

# USP121

## Principles of yoga philosophy and practice

The aim of this unit is to develop the knowledge and understanding of the principles of yoga philosophy and yoga practice. Learners will develop their knowledge of the history of yoga, the four paths of yoga, including the eight limbs and stages to Raja yoga, along with the different hatha yoga lineages and the introduction of yoga to the West.

Learners will explore the principles of energy anatomy, the energy bodies, chakras and nadis and consider these in relation to different yoga techniques and asanas. Learners will also consider ethical and professional practice for yoga teachers and students.

Level

**3**

GLH

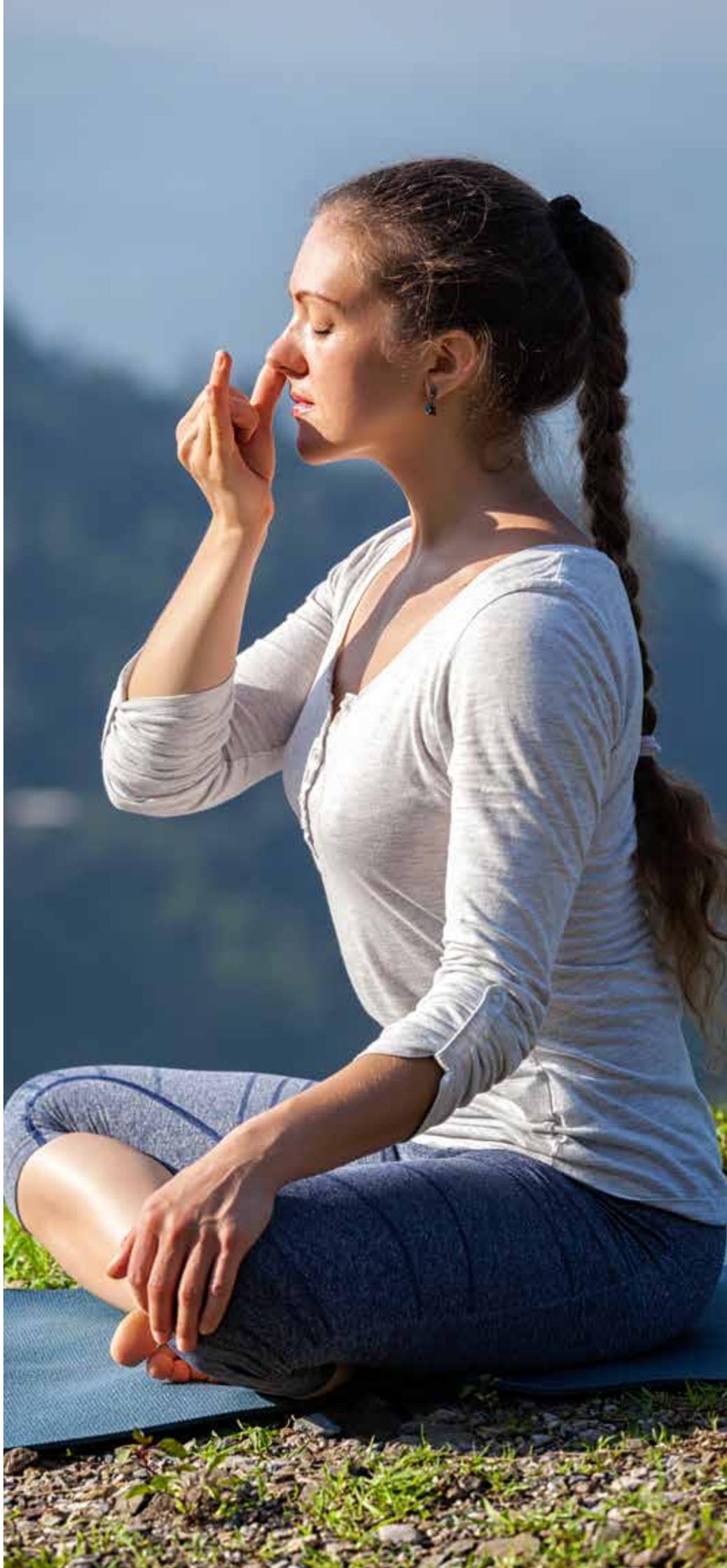
**60**

Observation(s)

**0**

External paper(s)

**0**



# Principles of yoga philosophy and practice

## Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit you will:

1. Know the philosophy and history of yoga
2. Know the principles of energy anatomy
3. Know the ethics and values of yoga

## Evidence requirements

1. *Knowledge outcomes*  
There must be evidence that you possess all the knowledge and understanding listed in the knowledge section of this unit. In most cases this can be done by professional discussion and/or oral questioning. Other methods, such as projects, assignments and/or reflective accounts may also be used.
2. *Participation log*  
There must be a log of 30 hours participation in yoga sessions (this must be signed by a qualified yoga teacher) and completion of a personal journal describing yoga practice and reflecting on understanding and experience of yoga philosophy, history and yoga techniques, including asana practice.
3. *Tutor/Assessor guidance*  
You will be guided by your tutor/assessor on how to achieve learning outcomes and cover ranges in this unit. All outcomes and ranges must be achieved.
4. *External paper*  
There is no external paper requirement for this unit.

# Developing knowledge

## Achieving knowledge outcomes

You will be guided by your tutor and assessor on the evidence that needs to be produced. Your knowledge and understanding will be assessed using the assessment methods listed below\*:

- Projects
- Observed work
- Witness statements
- Audio-visual media
- Evidence of prior learning or attainment
- Written questions
- Oral questions
- Assignments
- Case studies
- Professional discussion

*\*This is not an exhaustive list.*

Where applicable your assessor will integrate knowledge outcomes into practical observations through professional discussion and/or oral questioning.

When a criterion has been orally questioned and achieved, your assessor will record this evidence in written form or by other appropriate means. There is no need for you to produce additional evidence as this criterion has already been achieved.

Some knowledge and understanding outcomes may require you to show that you know and understand how to do something. If you have practical evidence from your own work that meets knowledge criteria, then there is no requirement for you to be questioned again on the same topic.

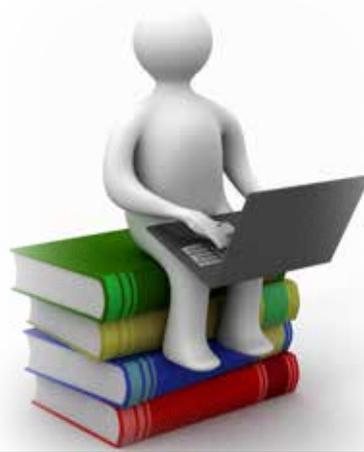
## Evidence requirements

There must be a log of 30 hours participation in yoga sessions (this must be signed by a qualified yoga teacher) and completion of a personal journal describing yoga practice and reflecting on understanding and experience of yoga philosophy, history and yoga techniques, including asana practice.

Your tutor/assessor will sign-off the log and journal once it has been completed.

	Date achieved	Assessor initials
Participation log (30 hours)		
Personal journal complete		

# Knowledge



Learning outcome 1

## Know the philosophy and history of yoga

You can:	Portfolio reference
a. Define the term yoga	
b. Explain the four paths of yoga	
c. Describe the history of yoga	
d. Describe hatha yoga lineages	



## Learning outcome 2

### Know the principles of energy anatomy

You can:	Portfolio reference
a. Describe the fundamental principles of energy anatomy that underpin yoga practice	
b. Describe the yoga techniques used in practice and their effects	
c. Describe the main asanas of hatha yoga	



### Learning outcome 3

## Know the ethics and values of yoga

You can:	Portfolio reference
a. Explain ethical practice for yoga teachers and students	
b. Explain professional practice for yoga teachers	

# Unit content



This section provides guidance on the recommended knowledge and skills required to enable you to achieve each of the learning outcomes in this unit. Your tutor/assessor will ensure you have the opportunity to cover all of the unit content.

## Learning outcome 1: Know the philosophy and history of yoga

**Define yoga:** The term yoga evolves from Hindu spirituality. It is one of the six philosophical schools of thought. It is believed to originate from the Sanskrit root word – ‘Yuj’, which means ‘to join’. Other definitions of meaning include: union, unite, being at one with the divine and the connection of mind, body and spirit.

**Four paths of yoga:** The four paths to yoga are Jnana yoga (philosophical study and use of intellect), Karma yoga (selfless service), Bhakti yoga (devotional path of prayer and mantra) and Raja yoga (Royal road), the 8 limbs (ashtanga) or 8 steps to Raja yoga)

1. Yamas – lifestyle values – non-violence
2. Niyama – lifestyle values – contentment, surrender of ego
3. Asana – hatha yoga postures
4. Pranyama – hatha yoga breath work
5. Pratyahara – withdrawal of senses
6. Dharana – concentration and focus of mind
7. Dhyana – meditation
8. Samadhi – bliss – super-conscious state

**History of yoga:** The history of yoga, including the six schools of Indian philosophy (Yoga, Samkhya, Nyaya, Vaishesika, Vedanta, Mimamsa). Reference to some of the key content from the main Yoga Texts (Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads) and how these texts inform yoga practice.

Outline a yoga timeline (Vedic Period, Post Vedic, Classical period, Modern, Hatha yoga) and the Introduction of yoga to the West. Development of yoga in the UK with consideration to different organisations and their roles including the British wheel of Yoga, Yoga Alliance, Fitness Yoga and the Register of Exercise Professionals. National Occupational Standards for yoga therapy (Skills for health).

**Hatha yoga lineages:** The three main lineages from Krishnamacharara including: Sri Pattabhi Jois (ashtanga vinyasa krama), BKS Iyengar (Iyengar) and Desikachar (Viniyoga).

**The Swamis** – Swami Sivanada (Sivananda) and his lineage (Swami Satyananda - Bihar school, Swami Vishnu Devananda and Swami Sada Sivananda). The lineage of Swami Vivekenanda including Bikram Choudhury (Bikram – Hot yoga).

**Other yoga lineages and practices** – kundalini, tantric, Scaravelli, Yin yoga, yoga therapy.



## Learning outcome 2: Know the principles of energy anatomy

### Fundamental principles of energy

**anatomy:** The three bodies (physical, energetic/causal and subtle/astral). Physical body or annamaya kosha/stula sharira. Causal body – karana sharira/seed body. Astral – sukshumna sharira.

**The energy body layers** – Annamaya kosha – physical/Pranamaya kosha – energetic/ Manomaya kosha – mind, knowledge/ Vijnanamaya kosha – wisdom, behaviour/ Anandamaya kosha – bliss, emotional.

**Models of energy flow and energy systems including** – Vayu (prana), the Nadis (Ida, Pingala, Sushumna), the Chakra system (seven main chakras - root, sacral, solar plexus, heart, throat, third eye, crown and Sanskrit names), other minor chakras, and earth star and transpersonal chakras (causal, soul star and stellar gateway).

**Models of mental and emotional behavior** – Klesa – causes of suffering (ignorance, ego, attachment, rejection, fear), abhyasa/ vairagya (practice/detachment) and antaraya (obstacles to a clear mind). Awareness of Ayurveda and the doshas.

### Yoga techniques used in practice

**and their effects:** Techniques and their connection to energy anatomy. Techniques include – asana/postures, pranayama/ breathing techniques, dharana/concentration, dhyana/meditation/reflection, relaxation, bhavana/visualisation, mantra – simple sounds and short supportive phrases in Sanskrit or own language – Om and chakra mantras (Lam, Vam, Ram, Yam, Ham, Ksham, Om), mudras (atmanjali/prayer; jnana, chin and dhyani), bandhas/locks (jalandhara/ throat; uddiyana/abdominal; moola/root; great lock/maha bandha), kriyas (kapalabhati - cleansing breath; jala neti/nasal cleansing; trataka/concentrated gaze). Consideration

should be given on how to adapt and modify the techniques for specific needs and when these may need to be excluded.

Benefits of the yoga techniques (including asanas), to include improvement in components of health and total fitness, self awareness, personal development, spiritual connection, unity of mind, body and spirit, being in the 'here and now' and living in the present moment, mindful awareness, reduced mental tension, clarity of mind, improved focus and concentration, improved confidence, assistance with managing emotions, improved energy and sense of wellbeing.

**Physiological benefits** – more effective breathing patterns, improved posture, improved flexibility, balance, strength, reduced physical tension (physical and mental), improved mobility, reduced joint pain, improved pain management, muscle tone, strength and endurance. Assists with management of chronic health conditions (e.g. reduced anxiety, improved bone density).

**Main asanas of hatha yoga:** The main asanas in different groups to include standing balances, forward bends, backward bends, rotations, strengthening postures, lateral balances, lying and seated postures (see range), e.g. Asana names in Sanskrit, e.g. uttanasana and English Language, e.g. standing forward bend.

Benefits and effects of asanas for the energetic body. Start positions for asanas (standing, seated, all fours, supine lying, prone lying, crook lying, crook seated). Preparatory, main and counter poses for all asanas. Correct alignment and teaching points, modifications and progressions, use of props, use of breath, use of mudras, bandhas, use of Drishti, use of visualisation and imagery.



### Learning outcome 3: Know the ethics and values of yoga

#### **Ethical practice for yoga teachers**

**and students:** Ethical practice with consideration to all four paths and the 8 limbs or stages to Raja yoga. Yoga as a service. Yoga lifestyle for modern living.

#### **Professional practice for yoga teachers:**

Professional practice and roles of different organisations (Federation of Holistic Therapists (FHT), Yoga Alliance (YA), Independent Yoga Instructors Network, British Wheel of Yoga (BWY), REPs/ Coachwise, Complementary and National Healthcare Council (CNHC). Codes of conduct (relationships, equality, health and safety, business and marketing and advertising). Insurance (different types and purpose, e.g. public liability). Maintaining own career development and continuing personal and professional development.