:** Do you have the right training to work with...? (Based on previous answers)

**Base:** See individual option
### Appropriate training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Partly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People after having a stroke (base: 221)</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with cardiac disease (base: 248)</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with lower back pain (base: 700)</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with cancer (base: 216)</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with obesity / diabetes (base: 595)</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with chronic respiratory disease (base: 203)</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with long-term neurological conditions (base: 178)</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question:** Do you have the right training to work with...?  
(Based on previous answers)  
**Base:** See individual option
Question: Are you planning to undertake additional training or Continued Professional Development (CPD) to work with these special types of clients?

Base: 1,612

- 38.6% will do more training with existing clients
- 22.3% will train to work with new types of clients
- 18.9% will do other exercise/fitness-related training
- 15.6% will do other general training (e.g., first aid)
- 25% will do all of these

22.6% have no training plans.
Section Four

Membership
Question: Which bodies are you a member of? (please select all that apply)
Base: 1,612
**Reasons for membership**

**Question:** What are the main reasons why you are a member of this / these organisation(s)? (Please select all that apply)

**Base:** 1,612 (Data displayed in percentages)

- **Discounted insurance:** 35.4%
- **Discounted PPL:** 9.5%
- **Training/CPD:** 41.5%
- **Marketing tools:** 11.3%
- **Social media exposure:** 7.2%
- **Content and choreography for classes:** 15.8%
- **Music for classes:** 17.2%
- **Links into local fitness/health networks:** 14.4%
- **Sourcing new facilities:** 2.4%
- **Fitness clothing and kit:** 5.8%
- **Monitoring and evaluation of classes:** 2.4%
- **Equipment including audio:** 1.3%
- **Because I have to be (i.e. it’s a requirement):** 45.0%
- **Other:** 7.5%
Using research from the Working in Fitness survey 2014, we have found the following key differences amongst respondents when compared with this year’s survey.

- **24.8%** of respondents received an *increase* in pay in 2015.
  - In 2014, only **20%** of respondents received a pay *increase*.

- **23.4%** of respondents have a Level 3 NVQ qualification in 2015.
  - In 2014, only **15.9%** of respondents had a Level 3 NVQ qualification.

- **34.3%** of respondents consider *time* a key factor for not undertaking further training in 2015.
  - In 2014, only **24%** of respondents considered *time* a key factor for not undertaking further training.
Do you have a question about the Working in Fitness Survey 2016?

Contact the Exercise, Movement & Dance Partnership

Or e-mail us on jademoulden@emdp.org

On 01403 266000