



Ethical Statement

Maintaining a code of professional ethics is key for the people we teach and our own integrity as teachers and as an organisation. Below we have outlined the ethical principles that we commit to.

Ethical Commitments

In our own practice

As individual practitioners, we commit to embodying the journey we hold space for others to take. In practice, this means a dedicated and ongoing commitment to:

- our own embodied personal healing, so that we are able to both empathise and connect to the work of our students whilst also separating our own work from that of the people we teach.
- self-care in order to avoid vicarious trauma or empathy fatigue and to support us in the longevity and consistency of our work. This may include, but is not limited to good sleep hygiene, time in nature, community connection, a healthy diet, exercise, movement, yoga, meditation, breathwork.
- ongoing professional development within the field of yoga, yoga therapy and embodied healing as well as in space holding, social and community justice, cultural appropriation, anti-racism, anti-oppression and community development.
- honouring the sources of the learning and wisdom passed down to us through correct and fair citation
- ensuring regular and relevant supervision and peer support is both available and accessed as a tool for reflective practice, as well processing and managing vicarious trauma or empathy fatigue

As individuals, in class when teaching

As individuals and as organisations, we commit to creating spaces that resist the traditional power dynamics of a yoga class. Instead, looking to create democratic and co-created spaces which allow for individual student voices to be not only heard but prioritised. As yoga teachers who hold varying levels of privilege, we recognise that our privilege holds us in a place of power, and we look to de-construct that as much as possible to create safer and more inclusive places in which to practice yoga. In practice that looks like a dedicated and ongoing commitment to:

- offering choice and empowering students to use it
- holding an unconditional positive regard towards all students
- using invitational language with no onus on a hierarchy of choices offered
- appropriate level of demonstration when teaching asana
- appropriate presentation or dress for the teacher/guide/facilitator (this may depend on the population and or environment)
- awareness of and training in a trauma informed approach to yoga, which recognises and respects each student's individuality and puts the students as the centre of decision making and also allows for some useful regulation tools which can be offered if necessary
- an awareness of mental health and how it may show up in the student's presentation and behaviour
- an understanding of true modifications that allow for any, body, shape, ability, age and demographic
- a clear and transparent set of guidelines appropriate to the class that is being taught for instance around use of phones, eating, drinking water, mat placement, use of equipment, using the bathroom, talking in class etc. This set of guidelines can potentially be co-created where appropriate
- understanding our biases and working to challenge them
- appropriate class planning/practice offering with regards mental and physical health, emotional state, age, stage and circumstance
- firm boundary holding with regards our role as yoga teacher, which includes but is not limited to issues around
 - friendships/relationships
 - social media
 - confidentiality
 - advice giving/signposting
 - giving receiving gifts/money/favours

Accountability and professional standards as self-employed teachers

As self-employed contractors of Edinburgh Community Yoga, we expect ECY teachers to be accountable for the highest standards of integrity and professionalism.

- having adequate insurance and Protecting Vulnerable Groups Disclosure where appropriate.
- holding relevant and appropriate training for the populations you are teaching
- attending regular supervision and/or having a mentor.
- consistently displaying high standards of behaviour and appearance
- not accepting responsibility for any valuables on behalf of anyone else
- not accept money as a gift, borrow or lend money to students or staff from partner organisations.
- never agreeing to carry or deliver goods or money into or out of any partner organisation

Scope of practice

It is important to highlight that we recognize and understand the scope of our practice and the limits thereof and to make that public, transparent and overt. That we as individual teachers, organisations and as a collective understand our duty of care and also the limits of it. We do this with a dedicated and ongoing commitment to:

- understanding and continuing to question and review our role as yoga teacher
- adhering to the boundary setting noted above
- holding and understanding a safeguarding policy and procedure which
- clearly states the role of a yoga teacher in regard to a safeguarding issue and provides us with clear guidelines around signposting, referrals and information sharing
- and commit to taking action should we feel ourselves working outside these boundaries
- We define the scope of practice we hold as individuals by
- the qualifications we hold
- the work and life experience we have

Accountability and Professional Standards as Organisations

As not-for-profit organisations purporting to empower, represent and collaborate with people who may be experiencing socio-economic deprivation, stigmatisation, oppression, poor mental, emotional or physical ill health it is imperative that we make dedicated and ongoing commitments to professional standards and accountability in order that we may offer as much protection to our students, teachers, volunteers, partners and collaborators as possible. We propose to do this by:

- recognising the importance of representation and working towards making sure all races, genders, ethnicities, ages and abilities are represented in our teaching team and administration
- a respect for the confidentiality of the students, whilst understanding the commitment to safeguarding we hold
- working alongside and in collaboration with partner organisations who can support our work whilst bringing their expertise to the group dynamic
- overtly disallowing any form of discrimination or bullying within the yoga space or group by having clear policies and procedures in place to deal with it should it arise
- committing to robust policies and procedures that support the professionalism of the service for teachers, employees, volunteers and service users
- offering classes that are actively anti-discriminatory by making them as accessible and inclusive as possible and considering yoga style, teacher, venue, equipment, advertising etc.
- taking responsibility for background checks and ensuing appropriate systems are in place to keep everyone as safe as possible
- robust volunteer recruitment or employment procedures to avoid discrimination and or unsafe practice
- a charitable/not for profit constitution
- no shareholders
- transparent, audited accounts
- committing to appropriate, respectful and confidential record keeping by

- Only collecting information that is necessary for the delivery of ECY's services
- Maintaining anonymity of clients when presenting an evaluation or case study
- Not taking, or using identifying photographs of clients without seeking express permission from each individual for the specific purpose e.g. social media/website
- Storing personal information correctly in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations
- Sharing the information sensitively and appropriately between colleagues, partner organisations and in extreme cases with outside agencies, in line with our Confidentiality and Privacy Policies and Procedures.