

Group fitness instructor Job Description

A free job description template for the Fitness industry

Company Name: _____

Location: _____

Employment Type: _____

Reports To: _____

Date: _____

DISCLAIMER

This group fitness instructor job description template is designed to reflect Australian workplace standards and fitness industry practices at the time of publication. Confirm the applicable modern award for your business and ensure compliance with all relevant employment laws.

1. Position overview

A group fitness instructor plans and leads group exercise classes — such as spin, HIIT, yoga, pilates or circuit — cueing safe technique, motivating participants and keeping the class flowing to time. The role combines strong presentation and energy with exercise knowledge and a focus on participant safety.

In Australia, group fitness instructors are typically classified under the Fitness Industry Award 2020 (MA000094) as fitness employees, usually around Level 3 or 3A as qualified instructors, depending on class type, experience and responsibility.

This template provides a foundation for creating clear, compliant job descriptions that attract engaging instructors while setting appropriate expectations for the role. Once hired, manage your class timetable efficiently with rostering software.

2. Key responsibilities

Class planning

Designing engaging, well-structured class formats appropriate to the style, participant mix and available equipment or space.

Class delivery

Leading group exercise classes with clear cueing, strong energy and effective pacing so participants stay safe and motivated throughout.

Technique coaching

Demonstrating and correcting exercise technique, offering modifications for different fitness levels, and preventing injury during classes.

Participant engagement

Welcoming newcomers, building a positive class atmosphere and encouraging regular attendance and progression.

Equipment and setup

Setting up, checking and packing down class equipment and audio, and reporting any faults or safety issues promptly.

Safety and hygiene

Ensuring the studio is safe and clean, following WHS procedures and responding appropriately to any incidents during class.

3. Skills and attributes

- Presentation energy: Confident, motivating stage presence that keeps a diverse group engaged and moving safely for the full class.
- Exercise knowledge: Solid understanding of class formats, cueing and safe technique across the styles you offer.
- Communication: Clear cueing, warm participant interaction and the ability to give quick, constructive corrections.
- Group management: Ability to lead classes of varied sizes and abilities, offering modifications so everyone can participate.
- Safety awareness: Attention to correct technique, participant screening and WHS to prevent injury during high-intensity classes.
- Reliability: Punctuality and dependability for scheduled classes, including early-morning, evening and weekend timeslots.

4. Qualifications and requirements

Group fitness instructor requirements combine a fitness qualification with current safety certifications and any format-specific accreditations. Some are mandatory, while others are preferred or desirable.

- Certificate III in Fitness (required) — A Certificate III in Fitness (group exercise) or equivalent is the standard qualification for group instructors
- First aid and CPR (required) — Current first aid and CPR certification is required to lead classes safely
- Working rights (required) — Eligibility to work in Australia
- Format accreditations — Program-specific certifications (for example, Les Mills, spin, yoga or pilates) are advantageous for those class types
- Professional registration — Registration with AUSactive (formerly Fitness Australia) is preferred by many employers
- Class experience — Previous group instructing experience is desirable but not always essential for entry-level formats

5. Working conditions

- Classes concentrated in peak early-morning, evening and weekend timeslots
- Physically demanding work leading and demonstrating exercises
- Split and broken shifts across multiple class blocks in a day
- A mix of studio, gym floor and occasional outdoor class settings
- Timetables that vary by season and class popularity
- Compliance with WHS, hygiene and equipment-safety procedures

6. Award information

Fitness industry award 2020

Most group fitness instructor positions in Australia are covered by the Fitness Industry Award 2020 (MA000094). This modern award sets minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for employees in gyms, studios and health clubs. View current Fitness Award pay rates.

The award classifies employees across Levels 1–7 (including 3A and 4A). A group fitness instructor is typically classified around Level 3 or 3A as a qualified instructor. For FY2026/27, a Level 3 instructor earns about \$27.97/hr full-time/part-time and \$34.96/hr casual. Use award interpretation software to calculate pay accurately.

Penalty rates and allowances

Under MA000094, full-time and part-time staff receive Saturday at 125%, Sunday at 150% and public holidays at 250%. Casual employees instead receive a 25% loading on ordinary weekday hours and a single flat rate of about 130% of the base for ordinary hours worked on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday — an unusual feature of this award.

Because instructors often teach split class blocks, a broken shift allowance of about \$18.07 per day may apply, plus a first aid allowance of about \$3.40 per day. Confirm the current rates and check whether an enterprise agreement applies in place of the award.

7. Frequently asked questions

About the role

Q: What does a group fitness instructor do?

A group fitness instructor plans and leads group exercise classes such as spin, HIIT, yoga or pilates. They cue safe technique, motivate participants, offer modifications for different abilities and keep the class flowing to time. It is an energetic, participant-facing role that combines presentation skills with exercise knowledge and a focus on safety.

Q: What award covers group fitness instructors in Australia?

Most group fitness instructor positions in gyms and studios are covered by the Fitness Industry Award 2020 (MA000094), which sets minimum pay, penalty rates and conditions. Sporting clubs and council leisure centres may fall under different awards, and some businesses may instead be covered by an enterprise agreement. Always confirm which instrument applies.

Q: What classification level should I use for a group fitness instructor?

Under the Fitness Award, group fitness instructors are typically classified around Level 3 or 3A as qualified instructors. The award runs from Levels 1–7, with advanced instructors and personal trainers at Level 4/4A. See our Fitness Award pay rates guide for current rates at each level.

Q: Do I need to include pay rates in a job description?

It's not legally required, but including indicative pay rates can attract more applicants and set clear expectations. You can reference the applicable award rate or use phrases like 'Award rates plus penalties' or 'Competitive per-class or hourly rate.' Check the current Fitness Award rates for guidance.

Qualifications

Q: What qualifications does a group fitness instructor need?

The standard qualification is a Certificate III in Fitness (group exercise) or equivalent, along with current first aid and CPR certification and working rights in Australia. Format-specific accreditations — such as Les Mills, spin, yoga or pilates — are advantageous for those class types.

Q: Do group fitness instructors need first aid certification?

Yes, current first aid and CPR certification is a standard requirement because instructors lead participants through physical activity. Track expiry dates so certifications stay current — HR software makes this easy to manage across a team of instructors.

Q: What qualifications should I require vs prefer?

Mandatory requirements usually include a Certificate III in Fitness, current first aid and CPR, and working rights in Australia. Preferred qualifications include AUSactive registration and format-specific accreditations. Avoid over-qualifying the role, as it can narrow your candidate pool unnecessarily.

Q: Can I hire group fitness instructors for specific class formats only?

Yes. Many instructors specialise in particular formats such as yoga, pilates, spin or HIIT. Specify the required accreditations for each format in the job description, and use scheduling that matches instructors to the classes they are qualified to teach.

Employment

Q: Should I hire casual or permanent group fitness instructors?

This depends on your timetable. Casual instructors offer flexibility for variable class schedules but attract a 25% casual loading under the Fitness Award. Permanent part-time staff provide timetable consistency and stronger retention. Many studios use a mix — permanent staff for core classes and casuals for peaks and cover.

Q: What penalty rates apply to group fitness instructors?

Under the Fitness Award (MA000094), full-time and part-time staff receive Saturday at 125%, Sunday at 150% and public holidays at 250%. Casual staff instead get a 25% loading on weekday hours and a flat rate of about 130% of the base for ordinary hours on weekends and public holidays. Use award interpretation software to calculate rates accurately.

Q: What is the broken shift allowance for instructors?

Broken shifts are common in fitness — for example, a morning and an evening class block. Under the Fitness Award, a broken shift allowance of about \$18.07 per day (plus about \$2.15 for excess fares) applies on top of the rates for the hours worked. Confirm the current amount in the Fitness Award pay guide.

Q: What should I include in a group fitness instructor employment contract?

Key elements include: position title and classification level, employment type (casual, part-time or full-time), pay rate, applicable award, reporting structure, main duties and required certifications such as Certificate III in Fitness and first aid. For casuals, include the 25% loading. Use our digital employment contracts to simplify this process.

Rostering

Q: How far in advance should I provide rosters to instructors?

Award and agreement roosting rules vary, so confirm the notice period that applies to your business. As a general practice, providing timetables at least 7 days in advance gives instructors visibility of their classes. Using roosting software helps ensure compliance and reduces last-minute changes.

Q: How do I roster instructors to weekly class timetables?

Build reusable roster templates for your weekly timetable, then match qualified instructors to each class format and timeslot. Use roosting tools to track hours, monitor coverage and adjust when instructors are unavailable. See our guide on how to roster fitness staff.

Q: How do I handle class swaps between instructors?

Set a clear policy that swaps only happen between instructors qualified for that class format, and require manager approval. Use roosting software with swap and approval workflows so cover is always suitably qualified and hours are tracked accurately for payroll.

Q: How do I manage instructor availability for roosting?

Collect availability preferences during onboarding and update them regularly. Use HR software and roosting tools to track when each instructor can work and which formats they teach. Clear availability policies simplify timetable planning and reduce gaps in coverage.