

## 3.2 Your Duty of Care

The Role and Responsibility of a yoga teacher and legal implications of yoga teaching

### **Part 1**

Ethical Practice,  
Equality & Inclusivity

# The code of ethical conduct

What is ethical conduct? According to Kylea Taylor:

*“Ethical behaviour is reverence for life demonstrated by right relationship to another.”*

She says there will be an external locus and an internal locus.

- **Internal locus:** our own ability to determine what is ethical in each situation
- **External locus:** the guidance laid down by a professional body:-
  - Providing a consensus of shared values
  - Encourages less deviation amongst its members
  - Gives us a framework upon which to base our teaching
  - Providing ideas upon to reflect upon to develop our own internal locus
  - Enables the professional body to discuss issues with members
  - Allow the professional body to act upon complaints if they arise

See the Code of Ethical Practice for BWY Teachers

# Equality & Diversity and promoting inclusion

- *“Equality is about the rights of learners to have access to, attend, and participate in their chosen learning experience.” (Gravells:2011 p47)*
- This is about equal opportunity where it is recognised that everyone is different but all have equal rights.
- This should be regardless of:
  - Age
  - Disability
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Race
  - Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
  - Sex
  - Sexual orientation

*The nine protected  
characteristics of  
The Equality Act 2010*

## So when teaching ensure you:

- Are non-judgmental
- Challenge any direct or indirect discrimination, stereotyping, prejudice, harassment, bullying and biased attitudes by yourself or other learners
- Challenge your own values, attitudes and beliefs so you are not imposing these on your learners
- Do not have favourite learners or give some more attention than others
- Do not indulge the minority at the expense of the majority
- Ensure particular groups are not offended: for example faiths or religions
- Ensure particular learners are not disadvantaged or advantaged
- Treat all learners with respect and dignity
- Use activities and assessments which are pitched at the right level
- Use questions which are worded so as not to cause embarrassment to learners

As highlighted in the BWY Equity Policy we must recognise the following are absolutely unacceptable:

- **Discrimination**
  - Directly by treating someone less favourably for reasons relating to a protected characteristic
  - Indirectly by seemingly giving practices, provisions or criteria which apply equally to all but in practice can disadvantage those with a protected characteristic
- **Harassment:** any form of unwanted or unwelcome behaviour which violates people's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment
- **Victimization:** treating someone unfavourably who has in good faith used the organization's complaints procedure
- **Bullying:** misusing power or position to persistently criticise, humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence

## The BWY Equity Policy also highlights:

- Whenever possible it will make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons
- There will be positive action to address any under-representation in its membership, workforce, or those wishing to participate in the practice of yoga
- This policy will be communicated to all members, volunteers, employees, and teaching members.
- There is a monitoring and evaluation system in place
- There is a complaints procedure in place
- The policy is reviewed at least once every three years.

## Promoting inclusivity

- Inclusivity refers to your ability to involve all of your learners, treating them fairly and equally without directly or indirectly excluding anyone.
- It is concerned with ensuring your learner's needs are met i.e. they:
  - Can fully participate
  - Feel they are safe
  - Feel they are valued
- To do this you will need to:
  - Identify individual needs (e.g. initial student questionnaire & follow up questions)
  - Create good lesson plans & Schemes of Work (incl. differentiation using mods/alts, using mix of teaching methods etc.)
  - Facilitate positive learning (e.g. use appropriate language, use student names, make aids available as needed etc.)
  - Assess the learning (e.g. note group & individual achievement, make adjustments as needed to make learning achievable, give feedback & encouragement etc.)
  - Evaluate your teaching (e.g. self-evaluation upon the efficacy and inclusivity of your teaching, receiving formal and informal evaluation from your students)

*See pages 50 to 51 of Gravells A., Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector, Exeter, UK: Learning Matters Ltd, 4<sup>th</sup> edition 2011*

# Bibliography

- Farhi D., Teaching Yoga, Berkley, CA: Rodmell Press, 2006, pp17-19
- Gravells A., Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector, Exeter, UK: Learning Matters Ltd, 4<sup>th</sup> edition 2011
- Taylor K., The Ethics of Caring: Honouring the Web of Life in Our Professional Healing Relationships, Santa Cruz, CA: Hanford Mead Publishers, 1995, p10