

EMD UK SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Group Fitness Reformer Instructor

SECOND EDITION: 17 AUGUST 2026

REVIEW DATE: 17 AUGUST 2028



SCOPE of Practice: Group Fitness Reformer

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ABOUT THIS SCOPE OF PRACTICE

This document is an EMD UK Scope of Practice overview for professional recognition of membership of the national governing body for group exercise.

Definition of Group Fitness Reformer,

Group Fitness Reformer frequently marketed as Dynamic Reformer, is a group fitness class delivered using a reformer-style apparatus. It follows the structure, programming, and delivery style of a mainstream group fitness class.

The carriage and springs provide external resistance. Classes typically use continuous movement, repeated exercise sequences, time under tension, fitness-based intervals, and limited recovery. The primary physical outcome is muscular endurance and functional conditioning, with sessions potentially also developing cardiovascular fitness, mobility, balance, and coordination.

Although participants may experience some improvement in strength, continuous classes with limited recovery should not be described primarily as strength training unless the programme includes sufficient resistance, planned progression, and appropriate recovery.

The primary purpose is general fitness conditioning. It does not focus on corrective exercise, detailed individual movement assessment, clinical rehabilitation, or the classical principles and teaching process of the Pilates Method.

Class size alone does not define the activity. The appropriate number of participants must be determined by the instructor's qualifications and competence, the needs and experience of the participants, the complexity of the programme, the apparatus and environment, and the level of observation and individual support required.

Group Fitness Reformer is intended primarily for appropriately screened participants from the general fitness population. Participants with injuries, significant health conditions, or referrals from physiotherapists or other healthcare professionals may require individual assessment, a smaller group, an adapted programme, or referral to a suitably qualified professional.

Determining what is and is not part of your scope of practice is a professional responsibility. When deciding whether a particular activity falls within your scope of practice, or when moving into a new scope of practice, you will need to consider whether the training and support you have received adequately equips you to perform the activity safely and effectively.

This scope of practice covers Group Fitness Reformer. It is distinct from the Pilates Method and Level 3/4 Studio Reformer Qualifications.

Professional Guidance:

Instructors working under this scope only (without a full Level 3 Mat Pilates qualification and comprehensive studio apparatus credentials) should not promote themselves as "Pilates Teachers," "Reformer Pilates Instructors," or offer "Clinical Pilates," or claim to teach the Pilates Method.

You may find it helpful to speak to the professional recognition of membership team who may be able to offer further advice in this area.

Published by:

EMDP Ltd T/A EMD UK

National Governing Body for Group Exercise

Publication date: 17 August 2026

First edition: V 2.0

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SYSTEM PARTNER

1. Overview

SCOPE OF PRACTICE: Group Fitness Reformer Instructor

Scope of practice refers to the professional activities a Group Fitness Reformer Instructor is licensed and authorised to deliver. This scope is designed to ensure a safe, effective, and evidence-based environment for group exercise.

This scope of practice overview sets clear expectations of our members' knowledge, skills, and abilities as a Group Fitness Reformer Instructor

- **Professional Responsibility:** Maintaining boundaries is a core professional duty. Instructors must only perform services for which they have been formally educated and trained.
- **Clinical Distinction:** This scope covers "Group Fitness Reformer." It is distinct from the Level 3 Reformer Qualifications and Pilates Method on the studio reformer.
- **Core Modality:** Group Fitness Reformer Instructors are exercise professionals who lead and motivate groups through structured, high-energy sessions. These classes utilise the Reformer's spring resistance and sliding carriage to deliver a workout focused on functional conditioning, muscular endurance, and cardiovascular challenge.

2. Professional Recognition and Eligibility

To hold and retain professional recognition under this scope, instructors must meet the following mandatory standards:

- **Prerequisites:** A minimum of a Level 2 Group Training to Music (GTM/ETM), or Level 2 Gym instructing certificate or Level 3 Personal Training qualification or level 3 Mat Pilates credentials certified by an approved centre of an Awarding Organisations which is regulated by Ofqual and a recognised certificate in Group Fitness Reformer.
- **Continuous Professional Development (CPD)** is a minimum of 10 hours of CPD per year to maintain up to date knowledge.
- **Duty of Candour:** In alignment with national governance and NHS standards, instructors must operate with transparency, ensuring all incidents or "near-misses" are documented and reported to appropriate management.



Agreed scope of practice educational products logo.

Educational products that meet the requirements of EMD UK's scope of practice may display this official EMD UK scope of practice logo.

3. Scope of a Group Fitness Reformer Instructor

Group Fitness Reformer Instructors are exercise professionals who lead and motivate groups through structured, intentionally designed sessions. These classes utilise the Reformer's spring resistance and sliding carriage to deliver a workout focused on functional strength, muscular endurance, and cardiovascular challenge.

Instructional Delivery

- **Adaptive Supervision & Cueing:** Perform continuous technique monitoring, ensuring safe joint and spinal alignment through Differentiated Cueing. Combine clear anatomical precision and motivational visualisation to ensure all participants feel successful, safe, and challenged.
- **Safe Programming:** Execute exercise sequences identified as safe for group environments from within the scopes of the training you attended, prioritising controlled tempo, time under tension and smooth transitions.

Apparatus & Risk Management

- **Equipment compliance:** All equipment must be **BS EN ISO 20957-1 (Class S)** compliant for commercial/studio use.
- **Loading and Weight distribution:** Instructors must manage "loading" and "weight distribution" of the carriage (spring tension) and the positioning of the gear bars and foot bars to ensure the machine is stable before a participant mounts.
- **Progressive Stability Framework:** Standing work performed on a moving carriage must be introduced progressively based on participant capability and in line with and not exceeding manufacturers' guidelines. Complex, unsupported standing rotational work and exercises that place unmanageable strain on joint structures are classified as "Red Flag" movements and fall outside this standard group fitness reformer scope of practice.
- **Operational Equipment Checks:** Instructors must perform a visual and functional check of springs, ropes, cleats, and carriages prior to the commencement of every session. Any mechanical faults or wear-and-tear must be reported to facility management immediately in accordance with the venue Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and the affected apparatus must be decommissioned until repaired.

In Class Safety and Coaching

- **Performance Monitoring:** Take responsibility for the physiological challenge of the group, ensuring high energy motivation is balanced with strict adherence to the safety boundaries of the Reformer Apparatus and within the guidelines of the skills and knowledge learnt from the Group Fitness Reformer Training.

4. Community Health & Social Prescribing Integration

When operating within a community health or Social Prescribing pathway, instructors must adhere to the following Clinical Governance standards:

- **Referral & Red Flag Screening:** Instructors must conduct proactive pre-exercise screening. They must be able to identify "Red Flags" (e.g., acute pain, neurological changes) that require immediate cessation of exercise and referral to a Level 3-4 Pilates Teacher or health professional.
- **Non-Clinical Boundary:** Instructors must clarify to participants and referrers that they provide.
- "Health Improvement and Functional Strength," not "Medical Rehabilitation" or "Clinical Diagnosis."
- **Data Security & Privacy:** Ensure all participant health screening and attendance records are managed in accordance with UK GDPR and relevant data protection standards.
- **Emergency Readiness:** Instructors must maintain active knowledge of the venue's/classes Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and ensure clear, safe exit routes at all times.

Extension of Scope & Specialisms

The Group Fitness Reformer scope applies strictly to mainstream, healthy adult populations. Instructors wishing to expand their practice to work with distinct populations, specialised environments, or advanced technical parameters must hold additional, recognised qualifications.

- **Pre- and Post-Natal Exercise:** Specialised programming modifying loading, positioning, and intraabdominal pressure for pre- and post-natal clients.
- **Advanced Functional Longevity:** Working with populations presenting with age-related functional decline, frailty, clinical balance issues, or bone health considerations (e.g., osteoporosis/osteopenia).
- **Long-Term Controlled Conditions:** Delivering exercise adaptations for individuals referred to with managed clinical conditions (e.g., controlled cardiovascular or metabolic conditions).
- **Specialised Programming for Young Adults:** Instruction tailored to the specific biomechanical and physiological needs of healthy teenagers and young adults, ensuring safe loading and alignment during periods of musculoskeletal growth.