

Appendix 2.

Certification Levels & Their Requirements

The three levels relevant for the world today appear to be the following:

- Yoga Instructor Certification is certification for any specific system of practice or regimen – The certification establishes that the person can teach a particular system of practice safely and competently, and also within the legal and regulatory environment of the geographic jurisdiction. There must be evaluations of the candidate for the technique as well as documented evidence of having passed a written exam or project report that clearly demonstrates understanding of the technique, its safe practice, ability to instruct others effectively and understanding of professional practice considerations.
- Yoga Teacher Certification – The certification establishes that the person can evaluate the need of each individual subject in a customized manner and prescribe the right set of routines to meet the needs of the subject. The ability to individually examine a subject and prescribe appropriately can arise in one or both of the following ways:
 - (i) Intensive training in a system that teaches to observe external indicators and prescribe accordingly as per the validation of the system e.g. like muscle and bone alignment like in the Iyengar system or Naadi assessment in other systems. In addition, there must be successful completion of knowledge requirement. For example for a Hatha Yoga approach or Iyengar Yoga approach, a course in modern human anatomical and physiological system may be appropriate. Other systems may require knowledge of Naadis/Bio-meridian systems from traditional medicine like Ayurveda, Traditional Chinese Medicine, etc.
 - (ii) Development of Prajnya that allows intuitive (psychic) reading of energy flows, and finding of right exercises to correct imbalances in energy flow of the human system (*Chitta* or *citta*). Also for certification, the student must demonstrate with documented evidence through case reports and examinations monitored by a qualified faculty of having successfully developed the ability to counsel individual subjects on yoga exercises and the understanding of Dharma.
- Yoga Therapist Certification is a slightly higher level certification from that of a teacher. It establishes that the person can treat a person for a specific disease condition with a higher level of medical understanding comparable to healthcare practitioners. The ability to individually examine a subject and prescribe appropriately can arise in one or both of the following ways:
 - (i) Training in bio-medical knowledge used by physicians or the Naadi/bio-meridian readings of Ayurvedic/Chinese Medicine doctors, and training in yoga therapy for different medical conditions as established by peer-reviewed scientific research.
 - (ii) Training in newly developed and validated measurement systems like Electro-Photonic Imaging that are already available or may emerge in the future and the use of statistically validated exercises to address specific conditions.

In addition to these certifications which are governed by the Accreditation Council, other certifications of yoga related courses for continuing education may be offered in other fields whose standards are governed by other accreditation bodies. These have nothing to do with this Council. However, the Council will seek to bring influence and bring acceptability of the CYAI standards for the responsible representation of yoga by other accreditation bodies.

Eligibility for the Three Levels

Pre-requisites for eligibility for seeking any level of yoga certification is adequate maturity that provides a variety of skills that makes one a receptive student and when certified can be a successful Instructor, Teacher or Therapist. While this can be assessed on a case by case basis by any accredited institution, following general rules are applicable.

For enrolling in a Basic Technique Instructor Certification program for any technique, anyone who is deemed a high school graduate or its equivalent* will be the minimum qualification for eligibility.

For enrolling into a Yoga Teacher Certification Program, the requirement will be a Bachelor's degree or its equivalent* .

For enrolling in a Yoga Therapist Certification Program, a Bachelor's level degree or its equivalent* is a requirement.

For Prajnaya based approach to training, prerequisites in terms of formal degrees are not relevant. In addition, there can be exceptions to prerequisites when reasonably justified.

***Equivalent is an idea that life process can be a learning experience in many ways that may be equal or better than conventional academic learning. Such equivalence may be identified by yoga institutions that engage in training suitable individuals.**

Summary Table of Proposed Certification Standards

| Certification Level | Eligibility | Study Content | Success Criteria | Certification or Degree |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| <u>Yoga Instructor</u> | At least High School completion or equivalent | - Summary study of the Yoga Sutras - A Specific System of Practice, Exercise or category of Exercises - Instruction Practicum and Professional Practice considerations | - Exam that establishes comprehensive understanding of yoga and place of the specific technique - Exam that demonstrates understanding of appropriate use of technique especially with regard to safety consideration - Faculty certification of (a) student mastery of the practice system and (b) Instruction Practice as adequate to lead a session independently with adherence to professional practice considerations - CYAI qualification examination | General Certificate called Accredited (Institution) Yoga Instructor Certification in a specific system of practice. May use AYI as qualification after name. |
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| Level | Eligibility | Study Content | Success Criteria | Certification |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <u>Yoga Teacher</u> (Observed Metrics Approach) | At least Bachelors degree or equivalent, except when it is pursued as part of a Bachelor's Degree in Yoga | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Line by Line study of Yoga Sutras with special focus on understanding of Dharma - Human System study (as noted earlier with respect to anatomical-physiological study or Naadi study) with specific discussion on the observed metrics - Study of other traditional texts and or a Capstone course on integration of theory and practice of yoga - Training in different exercise regimen specific to individual needs. - Individual customization Practice - Professional practice considerations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exam that establishes (a) comprehensive understanding of all aspects of yoga, (b) cleansing and balancing of energy flow (<i>Chitta Suddhi</i>), and (c) importance of Dharma in therapy as understood from the Yoga Sutras - Exam that establishes degree of understanding of the Human System and relevance of the metrics used to assess the subject. [This can be waived for physicians, and for those with degrees where human system has been covered and can establish adequacy by showing syllabus of course and score obtained in course.] - Exam that demonstrates understanding of appropriate use of technique including safety consideration - Faculty certification of (a) mastery of diverse exercises used including physical, breathing and meditation practices, and (b) observed Practice sessions indicating adequacy to counsel subjects specific to their needs - CYAI qualification examination | Accredited (Institution) Yoga Teacher Certification or Bachelor's Degree (or higher) in Yoga if breadth and depth of other studies meet regular University requirements. May use AYT as qualification after name. |
| <u>Yoga Teacher</u> (Prajnya Approach) | No formal degree requirement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Line by Line study of Yoga Sutras - Discussion of Dharma Shastra - Training in Prashna Shastra or Intuitive Observation - Training in different exercises used for specific needs - Individual customization practice - Professional practice considerations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exam that establishes (a) comprehensive understanding of yoga, (b) cleansing and balancing of energy flow (<i>Chitta Suddhi</i>), and (c) importance of Dharma in therapy as understood from the Yoga Sutras. - Exam or certification from faculty on Understanding of Dharmic Use of Prashna Shastra and potential for biases of mind in answers from Prashna Shastra. - Faculty certification of (a) mastery of diverse exercises used including physical, breathing, <u>mantras</u> and meditation practices and (b) effectiveness of student through documented cases that demonstrate ability of the student to counsel each subject in a customized manner. - CYAI qualification examination | Accredited (Institution) Yoga Teacher Certification. May use AYT as qualification after name. |

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|---|---|--|---|---|
| Level | Eligibility | Study Content | Success Criteria | Certification |
| <u>Yoga Therapist</u> (May be specialized for specific disease conditions) | At least Bachelors degree or equivalent | SAME AS YOGA TEACHER + - Higher level bio-medical studies for therapists including medical report assessments - Study of other texts & papers that establish evidence of therapeutic techniques - Training in specific exercises used for therapy | - SAME AS YOGA TEACHER + - Faculty certification of (a) mastery of exercises used for therapy, and (b) effectiveness of student through documented cases that demonstrate ability of student to conduct individual therapy - CYAI qualification examination | Accredited (Institution) Yoga Therapist Certification and possibly Masters Degree (or higher) if other requirements are met for a the degree in a regular University. May use AYTh as qualification after name. |

Duration of Certification Programs & Waivers for Previous Training

No specific duration of any program is critical to certification. It is the achievement of the student and certification by a responsible faculty and Institution that matters, and not the number of hours or days. However, programs that are presented as time bound must show adequate failure rate in the accreditation audit process for reasonableness, since mastery of techniques used and ability to apply or instruct others is a requirement for certification. There can always be exceptions where a specific group of students may have a high success rate even in programs of short duration. The accreditation audit will investigate such exceptions.

The system of recognizing previous training by waiving certain courses or training requirements is acceptable. However, the waiver process must establish by exam or by personal observation of faculty that the required certification standards have been met by a student for the specific course or training content.

The above statements are the real guiding principles for certification. However, for those who seek guidance on duration of training for professional preparation in yoga, the following may be useful:

- Basic Instructor Training (AYI) – 6 months – 200 hours of practice after training.
- Yoga Teacher Training (AYT) – 2 years – 800 hours practice in addition to completion of courses.
- Yoga Therapist Training (AYTh) – At least 1 year beyond teacher training.