

Best Practice Guidance for Remote Teaching

Overview

Remote teaching is offered by BWY teachers in a number of formats. You may be delivering a live streamed secure session that enables interaction between you and your students, or you may be recording a session that will be subsequently provided to your students as a pre-recorded video or audio class. Remote teaching is a different experience to being physically present with a student in a face to face setting and following this “Best Practice Guidance” will help to make sure that your remote teaching is delivered in a way that maintains the same high standards of professionalism, safety and safeguarding as your face to face sessions, and satisfies the requirements of your teaching insurance.

Health Questionnaire and Assessment

Before admitting students into remote sessions you must have a completed health questionnaire and an acknowledgement of the student’s understanding and acceptance of the remote learning disclaimer. Existing face to face students do not need to complete an additional health questionnaire but they do need to understand and accept the remote learning disclaimer. This can be emailed to them separately or it can be included in the invitation to the remote session. BWY disclaimers for teachers can be found in “BWY - Student Disclaimers Explained”.

If you are taking on a new student, you must also go through a brief online assessment interview as a one off process. A verbal screening before each session will still need to take place for live streamed remote classes.

BWY recognises that a teacher cannot compel a student to disclose health details and return this form and so provides an additional disclaimer for those occasions where the students opts not to disclose or simply does not return the form. There is an obligation upon teachers to attempt to gain this information, because it ensures that all or any appropriate modifications can be made but sessions can still go ahead in those cases where there is no disclosure.

Your Liabilities and Responsibilities:

BWY teachers are fully insured to teach remotely, either live streamed or pre-recorded, on a secure platform, to a private audience. However, teachers are unable to risk assess the student, or the space in which the student is practising, to the same degree that is possible in face to face teaching. Therefore, additional safeguards and procedures have been developed, to ensure that you as a teacher are protected from liability and that your students understand their responsibility to follow the student guidelines for remote learning, as their own commitment to keeping themselves safe and injury free.

GDPR:

A GDPR statement is incorporated into the BWY Student Health Questionnaire to comply with this legislative requirement. If you wish to record sessions that include participants on the screen other than yourself, then you will need to obtain each individual participant's permission to do this, and you must be aware that they are entitled to revoke that permission in the future.

Best Practice Guidance for Remote Teaching:

In addition to the procedures relating to the health questionnaire, student disclaimers, pre-session interviews and verbal screening, the following additional guidelines are intended to inform your teaching of remote sessions.

General

1. Remote teaching must be provided via a secure medium, that can only be accessed by a user id, password or other secure method. Unsecured open platforms are not suitable because sessions cannot be available for anyone to join or view. There is no teaching insurance cover for open content on unrestricted platforms.
2. Live streamed secure sessions with teacher/student connectivity and interaction are the optimum model for remote teaching; but it is acknowledged that this will not always be possible or practical.
3. All activities taught remotely must be suitable to perform in the environment in which the remote student/client is practicing. Teachers must therefore actively encourage participation in the session in an environment that is suitable, thereby avoiding potential injury and/or damage to possessions.
4. Any BWY teacher wishing to teach vulnerable adults, children and young people remotely, through an online platform, will be subject to meeting the same criteria and undergoing the same vetting process as they would to teach in a face to face environment. These requirements are summarised in the BWY Safeguarding Procedure Checklist on the BWY Website.
5. Teachers should follow all the usual BWY health and safety guidelines and comply in every other respect with the BWY standards of teaching.

Setting Up

6. Use an ethernet cable to connect your device to your router if possible. Close all other web browsers and data heavy applications so that your internet connection is secure and stable, to minimize any drop in signal while broadcasting.
7. Mute alerts on the device you are using for the session and any other devices that are within earshot, including phones.
8. Consider connecting your device to a TV via an HDMI cable to give you a bigger screen view.
9. Think about camera positioning for optimum student views. Your students should be able to see as much of you as possible and you should aim to minimise any adjusting of your screen during the session. You will probably need to be a minimum of 6 feet away from your device.
10. Try using blankets and/or bolsters and soft furnishings in the room you are filming from, to reduce echoing.
11. You may also need to adjust your lighting so that you can be seen clearly, can avoid screen glare, silhouetting and shadows. Avoid bright lights behind you or overhead; natural light is best.
12. Dress as you would if you were delivering a face to face yoga class but wear colours that contrast with your background and mat so that you can be seen clearly.
13. Be aware that music in the background can distort and/or be in competition with your voice.

14. Trial run all the setting up before the first class.

Managing Students

15. Class details should be sent by a private invitation or link. No links, passwords or access to any sessions, whether live streamed or pre-recorded should be publicly available.
16. In a live streamed class use the “waiting room” facility (if there is one) on entry to the session in order to keep the session private and only available to those people invited. There may also be a “door bell” or “knock to enter” facility that you may wish to use.
17. If possible and where the functionality is available, lock a live streamed session once all attendees have entered before the session begins.
18. Make use of any facility to remove a student in the event of any unauthorised person joining the session, or any behaviour that is deemed to be unacceptable.
19. If you are teaching a live streamed secure session opt for gallery view to bring images of all participants onto your screen.
20. Students should be informed in advance of all the equipment that is required for the session; this includes any props (e.g. blocks, belts, blankets, cushions) notebook and pen/pencil and water.
21. In a class where you have students that are using the technology of the remote session for the first time allow 15 mins prior to the session to enable everyone to get set up properly, to be comfortable and in the right place.
22. Ideally all participants should be muted to avoid background noise interfering with the session and to ensure efficient facilitation. Think about using hand gestures for communication and explain these beforehand e.g. thumbs up can be a sign of agreement, hand up for a question. Students will be more confident being muted if a language of interaction is agreed.

Managing Yourself

23. Keep calm when handling any technological hitches. For example if students cannot hear or see you it may be their sound or camera, not yours.
24. Avoid moving unnecessarily whilst you are teaching, keep steady.
25. Look at the camera as much as possible. Maintaining eye contact can be a great way to keep connecting with your students.
26. Teach with the same personality as face to face classes; remember to be authentically YOU!

Resources:

Norman Blair www.yogawithnorman.co.uk
Tarik Dervish www.yogawell.co.uk
Yoga Teacher On-line Support Network facebook group
Bluefin Insurance
JMW Solicitors LLP

1. *Face to face teaching insurance is explained in a separate document.*
2. *Remote teaching insurance is explained in a separate document.*
3. *“BWY Health Questionnaire” is available as a separate series of forms. Teachers are free to incorporate their own branding into any of these document but must use the same content.*
4. *In some cases disclaimers have been incorporated into existing documentation. Where this has not been possible they are available for teachers to copy and use or incorporate into their own documentation or emails. Disclaimers for remote teaching are available in “BWY – Student Disclaimers Explained”.*
5. *“Student Guidance for Remote Sessions” is a separate document that should be issued to all new remote students and to all existing face to face students before they attend remotely for the first time.*