



# Technical Manual



This document outlines the key components of the technical framework which will underpin REPs UAE under the following headings:

- **Structure of the Register**
- **Level Descriptors**
- **Role Descriptors**
- **Occupational Standards**
- **Qualification Approval for Entry to REPs**
- **Continuing Professional Development**
- **Dealing with Current Professionals**



## Introduction

REPS United Arab Emirates has been established and initiated by the Dubai Sports Council.

REPs UAE is a register which recognises the qualifications and expertise of exercise and fitness professionals. It is a system of regulation to ensure exercise professionals meet the industry's agreed standards. It is the only way to independently verify that exercise and fitness professionals are competent and appropriately qualified to do their job.

REPs UAE will be based on standards of international best practice, while being developed to suit the specific context of the UAE fitness industry.

One of the main underpinning principles of REPs UAE is Entry by Qualification. Instructors must demonstrate that they have gained skills and knowledge through a programme of learning before accessing the register.

The main function of the register is to provide a list of qualified and competent professionals. However to achieve this list, and to achieve the benefits to the industry and the nations health which will result from it, there needs to be a detailed and robust technical underpinning to the register. By technical we mean the structure of the register and the issues of role descriptors, occupational standards, qualifications and training that sit under it.

This short manual details the key technical decisions which have been taken so far in the development of REPs UAE.

## Structure of the Register



The structure of REPs UAE is based on the main roles which exist in the UAE fitness industry. It is a three level structure as determined by the Dubai Sports Council. Within each **level** there are **categories** corresponding to the roles in the industry.

The Register will initially be made up of eight categories across three levels as follows:

Level	Category
Level 1	Assistant Instructors
Level 2	Group Fitness Instructor
	Group Fitness Instructor (Freestyle)
	Gym Instructor
	Aqua Fitness Instructor
Level 3	Personal Trainer
	Pilates Teacher
	Yoga Teacher

Other categories, for example disability, management, or training for medical conditions, may be added in later years.

Each instructor who applies to REPs UAE will be placed on the register with the appropriate level and categories according to their fitness qualifications, these will appear on their REPs UAE membership card and certificate.

Training providers will be able to offer Entry Qualifications which are approved to give entry to REPs UAE against these levels and categories.

## Level Descriptors



### **LEVEL 1:**

An Assistant instructor. They are usually new recruits in the process of acquiring their formal fitness qualification. A registered member will supervise their work at all times. Note: Level 1 is not to be used for instructors who are working as independent trainers but are not qualified at a higher level. Level 1 is for assistant instructors who are not designing programmes or working independently.

### **LEVEL 2:**

Instructors, who are able to work independently to promote physical fitness and to plan and teach sessions. There are gym, exercise to music (Group) and aqua aerobics instructors at level 2.

### **LEVEL 3:**

Advanced instructors, who are able to devise and deliver programmes to meet individual or group fitness needs. Personal trainers, Yoga, and Pilates teachers are at level 3.

## Role Descriptors



The REPs UAE Role Descriptors provide a short “snapshot” of the eight categories of REPs UAE. They can be used by employers or members of the public to quickly see what an instructor can do.

### Assistant Instructor (Level 1)

An Assistant Instructor is usually a new recruit in the process of acquiring a fitness qualification at Level 2 or 3. Assistant Instructors have the competence to provide basic assistance to exercise participants in the gym. They will be able to assist with safety, maintenance of equipment and promoting exercise and physical activity. They will also be able to safely give a demonstration of the use of gym equipment and stretching. Finally they will have some basic knowledge of anatomy and physiology and can give basic advice to improve performance. An Assistant Instructor will work under supervision at all times and can not work independently to deliver sessions or design programmes.

### Group Fitness Instructor (Level 2)

A Group Fitness Instructor has the competence to independently instruct group exercise sessions. They will be able to apply the core elements of a Level 2 instructor to their work including: health screening, principles of anatomy and physiology, motivation, healthy lifestyles, health and safety and customer service.

A Group Fitness Instructor will focus on the delivery of exercise sessions to a group, normally in the studio environment. Music may or may not be involved in the session, where music is involved class participants will not be expected to work to the beat and phrase of the music and original choreography is not a requirement of a Group Fitness Instructor.

Further competences will include planning group exercise, preparing for a group exercise session, delivering group exercise, bringing a session to an end and evaluating the session.

A Group Fitness Instructor could be qualified with one or more “pre-choreographed” exercise routines. However they will also need to demonstrate competence against the core Level 2 Standards.

## Group Fitness Instructor (Freestyle) (Level 2)

A Group Fitness Instructor has the competence to plan and instruct group exercise sessions to music. They will be able to apply the core elements of a Level 2 instructor to their work including: health screening, principles of anatomy and physiology, motivation, healthy lifestyles, health and safety and customer service.

A Group Fitness Instructor (Freestyle) will focus on the delivery of exercise sessions to a group to music, normally in the studio environment. They will have competency in the planning, selection, sequencing and progression of exercises and appropriate music, and instructing and monitoring client to ensure safe conduct of activities. They will be able to plan original choreography for sessions.

Further competences will include planning group exercise, preparing for a group exercise session, delivering group exercise, bringing a session to an end and evaluating the session.

## Gym Instructor (Level 2)

A Gym Instructor can independently plan and supervise exercise in the gym. They will be able to apply the core elements of a Level 2 instructor to their work including: health screening, principles of anatomy and physiology, motivation, healthy lifestyles, health and safety and customer service.

They have the competence to plan, demonstrate, supervise and monitor gym based exercise. They will be also be competent to collect information, plan gym programmes, instruct in the gym and supervise exercise. Finally they will be able to monitor client progress and adapt gym programmes. They can plan or supervise exercise using a variety of equipment and training specifications from cardiovascular training, resistance training and flexibility training.

Level 2 Gym Instructors are not Personal Trainers and are not able to plan long term individualised programmes for a range of fitness goals and deliver personal training sessions.

## Aqua Fitness Instructor (Level 2)

An Aqua Fitness Instructor has the competence to plan, deliver and evaluate water based fitness activities. They will be able to apply the core elements of a Level 2 instructor to their work including: health screening, principles of anatomy and physiology, motivation, healthy lifestyles, health and safety and customer service.

They will also be able to understand and apply knowledge of aquatic exercise environments, their benefits and limitations, exercise techniques, and related equipment, exercise progressions, and stretching used in water based classes.

Further competences will include planning water-based exercise, preparing for a water-based exercise session, delivering water-based exercise, bringing a session to an end and evaluating the water-based exercise session.

### Personal Trainer (Level 3)

A Personal Trainer has the competence to design and implement holistic short, medium and long term exercise programmes for a range of clients with a range of exercise goals. They will be able to apply the core elements of a Level 3 Advanced Instructor including conducting health screening, applying the principles of exercise science to programme design, supporting long term behaviour change and applying motivational techniques, promoting health and safety and providing customer service.

They will also be able to carry out a client fitness assessment, using a range of fitness tests. Designing, managing, reviewing and adapting personal training programmes is a core competence of the personal trainer. Planning and delivering safe, effective and inspiring personal training sessions is also an important part of the role. Finally a personal trainer will understand and apply the principles of nutrition and weight management to their clients' programmes.

### Pilates Teacher (Level 3)

A Pilates Teacher is able to design, manage and adapt a series of mat Pilates sessions for apparently healthy adults of all ages and deliver Pilates sessions. They will be able to apply the core elements of a Level 3 Advanced Instructor including conducting health screening, applying the principles of exercise science to programme design, supporting long term behaviour change and applying motivational techniques, promoting health and safety and providing customer service.

A Pilates Teacher will also be able to teach Pilates including the skills of giving clear instructions, demonstrating skills and techniques and monitoring a Pilates class, and correcting exercise with clear and positive feedback. A Pilates Teacher can teach participants in a Pilates class or work with a single client.

The main competences of the Pilates Teacher are: Designing mat Pilates sessions; Preparing to teach mat Pilates sessions; Teaching mat Pilates exercises; Bringing mat Pilates sessions to an end; Monitoring and reviewing participant progress.

### Yoga Teacher (Level 3)

The Role Descriptor and Occupational Standards for Yoga Teacher are not being defined at this time. The Yoga category routes to entry of REPs UAE will be developed with relevant yoga organisation partners and training providers who deliver yoga courses.



## Occupational Standards



The underpinning standards for each level and category are based on the “ICREPs Global Standards” developed by the International Confederation for Registers of Exercise Professionals.

The standards have a simple format with a title, then a brief introduction saying what the standard is about – then two sections one called “performance criteria” which describes what the exercise professional should be able to do, and one called “knowledge and understanding” which describes what the exercise professional should know. Together these describe the competence to work in the fitness industry in a range of functional area. The standards are completely work-based, they describe competence in the workplace.

REPs UAE is a guarantee that instructors on the register have met the standards, normally this is confirmed through the instructor holding a qualification which matches the standards. The standards are the building blocks for the whole industry. Employers can use the standards to develop job descriptions, training providers can use the standards to develop courses, instructors must work to the standards to stay on the register.

The full standards can be found in the separate document “REPs UAE Occupational Standards” available from the register.

REPs UAE is exploring links with the vocational education system and qualifications framework of UAE. Changes may be made to link REPs to this system if appropriate.

## Qualification Approval for Entry to REPs



REPs UAE operates a principle of “Entry by Qualification”. Some evidence of certified fitness education is required to access the register. If local training providers are approved to qualify instructors against the levels and categories of the register then it is easy for REPs UAE to place the instructors on the register.

Courses which qualify an instructor in one of the categories of REPs UAE are called “Entry Qualifications”. External quality assurance is a key principle in the approval of qualifications.

There will be four routes for education providers to choose from to have their Entry Qualifications approved to give entry to REPs UAE:

- a) Use the UK qualification approval system – this involves being quality assured by a UK awarding body and offering UK qualifications which are on the UK National Qualifications Framework. UK awarding bodies provide the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for these qualifications; they also provide the external quality assurance. The qualifications are certificated by the UK awarding body. The awarding body is accredited by the UK qualifications regulator Ofqual. The UK awarding body certificate would be sufficient for an instructor to gain full entry to REPs UAE in the level and category that corresponds to the qualification.
- b) Use the Australian fitness qualification system. Australian qualifications are known as Certificate III or Certificate IV, based on Unit Standards developed by Service Skills Australia and supported by Fitness Australia. Courses should be delivered in accordance with requirements to give entry to the Australian Fitness Register (Fitness Australia).
- c) Use the South African qualifications system, where qualifications are assured through the South African Qualifications Authority and Sector Council Cathsetta. A visit from a SAQA/ REPs South Africa representative is part of the process.
- d) Use the ICREPs course accreditation scheme in conjunction with a USA certification agency. This is run by ICREPs and CYQ, the UK Awarding Body, – this process does not involve using a UK qualification, the qualification is checked against the standards by ICREPs/CYQ. In this scenario CYQ would not act as a UK Awarding Body, they would act as an agent of ICREPs to implement quality assurance checks such as qualifications and experience of staff, mapping to occupational standards, programme delivery, valid and reliable assessments, physical environment and equipment, teaching aids and learning resources. To be eligible for this route the training provider must be linked to a US certification agency who are accredited or planning to achieve accreditation with NCCA. This provides an added level of quality assurance, particularly to the examination processes.

Training providers can gain more information the accreditation options from the REPs UAE Technical Director.

REPs UAE would like to speak to providers about providing direct access to REPs UAE for instructors on graduation from approved courses. For example by providing a list of names to REPs UAE, and potentially having the option of including the cost of registration in course fees. Approved Entry Qualification providers and the courses they offer will be listed on REPs UAE website.

REPs UAE is exploring links with the vocational education system and qualifications framework of UAE. Changes may be made to link REPs to this system if appropriate.

## Continuing Professional Development



Continuing Professional Development (CPD), or “lifelong learning” is a key part of all registers of exercise professionals and vital to the ongoing professionalism of the industry. Instructors need to keep their skills up-to-date and gain new skills to meet the changing demands of the industry (eg innovations and technological advances) and meet the evolving needs of their clients.

It is normal to ask registered instructors to undertake a certain amount of CPD every year. All members of REPs UAE will need to gain 10 CPD Points per year. 1 CPD Points equals 1 hour of development activity. There are a wide range of development activities which are eligible for CPD points and could include courses, conferences, Sports Council events etc. REPs UAE will provide support to members to access and log their CPD points so that they can demonstrate the activities they have done when they come to re-register.

Employers can also apply for CPD Points for in-house training for their staff.

Specific REPs UAE CPD Points logos will be developed to give to endorsed providers.

REPs will honour CPD points from courses endorsed in other ICREPs countries such as UK, Australia, South Africa.

REPs UAE has also developed its own CPD approval system which includes provision for individual course endorsement and a CPD license.

## Dealing with Current Professionals



The biggest challenge to any new Register is how to deal with all the current professionals in the industry. They will have been in the industry from between 1 and 40 years, and their fitness education may have been gained long ago or in any country in the world – but they are working in the industry and will usually be highly skilled and competent.

When individual instructors apply to REPs UAE they will be dealt with in one of three ways:

- 1) Full entry
- 2) Provisional entry
- 3) Entry denied

Or in more detail:

1) We fully recognise and accept their qualifications to give full entry to REPs UAE in one or more of the levels and categories. They receive full entry and do not need to more education (except their CPD every year). These people will hold a qualification we know and recognise such as a UK awarding body qualification or qualification which is ICREPs recognised. We also know the qualification systems from most of Europe, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa through links to the registers in those countries and can easily accept instructors with the correct qualifications from these countries (ie the ones that would give them entry to the REPs in those countries).

2) We know they have done some education which is probably relevant and meets the UAE standards to some extent, and they have some experience in the industry but we can not be sure they have met all the standards. They may have a qualification from 10 or 20 years ago or a qualification where we can not verify that it meets the UAE fitness standards (eg a degree in sports science, or a course from a country where we are not familiar with the qualification system). These instructors will be given “provisional entry”. They will be put on the register with provisional status for one year. Within one year they must demonstrate they have met the full standards for the level and category they are seeking. REPs UAE and the training providers will set up a system of “Test Centres” where they can receive these provisional members and give them assessment and any training required (using an APA process) so they gain the relevant full qualification and can come back to REPs UAE and upgrade to full status.

Note: the training provider will undertake the Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA) Process, not the register.

Test Centres for the purpose of upgrading instructors from provisional to full status operate in the UK. It is envisioned the same system will apply in UAE.

Further information will be sent to training providers by the Technical Director in due course.

3) There is no evidence from their CV that the instructor has gained any fitness education or certifications and has no relevant experience and is denied entry to REPs UAE. These instructors have to go to a training provider and start their education from scratch and reapply to REPs UAE when they have a full qualification certificate.

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