

# Is your pilates teacher **really** qualified?

It would be nigh on impossible to have missed the explosion of pilates over the past few years.

Along with an assortment of other holistic exercise styles, pilates remains popular because it works. The demand is ever increasing for low impact, postural specific, stress relieving exercise regimes that will also make us look and feel good.

With the increase in demand for pilates instruction, comes the inevitable rush to service the demand. Enter the pilates training programs.

To date the pilates industry has had little control over the influx of pilates training programs on offer, due in most part simply to the growth time frame and an unregulated industry. Short courses of two to four days

instructing business on the basis of 2 to 4 days training – a frightening scenario when faced with the reputation of pilates for being “safe exercise” and it’s use for spinal and injury rehabilitation. At the better end, quite often short course participants come to the realisation that they are not being trained properly and find they have to enrol in more thorough training anyway.

## So what is the answer?

Pilates International, led by director Sally Anderson, have faced this problem head on and succeeded in creating the first ever professional pilates Diploma qualification.

Pilates International have developed thorough and extensive educational programs for many years, culminating now in qualifications for pilates instructors that include the Diploma, with an exit point qualification of Certificate IV. The Certificate IV is an industry entry level qualification, with graduates of the Diploma coming out at as a practitioner - a higher industry level (equivalent to Level Two with the Pilates Alliance regulatory body). These courses have been stringently reviewed and approved for government endorsement through the Vocational Education Training Accreditation Board (VETAB), and now set the benchmark for pilates training programs.

Graduates of these courses will receive qualifications that are recognised under the Australian Qualifications framework, and are recognised across other industries for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), but most importantly the Certificate IV and Diploma qualifications will produce skilled, knowledgeable graduates who will have proved their competency through a complete range of theoretical and practical components within the course.

## So what does this mean for the Pilates industry?

Well this means there is now formal, recognisable standards that you can measure a Pilates Instructor against. Instructors that don't meet these standards will have a hard time claiming any meaningful status. Just as importantly, other professionals have a clear qualification they can seek out when referring clients on for pilates sessions.

As a client you will have the assurance that your instructor is thoroughly trained and has the skills to look after you safely and appropriately.

As a graduate, you can be assured that you are achieving the highest quality training and the opportunity to fit within existing qualification structures and recognition.

As an insurance company, would you recognise short course and staggered training alongside an accredited, thorough program?

As a doctor, physiotherapist, osteopath, or other referring practitioner, would you refer to someone without a real qualification and risk the consequences?

There is no doubt in my mind that I would be seeking a graduate of this course to teach me the pilates method. I looked at the course outline and materials for the Certificate IV and Diploma courses and can see that they definitely offer an extensive content of study and practical application. I can also see that they need to. Sally says that “anything less is insufficient” and when looking at the potential problems of insufficient training, I can only agree.

For information on the Pilates International Diploma and Certificate IV courses, please call Karen on (02) 9699 5509 or visit [www.pilatesitc.com](http://www.pilatesitc.com)

For information regarding the pilates industry, how to select a studio/instructor or training course, please refer to The Pilate's Alliance at [www.pilatesalliance.net](http://www.pilatesalliance.net) or the administrator on (02)9540 3302



claim to give “certification”, as does a lot of staggered courses where you start with one component and then add, and then add, and keep adding – each component only giving the minimum so that you will need to do the next one. Not only are these training programs insufficient for educating a potential pilates instructor, but they can, at worst, be costly and deceptive. Manuals (if offered) are often charged on top of the course fees, and the certificate you receive at the end of the program offers you little. It may not offer you any real recognition, or opportunity for employment outside of the organization that you have undertaken the program with – and they will not guarantee you employment either.

On top of creating under-trained and uninformed instructors, these types of training programs also encourage some to start their own