



Criteria for who teaches at Triratna Centres and Groups

This brief aims to detail the principles behind, and criteria for, who teaches at Triratna Centres, groups and events. It draws upon, and is the application of, the 'What is a Triratna Centre' document which summarises the main conclusions and recommendations of the 2014 International Council discussion, following extensive and wide consultation.

The 'What is a Triratna Centre' document *'outlines the important principles of a Triratna Centre and spells out in more detail some of the specific structures we have developed, or need to develop further, to put the principles into practice'*. The principle aim is to strengthen and develop the unity of the movement, both regionally and nationally.

The principles and structures of Triratna Centres are explored through four lineages:

- 1/2. The lineages of teaching and practice
3. The lineage of inspiration: kalyana mitrata
4. The lineage of responsibility: structures

Under the *lineages of teaching and practice* the following points are outlined:

- As Sangharakshita spelled out in the 2009 paper, What is the Western Buddhist Order?, 'a spiritual community needs a high degree of commonality of practice'.
- What is taught and practiced at Triratna Centres is founded on Sangharakshita's particular presentation of the Dharma, and is faithful to that. It comes from the common body of material derived from Sangharakshita and evolved through the procedures on Commonality of Practice agreed by the International Council, under the guidance of the Public Preceptors.

- Centres offer a progressive training at all levels, encouraging a deepening Going for Refuge to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha through the progressive stages of commitment as Friend, Mitra and Order member.
- Because deepening Going for Refuge is central to Triratna in this way, Dharma teaching is done by committed members of the Order, or where it is necessary, by Mitras under the supervision of Order members.
- Individual Centres work in harmony with those with broad responsibility for the various aspects of training in Triratna (study, meditation etc.). In particular, Triratna Centres co-operate and work in harmony with the Preceptors College which holds a special responsibility to preserve and develop Sangharakshita's presentation of the Dharma.

These principles can be applied to criteria (guidelines) for who teaches at Triratna Centres and groups:

- They understand and support the spiritual principles of the Triratna Community and our system of practice and training;
- They have an effective spiritual practice of that framework themselves;
- They are able to work in harmony and cooperatively with the College, and those who have responsibility for other aspects of training in Triratna.
- They are in harmony with the spirit of the Order, and active in its life, with no major unaddressed difficulties with other Order members, e.g. for example, they would be participating in Chapters, taking part in the wider Order through Order gatherings and conventions, and be in good communication with their own KMs and Preceptors.
- They have the understanding of the material and the teaching skills they need to communicate effectively at the level they're teaching. They are willing to undertake further training and to receive feedback on their skills and approach

Where the teaching is being undertaken by a mitra:

- They will be in regular dialogue with, and guided by order members, regarding the material and practices they are teaching and wherever possible they will teach as part of a team
- They understand and support the spiritual principles of the Triratna Community and our system of practice and training;
- They have a developing spiritual practice of that framework themselves
- They are in harmony with the spirit of the order and movement, taking part in the Mitra Dharma Training Course and with effective kalyana mitra relationships, informal and formal