

Your Duty of Care

The Role and Responsibility of a yoga teacher and legal implications of yoga teaching
Part 2

Risk Assessment in Yoga

There are two main areas of risk assessment which pertain to:

- **The students**
- **The environment**

And for both of these we must endeavour to take **reasonable steps** to ensure safe practice. This is an ongoing responsibility as student's circumstances and the environment can change. However we are not responsible if something could not have reasonably foreseen.

We must always take steps to address anything identified as a risk whether we are employed or self-employed and if it cannot be removed then we should not teach.

Whenever a risk is identified then we should retain evidence of the factors considered and the steps taken to reduce it.

Q2 Creating a risk assessment checklist

This will provide excellent evidence that you have considered factors which may constitute a risk to your students...

What factors might you add to your checklist?

Remember that if a risk is identified you would need to make a note of steps taken to reduce it and this must be kept as evidence...perhaps you can make a space for this as a reminder at the bottom of your checklist?

Risk assessment and your students....

- Before we work with a student we need to know about their level of experience, their physical capacity and their health and the student questionnaire will give us this knowledge.
- In addition we need to closely observe students as we teach and adjust our teaching according to our observations.

Student Questionnaire

- This a source of information to enable us to:
 - meet the needs of our individual students
 - be aware of modifications or alternatives we must provide if medical conditions, injuries or structural problems are present
 - inform students that they must ask their health provider if they are in doubt as to whether they should practice yoga
- We should make a note on the form to show we have been made aware of something and can briefly state what steps will be taken.

Q3 Consider the BWY Student Questionnaire Template. Write a short statement regarding your views on its suitability, indicating if you would make any changes for use with your classes and why. State (1) how long will you keep questionnaire (2) how you will keep the information confidential (3) how you will store the questionnaire. . .

- To answer the remaining parts of Q3 you will need to consider keeping records and in particular the issues surrounding data protection.....

Keeping Records

You should keep:

- Registers
- Student questionnaires
- Schemes of work/class plans/changes noted
- Records of accidents/incidents
- Checklist for risk assessment
- Checklist for emergency procedures

Data Protection Act 1998

See page 34 in your student information handout and notice that we need to abide by the eight principles of the act; for us the most important points are:

- Only ask for information which is actually needed
- If computerized information is kept ensure there is a password and if paperwork is kept then make sure it is kept safely and is never on show
- Keep information up to date so you will need to add information as it is given to you and could give the questionnaire to students termly or periodically
- Do not pass on information to other parties, and you will need to seek students permission to allow other teachers to see it if for instance covering your class. You might like to add this to your questionnaire so you have permission given already
- Destroy information for students who no longer attend your classes
- Your students have the right to see the information kept if they wish to do so
- Our insurers require us to keep all records for a minimum of three years

Emergency Procedures & Reporting Accidents or Incidents

- If employed you will need to be aware of your employers emergency procedures and usually there will be an induction including this.
- However if self-employed you need to create your own emergency checklist to include:
 - As part of risk assessment
 - Students made aware of emergency exits and points for meeting
 - Student register available and taken
 - Students contact details available (emergency contact & number)
 - BWY Accident Report Form available
 - Location of first aid box identified
 - Phone available
 - As part of an emergency – what will you do?
 - First aid available for immediate care?
 - Hospital required?
 - Call contacts?
 - Complete accident report form and send off
 - Report to RIDDOR?

Question 4: You are employed as a yoga teacher. A student falls during your class, hits her head and passes out. She is taken to accident and emergency. What details do you record and who do you inform?

Note you are being employed!

What will you do?

See your Student Information Manual

- For the Duty of Care Policy see pages 12 to 16
- For the BWY Accident Report Form see pages 24 to 26
- For Data Protection see page 34
- For Student Questionnaire see pages 35 to 36

You will need the information covered here to answer questions 3.2 questions 2, 3 and 4 and remember if you are teaching you will need to follow these procedures

Lastly, to see your own insurance schedule go to the BWY website at

<http://www.bwy.org.uk/insurance/>