

USP123

Instructing yoga sessions

The aim of this unit is to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to deliver and instruct safe and effective yoga sessions.

Learners will develop knowledge of appropriate arrangements to prepare for yoga sessions, how to structure sessions safely and effectively and how to instruct and adapt the various yoga techniques and asanas to meet different client needs.

Learners will practice a range of instructional skills so that they can skillfully lead a group yoga session and practice, respond to client needs and adapt techniques and asanas to ensure safe and effective practice. Learners will also develop the knowledge and skills to evaluate their practice and identify ways to make improvements.

Level

3

GLH

60

Observation(s)

2

External paper(s)

0



Instructing yoga sessions

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit you will:

1. Be able to prepare the environment and equipment for a yoga session
2. Be able to instruct a safe and effective yoga session
3. Be able to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of the yoga session
4. Know how to deliver and instruct a safe and effective yoga session

Evidence requirements

1. *Environment*
Evidence for this unit may be gathered within the workplace or realistic working environment (RWE).
2. *Simulation*
Simulation is not allowed in this unit.
3. *Observation outcomes*
Competent performance of Observation outcomes must be demonstrated on **at least two occasions**. Assessor observations, witness testimonies and products of work are likely to be the most appropriate sources of performance evidence. Professional discussion may be used as supplementary evidence for those criteria that do not naturally occur.

Assessed observations should not be carried out on the same day for the same learning outcome. There should be sufficient time between assessments for reflection and personal development.

You need to meet the same standard on a regular and consistent basis. Separating the assessments by a period of at least two

weeks is recommended as competence must be demonstrated on a consistent and regular basis.

4. *Range*
All ranges must be practically demonstrated or other forms of evidence produced to show they have been covered.
5. *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.
6. *Case studies*
You must carry out and document evidence for delivery for at least 3 yoga sessions for a minimum of 3 client case studies (this may be as a group session or individual training sessions with each client). There must be a minimum of 3 sessions for each client.

Content of case studies: client screening records, session plans, client feedback and evaluation, self-evaluation.
7. *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.
8. *Additional information*
This unit **must** be delivered in conjunction with, and link to the content in the **Programming yoga sessions** unit. All asanas instructed must be fully planned.
9. *External paper*
There is no external paper requirement for this unit.

Achieving observations and range

Achieving observation outcomes

Your assessor will observe your performance of practical tasks. The minimum number of competent observations required is indicated in the Evidence requirements section of this unit.

Criteria may not always naturally occur during a practical observation. In such instances you will be asked questions to demonstrate your competence in this area. Your assessor will document the criteria that have been achieved through professional discussion and/or oral questioning. This evidence will be recorded by your assessor in written form or by other appropriate means.

Your assessor will sign off a learning outcome when all criteria have been competently achieved.

Achieving range

The range section indicates what must be covered. Ranges should be practically demonstrated as part of an observation. Where this is not possible other forms of evidence may be produced. All ranges must be covered.

Your assessor will document the portfolio reference once a range has been competently achieved.

Case studies

You must carry out and document evidence for delivery for at least 3 yoga sessions for a minimum of 3 client case studies (this may be as a group session or individual training sessions with each client). There must be a minimum of 3 sessions for each client.

Content of case studies: client screening records, session plans, client feedback and evaluation, self-evaluation.

Your tutor/assessor will sign below once it has been completed.

Evidence requirements	Date achieved	Assessor initials
Case study records		



Observations

Learning outcome 1

Be able to prepare the environment and equipment for a yoga session

You can:

- a. Prepare the area and safely set up the appropriate equipment for the yoga session*
- b. Prepare self to deliver a yoga session*

* May be assessed by supplementary evidence.

Observation	1	2	Optional
Date achieved			
Criteria questioned orally			
Portfolio reference			
Assessor initials			
Learner signature			



Learning outcome 2

Be able to instruct a safe and effective yoga session

You can:

- a. Welcome and prepare clients before starting the session*
- b. Verbally screen the clients and check their readiness to participate*
- c. Instruct a safe and effective opening phase that is appropriate to the clients, programme and environment needs
- d. Instruct a safe and effective main phase that is appropriate to clients, programme and environment needs
- e. Instruct a safe and effective closing phase that is appropriate to clients, programme and environment needs
- f. Monitor exercise safety and respond to clients' needs
- g. Adapt and modify techniques to assist client performance
- h. Use effective instruction skills to lead and control the session
- i. Use effective communication skills to support and motivate clients
- j. End the session safely and effectively
- k. Leave the environment in an acceptable condition for other users*

*May be assessed by supplementary evidence.

Observation	1	2	Optional
Date achieved			
Criteria questioned orally			
Portfolio reference			
Assessor initials			
Learner signature			



Learning outcome 3

Be able to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of the yoga session

You can:

- a. Evaluate the safety and effectiveness of the session using client feedback and own self-evaluation*
- b. Suggest ways to improve personal practice*

*May be assessed by supplementary evidence.

Observation	1	2	Optional
Date achieved			
Criteria questioned orally			
Portfolio reference			
Assessor initials			
Learner signature			



Range

*You must practically demonstrate that you have:

Instructed and adapted a session for a minimum of 3 different types of client needs	Portfolio reference
Clients with different experience of yoga - beginner or improver	
Clients of different ages and/or gender	
Clients with different levels of physical fitness - flexibility, strength, cardiovascular	
Client with different skill level - co-ordination, balance	
Clients with specific goals or requirements - to improve health, improve balance, assist with stress management, promote relaxation, improve flexibility, improve strength	
Instructed all phases of a yoga session	Portfolio reference
Opening phase with relaxation and mobilisation	
Main phase with a balanced selection of asanas	
Closing phase with pranayama, meditation and mantra	
Instructed a minimum of 1 flowing yoga sequence	Portfolio reference
Surya Namaskara - sun salutations	
Vinyasa flow (own design)	
Vinyasa flow (pre-designed)	
Vinyasa flow (pre-designed and for a specific goal)	

It is strongly recommended that all range items are practically demonstrated. Where this is not possible, other forms of evidence may be produced to demonstrate competence.



*You must practically demonstrate that you have:

Instructed a minimum of 5 standing balances with appropriate preparatory and counter poses	Portfolio reference
Tadasana - Mountain pose	
Vrkshasana - Tree	
Virabhadrasana 1 - Warrior – 1	
Virabhadrasana 2 - Warrior – 2	
Virabhadrasana 3 - Warrior – 3	
Malasana - Hindi squat	
Utkatasana - Chair (also strengthening)	
Garudasana - Eagle	
Natarajasana - Dancer (also a back bend)	
Instructed a minimum of 2 forward bends with appropriate preparatory and counter poses	Portfolio reference
Uttanasana - standing forward bend	
Prasarita padottanasana - wide legged forward bend	
Janu sirsasana - head to knee pose – seated forward bend	

It is strongly recommended that all range items are practically demonstrated. Where this is not possible, other forms of evidence may be produced to demonstrate competence.



***You must practically demonstrate that you have:**

Instructed a minimum of 8 seated or kneeling postures with appropriate preparatory and counter poses	Portfolio reference
Sukhasana - Cross legged easy pose	
Siddhasana - Perfect pose	
Ardha padmasana - Half lotus	
Padmasana – Lotus pose	
Dandasana - Staff pose	
Baddhakonasana - Cobbler’s pose or fixed angle pose	
Navasana - Boat pose	
Virasana – Hero pose	
Marjaryasana – Cat pose	
Bitilasana – Cow pose	
Upavista konasana – Seated wide angle pose	
Supta virasana – Reclining hero stretch	
Gomukasana - Cow face posture	
Simhasana - Lion pose	
Balsasana - Child pose	
Instructed a minimum of 5 lying postures with appropriate preparatory and counter poses	Portfolio reference
Apanasana – Wind relieving	
Ardhu Apanasana – Half wind pose	
Supta Hasta Uttanasana – Whole body stretch	
Savasana – Corpse pose	
Viparita karani – Legs up wall pose or inverted lake pose	
Supta padangutasana – lying hamstring stretch	
Instructed a minimum of 2 strengthening postures with appropriate preparatory and counter poses	Portfolio reference
Khumbhakasana - Plank	
Chaturanga dandasana - Crocodile	
Vasishthasana - Side plank	

It is strongly recommended that all range items are practically demonstrated. Where this is not possible, other forms of evidence may be produced to demonstrate competence.



***You must practically demonstrate that you have:**

Instructed a minimum of 3 rotations with appropriate preparatory and counter poses	Portfolio reference
Parivrtta Utkatasana - Twisting chair	
Parivrtta trikonasana - Revolved triangle	
Ardha matsyendrasana - Half lord of the fishes	
Jathara parivartanasana - Belly twist	
Instructed a minimum of 2 lateral postures with appropriate preparatory and counter poses	Portfolio reference
Utthita trikonasana - Triangle or extended triangle pose	
Uttihita Parsvakonasana - Extended side stretch	
Ardha chandrasana - Half moon pose	
Instructed a minimum of 5 backbends with appropriate preparatory and counter poses	Portfolio reference
Dhanurasana - Bow pose	
Bhujangasana - Cobra	
Urdhva mukha shvanasana - Upward facing dog	
Salabhasana - Locust	
Setu bandhasana or dwi pada pitham - Bridge	
Ustrasana - Camel pose	
Chakrasana - Wheel	
Matsyasana – Fish pose	

It is strongly recommended that all range items are practically demonstrated. Where this is not possible, other forms of evidence may be produced to demonstrate competence.



***You must practically demonstrate that you have:**

Instructed a minimum of 3 pranayama techniques	Portfolio reference
Ujjayi – Victorious breath	
Deep abdominal breathing	
Full yogic breath	
Brahmari - Humming bee	
Nadi sodhana - Alternate nostril breathing	
Kapalabhati - Lung cleansing	
Sithali - Cooling	
Sitkari Hissing	
Surya bhedana – Vitality stimulating breath	
Kumbaka – breath retention	
Instructed a minimum of 2 mudras	Portfolio reference
Atmanjali mudra - prayer	
Jnana mudra	
Chin mudra	
Dhyani mudra	
Instructed a minimum of 3 relaxation/meditation techniques	Portfolio reference
Dharana – A state of mind where focus and concentration is on one point	
Dhyana - Meditation	
Active muscular relaxation	
Passive muscular relaxation	
Bhavana – Visualisation	
Mantra – use of a sacred sound	

It is strongly recommended that all range items are practically demonstrated. Where this is not possible, other forms of evidence may be produced to demonstrate competence.

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

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.

**This is not an exhaustive list.*

Knowledge



Learning outcome 4

Know how to deliver and instruct a safe and effective yoga session

You can:	Portfolio reference
a. Describe the arrangements needed to prepare the environment and equipment for a yoga session	
b. Describe how to prepare self to deliver a yoga session	
c. Describe the information that needs to be provided to clients	
d. Describe a safe and effective yoga session structure	
e. Explain instruction skills	
f. Explain the main asanas of hatha yoga	
g. Explain how to monitor progress and identify whether any adjustments to the techniques are required	
h. Explain the roles, responsibilities and boundaries of a yoga instructor	
i. Explain how to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of a yoga session	

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: Be able to prepare the environment and equipment for a yoga session

Prepare the area: Prepare equipment to ensure the session is safe and effective and an appropriate atmosphere is created, to include yoga mats and the spacing and positioning (e.g. circle or lined/rows) and other equipment that may be needed (straps, blocks, bolsters, pillows, blankets, drinking water, music system, use of lighting, temperature, use of music, other props - candles, oils etc.), consideration to all of the above in relation to health and safety and other legalities, e.g. consideration to allergies for use of scented oils, music legalities, use of electrical equipment.

Prepare self: Personal preparation to include wearing appropriate clothing, personal hygiene, own mental and physical preparation (grounding and centering to be present for clients), no jewellery, long hair tied back.



Learning outcome 2: Be able to instruct a safe and effective yoga session

Welcome and prepare clients: Polite greeting and welcome of all clients, introduce self to all new participants, check all client needs and ensure appropriate screening has taken place (PAR-Q).

Verbally screen clients: Verbal screening to be conducted on a 1 to 1 basis to ensure confidentiality. Identify any changes to health and reasons for deferral or referral/ signposting to other professionals (and manage this with sensitivity and respect for client) or identify if clients are ready to participate (apparently healthy).

Instruct an opening phase: Appropriate time allocated, appropriate opening activities – mind and body preparation, focus and intention, relaxation, preparatory mobilisation and warming sequences, appropriate start positions (lying, seated, all fours), appropriate transitions and sequencing.

Use of safe and effective instruction skills – teaching position, demonstration, explanation – selection of instructions and pace, observation, correction methods, adaptation, modification, teaching points, visualisation and imagery, voice tone and volume to accommodate different learning styles (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic) and meet client needs.

Instruct a main phase: Appropriate time allocated, appropriate main activities, balanced asana practice (forward bends, back bends, twists, standing balancing, inversions strengthening, lateral), appropriate start positions, appropriate preparatory and counter poses, use of modifications and adaptations for different abilities, use of equipment and props to support clients (as appropriate), yoga techniques (focus, intention, concentration,

breath), vinyasa flow and themes (as appropriate) with appropriate transitions and sequencing.

Use of safe and effective instruction skills – teaching position, demonstration, explanation – selection of instructions and pace, observation, correction methods, adaptation, modification, teaching points, visualisation and imagery, voice tone and volume to accommodate different learning styles – visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and meet client needs.

Instruct a closing phase: Appropriate time allocated, appropriate closing activities and techniques (relaxation, pranayama, meditation, mantra), appropriate start positions (reclining, seated), appropriate transitions and sequencing to promote relaxation.

Use of safe and effective instruction skills – teaching position, demonstration, explanation – selection of instructions and pace, observation, correction methods, adaptation, modification, teaching points, visualisation and imagery, voice tone and volume to accommodate different learning styles – visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and meet client needs.

Monitor safety and clients needs: Use of appropriate teaching position, and changing of teaching position to ensure observation of all clients, question and answer to gather feedback from clients and offer 1 to 1 attention. Modification and adaptation of asanas and techniques to meet client needs and abilities.

Adapt and modify techniques: Use appropriate methods to modify and adapt to accommodate client needs, including appropriate asana start positions, range of



Learning outcome 2: Be able to instruct a safe and effective yoga session (continued)

motion, balance and support (use of wall or props to offer support or assistance, where appropriate), appropriate duration (length of hold and offer of resting postures), changes of leverage to reduce intensity and resistance (e.g. half plank instead of full plank), use of yoga techniques (breath work, focus, visualisation and concentration) to assist practice.

Effective instruction skills: Use of safe and effective instruction skills through all phases of the session – teaching position and changes of teaching position to enhance observation; correct demonstration and alignment; explanation (selection of instructions and pace), observation, methods of correction (including the use of tactile correction and how to use this sensitively and with respect to clients), adaptation and modification to accommodate clients, use of teaching points, visualisation and imagery, appropriate voice tone and volume. Methods used to accommodate different learning styles – visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and different client needs.

Effective communication skills: Use of verbal and non-verbal communication to accommodate different learning styles (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic).

Verbal communication (voice tone, volume, pace of speech, use of language, teaching points, use of visualisation and imagery).

Non-verbal (use of eye contact, body language, posture, demonstrations, facial expressions, proximity/spatial awareness, teaching position, tactile and guiding correction).

End the session: Appropriate time allowed to end the session and gain feedback from

clients, respond to client questions and provide feedback and support, including information on future sessions and home practice.

Leave environment in acceptable condition: Ensure all equipment is packed away, electrical equipment, including lighting and heating is switched off. Check that no client belongings have been left in the room and any rubbish is placed in bins (e.g. empty water bottles, tissues).



Learning outcome 3: Be able to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of the yoga session

Evaluate the sessions using clients' feedback and self-evaluation: All aspects of the session should be evaluated including: the safety and effectiveness of the session structure for meeting client needs; the safety and effectiveness of the selected yoga techniques and asanas (including choice of modifications); the effectiveness of the instructor/client relationship; the effectiveness of instructional techniques (teaching points, demonstration, teaching position). Evaluation should be considered with reference to client feedback and own observations.

Ways to improve personal practice: Methods to improve personal practice may include continuing professional development (CPD), workshops, additional reading (yoga texts), own personal practice, additional training and qualifications (yoga therapy, medical conditions), mentoring and coaching.



Learning outcome 4: Know how to deliver and instruct a safe and effective yoga session

Arrangements needed to prepare environment and equipment: Equipment to ensure the session is safe and effective and an appropriate atmosphere is created, to include yoga mats and the spacing and positioning (e.g. circle or lined/rows) and other equipment that may be needed (straps, blocks, bolsters, pillows, blankets, drinking water, music system, use of lighting, temperature, use of music, other props - candles, oils etc.), consideration to all of the above in relation to health and safety and other legalities, e.g. consideration to allergies for use of scented oils, music legalities, use of electrical equipment.

Prepare self: Personal preparation to include wearing appropriate clothing, personal hygiene, own mental and physical preparation (grounding and centering to be present for clients), no jewellery, long hair tied back.

Information for clients: Dates and times of sessions. The benefits of yoga, the demands of the session (level of complexity and challenge), the importance of developing own personal practice (not competing, working within own capabilities), any risks of participation, answers to participation questions to ensure informed consent.

Safe and effective yoga session: Opening phase, main phase and closing phase. Appropriate timings for each phase. The purpose and value of each phase and safe and effective exercises for each phase to meet different client needs.

Opening phase activities to include yoga techniques and asana for relaxation, preparatory mobilisation using appropriate start positions (lying, e.g. savasana,

seated, e.g. sukhasana, all fours, e.g. cat cow mobilisation, standing, e.g. surya namaskara), with flowing transitions.

Main phase activities to include a balance of asanas (forward bends, back bends, twists, standing balancing, inversions, strengthening, lateral, with appropriate preparatory and counter poses, use of modifications and adaptations for different abilities, use of equipment and props. The inclusion of Vinyasa flow and/or themes.

Closing phase activities to include yoga techniques and asana for relaxation, pranayama, meditation, mudra, mantra, chanting and prayers.

Instruction skills: Appropriateness of different instructional methods to accommodate different learning styles (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic). Demonstration, explanation, selection of instructions and pace (start positions, correct alignment, visualisation an imagery), observation and how to use changes of teaching position effectively, methods of correction (including the use of tactile correction and how to use this sensitively and with respect to clients), methods of adaptation and modification, use teaching points, appropriate voice projection and intonation.

Main asanas of hatha yoga: The main asanas in different groups, their names in Sanskrit and own language names (see range list - Standing balances – e.g. tree, warrior, Forward bends – e.g. uttanasana, Back bends – e.g. cobra, up facing dog, Inversions – e.g. down dog, shoulder stand, head stand, Rotations – e.g. belly twist, Strengthening – e.g. chair, crocodile, Seated – e.g. sukhasana, siddhasana, lotus, Lying – e.g. corpse). Awareness that



Learning outcome 4: Know how to deliver and instruct a safe and effective yoga session (continued)

some asanas fit more than one category. The start positions for all asanas and the preparatory and counter poses used. Correct alignment and teaching points for all asanas. Modifications and progressions for all asanas, including the use of props, use of breath, mudras, bandhas and drishti/focus, visualisation and imagery and reference to chakras that may assist client's performance.

Monitor progress and identify

adjustments: Monitoring clients through the use of observation and changing teaching position; observation of posture and joint alignment, use of question and answer to gather feedback and information from clients; how to adjust and modify various techniques to accommodate clients, how to correct clients sensitively and positively. Awareness of client goals and aims and their progress towards these goals; how to provide positive feedback to clients and information required for future sessions.

Roles, responsibilities and boundaries:

Professional practice (responsibilities and boundaries of role, including holding appropriate insurance and membership to professional organisations, maintaining continuing professional development, the importance of offering yoga sessions only in the way they have been trained and have experience to offer.

The qualities and skills of a yoga instructor (friendly, approachable, fair, honest, respectful, positive regard). The circumstances in which yoga can be offered as a first line of action without the need for other interventions, e.g. to assist stress management (instructors must have specialist knowledge and skills to deal with

specialist medical conditions, e.g. cancer).

The circumstances in which yoga cannot be a first line of action e.g. a broken limb which needs to be set. The reasons and purpose of referral to other professionals (medical conditions outside of scope of practice). Ethical practice as an instructor with consideration to all paths of yoga and the 8 limbs of raja yoga, yoga as a service and lifestyle for modern living.

Evaluate safety and effectiveness

of the yoga session: The purpose of evaluation and reflective practice. How to gather information from clients. How to deal with negative and positive feedback. How to provide feedback to clients. How to use feedback and own observations to develop practice. Areas to evaluate – session content and structure, instructional skills, communication skills, motivation, health and safety, client performance and satisfaction.