CYF API Terminology Glossary

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This document describes terminology used in CYF APIs. It is intended to make it easier for services to be able to talk to each other.

Location, and Venue

Classes always happen at a Venue, within a Location. Venues are typically street addresses (such as: Floor 4, Blue Star House, 234-244 Stockwell Rd, London SW9 9SP), within a Location which is typically named for a city (such as: London). All of a cohort's classes are expected to be in the same Location, but may vary in Venue within that Location.

People who attend a class in a Location may live somewhere else (e.g. people from Liverpool may attend class in the Manchester Location). But a class is associated with a single "Location", typically a city. A location may or may not run all courses, or all cohorts.

Stability

We expect locations to be added or removed on the order of once per year. We expect them to stay consistent while they exist, but when one is added, it may cause another to be renamed (e.g. if we split London into North London and South London).

Possible Location values (exact matches, with these casings and these spacings)

- London
- Glasgow
- Birmingham
- Manchester
- Sheffield
- Cape Town
- Virtual

Representing Venues

Venues should typically be consistently represented as a street address, and should include enough detail that a visitor can find that venue (e.g. including a floor number, or a company name).

Name: Regions

Region is often a useful term in user-facing copy (e.g. "If you live in the North West, come join our classes") to make people feel welcome/included/relevant. But as far as our data is concerned, people are attending class in a specific Location. Mostly this is for stability reasons - if we opened an Edinburgh class, we wouldn't want to have to rename Scotland to Glasgow. That isn't to say "Scotland" isn't conceptually a region with commonalities who may do things together, just that that isn't the best description of where class happens.

Name: Cities

Most of our classes happen in cities, but this is unnecessarily specific and perhaps limiting.

Values

- Acronyms (e.g. LDN, GLA, WM, NW, SA, ZA, …)
- Scotland (prefer: Glasgow)
- West Midlands (prefer: Birmingham)
- North West (prefer: Manchester)
- Capetown (prefer: Cape Town)
- South Africa (prefer: Cape Town)
- Online, Remote (prefer: Virtual)

Course

A self-contained group of learning topics with entry criteria, exit criteria, and outcomes.

Stability

We expect courses to be added single-digit per year, rarely removed, frequently modified, and occasionally renamed. Course names should always have unique initials. Where a course's name is a single word, that word will be used as its initials.

There is a 1:1 mapping between each course name and its acronym. The canonical name of a course is its name, and that should be used as a standalone identifier. The acronym may be used e.g. when making a cohort name.

Possible values (exact matches, with these casings and these spacings)

- Intro To Digital
- Intro To Programming
- Piscine
- Software Development Course
- Business Analysis Track
- Cloud Track

- Java Track
- CYF+
- Basic Online Skills
- AI Essentials

Alternatives considered

Values:
- Lots of acronyms (e.g. ITD, ITP, SDC)
- Sometimes Tracks were called Modules (e.g. "Cloud Module") - we'll standardise on tracks.

Module

A course is made up of one or more modules. A single-module course still conceptually consists of a module.

Sprint

A module is made up of sprints (typically one per week long) with assigned work, and optionally one or more Day Plans.

A sprint has a start and end day, and may have some meetings scheduled.

Sprints are typically numbered within a module, using a one-indexed counting system.

There may be some weeks or classes for a cohort partaking in a module which do not have an associated sprint, e.g. "catch-up" weeks.

Cohort

A cohort is a calendar-based group of trainees doing a course.

Cohorts are not tied to locations - a cohort may be made up of trainees attending class in different locations, but it may be useful to talk about "The London trainees in cohort 25-July-SDC". We treat these simply as filters to a query - i.e. the API endpoint would be to return a cohort, but may have a parameter to filter to just the London members.

A trainee may be a member of more than one cohort, even for the same course, or at the same time.

Stability

We expect cohorts to be created each time we run a course, currently ~20/year.

We expect trainees to often move between cohorts, to be present in multiple cohorts for the same course, to be removed from cohorts after creation. For some courses (e.g. ITD), trainees are frequently added to a cohort after it starts, for other courses this is rare but possible.

Values

Cohort names should take the form:
YY-MMM-CourseInitials, e.g. 25-Jul-SDC, 25-Sep-ITP, etc. The year and month here refer to the year and month that that cohort started the relevant course. The month should always be abbreviated to three letters.

When making an identifier for a location-based subset of a cohort, the location should be added to the end, e.g. 25-Jul-SDC-London.

Alternatives considered/seen which we should discourage

Name: Batch

Batch feels less human, like we're discussing resources not people.

Name: Intake

Intake only appears to be used in Classplanner, and implies it's more related to when people *start*, whereas we often have people re-taking classes.

Name: Course

We prefer Course to refer to the course being studied, rather than an instance of a group of people studying that course.

Values

There have been assorted formattings of the triplets of year/month/course, and shortenings of month names.

Class

A class is a single instance of trainees and volunteers gathering together (in person or online or both) to work together, as part of a Course Schedule.

A class has an associated Course, Cohort, Location, Date, Start and end time, and optionally Day Plan within the Course. Some classes do not have a particular Day Plan associated (e.g. for "catch-up" weeks).

A class is typically represented as an object with fields for: Course, Cohort, Location, Date. Multiple classes may coincide (e.g. by having both ITD and ITP at the same time and venue, or by having both London and West Midlands gathering together), but should be considered separate.

When looking up classes, we have no specific smaller unit, and simply suggest offering filter APIs. For instance, filtering down to the classes in a Location, the classes for a Cohort, or the classes between a range of dates.

Trainee

Someone learning with CYF.

A trainee may be enrolled (if they have completed eligibility checks and met some milestones), or not. For some courses, a trainee must be enrolled to join a cohort. For others, enrolment is optional.

A trainee has at least the following data properties which should be named accordingly:
- full_name
- email
- github_login
- github_id
- class_location
- is_enrolled

Stability

We expect many trainees to change their name and email address. Occasionally trainees change their location or GitHub logins. We would be surprised if trainees changed their underlying GitHub account ID, but it may be required in exceptional circumstances.

Prefer storing github_id in persistent data, because it is immutable, but be aware that presenting GitHub logins is generally more directly useful in user interfaces than IDs.