Honours Degree Level
Professional Licentiate in Acupuncture

COURSE PROSPECTUS

The Acupuncture Academy

www.theacupunctureacademy.org.uk

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This is the mural in one of our classrooms. The dragon represents power, strength, perseverance and a pioneering spirit.

Welcome!

We – and most of our teaching team - trained at the College of Traditional Acupuncture (CTA) which was based in Leamington Spa and later moved to Warwick. Several of us taught there too. CTA was founded by J R Worsley and was one of the very first acupuncture colleges in the UK, focused on teaching what is often referred to as 'five element acupuncture' (more on this later!). CTA sadly is no more, but our team is committed to passing on the system of medicine that we were taught and love, with some additions and modifications of course.

Much of what we do at TAA now is the result of our own experiences, both as students and teachers, at CTA and other institutions. We realised early on that conventional course structures often left busy, mature students exhausted and struggling by the end of the three years; hardly in the best place to launch their new career.

Considering their investment, and our investment in them too, this was distressing all round and so we decided to do things differently, to support exactly the kind of people who want to study acupuncture. Hence our extensive use of e-learning, our innovative clinical year model, and our absolute focus on the learners in our care. These are the things that make us different.

Thank you for taking the time to read this prospectus! We're happy you are considering joining our college community and this fantastic profession.

We start with a quick reference section on the overall course structure, before explaining what makes us different here at The Acupuncture Academy, 'TAA'. We'll give you some insight into being an acupunturist, and cover some FAQ's. After this, you can find more detail on how we teach and assess our students, and what each course unit covers. Finally you can read about our admissions requirements and application process, and meet the team. Hopefully we'll answer your questions along the way...but if you can't find something that you are looking for, or you have questions you can't find the answer to, just give us a call or contact us via the website – we are always happy to talk.

THE COURSE AT A GLANCE...

LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION...
As a BAAB fully accredited course, our Professional Licentiate qualification represents a final award threshold at Level 6, the equivalent of a Bachelor's degree with honours in the UK, and meeting the highest World Health Organisation standards for acupuncture training.

British Acupuncture Accreditation Board
Ensuring Excellence In Acupuncture Education

STRUCTURE...
We take two intakes per year, starting in March or September. Years 1 and 2 take a similar format with ten classes to attend each year (mainly over weekends), and home study in between.

In Year 3, the clinical year, you will attend eight further class weekends, and up to one day per week in clinic. During the first six months of third year, you will be in supervised practice, working in a team with your supervisor, but in the second six months (the final six months of the course) you will be able to treat patients on your own, when it suits you - and charge for your treatments too!

You can read more about what each year of the course involves later in the prospectus.

YEARS 1 & 2

Class	Home Study Period, between class session (4-6 weeks)
Ten class sessions each year, mainly over weekends (23 days each year)	Approx 18 hours per week of home study, including: • E-learning • Assignments • Skills practise

YEAR 3

	Class	Clinic
First six months	Five weekend class sessions	Working under supervision in clinic up to one day per week
Second six months	Three weekend class sessions	Working as a pre-qualification practitioner under 'indirect' supervision, arranging your own appointments and charging for your clinical work

THE TAA DIFFERENCE...

... IS IN OUR FOCUS ON E-LEARNING, AND THE PROPORTION THAT WE USE...
At TAA, you will need to attend for ten weekend class sessions per year (years one and two) and eight weekend classes in third year. With most acupuncture degree or degree level courses, you would attend college at least every other weekend, but we recognised that this can be prohibitive for those students who need to keep up a level of paid work, as well as those with children or other major responsibilities. So one of the big differences here at TAA is our use of high quality e-learning, which gives you the greater flexibility of studying from home between classes, and means you will spend less time away from home. You may be wondering 'how on earth can you teach acupuncture online?' This is a fair and sensible question!

The short answer is that we aren't; well, not the practical aspects, the bits that involve putting needles into patients etc. What we ARE teaching online is much of the theory that relates to practice, as well as the research and conventional medicine that you will need to support and inform your work. And we are teaching these things in a way that we believe improves student outcomes and the confidence of our graduates in practice. Why? Because all the essential information is there, and can be printed out and used as a textbook and valuable resource. Lessons prompt you to think, and give you time to digest. Nothing gets missed as it can be with conventional lectures, and you can return to lessons time and time again – even after graduation.

As for the essential practical skills, these are without exception taught in class, supported by videos and you will practise them throughout the course. You'll spend at least as much time, and often more time, on practical work than you would in other courses, thanks to the class time freed up by our use of e-learning.

"I was really concerned about connection with the group when I started. I learn through talking things through with others and honestly always thought that distance learning wasn't for me.

It's been such a revelation to me that this type of learning really works! "

- Allie, Year 2

This is the mural in our Turtle classroom. In Chinese philosophy, the turtle represents wisdom and longevity.

So the answer is 'we aren't actually teaching acupuncture online – we are using a dynamic combination of teaching and learning approaches that really work for mature learners'.

"I had no idea how the remote learning would work out, but it has been excellent. The e-lessons are such high quality, I could read them several times and keep learning new things, they are so rich with info. The forum is also working very well for me, I can get a really quick answer at any time to questions I have, or drill further into my ideas or understanding. All the ways we have as a group of communicating together between class have cemented our relationship and I have made new friends for life!"

- Fabienne, Year 2

THE LEVEL OF INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT THAT WE PROVIDE...
We understand that you might wonder whether you will feel as much 'connection' to your classmates and the college, if you don't attend as frequently as other courses? Luckily then, the answer is 'yes you will!' You will be fully supported during each study period through our ongoing forums where you can exchange ideas with your group, and ask any question, on any subject, at anytime, getting answers from tutors within 24 hours and often much quicker than that!

You'll have your own personal tutor with whom you'll speak regularly, as well as the option of being introduced to a graduate mentor, who can help you put things in perspective ;-) So you definitely won't feel alone!

"As a cohort, our degrees of separation are from Edinburgh to Portsmouth, and all sorts of places between; we have found our own chat group to be so useful and chat peaks a few days before a TAA weekend or when something is due!

We also use the TAA forum constantly, to enquire about and consider numerous conundrums, as well as the private facebook group where we can chat to TAA students in other groups. We never feel alone. I really do get all the support I need."

- Paula, Year 1

INTRODUCING...

Celia Tudor-Evans, Student Liaison Officer, advisory board member and clinical year supervisor. As the previous Vice-Principal of the College of Traditional Acupuncture, Celia's experience, wisdom and calm support is vital to all of us here at TAA.

"I very much enjoy my role here at TAA. Mainly, I bring the perspective of years of experience coupled with a clear understanding of how it feels to start out on your acupuncture journey.

I run the mentor programme, matching students with recent graduates who can offer perspective and further support. We are all here to provide an extra, independent listening ear whenever you need us".

- Celia Tudor-Evans

THE TAA DIFFERENCE...

OUR CLINICAL YEAR MODEL...
In other acupuncture courses, students attend the college clinic, usually weekly, during the third year, and then set up practice in their local area once they graduate.

Here at TAA, we wanted to give our students the opportunity to build their own practice during third year itself, meaning that our graduates leave with a flourishing business already in place. To achieve this, our students are paired with a supervisor as near to their local area as possible, from our network of supervisors all over the UK.

We believe this individual attention provides the most comprehensive opportunity for your diagnostic and clinical skills to develop, and allows you to build your confidence more quickly as a practitioner. So, an opportunity to build your business faster, and individual attention in clinic – a recipe for success! [Read more in Helping you make a living section.]

We are the only accredited course that uses this 'satellite clinic' model, and the only one that has a permanent 1:1 supervisor-student ratio in clinic.

A SPECIAL ATMOSPHERE...
The other thing that we wanted to be different about TAA is less tangible, but nevertheless important – the atmosphere we create. We disliked the formality that is typical in higher educational institutions, and have enjoyed proving it's possible to have fun while learning without losing any of the rigour. In fact, it actually helps you learn!

We also recognise that you as learners bring something to the table. It's not all about we, the teachers, and you, the receptive learner. Students bring very varied life skills and experience from their diverse backgrounds, and we are therefore equally as excited about meeting and learning from you as we are about teaching you.

Our approach is not about you sitting quietly and being told what to do, it's not about 'us and them'... but more like a big family, working together, with humour, warmth, and close support through all the excitement and challenges that training for your new career will bring.

So how do we make sure that we are getting this approach right? By asking our students of course! :D

We gather feedback in a variety of ways throughout the course, seeking thoughts, comments, and suggestions on all aspects of the student experience. Our results across all groups show a consistent 96% satisfaction rating, which we think means we're largely getting it right! Nevertheless, we're always open to improvement and we really do listen, and involve students where we can in any changes.

But it's not just our students who appreciate what we do. Our external examiners and accrediting body have consistently commended us on the quality of our feedback on coursework, and the individual attention and support our students get from first contact, past graduation and on into their careers as independent acupuncturists.

So, that is who we are and what makes us different in a nutshell. We are just as rigorous as all other fully BAAB accredited courses, meeting the exacting standards required to ensure that graduates achieve the necessary honours degree level, but as a private college, we can be more flexible and creative in the way that we teach and assess you, and we believe that we are better able to see and treat you as the individual that you are.

From Joint Principals
Jen Wade and Julie Ann Reynolds

OUR GRADUATES IN BUSINESS

After graduation you will be able to use the letters LicAc - (for 'Licentiate in Acupuncture') after your name. You will be eligible to join the British Acupuncture Council, and on joining you can also use the letters MBAcC (Member of the British Acupuncture Council) after your name.

The BAcC is the leading self-regulatory body for the practice of acupuncture in the UK. They work closely with many external stakeholders including the All-Parliamentary Group for Integrated Healthcare.

The BAcC itself is recognised by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA) which reviews the work of regulators and accredits regulatory bodies, covering other professionals such as scientists, dentists and opticians. The PSA is accountable to Parliament, meaning that the public can be further assured of extremely high standards in governance, standard-setting, education and training, management, complaints and information. Taken all together, this recognition means that GPs are officially allowed to 'delegate' care of patients to BAcC members.

Some of the TAA gang at the BAcC Conference 2018

This is a really exciting time for our profession! In late 2018, the inaugural World Acupuncture Day Global Conference took place in Paris, with speakers and delegates discussing the latest research and the increasing worldwide acceptance of the value and scope of acupuncture. There are recent landmark studies too, including research in the renowned journal 'Pain', which demonstrated the benefits of acupuncture in a wide range of pain conditions. It's not all about pain however, as the Acupuncture Evidence Project demonstrated when it reviewed evidence for 122 conditions across 14 broad clinical areas. Of these, 117 showed a positive effect for acupuncture treatment.

From migraines, depression, hypertension, menstrual problems, nausea and vomiting, hot flushes, insomnia and stroke rehabilitation through to cancer support, we are helping numerous patients around the world with a huge variety of health issues: mental, emotional, and physical. Acupuncturists Without Borders respond to international disasters, while two British Acupuncture Council members are making a difference in Africa with their work on drug-resistant tuberculosis. Here at TAA, guest lecturer Dr Beverley de Valois carries out research in the field of cancer survivorship and has introduced acupuncture into mainstream oncology services, and our own Joint Principal, Julie Ann Reynolds, focused her most recent research on Irritable Bowel Syndrome, demonstrating acupuncture to be highly effective when compared with usual care in a clinical trial.

Most excitingly for us, in 2019, in conjunction with a group of our graduates and funded by a British Acupuncture Council grant, we opened a new clinic to study the effectiveness of acupuncture in treating mental health issues amongst university students. This is a hugely valuable project, and one which we hope to continue once the initial research period has ended, providing opportunities for more of our graduates.

With increased acceptance of the value of acupuncture then, ever more opportunities are opening up. Acupuncture is now used in many conventional medical institutions in the UK, including hospitals and charities, and - following a recommendation made by the National Summit on Quality in General Practice – it is accessible in greater numbers of GP surgeries. The Acupuncture Now Foundation lists around 30 services around the country which address general health, addiction, cancer care, mental health, neurology, and fertility/maternity. In the US, there is also increasing use of acupuncture in many hospital settings, including emergency rooms and children's hospitals. It is increasingly offered as an alternative to medication, to help with the rising global opiate crisis, and for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, particularly in the military, in the US and the UK.

Aside from the increasing opportunities within charities and the NHS, most acupuncturists elect to work primarily in private practice. They work in a variety of settings for this, such as multi-disciplinary clinics (with other allied and complementary health professionals), health clubs, or by creating a clinic room in their own home or garden. Acupuncturists set their own hours, which is great for working around family and other commitments, and they often work closely with other health practitioners, sharing cross-referrals. Community clinics, or 'multi-beds' are also gaining in popularity all the time, and these offer access to treatment for those on lower incomes. We have a popular clinic like this at TAA, serving our own local community and doubling as our teaching clinic. It's led by one of our clinical year supervisors, and assisted and observed by our students. We also host a specialist 'children and families' community clinic, run by one of our local graduates, again offering a great opportunity for students to observe.

Here at TAA then, your training will equip you to be able to take full advantage of all the opportunities this profession offers. You will learn everything you need in order to practice safely and effectively, whatever problems your patients present with. What's more, we do everything we can to help you develop and grow your business.

But this isn't just about opportunities or scope of practice. Being an acupuncturist is rewarding on so many levels. Let's hear some of our graduates' stories...

"After graduating from The Acupuncture Academy, I was thrilled to be accepted for the position of acupuncturist for a national cancer charity. I have worked there for almost 2 years now. Alongside this I have also built up my private practice. TAA gave me the skills, confidence and on-going support to be able to achieve this. "

- Emma Scott, Malvern and Cheltenham

WHAT OUR GRADUATES SAY

"I started studying with TAA back in September 2015. I can honestly say that the whole process was nothing short of life changing - the course opened up a whole new way of experiencing the world! This may sound a bit evangelical but this particular approach to acupuncture not only gives you the tools to become a competent acupuncturist but also to make sense of your own life.

The course was fantastic, the tutors went above and beyond and I've made friends for life. Almost a year after graduating, I've got a steadily growing practice, doing something which I love. I'm truly grateful."

- Jo Teasdale, Essex

"I graduated from TAA in March 2019 and I now have a growing practice based at my home in Hertfordshire.

Although it is slightly daunting to start on a journey as a new practitioner the course has given me a fantastic grounding in classical acupuncture with a strong emphasis on clinical skills; this, together with extensive coverage of acupuncture theory, biomedicine and research skills has given me the confidence to treat patients as well as providing a strong basis for my future learning.

Throughout the course I received amazing support from my tutors and supervisors, as well as my peers and other graduates, and I continue to feel this support as I build my practice."

- Christine Hutchinson, Hertfordshire

"I feel so privileged to be working as an acupuncturist following graduation from The Acupuncture Academy. I love the freedom of self-employment whilst at the same time doing what I can to help others. It still fascinates me enormously how people can and do get better with treatments.

For example, when a male patient in his sixties started receiving treatments for very erratic blood pressure and a low pulse rate I was unsure if acupuncture would be able to help. However, to both mine and the patient's delight, after just a few treatments his blood pressure stabilised and his pulse rate increased. A few months on and everything continues to remain in the normal range and he feels much better in himself.

It really is amazing doing a job that has the potential to make a substantial difference to people's lives."

- Gemma Starling, Cornwall

"I'd been interested in acupuncture since first having treatment in my early twenties. By my mid-forties, I was saying wistfully, that, along with going to art school, acupuncture was one of the things I'd love to study 'in my next life'.

In my fifties and running my own business, I realised that if I wanted to do this thing, then it was pretty much now or never. I googled courses that evening and discovered The Acupuncture Academy. Its combination of weekend study days with supported online learning looked like it would fit around my work and family commitments. Within the week, I'd met Julie and Jen in Leamington Spa and put in my application. Six weeks later, I turned up for my first weekend.

That was four years ago. I've now been in practice for a year, and at every clinic session my patients tell me what a difference I'm making to their lives.

At the end of our three years of study I was nominated to speak for the graduating class of S2015. In that speech I quoted Ray Bradbury, who said that sometimes in life you've got to 'jump off cliffs and build your wings on the way down'. I took the leap, and The Acupuncture Academy taught me all I needed to build those wings."

- Kaye Coleman-Rooney, Cambridgeshire

"I qualified from TAA in 2015 and I have to say I absolutely love my new career! It never feels like going to work and I love the fact that there's still so much to learn. I work from a custom-made treatment room in my garden which gives me enormous flexibility to manage my working life around my family. I have a very good network of local therapists who I meet regularly to discuss cases and aspects of being a practitioner. I also attend lots of post-graduate courses and have a CPD buddy who I chat to regularly and do self-directed study with.

My only regret is that I didn't train years ago! Thank you TAA for the opportunity to re-launch my career...it now feels like a vocation rather than a job."

- Caroline Challender, Nottingham

WHAT OUR GRADUATES SAY

"I started my journey as an Acupuncturist in 2012 at the Acupuncture Academy in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. I have to say it has been an incredible journey, meeting some fabulous friends, colleagues, tutors and patients along the way.

I can highly recommend studying at The Acupuncture Academy as it's almost like I gained an additional family along the way as everyone was so friendly and supportive. The tutors went above and beyond my expectations and we were all given immense support throughout the 3 years with both the academic side of the course as well as the practical skills. The online study material, forums and the tutors themselves have continued to be an excellent resource even since qualifying.

I never quite anticipated the transition from my career in District Nursing to a Practitioner of Acupuncture to materialise quite as quickly as it did over a matter of 12 months! To be able to treat a huge array of patients with varying backgrounds and conditions and watch them improve significantly week by week - often without the need of conventional medicine at all - is tremendously rewarding. Having previously worked within a very stressful environment, working long hours, with very little job satisfaction was not very gratifying. However, since being an Acupuncturist I have been able to set my own working hours, be my own boss, work to my own targets and work in a peaceful, stress free environment, which is categorically priceless.

I can honestly say it has definitely been the most rewarding, interesting and greatest path I have ever taken and have absolutely no regrets. I have now built up 2 private clinics, within a multi-disciplinary setting in the Shropshire region and, hope one day to expand further. "

- Kerry Butler, Shrophire

"I trained to become an acupuncturist as I had had my own health issues that couldn't be resolved with Western medicine. Acupuncture had really helped me and I wanted to be able to share how wonderful it is!

Training was a huge journey for me, I now live somewhere I really love in rural Wales, and practice in a co-operative clinic with a lovely crowd of other therapists who share the same vision of delivering affordable beneficial treatments for all.

My life looks very different now, to when I started the course, but I am so much more happy and really enjoy making a difference to my patients' lives."

- Vicky Powell, Powys

"After 3 decades working in IT I decided to retrain as an acupuncturist. My life had become increasingly more stressful and there seemed to be no real value in what I did anymore. I selected TAA as it seemed a good fit for my learning style, being mainly from home with college attendance focussed on one weekend per month. It didn't take very long for me to appreciate how the world of acupuncture was so different to anything I had experienced before - I practically had to re-wire my brain! When I found things difficult to learn or comprehend TAA couldn't have been more supportive. I appreciated being guided without being completely spoon fed.

Since proudly graduating with a 1st equivalent, I have been able to build a busy and successful clinic and still have to pinch myself almost on a daily basis that I am able to change people's lives for the better.
Three cheers for TAA!"

- Spod Dutton, Northamptonshire

"Our group started our training in September 2013. We supported each other through each stage of the course - with both practical and theoretical learning. Team work was a great advantage and enhanced the learning experience.

Since qualifying in 2016, we agreed to plan to meet up for a weekend away annually, in fact the first weekend was all booked before we left college!

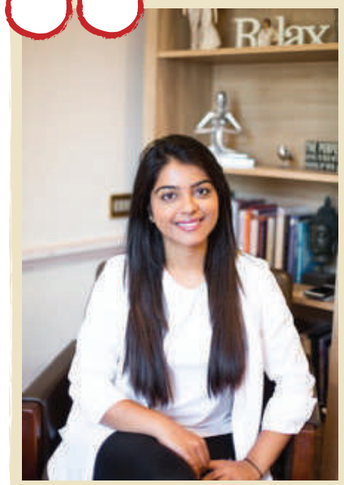
Our weekends involve relevant activities to continue our peer support and share experiences, new skills and knowledge. All of this enhances our clinical practice and benefits our patients.

Of course, we also include plenty of fun, eating, drinking, socialising and countryside walks too.

Completing the TAA course has been a valuable and life changing experience for all of us, and creating new friendships has made the experience extra special."

- Sarah Watkins, Birmingham, on behalf of group S2013

WHAT OUR GRADUATES SAY



"I commenced my study for the Professional Licentiate in Traditional Acupuncture at The Acupuncture Academy (TAA) in March 2015 and graduated in 2018. Studying at TAA was a brilliant experience, because the syllabus and course structure was extremely thorough, the college tutors were very knowledgeable, supportive and friendly throughout my time there, and there was a strong focus on both my professional and personal development. As a result, I felt fully equipped to independently work as a Traditional Acupuncturist and treat patients in a clinical setting when I qualified.

I currently work from a quiet and relaxing clinic in Edgbaston, which is based in the heart of the city of Birmingham. I already work for 3 and half days per week, and I regularly see patients ranging from teenagers and young adults, to the middle aged and elderly. Some of the more common conditions that I treat at my clinic include mental health concerns (e.g. anxiety, depression and PTSD), chronic pain, migraines and sleep disorders.

Thanks to the thorough training that was provided at TAA in areas such as patient diagnosis, treatment planning and ongoing clinical assessment, as well as the provision of modules such as Business Planning and Research during the course, I am pleased to say that I feel both competent and confident in treating my patients and running my clinic. I look forward to continuing to grow my practice and clinical experience over the years to come, and will be taking advantage of the various CPD courses that are available (a number of which TAA regularly holds for its graduates) to help me achieve this."

- Gee Aulak, Birmingham

"I trained with TAA from 2012; this was the best decision I have ever made. With such comprehensive training from day one; a team of tutors who genuinely care and Jen and Julie - Joint Principles are the most incredible people, passionate about teaching the students to become competent practitioners, I knew I was in good hands.

The course structure meant that I could continue working part-time and still complete this course with a very young family. By the third year, as part of the college course, I had set up in my own clinic, firstly working with my wonderful supervisor and by the end of the course it was an easy and natural transition, fully qualified and fully prepared, to being comfortable in my own clinic. My clinic is in my small town, I absolutely love what I do and cannot imagine doing anything else. I feel blessed with having the most rewarding job with wonderful patients. At the time of writing, I have just welcomed my 14th 'acupuncture baby' (but fertility is only one of the many things I work with!)

Training with The Acupuncture Academy means I am part of a 'family' with on-going support. I cannot recommend the training here highly enough, I will always feel grateful to TAA for making me the confident practitioner I am today. I loved it so much, I now squeeze in a few hours each week outside my busy clinic days helping with admin – so I look forward to meeting you!"

- Clare Watkins, Warwickshire

"Training to become an acupuncturist at The Acupuncture Academy was one of the best things I have done with my life. The course was three years of constant hard work, but incredibly interesting and life changing. Becoming an acupuncturist has allowed me to work for myself and run my own business which is what I've always wanted to do. I run a clinic from home which has allowed me to have the flexibility to practice around my family and busy life. I am able to fit patients in around school hours, holidays and I work evenings and weekends should I choose to. I love the variation this job brings. My working day is so varied and every day is different, treating a wide variety of health conditions and ages of patients, including teenagers, which I've really enjoyed! Treating patients is extremely rewarding and lot of my patients who have not found an answer with Western medicine have found that acupuncture is the only thing that has helped them back to health and I feel humble that I am able to work with them on this journey. There aren't many jobs where you can so directly change a person's life for the better. My passion for acupuncture grows stronger as my experience as a practitioner increases."

- Lucy Ward, Warwickshire

"I was accepted onto the first ever cohort at The Acupuncture Academy. Because of the flexible nature of the course, I was able to work and study at the same time. If they hadn't designed the course like this, I wouldn't have been able to do it at all.

I quite quickly left my previous employment to concentrate on building up my now thriving private practice in Birmingham – Pathway Acupuncture Clinic. I worked for around a year in a multi-bed setting as well, which was a great experience, and have now settled on private practice only. Additionally, I now assist in teaching practical skills at TAA which I also love doing!

I love the freedom that self-employment provides and determining my own working patterns. I work part-time, which allows me time to spend on my other interests; this was a major attraction for me in training in the first place.

To qualify as a Traditional Acupuncturist is one of the best things I have ever done. It is a great pleasure, and honour actually, to be part of a system of medicine that has such a long and ancient lineage. It is also incredibly interesting and not a subject that you ever finish learning about! Consequently then, not only do you meet interesting people and are able to help them achieve better health, but you also continue to develop yourself. A win-win situation!"

- Yvonne Cook, Birmingham

HELPING YOU MAKE A LIVING

We do everything we can to make sure every graduate has the best chance of success in practice, and we want your story to be as fulfilling as the ones you've just read.

So, as part of the course, we'll give you a great deal of help with marketing and business. And this is not just relevant knowledge and skills, but includes practical help in the form of materials you can use to help you succeed, such as tailored leaflets and GP information packs….we even give you a bespoke website once you've graduated and joined the BAcC!

To help our graduates feel as confident as possible in their work, we provide lots of ongoing support. This includes for example: continued access to course e-lessons; a private graduate Facebook group for clinical questions, sharing and support; reduced cost Continued Professional Development courses; a free listing on our register of Five Element practitioners, and clinic opportunities for local graduates.

As we said, at TAA, we are a family, and that means we're here for you!

We understand though, when thinking about undertaking any course, or changing career, one thing people really need to know is, "Can I make a good living?" So, does everything we do to help our students and graduates succeed actually result in our graduates making the living they need? To find out, we sent them surveys one year and three years after leaving us….

Firstly, 100% of the graduates surveyed to date are still working as acupuncturists, which is great news!

ONE YEAR AFTER LEAVING US...
The average number of treatments each week that graduates are carrying out at this stage is 14. Using average treatment fees this equates to a gross income of around £600 per week then (London prices/income will be higher), or around £28,000 pa (allowing for a few weeks off!)

But how does this compare to how much work they would ultimately like to be doing?

On average, our graduates are aiming to carry out 21 treatments per week. So, one year after leaving us, they are around 65% of the way to achieving their practice goals.

Most importantly perhaps, as you consider embarking on the course, you can see that the course can technically pay for itself in under one year, and in some cases less, because you will also be earning money from your acupuncture practice in the final six months of the course.

THREE YEARS AFTER LEAVING US...
The average number of treatments per week that graduates are carrying out at this stage has reached 21, so by this time they have met their initial goals for the level of practice they wanted. Using average treatment fees this equates to a gross income of around £900 per week (again, London prices/income higher), or £42,300 pa.

Imagine running your own clinic!

We can say with confidence then that not only will you be doing a job that you will love, but you should be able to make a good living doing it!!

"What is vitally important is the ability to do this course while still earning in another job. You end the course with little debt, unlike standard degree courses, and have a business already running to build from. "

- Christine Poolton, M2012 Graduate, Birmingham

OUR HOME IN ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA

OUR HOME TOWN AND COLLEGE FACILITIES...

TAA spent its fledgling years in the basement of the old town hall in Leamington Spa, and moved in early 2019 into an elegant three-storey Grade II listed building in Hamilton Terrace, close to The Parade - the town's main shopping street - just 10 minutes' walk from the train station. Teensy bit more salubrious and a lot less litter, although we had become quite attached to the old place, with the tippy tapping of a dance school right above our heads!!

Here at Hamilton Terrace, we have large teaching rooms, an extensive library, kitchen and student common room facilities, two private clinic rooms, a reception area, and easy access to nearby parking.

Royal Leamington Spa is in the heart of Warwickshire near Birmingham, Coventry, Warwick and Stratford-upon-Avon, and is easily accessible by road, rail or air.

Our students travel from all around the UK, as well as Europe and even internationally, to attend class weekends. It is an easy journey for students coming from London. The average number of miles that our students travel to college is 60, while the greatest distance travelled within the UK is around 340 miles.

Leamington is a beautiful and diverse Regency town, with great shops and restaurants, most within 5 minutes walk of the college. We are also located right beside the historic Jephson Gardens, a stunning and well maintained Victorian park, as well as the River Leam and it's 'Elephant's Wash'.

(Seriously though, the first elephant trainer in England was Sam Lockhart. Born in Leamington in 1850, he brought three elephants back from Ceylon and they lived in the town. This is where they were walked into the River Leam to be washed!)

There is plenty of accommodation nearby too, from guest houses and homestays to hotels. Prices can range from £25-£55 per night, unless you want more luxury that is! As most of our students are not local, they stay over in Leamington when attending class weekends, and apparently a jolly time is had by all (we don't need to know the details, we'll just say 'pink flamingo' – they'll know who they are!!). You can get recommendations from others through our private Facebook group, and if you don't 'do' Facebook, we can help you with that too because it can be done anonymously – no need to start posting photos of your dinner!

The view outside the college.

EXAMPLE TRAVEL TIMES - note that London is under 2 hours away by rail or road:

	Rail	*Driving*
Birmingham	28 mins	40 mins
Oxford	34 mins	57 mins
Reading	1 hr 8 mins	1 hr 32 mins
London	1 hr 20 mins	2 hrs
Manchester	2 hrs 9 mins	2 hrs 32 mins
Bournemouth	2 hrs 25 mins	2 hrs 25 mins
Cardiff	2 hrs 34 mins	2 hrs 13 mins
Cambridge	2 hrs 45 mins	2 hrs
York	3 hrs 52 mins	2 hrs 42 mins
Glasgow	4 hrs 50 mins	5 hrs 15 mins

BY AIR

Our nearest airport is Birmingham International, which has domestic flights from Newquay, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Inverness, Aberdeen, the Isle of Man, Belfast, several locations in the Republic of Ireland, and of course internationally. Leamington Spa is then just a short train journey (around 20 minutes) from the airport.

OUR PROFESSIONAL LICENTIATE IN ACUPUNCTURE

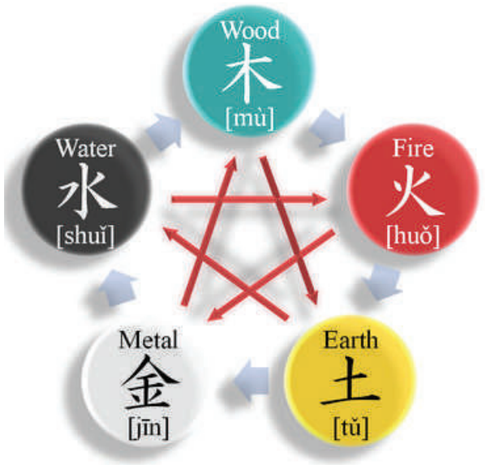
As with all BAAB fully accredited courses, we teach every aspect of acupuncture education set out in the British Acupuncture Council's Standards of Education. This means that we cover: acupuncture theory; anatomy and point location; all the aspects of conventional medicine an acupuncturist needs to know; clinical skills including needling, 'moxibustion', cupping and Tui na; professional practice - from rapport and therapeutic relationship skills through to professional codes, safe practice and clinical practice itself; as well as research with a focus on acupuncture. But before we get on to how we teach you, and the detail of our curriculum, you may be wondering....

What 'style' of acupuncture do we teach?

The most common styles of acupuncture practised in the UK are known as Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), roughly speaking a more symptom-based style developed in the 1950's, and Five Element acupuncture (5EA), which could be generally described as more 'holistic' in nature. TCM in general involves much more learning by rote, and uses acupuncture 'prescriptions' aimed at conditions. With 5EA, the focus is more on the person who has the condition as opposed to the condition itself; the 'root' so to speak, as opposed to simply the 'branch'.

It aims to promote the body's self-healing mechanisms, and is excellent at addressing conditions that have an emotional cause (as can often be the case). It is more instinctive and intuitive, and cannot be learned from books alone, as Five Element practitioners develop and use fine, sensory diagnostic skills to read the very subtle signals that the body produces when ill or out of balance.

All acupuncture courses will lean more towards one or the other style, or may teach both in a fairly equal ratio, in what is referred to as an 'integrated' approach. At TAA we feel that this is an artificial division though, because 5EA and TCM practice are both derived from the main classical theories, all of which we teach.



The Five Elements

Our students therefore develop a deep knowledge and understanding of all relevant classical theory, but have a central focus on the Five Element model. This broad education, with a Five Element focus will allow you to see each patient as unique, working with them at a much deeper level.

All BAAB accredited courses are required to introduce the theory of the Five Elements, but most don't teach the diagnostic skills, or clinical applications. So for graduates of those courses, it is not a style that can be applied in a clinical setting. If Five Element acupuncture is of particular interest to you then, TAA is a good choice.

Of course, there are more immediate situations where additional tools might be called for; those times when we need to treat the 'branch' as well as the 'root'. Certain pain conditions for example, or fertility issues, pregnancy, or cancer support. In these sorts of situations, TCM theory often brings a useful additional perspective and approach. Because you will have learned ALL of the primary classical theories and skills, you will be able to address this, and work truly creatively, designing bespoke treatments for each and every situation. In our experience this means speedier and more stable improvements – both in how the patient feels, as well as their initial, presenting condition. This is a very satisfying and successful approach, which is why we're excited to pass it on to you!

SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

"AM I TOO OLD? AND I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING AT ALL ABOUT MEDICINE!!"

The average age of our students is 42 (range goes from early 20's to mid 60's), and their backgrounds are hugely diverse, including teaching, healthcare, IT, business, and of course, full time parenting.

You certainly don't need a healthcare background, as you will learn everything you need to with us.

"I HAVEN'T STUDIED FOR YEARS, AND CERTAINLY NOTHING FORMAL..."

Many of our students haven't studied for a long time, or have never done a degree before, so we are used to providing additional study support. In fact, we have a Writing Skills e-lesson which you can complete before you start, getting advice and feedback from us on a piece of your own work so that you feel more confident. We are frankly far more interested in your overall understanding and skills than your capacity for excellent written work - so our focus is very much on supporting you to achieve the best possible outcomes in clinic.

"I'VE GOT FAMILY TO CONSIDER, AND/OR I WORK FULL TIME...IS IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO DO THIS COURSE?"

The majority of our students have children, and many have young children (though having a supportive partner or family does help!). Many are working full time when they join us too, although we recommend dropping to four days or fewer per week if possible. This will be necessary by third year anyway, ...when your clinical work starts and you need a day per week to treat your own patients.

In years one and two, there are ten visits to college which are arranged over weekends, with the occasional addition of a Thursday and/or Friday. During the four to six weeks between each college visit (we call this a 'study period'), you will also study at home.

A rough guide is that for every hour in class, you'll need to do four hours of study at home, which equates to around eighteen hours per week, as would be usual for a three year degree level course.

...However, it won't be eighteen hours spent entirely sitting in front of a computer so don't panic; these 'hours' include all sorts of study, and remember, the important bit is you can organise this time to suit you, and work around your life commitments! In addition to working through three e-lessons, taking part in forums and doing assignments, you will also be spending some of your time each month on practical work such as point location and clinical skills practise.

In general, working through your e-lessons and other academic work can take up to half of your study time, with the practise of skills such as point location and needling (into a pad, not your partner or the dog!!) making up much of the rest. The majority of this practise will be done at home, though you can attend additional sessions at college or with local practitioners to make up requirements for the amount of 'checked' practice that you need.

"Wanting to take a more rewarding path in life, I started the course in 2015. The next three years were very challenging, as I continued my day job as an electrician, and have two small children...but all of the tutors, principles and my colleagues made every hour so interesting and enjoyable.

At the end, I have made friends for life and qualified in such a life changing discipline that makes you see the world in a completely new way and allows you to make huge changes to the people you are lucky enough to treat. "

- Martin Blake, Somerset.

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT IN YEARS 1 & 2

In this section, we look at the various ways in which you will be taught during the first and second years of the course: in the classroom, via e-learning, and in the clinic, before explaining some of the assessment methods we use.

IN THE CLASSROOM...
Your weekends in college are active and engaging, which is probably a good thing at the end of what may well have been a long week at work or with the kids! Sessions generally focus on the teaching and development of clinical skills such as point location and needling, and diagnostic skills such as pulse taking, and colour, sound, odour and emotion. You'll have two days of Tui na (a bodywork technique used both for diagnosis and treatment) and also reviewing the theory that you'll have covered online. As we mentioned earlier, ALL practical skills are taught first in class, but there are videos too so that you can confidently carry on practising when you get home.

"Guy is showing Jenny and I how to confidently find the wrist flexure, something we kept getting wrong. We can now do it!

Guy is warm, engaging and he explains things so well."

- Jenny, Year 1

Class time is invaluable both for learning, and for spending quality time connecting with your peers. You'll be working hard, but don't forget though that we believe fun is an important element of helping you to learn - so be prepared to enjoy yourself!

WORKING WITH STUDENTS ACROSS THE YEARS...
As well as the regular class weekends with your own group, there are valuable opportunities to attend additional sessions with students from all years. Students typically attend two or three of these extra sessions per year.

They range from point location practise sessions, to diagnostic skills 'fun days' where you can practise your colour, sound, odour and emotion diagnostic skills with some new 'victims'!

In year two, we offer an additional day undertaking a First Aid course, which you'll need before you enter the clinical year. If it suits you to take such a course elsewhere, that's no problem!

Learning the skill of odour diagnosis!

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT IN YEARS 1 & 2 - E-learning at TAA – meet 'ALEC'

ALEC is the friendly name that we give the Academy Learning and E-Community. It is a 'one-stop-shop' where you can find everything that you might need to progress through the course including all your admin (eg copies of handbooks and assessment guidance) as well as your e-lessons and the point location and skills videos that support your class sessions.

The e-lessons are engaging and interactive, and build over the first two years into a comprehensive text on 'everything I might possibly need to know'. Don't worry if you have never learned this way before though, as you don't need any special skills and don't forget - we will give you all the support you need to help your learning succeed, via your group's forums, personal tutoring, and your own graduate mentor if you'd find this useful, not to mention reviewing your learning in a class setting.

All you will need is internet access and a PC or mac computer that's reasonably up to date, and allows you to work with 'Word' documents (for the purposes of assignments). There IS some accessibility on iPad and smartphones, it can be a little limited. There is also the facility to listen to lessons too, which can be useful for reviewing lessons while doing something else, as well as being invaluable for students with dyslexia or other issues with screen reading.

"I love the e-lessons, and even more now I am going back and looking at them again as I progress. Each time, they increasingly knit together and make so much more sense."

- Wendy, Year 2

"The content of the e-lessons is of a consistently high standard and they're extremely well put together."

- Mel, Year 2

"The lessons have obviously been very well thought out and planned."

- Donna, Year 1

"The forums are outstanding, both the speed of response and quality of answers are exceptional."

- John, Year 1

HERE'S A REMINDER OF SOME OF THE BENEFITS...

1. FLEXIBILITY AND TIME SAVING
- less time travelling and away from home
- study fits much more easily around other commitments
- learning at your own speed, rather than being forced to work in class at the same pace as others
- saving huge amounts of time writing up notes from lectures; all your factual notes are in the e-lessons already!

2. UNLIMITED ACCESS
In a more typical learning environment, if you miss a lecture in class, then it's hard to fully catch up. if you did attend, but cannot later decipher your notes, that may be your last chance to grasp the subject.

Here at TAA, you can access e-lessons as often as you like, and they are still available after you graduate for easy reference.

3. REMAINING CURRENT
We can more easily ensure all your information is up to date, as new research comes out, for example...

4. IT'S A MUCH MORE ECO-FRIENDLY WAY OF LEARNING!

"I have always been impressed by the tutors' quick responses to my forum queries and the lengths they go to in answering my questions so fully. They must look very frequently – do they ever get a break?!"

- Lynne, Year 2

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT IN YEARS 1 & 2 - in the clinic

The course is also built around clinical practice, so from very early on you'll be observing practice in our busy teaching clinic, in class, with TAA graduates, and with practitioners in your local area. Throughout years one and two, you will be able to take pulses and develop your other diagnostic skills during your observations, and in second year, in the teaching clinic, you can take more of a role in simple treatment tasks such as applying moxa and getting involved in treatment planning discussions with the practitioners. In second year, you will also spend time observing the third year students in their treatment planning discussions in class.

"Here, I am chatting with Sharon, who runs our teaching clinic, during an observation session. We've just seen an elderly patient who had, for many years, been too anxious to walk into town before coming for acupuncture – after just the first treatment, he was back out with his wife enjoying a day of shopping, and over the moon! It's so amazing to see what we are learning coming to life like this!"

- Michelle Venter, Clinical Year Student

ASSESSMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS - YEARS 1 & 2...

At TAA we don't believe in making students jump through academic hoops for the sake of it, so everything that we ask you to do is useful to your future practice, be that discussing acupuncture research in the news with your patients, through to planning out your treatments in clinic.

Again, don't worry if it's been a long time since you last did any academic work and you are feeling rusty – remember we'll support you with this, including offering you a tailored Writing Skills lesson if you need it.

Assessment methods include:

- A portfolio which includes logs of your development in:

  - clinical and practical skills,
  - examples that demonstrate your understanding of theory, and
  - learning arising through your observations

- Case studies - diagnosing and planning treatments

- An informal research presentation - giving you a tool to build practice

- Practical assessments on point location and clinical skills

THIRD YEAR - THE CLINICAL YEAR

IN YOUR OWN CLINIC - YEAR 3...
Third year is when it all comes together! Right from the start of this year, you will begin working with your own patients under the guidance of your own personal clinical supervisor, in a clinical setting near to where you live (note that if we can't place you with anyone local, you'll work at the TAA clinic, though this hasn't yet been necessary!) Your clinical work will usually take place on a weekday, during office hours, starting with half a day and moving up to a day over time, so you'll need to be prepared for this (we'll organise your placement early in your second year so you can plan ahead).

Over time, your supervisor will gradually step back and encourage you to work more independently, until around mid-way through the third year, once you have achieved the necessary standards in your clinical work, we move you into a 'pre-qualification under indirect supervision' stage, which means that you can work in clinic semi-independently, arrange your diary to suit yourself, and charge your patients.

From midway through third year then, you start earning money from your own practice!

During the last six months of third year, you will continue to receive close support at class weekends, and via indirect supervision - which means regular personal tutorials, and detailed written feedback and advice on the treatments that you are doing, and planning to do. There is a lot of support available for this section of the course, so don't worry that you will just be out there on your own. You'll be ready for it as and when it happens!!

This year you'll attend eight class sessions over the year, in addition to your clinic day each week. Classes in third year always include time to discuss and get advice on one or more of your clinical cases – these sessions are led by different members of the clinical year team to ensure that you get the widest possible perspective.

Lucy and her supervisor Dean

It feels so rewarding treating patients in clinic after so much hard work learning theory! Learning to diagnose this through CSOE is a revelation, it is such a challenge and so rewarding when your patients respond well. At first I was nervous about being watched by my supervisor, but I soon got used to it and realised he is a huge support, he's like my safety net.

What I find so practical about the course, is that you start building your own business before you've even graduated, so I'm looking forward to the transition from student to fully independent practitioner being a smooth one.'

- Lucy Inman, Clinical Year Student

"Here, I am helping Lucy assess a patient's pulse. I have been supervising acupuncture students in their clinical work since 1996, and every time is different, and rewarding in so many ways. Since I've been working with TAA students, the use of the 1:1 supervision model has enabled me to more closely observe and develop student practitioners than may possible in the usual college clinic environment. I have seen this reflected in the many TAA graduates I've come into contact with."

- Dean Lander,, Clinical Year Supervisor

DETAIL ON THE CURRICULUM – THE COURSE 'UNITS'

ACUPUNCTURE THEORY

In this unit, you will learn all the primary fundamental concepts of Chinese medicine, grounded in their classical, historical and clinical contexts.

Five Element theory provides a model of health as well as disorder, and it relates closely to the patterns and forces in the natural world. We'll help you explore these relationships by directed observation of the world and the people around you, including observation of example cases. In this way, the theories are brought to life, and you will start to recognise how we use them to diagnose the individual 'landscape' of each patient.

Five Element theory can only be used successfully in practice if it is combined with the necessary diagnostic skills, so this unit is taught closely alongside the Clinical skills unit. The knowledge and skills you develop will enable you to recognise basic patterns of diagnosis early on in your studies, and by the third year, moving into the Professional Clinical Practice unit, you will be able to diagnose complex cases and work out the most appropriate treatment.

From year two, this unit also functions closely alongside your Biomedicine studies, so that you can work safely and confidently with patients who come to your clinic with recognised conventional conditions.
Acupuncture theory is taught using: e-learning, lessons, activities, and facilitated forum discussions class room teaching – including immersive workshops and field trips; pairs and group work to explore the application of theory and analyse case snapshots; student-led problem based learning; observing patients in class and viewing of video examples to illustrate the relationship of theory to practice.

YEAR 1:
In this year, you are introduced to all the primary fundamental concepts and theories underpinning Chinese medicine, including:

- Dao, qi, yin/yang, Eight diagnostic principles
- Five Elements in health and disease
- Twelve Officials and their functions; organ diagnosis; syndromes
- Vital Substances (e.g. Qi and blood)
- Concept of the Causative Factor
- Causes of disease, including emotional and environmental causes
- Food energetics
- Root and branch
- Chinese clock (rhythms of function)
- Energetic 'Blocks' to treatment
- Channel theory, and functions and use of points
- Theory behind diagnostic and clinical skills techniques

You will also be introduced to the historical context, development and acculturation of Chinese Medicine (i.e. how it moved from the East to the West!!).

YEAR 2:
In year two, you will review and deepen your understanding of the theories you learned in year one, and combine them with your developing clinical and diagnostic skills and your Biomedical knowledge, to explore the diagnosis of example cases. From there, you will start to think about how to put together elegant and appropriate individual treatments. Your understanding of theory will be further cemented by your work in the Professional Clinical practice unit this year, taking case histories from real volunteers, and exploring the treatments you would carry out, as well as observing in the teaching clinic and taking an increased role there in treatment planning alongside the practitioners.

You will also learn more about the advice on diet and lifestyle, framed in a Chinese medical context, that you might give patients to support their progress.

CLINICAL AND DIAGNOSTIC SKILLS

Putting together the theory you're learning with the skills you are developing is an exciting part of the course our students love! Acupuncturists use their diagnostic skills to draw upon a variety of sources of information aside from what the patient says: pulse and tongue diagnosis, as well as physical examination from both a Chinese medical perspective and a conventional structural perspective. In Five Element acupuncture, we use the important additional diagnostic skills of assessing Colour, Sound, Odour and Emotion.

Your diagnostic skills are developed in the classroom, in clinic, and at home, throughout the course. In class practical sessions you will work in pairs and small groups, with a high tutor-student ratio for maximum support and feedback. At home, you will continue working on these skills by taking and recording pulses of your friends, family and colleagues, and observing Colour, Sound, Odour and Emotion. You'll then have opportunities to discuss these findings in class. In Five Element acupuncture, we learn to read additional information from the pulses that helps us diagnose potential 'Blocks to treatment'. Sessions attended by students across all three years maximise opportunities to practise under the guidance of experienced tutors, with a variety of different people to act as 'bodies'.

This unit also ties in closely with your work in the Professional Clinical Practice unit, as you will start to put some of your skills into practice observing patients from year one, both in our busy teaching clinic (which runs every week, serving the local community), in class, and with practitioners in your local area. In these settings, you will interact with patients, taking pulses alongside the practitioner or clinical supervisor, and comparing your observations of diagnostic signs, so that you receive further checks on your progress. In this unit, attention will also be paid to learning how to work with patients with sensitivity and dignity during all aspects of diagnosis and treatment.

The focus in clinical skills is on safe and effective needling techniques and the application of moxibustion, a warming herb used alongside needling in most acupuncture approaches, but particularly central to Five Element practice.

You will start needling right from your second weekend in class, and practise regularly until you begin treating patients in your Clinical year, when you continue to develop your skills as part of the professional Clinical Practice unit, taking increasing responsibility for the management of patients.

Tui Na is an additional Chinese medical bodywork technique used in both diagnosis and treatment. As part of this unit, you will have three days of Tui Na tuition and practise, to help you develop some basic skills. These are not formally assessed, though you will be informally assessed during your last session of second year so that you feel confident using your skills in practice.

In third year, you will learn further adjunctive skills including cupping, gua sha, and auricular acupuncture, so that you have the widest possible range of tools at your disposal when planning treatments.

Another important aspect of this unit is the introduction of rapport and enquiry (history-taking) skills, which again you'll develop much further in the Professional Clinical Practice unit as you explore the therapeutic relationship in more depth, including issues of ethical and professional practice.

During your time in clinic, your personal supervisor will work closely with you to provide continual checks on your diagnostic and clinical skills, as well as your safe practice.

DETAIL ON THE CURRICULUM – THE COURSE 'UNITS'

YEAR 1 AND 2 CONTENT:

Introduction to rapport skills

Diagnostic skills:
- To See, To Hear, To Ask, To Feel
- Colour, Sound, Odour and Emotion skills
- Pulse taking and the diagnosis of Blocks via pulses
- Tongue diagnosis
- Akabane testing (for left/right imbalance)
- Blood pressure measurement
- Conventional structural examination
- Palpatory skills: Japanese Abdominal Diagnosis, Tuina channel palpation

Clinical skills
- Needle techniques: primary techniques of tonification, dispersal and evens, and selected other techniques including trigger point needling
- Clean needling technique
- Moxibustion
- Cupping/gua sha/bleeding/ intra-dermal & plum blossom needling
- Moxa needling
- Introduction to auricular acupuncture

Learning Five Element theory and the diagnostic skills we use has really helped me to understand both myself and others, professionally and personally. Not only am I learning about how to practically treat people but I am learning about a whole new way to view the world.

Being able to see how energy moves in nature in the same way as it does us, how we are part of the wider environment, has helped me to develop understanding, compassion and patience as well as the skills needed to help others on their paths to health. It's been a truly transformative experience.

- Allie, Year 2

ANATOMY, CHANNELS AND POINTS

The Anatomy, Channels and Points unit is designed to provide you with a thorough grounding in surface anatomy, the functions of relevant anatomical structures and the geography of the channels and acupuncture points. It is important to note that the vast majority of our students begin the course with no prior knowledge of this topic, and we will be teaching you all you need to learn! You will start with an introductory class session and accompanying e-lesson, and learn new anatomy in class alongside each channel. We ensure a high student-tutor ratio in these classes, so that you get as much individual feedback on your work as possible. You will also be able to watch tutor demonstrations in class, and at home you can watch our online videos, in which unit leader Guy Caplan locates each set of points. These videos are available both before the relevant class session, and whenever you need to review them afterwards.

If you do have prior anatomical knowledge, you will likely find the opportunity to review helpful!

In this unit, attention will also be paid to learning how to work with patients with sensitivity and dignity when palpating anatomy and locating points.

As you practise in class, your tutors will also help you to review the different functions and uses of points that you'll be introduced to in Acupuncture Theory.

In year one, you will learn all the 'Command points' – these are the points we use most frequently, and they are all located below the elbows and knees. In year two you will focus on points elsewhere on the body, but also review regularly those you learned in year one.

In your third year, you get to put your knowledge of point theory and your location skills into practice with your patients in clinic. Your clinical supervisor will work closely with you to ensure your locations are correct, and be by your side to build your confidence with the needling of any 'difficult' points and ensure you follow safe practice. At this stage you will also learn just a few more 'Extra' points that can be particularly helpful for some pain conditions. You will still have opportunities at most class sessions to practise any points you feel less confident with, and receive feedback from tutors.

Practising point location will be a large part of the work you do both at college and at home – it's so important to get it right! We therefore provide optional free sessions with a tutor on most of your class weekends, for a couple of hours on the Saturday evenings, as well as several optional free days you can attend throughout the year. Most students attend one or two of these over the course of the year, and they are always held at weekends. Several of our tutors and clinical supervisors also offer private sessions for small groups to practise on

YEAR 1 & 2 CONTENT:

- Surface anatomy (and deep anatomy where relevant to needling safety)
- Knowledge, identification and relationship of anatomy to acupoints and channels
- Location of acupoints on twelve main channels, and Ren and Du mai
- Location and use of selected extra points, and Ah Shi points
- Introduction to use and needling of 'trigger' points
- Review of point names, spirit and functions, during and linked to location
- Channel palpation techniques for anatomy and point location
- Handling and movement of patient for point location/needling purposes
- Different types of channel (including deep pathways)
- Flow of qi, including entry-exit protocol
- Review of safe insertion depths/directions during locating
- Location of acupoints according to selected protocols (eg AE, other blocks)

I have loved learning Five Element acupuncture. It has given me a whole new outlook on life. Not just as a practitioner but also in my day to day life.

Being in clinic has brought all the theory to life, seeing the results in my patients and changing their lives for the better is worth every single moment of reflection!

- Tish, Clinical Year Student

DETAIL ON THE CURRICULUM – THE COURSE 'UNITS'

BIOMEDICINE

In this unit, over the first two years of the course, you will develop a sound basic understanding of the structure and function of the physiological systems of the body, basic psychology, pharmacology, and potential disorders and their tests and treatments. This will enable you to practice acupuncture safely, both in terms of needling/palpation, and being able to assess patients and recognize those signs that indicate either urgent or recommended referral for conventional medical tests or treatment.

In first year, you will start with some overview lessons on basic physiology, the conventional view of pharmacology, and comparisons with the Chinese medical perspective. You will move on to studying the first body 'systems', starting with the musculoskeletal system and the cardiovascular system, their conventional diseases and disorders, tests and treatments towards the end of first year, and continue to look at further systems throughout second year. Throughout this unit, we look at the Chinese perspective alongside the conventional – so even if you have some prior knowledge of the conventional aspect, you will find this unit very beneficial.

The unit is taught using e-lessons with examples from practice and mini-case examples for you to work on, alongside the core textbook provided (aimed at acupuncturists). You will also review in class sessions what you have learned, in the context of example case discussions and treatment planning.

In the third year, as you work with your patients in the Professional Clinical Practice unit, you will consider your patients' conventional disorders, tests and medications, as well as any 'Red Flags' for undiagnosed conditions or other issues requiring referral, as part of your overall diagnoses. You will also learn to communicate appropriately with patients about their conventional conditions and treatments, and with referring GPs and other health professionals.

Further class sessions in third year will build on earlier knowledge to look at the conventional aspects of specialist areas such as working with patients undergoing assisted conception, in pregnancy, those with cancer, and in the area of mental health.

YEAR 1 CONTENT:

- Basic physiology
- Concepts of health (including biopsychosocial model)
- Pharmacology
- Overview of 'Red flags' and appropriate referral
- Body systems from now on through second year include looking at conventional disorders, red flags, tests and treatments, Chinese Medical view
- Musculo-skeletal system
- Cancer
- Infectious diseases

YEAR 2 CONTENT:

- Nervous system
- Special senses
- Blood system
- Lymphatic and immune systems
- Cardiovascular system
- Respiratory system
- Endocrine system
- Female and male reproductive systems
- Urinary system
- Gastrointestinal system
- Integumentary system
- Mental health and health psychology

RESEARCH AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

In this unit, you'll be introduced to critical thinking and reflective practice, which is central to our work as acupuncturists. We develop as professionals by continued learning from practice: "What could I have done better during that treatment, and why?", "Why did that happen?" "What more could I find out that might help my assessment and treatment of this patient?"

You will develop this perspective throughout years one and two, by applying these processes to your work in all other units of study. This unit will also encourage you to explore your underlying values, assumptions and attitudes, in order to help you assess your patients in third year with clarity, and work with them with respect and compassion.

You will explore research methods, perspectives and approaches, so that you can search for and evaluate appropriate sources of evidence, and know how and when to apply this as part of evidence-based practice. In this aspect of the unit, we focus on acupuncture research throughout, maintaining relevance and interest. In the second year, you will work with one of your peers to produce an evidence-based talk about acupuncture, aimed at an (imaginary) audience of your choice. This is a part of the unit students really enjoy, and many have gone on to use their talks as a valuable tool to promote practice.

In third year, you will complete the unit by undertaking a Final Year Project - usually an in-depth case study on one or more of your patients. For this, you will draw on the appropriate research evidence for background, and also collect and assess simple outcomes data.

Caroline Robinson, S2016 graduate, talking about her Final Year Project:

"Although in years one and two I was a bit nervous about it, in fact carrying out my Final Year Project case study was actually one of the most valuable experiences of my training. Presenting to my peers about my patient, using data I had collated from clinic, was such a memorable and exhilarating experience. I guess what really hit home for all of us was the reality of our work with patients, what we can achieve. Although I knew from my own experience as a patient how transformative Five Element acupuncture can be, when it hits that we can make that happen for someone else… it just feels fantastic! In my talk I discuss the case of a male fibromyalgia patient, and I shared this message from him, after just his first five treatments:

"I'm doing really good! Flare ups are a rare thing, my general pain levels are under control, small episodes of hypersensitivity where I have to take pills and go to bed, but apart from that I am doing good. It's the mental side of it that's the biggest change, I was in a place of despair and fear about my future before my treatments with you, and all the physical benefits aside it's the ability to stay calm and manage my health that's the biggest deal, the difference between being sorrowful and afraid of what's happening to me compared to being cool and composed and learning to live a different way that's helped the most.. we got a new dog, and I am walking with him and even jogging when I can! There's no way I could have done this before you helped me!.. I'm on track, looking forward to life and winning the battle with this miserable condition, which seems like a much smaller thing these days. Thank you again."

DETAIL ON THE CURRICULUM – THE COURSE 'UNITS'

YEAR 1 CONTENT:
- What is research/scientific research? What are the paradigms?
- Reflective and critical thinking theory
- Types of questions research can answer
- Critical appraisal of research
- Searching for literature
- Literature reviews/systematic reviews

YEAR 2 CONTENT:
- The main features and uses of selected research designs
- Carrying out a service evaluation differences with audit
- Methods of data collection
- Sampling
- Ethical issues pertaining to (acupuncture) research
- Analysis and presentation of quantitative and qualitative data
- Presenting research – oral and PowerPoint
- Dissemination of research

YEAR 3:
Independent supervised Final Year Project drawing on the learning from year 1 & 2.

PROFESSIONAL CLINICAL PRACTICE

From the start, this unit is designed to facilitate you becoming an autonomous healthcare practitioner who can demonstrate proficient performance in complex clinical situations. It ties together in the context of practice all the relevant strands in other units: your clinical skills and point location, acupuncture theory, biomedicine theory, research skills, and reflective practice.

In the first year, your main learning will take place via your facilitated observations of practice, and class sessions to help develop rapport and interaction skills. This work will be aimed at developing your skills in a practice context, and immersing you in the work of an acupuncturist to prepare for the realities of clinical life. At this stage, you will also begin to explore the strengths and challenges you may have as a practitioner, as well as starting to consider the kind of acupuncture business you might like to have.

During year two, your practical work in this unit will include you taking management of patient consultations through to diagnosis and treatment planning. Both e-lessons and class sessions will be focused on this, and you will also spend time observing third year students discussing their clinical cases, to immerse you in the ongoing process of developing diagnoses through clinical reasoning over time.

Further theory in year two includes an exploration of the therapeutic relationship, including the definition and application of professional and ethical conduct and values, as well as marketing and business management.

Helping you to become a successful practitioner is of great importance to us! So, as well as teaching marketing and business, and providing you with materials and practical help, we also ensure you are able to join the British Acupuncture Council (BAcC) as a student member from year one and receive all the benefits student membership confers. We also subsidise your attendance at the BAcC conference should you wish to join us, during any year of the course. This can foster a real sense of professionalism and forge a wider network that will serve you over your lifetime as a practitioner. And there's always a good party! The greatest emphasis in this unit is on the third year when you will now take the main responsibility, supported by your personal supervisor and personal tutor, for managing your own patients.

What happens at the conference, stays at the conference!

Class sessions will help you develop further your skills of clinical reasoning, and you will also review and add to the biomedical and acupuncture theory that you will need to know when working with 'specialist' areas and vulnerable groups, such as: mental health, obstetrics, gynaecology and fertility, the elderly, children and palliative care.

YEAR 1 CONTENT:
- Introduction to rapport and emotional interaction
- Patient observation – linking theory to practice
- Exploring scope of practice and readiness for practice

YEAR 2 CONTENT:
- Building and sustaining a therapeutic relationship including effective communication: theory and practice
- Making a Traditional Diagnosis
- Effective communication with the general public and health professionals
- Professional practice issues (drawing on the BAcC Code of Professional Practice) including:
- Patient management (expectations before and over course of treatment, boundaries, ethical considerations etc)
- Consent
- Issues around referral of patients
- Record keeping
- Setting up in practice – marketing, business planning

YEAR 3:
- Diagnosis and treatment of patients, and ongoing clinical reasoning
- Review and continuation of marketing and business planning
- Principles and considerations when treating different patient groups (including children, obstetrics and gynaecology, the elderly, mental health and palliative care)

Chris Nortley, Guest lecturer in Mental Health, and clinical supervisor, working here with the M2017 group

Chris says:

"I am always very happy to teach at TAA. I find the students well informed and highly motivated and they invariably demonstrate high standards both in the classroom and in the clinic environment.

For many years I ran an NHS Acupuncture service at North Manchester General Hospital Department of Psychiatry, developing the use of Five Element style Acupuncture in the treatment of mental illness. I consider it invaluable to have the opportunity to disseminate this clinical experience to today's students."

Comments from the group:
- *Fantastic, absolutely fascinating*
- *Awesome and inspiring*
- *Inspirational, mind blowing*
- *Really really interesting*
- *Very illuminating and inspiring, I've learned alot. Brilliant!*

ADMISSIONS AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

OUR BASIC EDUCATIONAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Our educational entry requirements (which must be demonstrated if you are applying straight from A-levels):

- Five GCSEs/GCEs at grade A-C or equivalent, including maths or a science, and English AND at least 240 A-level/AVCE points from two or more A2 levels or the equivalent (see our website for more details)

However, you can also apply as a mature student without formal qualifications as set out below:

APPLYING AS A MATURE STUDENT (WITHOUT FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS)

We very much welcome applications from mature students, who bring an enormous amount of useful life experience. Ideally, you will have the entry qualifications above, however, if you don't have this conventional educational background, we'll do everything we can to help you succeed.

As part of your application, we will be looking for:

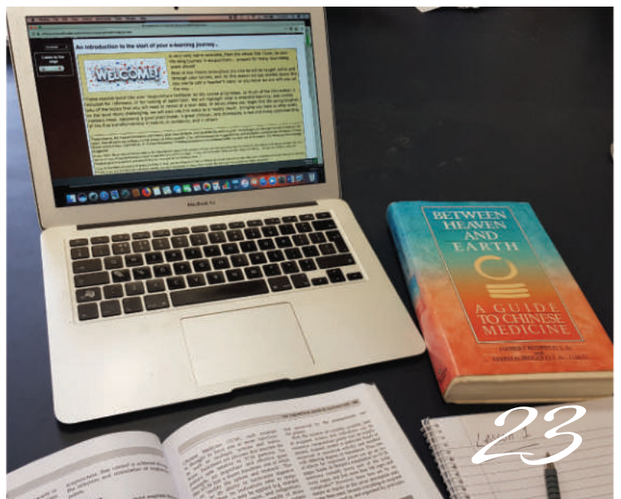
- A genuine motivation to study and practice acupuncture, a sincere and caring attitude, and a willingness to develop personally as appropriate
- A standard of personal health and wellbeing sufficient to enable you to undertake and complete the course
- Sufficient command of written and spoken English: at least up to IELTS band 7 standard
- An understanding of the commitment demanded by the course, and how you plan to fit your studies into your life
- Basic competency in IT (using Word, saving documents, creating folders to store files, and uploading and downloading documents)

If you do lack the conventional entry requirements for honours degree level study, we will explore with you during your interview how you may have developed relevant skills through your life and work experience, such as working with people, communication skills, problem-solving and decision making. If we feel it would be of benefit, we will enrol you on our free Writing skills for study e-lesson, to help you to prepare you for study at this level. As part of this module, we may require you to submit a short piece of writing, and we'll give you helpful feedback on this.

It may well be that you have simply been out of education for a long time, and you're worried you may be a little rusty?! This would apply to most of our students, so don't worry, you won't be alone. The writing skills module is available to all our students before they start, so if you feel you need a refresher, the help is there. Once you've started the course, you can go back to this lesson at any time, and remember, we'll support you all the way through in a variety of ways, to help you succeed.

The class tutors are kind and patient, encouraging us along the way. With their support and experienced teaching I have no doubt we will all become excellent five element practitioners.

- Bev, Year 2



ADMISSIONS AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

FITNESS TO PRACTISE

A certain amount of physical dexterity is essential when undertaking the course and then moving into practice, and while we can make reasonable adjustments to the programme for students with disabilities in line with our strategic aim of widening participation in healthcare education and practice, we also need to ensure future patient safety through accurate assessment. Part of our application process will therefore be designed to ascertain need, and possible responses.

As part of assessing fitness to practise, we will also require a reference from a professional who has known you for a minimum of two years either in a workplace, study or personal capacity (not family members), describing their opinion on fitness to work directly with the public in a professional healthcare capacity.

Subject to regulatory requirements, you may be required to present a current CRB disclosure, however in the absence of this regulatory requirement at present, a self-declaration must be signed as part of your student contract, as a minimum. You should also be aware that the British Acupuncture Council will consider fitness to practice as part of your application to them on graduation, including relevant health conditions.

STUDENTS FROM OUTSIDE THE UK

We welcome students from around the world who have an appropriate level of written and spoken English (at least up to IELTS band 7 standard).

As a private institution, it is not possible to gain a study visa to study with us, however, many students fly to the UK to attend class sessions. We would need to discuss clinical year arrangements, which may need to take place at TAA, or in one of our London clinics. Contact us to discuss how studying with us might work for you. You should also make yourself aware of the requirements for practising acupuncture in your home country, or the country in which you are hoping to set up practice.

FEES AND COSTS

We provide a high quality, hands on course with a great deal of individual support, at a lower cost than universities can offer. Current fees and options for fee payment can be found on our website and payment options are available if you need to spread the cost over the duration of the course.

Your fees include several key textbooks and most of what you'll need, although there are a few additional costs that you will want to factor in however, including travel and accommodation if necessary, a white clinic coat (around £25) for observations and clinical work, a sphygmomanometer and stethoscope for taking blood pressure (we sell some good value ones at cost price), a First Aid at work one day course, and further clinical supplies for third year.

As a private college, our students cannot apply for government student loans, however some students have found creative ways of financing their course, including bank loans, borrowing from family, or releasing equity from their property. You could also explore charities and trusts (often, these focus for example on students from lower income backgrounds). Ask at your local library, and explore for example:

- The Educational Grants Directory
- The Charities Digest
- The Grants Register
- The Directory of Grant Making Trusts

Remember that by the end of your first year in practice , it is realistic to assume that you will have earned at least the same amount as any loan taken out.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

If you are looking to transfer from another institution, we'll work with you to assess what level of study you have attained and how this fits with our course. Typically, you'll need to provide transcripts and a syllabus for your previous course, and we may ask you to complete a practical and/or written assessment. If the course you wish to transfer from has substantial differences in content or organisation, or you have been away from your studies for over eighteen months, it is likely that you will have to start the course at the beginning; however, you may well be able to use some of your previous work in your coursework with us.

Due to the structure of our course, it is not usually possible to formally accredit prior learning and exempt students from part of the course. Health professionals will be at an advantage, and may be exempt from certain assessments or aspects of assessments, but will usually need to take all units (because, for example, in the Biomedicine unit, we compare to the Chinese medicine perspective throughout). Please contact us if you'd like to discuss this with us.

"Following a long career as a physiotherapist in the military, and having already completed a Masters degree in Western Medical Acupuncture, I decided that I would like to practice acupuncture full time, and so looked for an acupuncture college that would give me the highest level of training in Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Despite it not being the closest college to me, I chose The Acupuncture Academy as their unique structure of distance learning combined with in-house training made the course easily accessible to me as a parent of two young children.

The course was hugely enjoyable and the whole atmosphere of the college was like one big family. The college team were so knowledgeable and passionate about acupuncture, it really inspired us all to be the best that we could be.

Following my three years of training at the college, I graduated in 2018 and have since moved to South Yorkshire and set up a clinic in my own home. After one year in practice, I am fortunate enough to require a waiting list for new patients.

I see a varied caseload ranging from musculoskeletal injuries to menopause, migraines to cancer treatment side-effects. I also support a number of patients going through fertility treatment. It still excites me that acupuncture can treat almost anything and everything!

I am so grateful to the college for providing me with such an in-depth and robust education. Their constant support and guidance kept me on an even keel, and enabled me to develop a level of knowledge that allows me to be confident and successful in my practice. I love what I do, and couldn't imagine doing anything else!"

- Lisa Lowe, M2015 graduate, Rotherham

TALK TO US, VISIT, OR APPLY!

PREVIEW SESSIONS AND APPLICATION

We have intakes in Spring and Autumn (usually starting late March and late September), and as well as preview sessions throughout the year which anyone can attend to get a feel for the course – you don't need to be certain that you want to apply, and you can bring your partner or a friend if you like. Dates for the preview sessions are on our website, and we'd love to meet you.

Preview sessions include a light lunch and a tour of the facilities. Throughout the session you will have opportunities to meet up with current students, tutors, and graduates, and hopefully also some of your future classmates! There is a Q & A session about the course, a 'taster' acupuncture theory class, and also the opportunity to try out practical skills such as pulse-taking and point location.

We have a limited number of spaces for interviews during preview sessions but if we run out of spaces on the day, or you aren't sure that you want to apply until after you've visited us, then we will arrange a telephone interview once we have your application form.

You can apply for any intake at any time, and there is no deadline, although if you apply once the next intake is full, you'll be offered a place on the following one. You can find the application form on our website, and if you need any help with completing it, just give us a call.

Our interview process is informal and supportive, aimed as much at helping you decide whether we are the right college for you as it is to determine your ability to successfully undertake the course.

If you are unable to attend any of the preview sessions (or you can't wait until the next one!), do get in touch and we'll arrange a time when you can visit. We are always happy to talk, at any time, so whether you don't have a clue if this course is for you yet, or you are ready to apply and you'd like to start as soon as you can – please don't hesitate to pick up the phone.

IF YOU'RE ACCEPTED... WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

We ask for a deposit of £400 to secure your place, which is a non-refundable part of your course fees. Once you've accepted your place by making this payment, we'll send you a starter pack with your student handbook and your first two course textbooks. We'll also enrol you then onto the Writing Skills e-lesson if you feel it would benefit you.

The remainder of first year course fees, or your first instalment if this is the payment option you choose, is due around 6 weeks prior to your course start date. At this stage, your first year course will open on ALEC (our e-learning site) and you'll now be able to start finding your way around and exploring all the materials and information available, including your full class schedule for the year. You'll be able to complete a pre-course e-lesson on the history of acupuncture, and if you're feeling brave, introduce yourself on your group's forum! We also encourage students to join our private facebook group for all students across the three years, before they start, as this is a great place for finding other TAA students near you, and seeking early advice – even if it's just on where to stay and the best places for dinner!

So, thank you for considering TAA for your studies, and – again – don't hesitate to get in touch.

Jacqui Jensen, our Operations Manager and Clinical Year Guest Lecturer taking preview session attendees through the practical skill of pulse taking.

MEET THE TEAM

You've met some members of our team throughout this prospectus, and we hope you'll come and meet everyone else very soon. Here's a few last words about us, and other important members of the TAA team.

Julie Ann Reynolds
Joint Principal and Clinical Lead

With a varied background including marketing, a stint as a pub landlady (don't ask!!), and working with brain injured adults, I felt drawn to train as an acupuncturist.

The moment I visited the College of Traditional Acupuncture (CTA) in the early 2000s, I felt I had come home. Following graduation, as I built up my practice, I studied for an MSc in Health Services Research from York University. For my thesis, I carried out a clinical trial of Five Element acupuncture for IBS, which demonstrated highly significant outcomes for the acupuncture patients. The study was published in Acupuncture in Medicine. I then returned to CTA in 2006, where I developed and led the teaching on the research unit. I sat on the BAcC Research Committee for many years, overseeing numerous member research projects.

I practice acupuncture in Leamington and also at my home in rural Suffolk. I have a particular interest in mental health, the elderly, and menopause, and I am absolutely passionate about teaching and supporting students and graduates in the best profession in the world!

Jen Wade
Joint Principal and Head of Academic Studies Years 1 and 2

I graduated from the College of Traditional Acupuncture in March 1994, and went on to graduate from the College of Integrated Chinese Medicine on their Traditional Chinese Medicine programme in 2001. This dual approach to acupuncture, covering Five Element acupuncture as well as TCM, broadened the scope of my treatment while at the same time highlighting my belief that all theory derives from a clear understanding of the classical texts.

In 2005 I returned to CTA and became a full Faculty member, teaching extensively on both first and second year, and participating in many projects involving course documentation and quality assurance across the BA programme. This work included core documents such as the Graduate Profile, Faculty Profile, a shared teaching database, upgraded teaching materials, and Quality Assurance processes such as the annual Student and Staff surveys. These projects were all aimed at sharing good teaching practice, and elevating standards of teaching and pastoral care on an on-going basis. During this time I also elected to study teaching in more depth, and enrolled on the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector which I completed in June 2009, gaining a First.

After studying teaching and learning methods in such depth, and having spent time thinking about my experiences at CTA, I realised the potential for a much better learning experience; one which could maximise and support learning while allowing students to maintain a healthier work/life/family balance. So, with my colleague and best friend Julie, TAA was born! I love so much about what we do here, but particularly supporting students who are balancing studies alongside work or a young family because this is what motivated me to train in the first place - a caring career that would fit around my children. My son and daughter may have flown the nest now, but I still love my practice at home, and have more time to spend thinking about my other 'family'; the staff, students and graduates of TAA.

Having fun at graduation

You will always be one of the family once you've graduated.

Sue Harrington, S2012 Graduate, talks about some of the graduate support systems we offer:

"It is fantastic being able to have somewhere to post questions and have feedback, suggestions and support so quickly from peers and tutors. And it is not just the answers to my own posts that are so useful, reading other graduates' questions and the answers provides lots of helpful nuggets. This space makes me feel less isolated 'out there' as a new practitioner. Continued access to the lessons and the continuous development of the content is extremely useful.

I am very grateful to TAA for providing us with this – it's an enormous benefit."

MEET THE TEAM

Bruce McCallum - First & Second Year Tutor

Following a lifetime of interest in Chinese culture, I started reading extensively on the subject of Chinese medicine. I came across the practise of pulse diagnosis. Ascertaining a patient's state of health and balance by reading their pulses really intrigued me! The fact that Chinese doctors had been doing it for thousands of years amazed me. And that was it, I was hooked. I enrolled at the College of Traditional Acupuncture in Leamington Spa, graduating in 2005 as a fully accredited acupuncture practitioner. And I have been treating patients in London ever since.

As well as treating patients at my clinic, I became involved in the research of acupuncture, being part of an extended research trial looking at the efficacy of five element acupuncture in the GP setting for patients with medically unexplained symptoms.

I started teaching in 2007, and also worked closely with the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board helping to develop acupuncture courses through the accreditation process. Teaching and research certainly enhance my relationship with acupuncture. They allow me to develop a far deeper understanding of my practise. The real inspiration, for me, is seeing the phenomenal results that can be achieved with patients, and passing this on to students. I look forward to meeting you.

Guy Caplan - First & Second Year Tutor

After many years as a mental health nurse, I graduated from The School of Five Element Acupuncture (SOFEA) in London in May 2002. I went on to become a tutor at the School until it closed in 2007 when the Principal, Nora Franglen, moved writing and post-graduate teaching. I enjoyed teaching this amazing system of medicine, so I went on to teach at The College of Traditional Acupuncture in Warwick and at the London institute of Five Element Acupuncture in London, as well as the Academy of Five Element Acupuncture in Norway.

I have been teaching at TAA since it started in 2011, and now also teach in Singapore, Australia and Switzerland as well as running post-graduate training with Nora Franglen in London and China.

In China, we teach in Beijing, Chengdu and Nanning, bringing Five Element acupuncture back home! Since 2013 when we started, interest in it has become huge, and we now lecture and teach diagnostic skills to hundreds of interested students each time we visit.

I still make time for a busy practice in London, based in Blackheath and Islington. I particularly love teaching students during the first year, as I just love seeing their world changing as they explore the philosophy and practice of this incredible medicine.

Lisa Lowe - TAA Tutor and TAA Graduate

Following a long career as a physiotherapist in the military, and having already completed a Masters degree in Western Medical Acupuncture, I decided that I would like to practice acupuncture full time, and so looked for an acupuncture college that would give me the highest level of training in Traditional Chinese Medicine.

After graduating from TAA, I moved to South Yorkshire and set up a clinic in my own home. I was able to quickly fill my diary with an abundance of new patients; the majority of whom are still with me today. After just one year in practice I was fortunate enough to require a waiting list for new patients.

I see a varied caseload including musculoskeletal injuries, menopause, anxiety and depression, migraines, support for cancer treatment, as well as general well-being. I also support a number of patients going through fertility treatment; I will never forget the elation of my first 'acupuncture baby'! It still excites me that acupuncture can treat almost anything and everything.

I am so grateful to the college for providing me with such an in-depth and robust education. Their constant support and guidance kept me on an even keel, and enabled me to develop a level of knowledge that allows me to be confident and successful in my practice. So I was delighted to return to TAA as a tutor, passing on what I love. I couldn't imagine doing anything else!

Juanita Bolster - First & Second Year Tutor

My alternative therapy journey began in 1977, with a Swedish massage diploma in London. This offered excellent groundwork, but seemed to lack sensitivity, and I was drawn to an aromatherapy and reflexology diploma. Chinese acupuncture attracted my attention too, and in 1989, I enrolled on my three year acupuncture training at the College of Traditional Acupuncture. During the course, I was introduced to zero-balancing, and am continuing the advanced training certification programme. I met Jen and Julie when I went back to teach at the College of Traditional Acupuncture, and was part of their founding teaching team at TAA in 2011. In addition, I guest teach holistic therapies at three local colleges. I have run my own independent courses for many years, in aromatherapy, Indian head massage, Swedish body massage, reflexology and acupressure, and offer workshops in many of these as post-graduate CPD at TAA.

My practice is in Leamington Spa, and I love all aspects of it, from helping with stress and trauma, through to fertility, pregnancy and post-natal care, pain conditions and skin conditions. I am absolutely dedicated to working with students, in particular I enjoy helping them develop their clinical and palpatory diagnostic skills, and point location. I am very much looking forward to meeting you and helping you through this course.

MEET THE TEAM

Tim Sullivan - Tui Na Tutor

I have been interested in exploring healing and identity from a very early age. Initially I used art as my medium, but it was not until a fellow student in Denmark had a painful neck that I found my vocation!

Returning to England I qualified in Acupuncture and Tui Na at LCTA and spent ten years developing my work through further study including Intuitive Massage, Shiatsu, Tai Chi and Qi Gong. I also gained clinical experience in Hangzhou hospital of Traditional Medicine in China. I am currently working on my PhD in Classical Chinese Medicine. I run a busy practice in North-West London, using Acupuncture, Tui Na and Reflexology. I treat all sorts of conditions, but I specialise in physical injury and pain, and emotional trauma. I teach in the UK and worldwide, and very much enjoy working with TAA students, helping them develop Tui Na skills to complement their acupuncture practice.

Coral Perfitt - Third Year Tutor and Clinical Supervisor

I graduated with a Lic Ac in 1997 and then my advanced Lic Ac in 2000, when I also started teaching. I have taught all levels and subjects including conventional medicine. Research is also a particular interest, and I have been involved in projects on pulse-taking, and also, when I set up a service offering acupuncture to high security prisoners, when I evaluated the feasibility and outcomes of this project. It was fascinating stuff! At TAA, I enjoy working with all years, in particular helping students develop the skill of Colour, Sound, Odour and Emotion diagnosis. You will see me most often in the clinical year, both teaching and supervising clinical students.

Linda Winstanley - Clinical Year Tutor and Clinical Supervisor

I am a passionate practitioner and teacher of Five Element Acupuncture. Prior to becoming an acupuncturist, I was a community worker with a BA (Hons) in Social Science and a background in research and management, having worked at Aston University. I qualified as an acupuncturist in 1994, going on to gain my Advanced Lic. Ac. in 1997.

I taught at the College of Traditional Acupuncture (CTA) for thirteen years, where I also spent time managing each of the three years of the degree course, and working as a clinical supervisor. I joined the Faculty at The Acupuncture Academy as a tutor and clinical supervisor in 2015, where I particularly enjoy helping students develop their sensory diagnostic skills. I have also taught postgraduate courses for many years, again focusing on our core sensory diagnostic skills. I mentor graduates through group sessions and case discussions. I co-authored a commentary on Energetic Blocks in the Acupuncturist journal, another area of Five Element practice that I find fascinating, and take a keen interest in research and classical Chinese texts.

I have clinics at my home in Birmingham, and in Leamington Spa.

Anna Bernard - Clinical Year Tutor and Supervisor

After working in marketing for the arts, I trained at SOFEA in 2001 and have built up busy practices in Kilburn and Crouch End specialising in fertility, obstetrics and vocal issues. As a singer, helping other vocal users using acupuncture is a passion of mine. I love talking about and passing on my knowledge of acupuncture - it keeps me and my practice alive as I'm continually reminded of how brilliant it is.

Dr Liza Willmot - Head of Biomedicine

I was for many years a consultant psychiatrist working in the NHS. I became interested in traditional acupuncture after gaining much personal benefit from treatment and began recommending it to my patients. On retiring from the NHS, I trained in five-element acupuncture simply out of interest with no real plan to go into practice! However I found it all so fascinating that I am still in practice today. In addition to my work here at TAA I also enjoy teaching medical students at Warwick University about acupuncture and complementary therapies.

I am passionate about bringing the two worlds of Chinese and conventional medicine closer together, and about acupuncture in mental health – something Five Element acupuncture particularly excels at.

Gabi Stutz - Third year Tutor and Clinical Supervisor

Since 1990 when I graduated as an acupuncture practitioner, I have been running a private acupuncture clinic in Milton Keynes. I enjoy seeing a wide spectrum of patients with a broad range of chronic complaints, helping to manage physical, mental and emotional aspects of health.

I taught at the College of Traditional Acupuncture for 14 years, being involved mainly in clinical supervision and undergraduate research, and at TAA, I enjoy working with the clinical year students during discussion of their cases, and supporting them in their work with patients.

MEET THE TEAM

Dr Beverley de Valois PhD LicAc FBAcC MBLS - *Third Year Lecturer in Cancer Survivorship*

Beverley studied acupuncture at the College of Integrated Chinese Medicine in Reading and at the Zhejiang College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Hangzhou, People's Republic of China.

After graduating in 1999, she joined the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre, a cancer drop-in and information centre associated with Mount Vernon Cancer Centre in Northwood, Middlesex. Since 2000, she has worked part-time as a Research Acupuncturist in the Supportive Oncology Research Team (SORT), now part of the East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust. Her focus has been investigating the use of acupuncture to improve quality of life for cancer survivors.

In 2007, she was awarded a PhD by the University of West London (formerly Thames Valley University) for her research into using acupuncture to manage tamoxifen side effects in women with breast cancer. Post-doctoral research projects she has investigated include:

- using acupuncture and moxibustion in the management of lymphoedema, funded by the National Institute of Health (NIHR) Research for Innovation, Speculation and Creativity (RISC) programme

- using daily self-administered moxibustion to St-36 to reduce chemotherapy-induced pancytopenia, a feasibility study funded by the British Acupuncture Council

Beverley also practices privately in her clinic in Uxbridge, Middlesex.

She is committed to the use of 5 Element acupuncture in her practice and in her research. As well as studying formally as an undergraduate, she has undertaken long-term private study of 5 Elements acupuncture, and has published several papers on the subject.

Beverley has held a post as Honorary Research Fellow in the School of Social and Community Medicine at the University of Bristol. In 2011, she was elected a Fellow of the British Acupuncture Council in recognition of her contribution to the acupuncture profession in the UK. She is a longstanding member of the British Lymphology Society (BLS) and is currently Chair of the BLS Scientific Committee.

Beverley has over 20 journal paper publications, and a book chapter:

Jacqui Jensen - Operations Manager, Lead Administrator and guest tutor

I graduated from the College of Traditional Acupuncture and Oxford Brookes University in 2009 where I was awarded the Licentiate in Acupuncture and a first class BA(Hons) Degree. As a BAcC member, I regularly attend courses and study current research in a wide range of subjects. This has included areas in male and female fertility, mental health and pain relief. My practice is set in my home clinic in Stratford-upon-Avon, and I very much enjoy my work at TAA helping the Principals and the students. I am supported by Clare Watkins, who graduated from our very first group (you can read about Clare in our Graduate stories). You will see me teaching in third year, in my specialist fields of fertility and pregnancy. I can't wait to meet you...

Sharon Hansford
Teaching Clinic lead, third year guest tutor, and clinical supervisor

I trained at the College of Traditional Acupuncture, Warwick, graduating in 2009. I stumbled upon acupuncture by chance whilst visiting China, and this holiday was to change the direction of my life! I left the career I had known for over 20 years, in coaching and training, as I felt the incredible benefits of my own treatments.

I am particularly committed to bringing affordable acupuncture, and I run a Community clinic in Rugby, as well as TAA's Community Teaching Clinic; both offering low cost treatment to the local communities.

I very much enjoy having first and second year students observing and helping me out in the clinic, and supporting the third years as they treat patients, and I am passionate about students enjoying the clinic experience - after all it is what we are all working towards in the end!

I love ensuring the patients walk out of the clinic feeling they have received a first class supervised treatment.

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