



# Scope of Practice Template

**Directions:** Read through this template to learn more about developing a scope of practice. Type or write to respond to prompts. Prefer to work on this template in Notion? Those with a Notion account (free to create) can [duplicate this template](#) in Notion.



A scope of practice is a way to guide your work life (though it can also be used in your personal life) toward greater balance, freedom, and clarity. A scope of practice focuses on two questions: 1) What am I qualified to do in this role? 2) What is my responsibility in this role?


## Step 1: What Are Your Qualifications?

Imagine that you find out that you have arthritis in your right hip. A doctor you trust tells you that if you want to be free of hip pain, you'll need hip replacement surgery. Who would you want to perform that surgery: an orthopedic surgeon or a yoga teacher trained in teaching students with arthritis?

Imagine that after a successful hip replacement surgery and physical rehabilitation, a trusted doctor tells you that developing a consistent yoga practice will help you take care of your new hip. Who would you rather take yoga classes with: a yoga teacher trained in teaching students with arthritis or an orthopedic surgeon?

I'm guessing that you chose to have a surgeon perform surgery and a yoga teacher teach yoga. Why? Because of their qualifications. A surgeon is qualified to perform surgery. They have received extensive education and many hours of supervised practice in performing surgery. I am a certified yoga teacher who has trained in a model called Yoga for Arthritis. I am qualified to teach yoga to people with arthritis because I have studied and practiced that work. I am not qualified to perform surgery, therefore it is outside of my scope of practice as a yoga teacher. An orthopedic surgeon is not qualified to teach a yoga class, therefore it is outside of their scope of practice as a surgeon.


A scope of practice protects both provider/educator and client/learner. If I was to try to perform surgery, it would harm me and the patient. Working within our qualifications mitigates harm.

 **WRITE:** Name the role you wish to analyze. In that role, what are you qualified to do? Are there any things that you are regularly asked to do that you are NOT qualified for? **RESPOND HERE:**

## Step 2: What's Your Responsibility?

Let's consider my work as adjunct faculty teaching college students. Imagine that I tell my students that I am a certified yoga teacher. I then receive an email from a student telling me that he has been under a lot of stress at work. He wants to start a yoga practice and asks me to recommend yoga postures he can begin practicing at home. Am I qualified to guide this student in his yoga practice? Yes. Is it my responsibility in the context of my adjunct faculty role? No. In this context, offering yoga instruction is outside of my scope of practice as an adjunct professor.

When we routinely work outside of our scope of practice, we put ourselves at risk for burnout, which harms us and harms our clients/learners. Staying devoted to what is our responsibility and kindly but clearly declining to work outside of our scope of practice mitigates harm.


 **WRITE:** What is your responsibility in the context of this role? Just write whatever comes. These might be specific tasks or big picture visions/values. What is yours? Then, write about what is NOT your responsibility in the context of this role. Are you ever asked to do things that do not belong to you or that belong to other people? How does this impact you? Those who you serve? **RESPOND HERE:**

## Step 3: Developing Your Scope of Practice

Let's begin to draft your initial scope of practice. Below you will find two columns: Mine and Not Mine. On the left, under the Mine column, write down responsibilities that you are both qualified to do and that are yours to do in the context of this role. On the right, under the Not Mine column, write down things that you are not qualified to do and/or that are not your responsibility. I've given you a couple of examples from my own scope of practice to get you started, but don't let those examples constrain you. This is a first draft, so just get it out and put it in writing.


Mine	Not Mine
Ex: respond promptly to student emails, post weekly announcements outlining course goals, maintain a consistent presence in course discussion board	Ex: providing therapy to my students, being constantly available to students at all hours of the day, managing a student crisis completely on my own

Begin entering your responses HERE.	Begin entering your responses HERE.
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 **WRITE:** What came up for you as you wrote your scope of practice? How did it feel to name what is yours and not yours? Was anything surprising to you? Did you notice any resistance? What did that resistance say? **RESPOND HERE:**

## Step 4: Rightsizing Our Scope of Practice

Sometimes, through this exercise, we might notice an unmet need in our learners/clients. We might decide that we are qualified to address it and feel that it is our need to meet. There's nothing wrong with expanding a scope of practice, but it's also true that we have limited time and energy. Many of us have expanded our scopes of practice over the past few years, adding things to our role without removing something else. How can we rightsize our scope of practice, for our wellbeing and the wellbeing of those we serve?

 **WRITE:** Is your current scope of practice realistic and sustainable? How so? If not, name 1-2 things that you would be willing to begin thinking about removing from your work. Even if that feels impossible, let it be possible here. Put that desire for sustainable work into words. **RESPOND HERE:**


## Step 5: Next Steps

Congratulations on caring for yourself and your learners/clients by taking the time to reflect on your scope of practice. That alone is enough.

If you'd like, you might find additional value in sharing this scope of practice in community. Consider writing/sharing your scope of practice with your immediate team. Compare/contrast your scopes of practice. What's the same? What's different?

Sometimes, the process of writing a scope of practice will point out learner/client needs that are not being met. Discovering those needs as part of a community can help us to take the next, smallest step toward getting those needs met, even if we are not the ones to meet them.

Finally, you might wish to place this Scope of Practice in a place you can view it regularly, whether in a digital or analog format. Notice when you stray from your scope of practice. Celebrate when you remain within it. Should you choose to expand your scope of practice, use what you've learned here to create a revised scope of practice, remembering that when you add something to your work, it's best to remove something else to create balance.

 **WRITE:** Who might you wish to share this reflection with? How do you plan to regularly reflect on your scope of practice? **RESPOND HERE:**

Thank you for taking the time to consider this scope of practice model. May it be of benefit.

I developed the idea of an educator's scope of practice through my work with trauma-aware teaching. If this model resonates with you and you'd like to learn more, consider taking my self-paced, online course, *Trauma Fundamentals for Higher Educators*. Use code SCOPE10 for 10% off. [Register and start learning on Teachable](#).