

Appendix 4 – Frequently Asked Questions About Course Exams

The following questions and answers explain the procedure to obtain your STOTT PILATES® Certification.

How Long Do I Have to Complete My Course Examination?

You must take your exam within six months of completing your last course. We encourage you to take some time afterward to practice and synthesize the information prior to taking the exam; however, you are welcome to take the exam immediately after you complete the course if you and your instructor agree you are ready.

What Exams Should I Take?

The following exams are available in a Level 1 (Essential and Intermediate), Level 2 (Advanced), or Combined Levels 1 & 2 format:

- ▶ Matwork
- ▶ Reformer
- ▶ Matwork & Reformer
- ▶ Matwork, Reformer, Cadillac, Chair & Barrels

If you take the CMR, IMP, IR or ICCB you are eligible to take a Level 1 exam.

If you take AM, AR, or ACCB courses you are eligible to sit for a combined Level 1 & 2 exam.

If you choose to examine at Level 1 (written and practical components) and wish to upgrade to Level 2 certification at a later date (practical component only), there is a separate fee.

If you hold Matwork certification and want to certify in Reformer or vice versa, you must take a combined Matwork and Reformer exam, so that we can test your ability to program various equipment repertoires together. You are not obliged to take (and pay for) two or more exams if you are planning to take more than one course. You may wait until completion of the second or final course to take a combined repertoire exam.

If you prefer to pause between courses, you may take an exam to become certified in one course only, and other combined exams (after completing the second or subsequent courses) to become certified in all the work. In this case, separate exam fees would apply.

You are eligible to take a Full Certification exam if you have completed all levels of training on all pieces of equipment AND have also taken the *Injuries & Special Populations* course.

The written component must be conducted at a location where you can be monitored. This can be at a STOTT PILATES Licensed Training Center (visit www.stottpilates.com for a list of these locations) or a library (public, college or university).

The practical component must be conducted in the presence of an instructor trainer at a STOTT PILATES Licensed Training Center. Alternatively, the exam can be submitted by videotape (guidelines to follow).

The written and practical components may be taken on different days but MUST be taken within 7 days of one another.

Level of Certification

If you have only taken Intensive or Comprehensive courses covering Level 1 (Essential and Intermediate) repertoire and have not taken the Level 2 (Advanced) repertoire course(s) you may only take a Level 1 exam.

If you have taken the Level 2 repertoire course(s) and do not hold a Level 1 certification, you may choose to take either a Level 1 or a combined Levels 1 & 2 exam. If you have taken the Level 2 repertoire course(s) and already hold a Level 1 certification, you are only required to take the Level 2 exam, which is practical only.

You may also choose to examine at Level 1 on a certain portion of the repertoire and at Level 2 on another portion. However, as a general rule, we do not recommend only testing on part of the repertoire learned. We encourage you, if at all reasonable, to test on all levels and all repertoire for the courses you have taken. Exceptions can be made if you and your instructor trainer feel it impossible for competency to be reached in all areas within the prescribed time period, with the provision that you will not teach that repertoire.

If you test for a Combined Levels 1 & 2 (Essential, Intermediate, and Advanced) certification and only do well on the Level 1 (Essential and Intermediate) repertoire, you will be awarded Level 1 certification. If you are taking a combined Matwork and Reformer exam or a combined Matwork, Reformer, CCB exam and testing for Level 1 & 2, you may be awarded Level 1 in a certain portion of the repertoire and Level 2 in another portion.

What is a Passing Score?

You must receive an average score of 80% (practical and written) and achieve a minimum score of 75% on each portion in order to pass. Both of these requirements must be met in order to achieve certification.

What if My Course Finished Longer Than Six Months Ago?

If you have failed to meet the six-month requirement to complete your examination, you must complete private review hours with an instructor trainer to reinstate your eligibility. Material covered will be specific to your needs to better prepare you for the exam. The number of hours required is based on the course material that must be covered and the demands of the course repertoire.

The Minimum Private Session Requirements Are:

- ▶ Matwork – 1 hour
- ▶ Reformer – 1 hour
- ▶ Matwork & Reformer – 1 to 2 hours
- ▶ Matwork, Reformer, & CCB – 2 to 3 hours

The Instructor Trainer may recommend further privates or study as preparation.

What Will I Be Asked to do for My Practical Exam?

The time allotment for each practical exam is as follows:

- ▶ Matwork – 1 hour
- ▶ Reformer – 1 hour
- ▶ Mat & Reformer – 1.5 hours
- ▶ Mat, Reformer, Cadillac, Chair & Barrels – 2 hours

The initial five to ten minutes of the exam are dedicated to information gathering. You are required to ask your subject pertinent questions regarding history, physical condition and goals.

For the postural analysis portion of the exam, you are required to analyze the subject from both sides, front and back view. Using visual observation AND palpation, verbally relaying your findings to the examiner. You are also required to give a general description of your planned workout including: what muscles / muscle groups will be targeted, what alignment issues will be addressed and what props or modifications may be necessary.

For the next five to ten minutes you will take your subject through the *Five Basic Principles* in proper sequence, using clear imagery and movement cues to help the subject properly achieve biomechanical body awareness. You must clearly explain why each of the principles is important.

The following key points should be mentioned and proper cueing and correcting of the subject should be demonstrated.

1. Breathing

- ▶ In through the nose, out through the mouth with pursed lips
- ▶ Emphasis is on 3-D breath especially into the posterior and lateral aspects of the rib cage, because these tend to be under utilized areas
- ▶ Exhaling deeply can also help activate the deep support muscles by engaging the transversus abdominis
- ▶ Explanation of the action of the transversus and how it stabilizes the lumbo-pelvic region, especially in neutral position.
- ▶ The gentle contraction of the deep pelvic floor muscles also aids in firing the transversus abdominis
- ▶ This breath pattern helps avoid unnecessary tension in the neck and shoulders
- ▶ This breath pattern helps relaxation
- ▶ The rib cage opens out and up during an inhale, promoting spinal extension and closes in and down during exhale, promoting spinal flexion

2. Pelvic Placement

- ▶ In neutral pelvic placement, the natural lordotic curve of lumbar spine is present
- ▶ ASIS and Pubic Symphysis lie approximately in a horizontal plane drawn parallel to the floor when lying supine
- ▶ Neutral promotes good shock absorption and efficient movement patterns throughout body
- ▶ Neutral is usually used during closed kinetic chain activities
- ▶ Imprinted position is a slight posterior pelvic tilt with slight lumbar flexion and is used to gain stability if neutral cannot be maintained and often used during open kinetic chain activities
- ▶ Imprint involves shortening of obliques without activation of glutes

3. Rib Cage Placement

- ▶ Emphasis is put on breathing into the posterior and lateral aspects of the rib cage
- ▶ Abdominal wall attaches to the lower ribs. Be aware of maintaining abdominal engagement and not popping the ribs
- ▶ Abdominals stabilize rib cage and therefore spine during movement of the arms
- ▶ Used to keep the spine neutral and stable

4. Scapular Movement & Stabilization

- ▶ Scapula lacks bony attachment to the ribs and spine (only attaching to clavicle), thereby providing mobility to the upper limb, which must be counterbalanced with stability
- ▶ It is important to balance the surrounding muscles and to control the movement of the scapulae
- ▶ The scapulae should lie flat on the rib cage and glide across it without winging
- ▶ Protraction, retraction, elevation, depression, upward rotation and downward rotation are available movements
- ▶ Stabilizing the scapulae is necessary during the initiation of every exercise

5. Head & Cervical Placement

- ▶ Cervical spine should hold its natural curve (anterior convex) and the skull should be balanced directly above the shoulders in sitting or standing
- ▶ Pads or pillows may be needed in supine or prone to prevent hyperextension of the cervical spine
- ▶ Cervical spine should continue the line of the thoracic spine in neutral, during flexion, extension, lateral flexion and rotation
- ▶ Cranio-vertebral flexion, flexing the cranium on the first two vertebrae of the cervical spine, not jamming the chin into the chest, occurs initially when flexing the upper torso from a supine position
- ▶ Use these methods to (dynamically) stabilize the cervical area and avoid strain.

The remainder of the practical exam is dedicated to taking your subject through an appropriate workout.

The following areas will be evaluated:

- ▶ Postural analysis.
- ▶ Stated focus of workout.
- ▶ The *Five Basic Principles*: taught separate of the Warm Up in Matwork and applied to all the exercises.
- ▶ Teaching manner and energy (attitude, motivational, verbalization skills). You are guiding your subject with control and develop a rapport with your subject.
- ▶ Ability to cue: use of imagery, verbal cues, and kinesthetic cues (touch) to aid in guiding your subject through the exercises and transitions, cues should specific to your subject and be a combination of muscular and tactile cues and imagery to achieve movement to incorporate and reinforce all basic principles.
- ▶ Ability to correct: use of imagery, verbal cues, and kinesthetic cues (touch) to ensure correct alignment and proper execution of exercises; knowledge from course(s) to achieve dynamically stabilized, conscious and safe movement.
- ▶ Knowledge of content, knowing the relevant repertoire of exercises and the corresponding movement and breath patterns, minimum number of exercises for each piece and level.
- ▶ Exercise progression and rationale for the exercises chosen, applying adaptations and modifications as necessary.
- ▶ Rhythm and pace of the workout: fluidity, using transitions from one exercise to another, choosing a pace that challenges the individual without compromising the *Five Basic Principles* or causing overexertion, and cueing in a manner that encourages proper timing of movement and breath, the workout fit the required amount of time for the exam.

Expect to be questioned periodically on the exercises and your choices. This is to evaluate the depth of your understanding of the exercises and how to administer them.

After working on each individual piece of equipment you may be asked to teach a few exercises of the examiner's choosing to "spot check" your knowledge of the entire repertoire.

Completed Observation and Practice Logs must be brought to the practical exam.

Exams will not be processed unless accompanied by these logs.

The number of exercises listed after each type of exam below is the attached minimum requirement.

More exercises can be included where time allows.

Note: an exercise with variations only counts as one exercise. For example, if Footwork positions 1, 2 and 5 are shown it counts as one exercise, not three. Also, advanced versions of exercises that are only slightly different from the intermediate (e.g., Short Spine) would not count as meeting the minimum requirement of advanced exercises, but may certainly be included.

Matwork Exam

Following the postural analysis and *Five Basic Principles* you will guide your subject through a 40-50 minute workout that combines Essential and Intermediate level exercises.

Level 1:

Minimum eight Essential, four Intermediate exercises.

Combined Levels 1 & 2:

Minimum four Advanced exercises (in addition to above) It is important to incorporate Fitness Circle® resistance ring and Flex-Band® exerciser and possibly Arc Barrel into the workout.

Reformer Exam

Following the postural analysis and *Five Basic Principles* you will guide your subject through a 40-50 minute workout that combines Essential and Intermediate level exercises.

Level 1:

Minimum six Essential, four Intermediate exercises.

Combined Levels 1 & 2:

Minimum six Advanced exercises (in addition to above).

Matwork & Reformer Exam

Following the postural analysis and the *Five Basic Principles* you will guide your subject through a 70-80 minute Mat and Reformer workout that combines Essential and Intermediate level exercises.

You are allotted approximately thirty minutes for Matwork exercises and 40-50 minutes for a Reformer workout.

For the Matwork portion, it is important to incorporate Fitness Circle® resistance ring, Flex-Band® exerciser and possibly the Arc Barrel into the workout.

Exercise Requirements

Exercise Requirements

Level 1:

Matwork – minimum six Essential, three Intermediate exercises.

Reformer – minimum six Essential, four Intermediate exercises.

Combined Levels 1 & 2:

Matwork – minimum three Advanced exercises (in addition to above).

Reformer – minimum four Advanced exercises (in addition to above).

Matwork, Reformer, Cadillac, Chair & Barrels Exam

Following the postural analysis and the *Five Basic Principles* you will guide your subject through a workout for the remaining 1 hour and 40 minutes to 1 hour and 50 minutes that combines Essential and Intermediate level exercises.

You are allotted approximately 20 minutes for Matwork exercises and approximately 30 minutes for a Reformer workout.

For the Matwork portion, it is important to incorporate Fitness Circle, Flex-Band and possibly the Arc Barrel into the workout. The remaining 50 to 60 minutes are dedicated to a workout using the Cadillac (15 minutes), Stability Chair (15 minutes), Ladder Barrel (10 minutes), Spine Corrector (5 minutes), and Arc Barrel (5 minutes) that combines Essential and Intermediate level exercises.

Exercise Requirements

Level 1:

Matwork – minimum four Essential, three Intermediate exercises

Reformer – minimum six Essential, three Intermediate exercises

Cadillac – minimum two Essential, two Intermediate exercises

Stability Chair – minimum two Essential, two Intermediate exercises

Ladder Barrel – minimum one Essential, one Intermediate exercises

Spine Corrector – minimum one Essential, one Intermediate exercises

Arc Barrel – minimum one Essential, one Intermediate exercises

Combined Levels 1 & 2

The following exercises must be done in addition to the above requirements:

Matwork – minimum three Advanced exercises

Reformer – minimum three Advanced exercises

Cadillac – minimum two Advanced exercises

Stability Chair – minimum two Advanced exercises

Ladder Barrel – minimum two Advanced exercises

Spine Corrector – minimum one Advanced exercise

Arc Barrel – minimum one Advanced exercise

Important General Info About All Exams

The subject you choose must be capable of doing required exercises safely. The time allotted for the workout portion of the exam will not allow for the completion of all exercises in the full repertoire. You must ensure that the exercises chosen represent a well-rounded workout that address all aspects of movement (i.e. flexion, extension, rotation, etc.) and cover the required number of Essential, Intermediate or Advanced exercises, while being appropriate to your subject.

Level 2 – Practical Only

You do not need to do a postural analysis, stated workout focus or the *Five Basic Principles*.

Your subject should be someone who is capable of executing at an Advanced level.

The test is designed in this way to evaluate the depth of your understanding of the exercises and how to relate them to your subject. Fitness Circle®, Flex-Band® and Arc Barrel should be incorporated into the Matwork portion.

The Advanced Matwork exam should be no longer than thirty minutes and include at least six advanced exercises after a brief warm up.

The Advanced Reformer exam should be no longer than thirty minutes and include a brief warm up and approximately nine Advanced exercises.

The Advanced Matwork/Reformer repertoire exam should be no longer than forty-five minutes and include a brief warm up on the mat, approximately three Advanced Matwork exercises and nine Advanced exercises on the Reformer.

The Advanced Matwork/Reformer/Cadillac, Chair & Barrels exam should be 1 hour long and include a brief warm up on the mat, approximately two Advanced Matwork exercises, six Advanced Reformer exercises, four on the Cadillac, two on the Chair, two on the Ladder Barrel, and one each on the Arc Barrel and one on the Spine Corrector.

What is the Best Preparation for the Practical Portion of My Exam?

In addition to fully understanding the material conceptually and physically reviewing the exercises, the best preparation for the practical exam is the practice teaching of as many different people as possible (family, friends, classmates) to apply your knowledge, adapt it to many different body types, improve your teaching skills, and become comfortable with your teaching experience. Practice teaching within the specified timelines and meeting at least the minimum number of exercises.

What do I Need to Know for My Written Examination?

The written exam consists of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank or matching type questions, and muscle identification questions. It will take you approximately 2-3 hours to complete the exam. However, you are not required to finish within a specified time limit.

The exam tests your knowledge of the following:

- ▶ Muscle origin, insertion and action (please refer to list of muscles in the Matwork/Reformer Support Materials book)
- ▶ Recognition of diagrams of individual muscles
- ▶ Concentric, eccentric and isometric contractions of specific muscles during specific movements and exercises
- ▶ Movements that make up exercises and their proper anatomical descriptions
- ▶ Order of Essential and Intermediate Matwork (Matwork, Matwork & Reformer or Matwork, Reformer, & CCB exam)
- ▶ Order of Essential and Intermediate Reformer (Reformer, Matwork & Reformer or Matwork, Reformer, & CCB exam)
- ▶ Ideal postural alignment and groups of opposing muscles
- ▶ Poor postural alignment and muscular imbalances
- ▶ Modifications to exercises for poor postural alignments
- ▶ Programs to accommodate poor postural alignments
- ▶ Proper set up of equipment, starting positions, movement patterns, and major intent or goal for each exercise
- ▶ The *Five Basic Principles* – anatomical descriptions and purpose
- ▶ Proper anatomical terms must be understood and used in all the relevant categories above.

Written Study Tools

In addition to STOTT PILATES® manuals and support materials, outside resources such as *Trail Guide to the Body* and *Muscular System Flash Packs*, are highly recommended. They can be purchased through their respective websites www.booksofdiscovery.com and www.bryanedwards.com.

I Can't Take My Exam at a STOTT PILATES Licensed Training Center. What are My Options?

If you are unable to complete the written portion of your exam at a Licensed Training Center you have the option of writing the exam by Proctor. The conditions of a proctored exam include the following:

- ▶ A third, uninterested party (notary or public library) must oversee/supervise the written exam.
- ▶ Written exam must be taken within the six-month period after the last certification course was completed.
- ▶ Exam fees (practical and written) must be paid in full prior to sending the written exam to the specified Proctor.

Use of a public library is standard protocol for most STOTT PILATES course examinations as these locations proctor a variety of examinations for various organizations.

Proctored Exam Procedures

Contact the STOTT PILATES Education Department at 1-800-910-0001 ext. 299 or email education@stottpilates.com to express your intent to write an exam by proctor. You will need to provide the following information:

- ▶ Exam location (i.e. public library), mailing address, and phone number
- ▶ Contact person supervising the written exam
- ▶ Method of payment (VISA, MasterCard, AMEX, or money order) The exam package will be sent to the contact person at the specified exam location. It will contain the following:
 - ▶ STOTT PILATES certification course written exam (1 copy)
 - ▶ Receipt of payment (2 copies)
 - ▶ Pre-addressed return envelope

Student Responsibilities

- ▶ Set time and date to write the exam.
- ▶ Provide up-to-date contact information (phone numbers and email address) on the written exam so that we can notify you of the results.
- ▶ Complete Observation and Practice Logs. We will not process practical exams without this accompanying paperwork.

Proctor Responsibilities

- ▶ Receive the examination package
- ▶ Supervise the examination process (date, time, and location to be agreed upon by the proctor and student)
- ▶ Seal the pre-addressed return envelope (with completed written exam and receipt of payment enclosed) and sign the back portion of the sealed envelope to ensure authenticity. The student is responsible for postage for this package.

Video Exam Procedure

The purpose of the practical examination is to observe you as you lead a "subject" through a workout. The subject should be another STOTT PILATES® student who has taken the course covering the same level and repertoire covered in the exam. The videotaped workout will be one hour for the Matwork or Reformer exam, 1-1/2 hours for the Matwork & Reformer exam, and 2 hours for the Matwork, Reformer, Cadillac, Chair & Barrels exam.

Technical Considerations

- ▶ Position the camera to observe a side view of the subject's body (the entire length), allowing for an additional three feet on either end to ensure enough room to move about. Be sure to keep the view close enough so that details in the subject's movement and the interaction between you and your subject can be seen.
- ▶ Test the video equipment and sound level and make sure that it records properly and that your voice can be heard on the tape.
- ▶ Face the camera (instructing on the far side of their subject to avoid obstructing the view).
- ▶ Camera adjustments should be performed at natural breaks in the examination process (i.e. between the postural analysis and Matwork or between the Matwork and Reformer).
- ▶ The tape should NOT be stopped at any other point during the practical component of the examination. Your subject's workout should be continuous.
- ▶ Video must be sent in either VHS NTSC, DVD, mini DVD, CD or VHS PAL formats.
We do NOT accept any other format for practical examination submission.

Conducting the Exam

Please read, *'What is Involved in the Practical Exam?'* section for more detail. Follow the timelines and minimum requirements outlined. You should state your name and the name of your test subject. The test subject must be familiar with the required repertoire associated with your exam.

How Long Does it Take to Receive Notification of My Results?

Exam results will be sent directly to you, normally by email. The LTC and/or Instructor Trainer will also be informed of the marks. Marking takes between four to six weeks from the date of the exam.

What if I Don't Pass My Exam?

If you have to retake a portion of or the entire exam, this should happen within six months of the date of the original exam. This ensures that the information remains relatively fresh but allows time to study and improve in the necessary areas. If this time limit has passed, it is highly recommended that you book privates with an instructor trainer.

If you take your exam for the first time and fail both portions, you have one more opportunity, within six months, to successfully pass the exam. If you fail both portions the second time, you must wait six months before retesting.

If you fail one portion of the exam on the initial test, you must retake that portion within six months of the original exam. If the six-month time limit has passed you must take both the written and practical again.

To find a Licensed Training Center near you visit www.stottpilates.com/education/centers.html

How Much Will it Cost to Write my Exam?

For up to date exam fees please visit www.stottpilates.com/education/exams or contact your Licensed Training Center near you.