



Membership Information

Revised 27/1/09 (Please check the YTAA website to ensure you are reading the latest revision of this document). Please also see the separate document entitled "YTAA Application for Membership".

Introduction and background

The popularity of yoga in the community has grown significantly in recent years. In line with this growth, there has been an increase in the availability of yoga teacher training courses. These courses range in duration from a few weeks intensive to four years part-time, usually face-to-face, but sometimes also by distance learning. There is great disparity between teacher training courses, from less than 100 hours to more than 1000 hours with varying degrees of face-to-face contact.

As the national body for registration and representation of yoga teachers from all traditions and styles of yoga, the YTAA has an important role in guiding the national direction of yoga teaching in Australia. As such, we have a responsibility to carefully set standards for membership to protect both the public and the tradition of yoga. In the case of the public, it is important to ensure that consumers can trust that yoga teachers registered with YTAA have a level of training and experience considered to be a reasonable minimum standard by their peers.

For example, the YTAA believes that the minimum time required for integration of the philosophy and techniques of yoga into a new teacher's life is 12 months, whether the training is full-time, part-time or by distance learning. Likewise, YTAA has long maintained a requirement of 320 hours or more of yoga teacher training to become a full member of the Association, which is further broken down into the number of hours required for essential curriculum components and contact (face-to-face) hours. In the case of distance learning courses where face-to-face contact is limited, this is further broken down into content, contact and mentoring components.

However in recent years market forces and international influences have become increasingly relevant in yoga teacher training. Increasing numbers of new yoga teachers in Australia are being trained to the 200-hour Yoga Alliance (USA) standard. These new teachers were previously unable to join YTAA and therefore were unlikely to be influenced by YTAA's efforts to further develop teaching standards, such as the requirement for YTAA members to engage in Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

In February 2008, the YTAA national committee decided that it was important to address the gap between the requirements for YTAA membership and the proliferation of the international 200-hour teacher training standard. This will ensure that YTAA remains relevant to the profession it represents, and in a position to influence the future standards and direction of yoga teaching in Australia.

Provisional membership

Commencing 1 July 2008, YTAA introduced a 200-hour “Provisional” category of membership, and an increase in the number of hours training required for Full membership from 320 hours to 350 hours, with an upgrade path to Level 2 (Intermediate, 500 hours training and 5 years/500 hours teaching) and Level 3 (Senior, 1000 hours training and 10 years/1000 hours teaching). In the short term, anyone adversely affected by the changes may request special consideration, which will be assessed by the Committee on a case-by-case basis

The Provisional membership category is equivalent to the Yoga Alliance RYT200[®] standard and therefore internationally relevant. Teachers with 200 hours training in the required curriculum areas are able to obtain Provisional membership with YTAA, on the condition that they continue training in order to reach 350 hours of training (and therefore Full membership of the Association) within three years. Provisional members are able to teach yoga and qualify for yoga teaching Public Liability insurance.

In addition, new Provisional or Full members who have spent less than 12 months training to become a yoga teacher are required to enter into a mentoring agreement with a more senior recognised teacher to bring the length of time spent under supervision up to 12 months. Please see the *Mentoring Guidelines* document on the YTAA website for further information.

Full membership (Levels 1, 2 and 3)

Teachers with 350 hours training in the required curriculum areas are able to join YTAA as Full members (Level 1) subject to the requirement to enter into a mentoring agreement if the time spent in training to become a teacher was less than 12 months.

Level 2 (Intermediate) and Level 3 (Senior) membership were previously able to be earned by gaining years of teaching experience alone, however these levels now also involve further training to reach Intermediate membership with 500 hours of training (Level 2) which is equivalent to the Yoga Alliance RYT500[®] standard, and Senior membership (Level 3) which requires 1000 hours of training.

The definition of what constitutes “training” hours for the purposes of increasing levels of membership is the same as the definition and application of “CPD” described in the Continuing Professional Development, *CPD Policy and Forms* document available on the YTAA website. In simple terms it relates to training in yoga teaching, further broken down into training that is “core” to yoga teaching, and training that is “related” to yoga teaching, contact (face-to-face) or non-contact, with some activities earning more points than others. Full details are available in the CPD documentation.

Minimum hours of training in specific curriculum areas continue to apply to all levels of membership, to ensure teachers have received sufficient training in essential components of yoga, such as yogic physiology, anatomy and physiology and teaching techniques. Please see the Curriculum Table later in this document for further information.

Special Entry membership

Special Entry allows for the fact that traditional training in yoga may have been informal and not certified, therefore not easily demonstrated. If you feel that Special Entry applies to you, please be aware that you will need to provide a detailed explanation of your reasons for applying for Special Entry and sufficient documentation to demonstrate your training and experience. Information as to documentation required is available in the Application for Membership form. Requests for Special Entry are considered by the Committee on a case-by-case basis.

Requirements of Membership

All YTAA members (other than Associate members) are required to:

- Abide by the YTAA Code of Ethics
- Maintain current First Aid certification
- Maintain current Public Liability insurance for yoga teaching

Engage in Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

All YTAA members (other than Associate members) must earn at least 36 CPD points in each 3 years of membership, with evidence of CPD undertaken to be provided each year at renewal. Please see the *CPD Policy and Forms* document on the YTAA website for more details. Training undertaken as CPD also counts towards increasing levels of membership, therefore teachers are advised to keep good records of all training undertaken along with records of actual teaching experience gained.

Increasing levels of membership

There is no difference between the CPD points system and the training hours required to increase levels of membership in the YTAA. For example, you only need to earn 36 CPD points in each 3 year period in order to remain a YTAA member, whereas to increase from Level 1 to Level 2 requires 150 hours of training (equal to 150 CPD points) which can be accumulated over many years if needed.

Mentoring guidelines

Mentoring (both being a mentor and being mentored) is to be encouraged at all levels of seniority in yoga teaching. Mentoring has been part of yoga for thousands of years, with teachers handing down knowledge to students on a one-to-one basis. Ongoing mentoring is not a formal requirement of YTAA membership, but we encourage teachers at all levels of membership to see both mentoring and being mentored as a desirable and important part of ongoing personal and professional development in yoga. Please see the *Mentoring Guidelines* on the YTAA website for more information

Benefits of membership

All YTAA members (other than Associate members) enjoy the full privileges of the Association – they may vote, be elected to the Committee, and be included on the YTAA website referral service.

Benefits of membership are described in more detail on the YTAA website, but include:

- Advocacy, representation and support from a professional national association
- Discounted insurance tailored to yoga teaching with cover for multiple modalities
- Discounts on workshops, seminars and conferences organised by YTAA
- Regular networking opportunities with other yoga teachers
- The “Find a Teacher” website referral service so prospective students can find you
- The quarterly “Yoga Today” printed newsletter
- Access to the “Yoga Classifieds” on the YTAA website
- Access to the “Calendar of Events” on the YTAA website
- A regular monthly email newsletter with the latest news, events and training opportunities
- Use of the YTAA member logo (shown below) subject to the guidelines for use

Importantly, YTAA members support the work of the Association to further the cause of yoga as a professional discipline, promoting yoga to the public and developing yoga teaching standards in Australia.

Associate membership

Associate membership is for:

- People training to become yoga teachers (not yet teaching)
- Yoga teachers who are no longer teaching
- Other people who wish to support the work of the Association

As non-teaching members, Associates are not entitled to yoga teaching Public Liability insurance.

Associate members do not have voting rights, ie: they cannot vote at YTAA meetings and cannot be elected to the Committee. They can however, have input into debates or other processes on which votes are cast, and may be invited to serve on working parties established by the Committee.

Frequently asked questions about membership

What if I don't have a minimum of 12 months of teacher training?

- Engage in a mentoring agreement with a more senior recognised teacher for a period of time to achieve the minimum 12-month period under supervision. Mentoring involves undertaking regular (at least once weekly) supervised training in yoga teaching with a more senior teacher and can be structured in a way to best suit both you and your mentor, eg: teaching as a trainee teacher under supervision or assisting the teacher in class. At the conclusion of the mentoring period, your mentor should provide you with a letter confirming the length and nature of the mentoring period. Please see the *Mentoring Guidelines* on the YTAA website for further information.

What if I don't have enough hours of training in each of the curriculum areas?

- Please see the Curriculum Table in this document for a breakdown of the training hours required by curriculum area. In this case, you should engage in further training to achieve the required hours in each of the curriculum areas (eg: complete additional workshops or courses to complete all syllabus areas). There are a number of teacher training schools that provide short courses covering specific curriculum areas. Further training may also include formal mentoring with a more senior recognised teacher, eg: teaching as a trainee teacher under supervision or assisting the teacher in class, in which case a letter will be required from the mentor teacher to confirm the curriculum areas taught and the hours completed. Please see the *Mentoring Guidelines* document on the YTAA website for more information.

What if I don't have enough "contact hours"?

- Generally, at least 65% (two-thirds) of the hours spent training to become a yoga teacher should be "contact hours", meaning face-to-face contact with your teacher (eg: about 230 hours of 350 hours). The remaining hours can be completed as home study if compliance can be assessed. For example, if the teacher training course you attended required you to complete certain activities at home and to maintain a diary of those activities, and if the diary is checked and compliance is assessed as part of the course, then the home study component of the course may be counted towards your training hours. You must be able to provide documentation to demonstrate your eligibility for the home study (non-contact) component of the training.
- If you have less than two-thirds contact hours (such as attending a distance learning or correspondence course), and home study compliance was not assessed, please discuss this with the membership secretary to determine eligibility for membership. You may be able to enter into a mentoring agreement as described above to achieve the required contact hours.

What is required of a Fitness Professional wanting to teach yoga in a fitness setting?

- Fitness Professionals wanting to teach (or continue teaching) yoga in a fitness setting must first have their prior training and experience in yoga teaching assessed by YTAA before they can register with Fitness Australia as a Yoga Instructor. Please contact Fitness Australia for the requirements for registration as a Yoga Instructor. If you are not sure how your training or experience will meet YTAA requirements, please contact YTAA on 1300 881 451 or send an email to enquiries@yogateachers.asn.au for assistance. Please see the *Fitness Professionals and Yoga Teaching* document on the YTAA website for more information.

How can I use the YTAA member logo?

- YTAA members can use the YTAA member logo (shown) in their advertising and promotional materials. Use of the logo is limited to advertising, promotional materials and pages of your website directly related to your teaching, eg: the logo cannot be used in such a way as to suggest that YTAA has recognised any other aspects of your business, only your yoga teaching. Your right to use the logo remains always at the discretion of the YTAA committee.



Levels of Membership Curriculum Table

This is a guide to levels of individual membership of the Yoga Teachers Association of Australia. For Training School registration, please see the *Application for Registration of a Yoga teacher Training Course* document on the YTAA website.

		Yoga Teachers Association of Australia Levels of Membership			
	Curriculum area description and examples	Provisional member	Full member (Level 1)	Intermediate member (Level 2)	Senior member (Level 3)
Teacher Training	Minimum hours of yoga-specific teacher training required for entry to each membership level. This can include further training after becoming a yoga teacher.	200 hours	350 hours	500 hours	1000 hours
Personal Practice	Minimum years of personal yoga practice, of which at least one year must be prior to commencing yoga teacher training evidenced by a supportive teacher-student relationship.	1 year	2 years	5 years	12 years
Professional Teaching	Total minimum years and minimum hours of professional yoga teaching.	n/a	n/a	5 years and 500 hours teaching	10 years and 1000 hours teaching
Mentoring	Mentoring involves undertaking regular (at least once weekly) supervised training in yoga teaching with a more senior teacher and can be structured in a way to best suit both you and your mentor, eg: teaching as a trainee teacher under supervision or assisting the teacher in class	If the length of time you spent training to become a yoga teacher was less than one year, mentoring is required. (* see note below)	If the length of time you spent training to become a yoga teacher was less than one year, mentoring is required. (* see note below)	Ongoing mentoring (both as a mentor and mentoree) is recommended	Ongoing mentoring (both as a mentor and mentoree) is recommended
Special Conditions	Conditions relevant to membership level.	Provisional on qualifying for Full membership (Level 1) within 3 years. (*see note below)	n/a	n/a	n/a

		Yoga Teachers Association of Australia			
Level	Curriculum area description and examples	Provisional member	Full member (Level 1)	Intermediate member (Level 2)	Senior member (Level 3)
Anatomy and Physiology	Study of the anatomy & functional physiology of bodily systems.	30 hours Minimum 5 hours must be spent applying A&P to yoga teaching Minimum 5 hours must be spent on yogic physiology	30 hours Minimum 5 hours must be spent applying A&P to yoga teaching	50 hours Minimum 10 hours must be spent applying A&P to yoga teaching	90 hours Minimum 20 hours must be spent applying A&P to yoga teaching
Yogic Physiology	Study of subtle yogic physiology and energy fields, such as: Nadis, Koshas, Chakras, Gunas. etc. (study of Ayurveda not counted)		20 hours	30 hours	50 hours
Philosophy, Ethics and Lifestyle	Study of the yogic philosophies and yoga educational texts, ethics for yoga teachers, yoga lifestyle. There are a number of yogic texts but at least the following must be included: - Yoga Sutras of Patanjali - Hatha Yoga Pradipika - Bhagavad Gita - YTAA Code of Ethics	30 hours Minimum of 20 hours philosophy and 2 hours ethics	50 hours Minimum 30 hours philosophy	70 hours Minimum 50 hours philosophy	100 hours Minimum 80 hours philosophy
Techniques	Theory and practice of yoga techniques in traditional areas of yoga study. Yoga techniques such as: Asana, Pranayama, Meditation, Bandha, Mudras, Kriyas, Shatkarma, etc, relaxation, chanting, and other traditional yoga techniques. Substantial emphasis must be given to both the theory and guided practice of, in a dedicated teacher training environment.	100 hours Minimums: Asana 50 Pranayama 20 Meditation 10 At least 5 hours of Bandha and Mudra must be included in the Asana and Pranayama above	150 hours Minimums: Asana 100 Pranayama 20 Meditation 10 At least 5 hours of Bandha and Mudra must be included in the Asana and Pranayama above	200 hours Minimums as for Level 1	300 hours Minimums as for Level 1

		Yoga Teachers Association of Australia			
Level	Curriculum area description and examples	Provisional member	Full member (Level 1)	Intermediate member (Level 2)	Senior member (Level 3)
Teaching Methodology	Study and practice of teaching methodologies such as: Principles of demonstration, observation, communication, assistance, correction, adjustments, instruction, teaching styles, learning styles, etc.	30 hours, of which at least 10 hours must be specific to the teaching of yoga Business skills cannot be counted here	30 hours of which at least 10 hours must be specific to the teaching of yoga Business skills cannot be counted here	50 hours, of which at least 20 hours must be specific to the teaching of yoga Business skills cannot be counted here	90 hours, of which at least 40 hours must be specific to the teaching of yoga Business skills cannot be counted here
Integrative Practice and Teaching (Practicum)	Such as: supervised teaching practice, observation of teaching, assistance in classes taught by qualified teacher, receiving and giving feedback. For full members, this includes professional on-going mentoring and supervision under a more senior teacher.	10 hours	40 hours	50 hours	70 hours
Remaining Hours/Specialities	May be distributed among the categories above or in an area of specialisation such as: Therapeutic use of asana, pranayama, relaxation, meditation, cleansing practices, yoga for special needs groups such as children, pre/post natal, etc.	nil	30 hours	50 hours Suggested 30 to 50 hours per modality of specialisation	300 hours Suggested 30 to 50 hours per modality of specialisation
Overall Contact Hours		65% contact hours across all levels of membership and curriculum categories (see note below)			
Total Hours		200 hours	350 hours	500 hours	1000 hours

Notes to accompany the Curriculum Table

General guidelines

The Curriculum Table provides guidelines as to minimum requirements in training and experience for membership of YTAA. They are not absolute rules and the descriptions given are examples only. Membership is considered on a case-by case basis at the discretion of the Committee. Your actual training in yoga teaching may vary as required by style or tradition of yoga, and may not have come from a single source – you may have acquired your expertise in different ways, from different teachers with different learning models. However, overall your training and experience must largely cover the curriculum areas and time requirements shown in the Table, and you must be able to provide documentation to demonstrate this. In instances where no certificate is available, you must get testimonials from other people who can confirm the fact that you have the training and experience you claim. If you have any questions about your eligibility for membership, please contact YTAA on 1300 881 451 or send an email to enquiries@yogateachers.asn.au for assistance.

Provisional membership

Teachers with 200 hours training in the required curriculum areas are able to obtain Provisional membership with YTAA, on the condition that they continue training in order to reach 350 hours training (and therefore Full membership of the Association) within three years. Provisional members are able to teach yoga and qualify for yoga teaching Public Liability insurance.

Mentoring

For those who have spent less than 12 months training to become a yoga teacher, there is a requirement to enter into a mentoring agreement with a more senior recognised teacher to bring the length of time spent under supervision up to 12 months. Mentoring involves undertaking regular (at least once weekly) supervised training in yoga teaching and can be structured in a way to best suit both you and your mentor, eg: teaching as a trainee teacher under supervision or assisting the teacher in class. Please see the *Mentoring Guidelines* on the YTAA website for further information.

Contact hours

A guideline of 65% contact hours applies across all levels and curriculum areas of YTAA membership, however applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis and may fall outside this guideline if approved by the Committee. For example, some recognised distance learning courses may, by necessity, have lower contact hours, but will usually have substantial documented mentoring and home learning requirements.