



Scope of Practice

A registered yoga teacher may pursue any activity that falls within the Scope of Practice. Currently, in New Zealand, yoga teacher registration is based on verification of initial and continuing competence through the professional body, Yoga New Zealand. Some yoga teachers will hold additional qualifications that complement the scope of Yoga Teaching, which will permit such practitioners an extended Scope of Practice, for example being a registered psychologist, physiotherapist, doctor, naturopath etc. Such extended scope is beyond normal Yoga Teaching practice and is to be regulated by the scope and codes of the professional registering body of other such disciplines. The duty of care of a yoga teacher is to ensure the safety of a student at all times and to refer to a more appropriate therapist or medical practitioner when the student presents with symptoms outside the expertise of the teacher.

A yoga teacher has qualifications, specialised skills and knowledge in the application of Yoga.

Yoga teachers registered by Yoga New Zealand have an approved yoga teaching qualification and agree to adhere to professional ethics, guidelines and codes relating to the practice of yoga teaching in New Zealand.

Yoga Teaching

A yoga teacher is qualified to liaise with other health professionals to:

- Receive and provide referrals from and to other appropriate healthcare providers.
- Be part of a multi-disciplinary team when necessary.
- Engage with medical or allied health professionals (when appropriate) and use best practice referral/ feedback processes to optimise client health and wellbeing outcomes.

A yoga teacher is NOT qualified to:

- Advise about other health treatment modalities other than referring clients to appropriate personnel or services.
- Request diagnostic tests or procedures unless suitably qualified.
- Interpret raw diagnostic test results.
- Prescribe medication, nutritional supplements or herbs from Western or traditional medical methods such as Chinese medicine or Ayurveda, unless suitably qualified.
- Advise about ceasing prescribed medication.
- Perform any invasive procedures.

- Judge or make recommendations about any other form of advice or treatment from another healthcare professional.
- Work with clients presenting with issues outside the teacher's areas of competence.
- Advertise themselves as beyond the scope of yoga teaching unless they hold other qualifications
- Diagnose a medical condition.
- Make false claims about yoga's therapeutic and healing capacities.

A yoga teacher is qualified to have an appropriate understanding of health and health systems to:

- Be informed by diagnosis provided by other health professionals qualified to do so.
- Have a basic understanding of transference and counter-transference.

A yoga teacher is qualified to work from a yoga educational framework:

- Work within the scope of a yoga teaching qualification with a variety of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health presentations.
- Offer an integrated set of practices aligned to the needs of the individual and according to yoga models of health such as, but not confined to, the pancamaya kosha (dimensions of the human system) and guna (fundamental forces of nature).
- Include yoga practices such as asana (postures), pranayama (breathwork), relaxation, meditation, mudra (energetic gestures and seals), banda (energy locks), mantra (sacred sounds), bhavana (imagery), sankalpa (affirmation/intention), yogic lifestyle and nutrition advice according to a yoga framework, education in yoga philosophy, and other practices steeped in the yoga tradition and for which the therapist has received appropriate training, certification and registration.

Yoga Teaching may occur in the following settings:

- Individualised yoga teaching that occurs in a one to one setting.
- A group yoga class consisting of people with a variety of conditions. Again, individual modifications will be given and individual assessment provided prior to class entry.