



# International Acupuncture and Dry Needling Association of Physiotherapists

[www.iadapt.physio](http://www.iadapt.physio)

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## IADAPT Accreditation Scheme for Basic Acupuncture Education for Physiotherapists / Physical Therapists

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### Objectives

This scheme is designed to set out standards for and accredit programs that meet the requirement of the International Acupuncture and Dry Needling Association of Physiotherapists (IADAPT) in the basic requirement for acupuncture education for Physiotherapists (Physical Therapists) to use needling techniques safely and effectively. Physiotherapists who have completed the programs should be able to perform acupuncture and dry needling and some related techniques based on a contemporary approach safely and effectively in the treatment of common pain and musculoskeletal conditions. Dry Needling is considered a form of Acupuncture by IADAPT, and it is encouraged that Physiotherapists should understand the whole spectrum of Acupuncture, from Traditional to Modern Biomedical Acupuncture to Dry Needling, but they may opt to practice acupuncture according to all or any specific category.

### Required Elements of Program Design

The programs should be designed to be delivered over **at least 80 Contact Hours\*** with demonstration of the following mandatory contents:

- 1. Basic Concepts of Contemporary Acupuncture (Biomedical Acupuncture and Dry Needling) and/or Traditional Chinese Acupuncture.**
- 2. Safe Application of Acupuncture and Related Techniques (if included).**
- 3. Practical Application of Acupuncture for Pain Management and Common Musculoskeletal Disorders.**
- 4. Clinical Reasoning of Acupuncture Treatment within Physiotherapy.**
- 5. Knowledge of evidence-based acupuncture treatment.**

A minimum of 80 contact hours is considered the basic requirement to ensure **safe acupuncture practice for Physiotherapists**. The 80 hours includes: contact hours / face to face teaching or supervised internship. It does not include hours of self-directed learning or unsupervised practice.

Educators introductory acupuncture programs are not restricted to develop programs that contain more contact hours. 200 contact hours (including the 80hour Introductory program) are recommended for an Advanced level program.

## IADAPT Recommended Curriculum Criteria

The recommended curriculum for the program should include:

- **Traditional and Modern Theories of Acupuncture (the balance of which is at the individual program designer's discretion)**
- **Safety Guidelines and Hygienic Practice of Acupuncture**
- **Indications and Contraindications of Acupuncture**
- **Diagnostic skills**
- **Clinical reasoning**
- **Basic Theory and Principles of Diagnosis in TCM (if included)**
- **Acupuncture Point Finding and Myofascial Trigger Point Identification, (Surface Anatomy), including major points of the limbs, back and head**
- **Practical Needling Techniques**
- **Supervised Practice**
- **Ability to apply Evidence-Based Practice to Treatment**

The curriculum *may* also include:

- Acupuncture Related Techniques, e.g., Moxibustion, Cupping, Coining (guasha), Acupressure, Dry Needling, etc.
- Special application, e.g. Electroacupuncture, Acupuncture-like TENS, etc.
- Microsystems, e.g., Auriculotherapy, Scalp Acupuncture, etc.
- Introduction to clinical application of acupuncture in neurological, respiratory and other disorders

The program should be delivered with **face-to-face teaching** or **supervised practice** that should construct the main design of the 80-hour program.

Pre-recorded online studies, distance learning, self-directed study and other non-contact pedagogical approaches may be utilised to enrich the program but should not substitute the minimum number of hours required by IADAPT.

The following Formative and Summative assessments may be used and are considered contact hours:

1. Student Presentation.
2. Written Examination.
3. Practical Examination.
4. Clinical Placement.

Self-study of at least 160 hours is expected from students in readings assignments, and acupuncture practice, etc.

Some examples of program design are shown in the appendix for reference. However, they are **not** intended to be restrictive. Program developers may design programs in accordance with local, cultural, legal or other needs or requirements. Nevertheless, they must fulfil the above-mentioned criteria.

## Teaching Faculty

Faculty members may be drawn from different professional disciplines who are qualified to deliver lectures, teach practical acupuncture needling, supervise practice and supervise clinical attachment or placement in acupuncture. However, at least one member of the faculty must be a qualified physiotherapist with current membership of their Physiotherapy Association that is a member of World Physiotherapy.

## Medium of Instruction

The medium of instruction may be in any local language or dialect that is suitable for the participants according to the needs of different countries or areas. However, there must be an English version of the program details for the assessment of an application for accreditation submitted to IADAPT.

## Entrance & Graduation Requirement

The main cohort of applicants must be duly registered or recognized physiotherapists. Other relevant medical and health care professionals may enrol in the program according to local requirements. Education for these participants is not recognized as IADAPT certified.

The program must assess students to ensure adequacy of knowledge and safe needling practice. A **written examination** and a **practical examination** are mandatory requirements. Other forms of assessment, e.g., student presentation, clinical placement, continuous assessment of return demonstration, etc. may also be included in the evaluation of student performance. The assessments should ensure that the student can utilize acupuncture (or dry needling) based on sound Physiotherapeutic assessment utilizing clinical reasoning

(whether TCM diagnostic or Western biomedical principles) and using acupuncture in a safe and effective manner.

Award of IADAPT Certification to qualifying students requires demonstration of 80-contact-hours of education, supervision and the passing of all written and practical examinations, and, if applicable, other forms of assessment (e.g., presentation, continuous assessment and clinical placement).

## Certification issued by IADAPT

Upon successful accreditation of the program, IADAPT will issue a “**Certificate of Accreditation**” to the school, association or authority (the **institution**) holding the education program. The certificate is valid for 4-years and it is expected that the institution continuing to run the program should apply for an updated accreditation from IADAPT within the 4-year cycle. The institution may use the phrase “**Accredited by the International Acupuncture and Dry Needling Association of Physiotherapists, an Official Speciality Group of World Physiotherapy**” or its abbreviated or local equivalent to describe the program offered while the Certificate of Accreditation is valid. The institution should inform IADAPT if there is any change in their curriculum (not timetable).

A Certificate to the **student** who is a registered / recognized physiotherapist who has undertaken the program and passed all assessments may be issued a “**Certificate of Acupuncture for Physiotherapists (Physical Therapists)**” for the accredited program. Proof of the physiotherapist’s status, as a member of a World Physiotherapy member country or territory is required. The application for this Certificate must be initiated by the Institute that offered the program. Proof of the studentship, successful completion of the program, and their World Physiotherapy-related membership should be included in the application.

## Fees

- Application for Accreditation of the Program: GBP300
- Application for issuance of Certificate of Acupuncture for Physiotherapists, for individual students: GBP20 per each certificate

## Application Procedure

Complete relevant forms and submit via email to [contact@iadapt.physio](mailto:contact@iadapt.physio) or by mail to GPO Box 4310, Hong Kong (Attention: Kerry Fung). All fees should be paid to the bank account of IADAPT via Bank Transfer. An invoice will be provided.

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## Appendix

### Examples of an Introductory Acupuncture Program

*These examples demonstrate how an introductory course may be designed. It is not intended to be restrictive. Program developers may design programs that fulfil the objectives of IADAPT in accordance with local, cultural, legal or other needs or requirements. These examples serve as ideas. Strict adherence to these examples may not guarantee successful accreditation by IADAPT.*

#### *Example1 – Classroom teaching with designated Clinical Attachment*

Day 1	Basic Concepts of Acupuncture and the Spectrum of Practice – including: Traditional Asian Acupuncture (TA) Western / Biomedical Acupuncture (WA) Trigger Point Dry Needling (DN) Dry Needling (not exclusively trigger point) Mechanism and Therapeutic Effects of Acupuncture Practice Indications and Contraindications for Acupuncture Clinical Reasoning for Acupuncture in Physiotherapy
Day 2	Basic Concepts of Traditional Chinese Medicine Safety and Hygiene in Acupuncture Treatment
	Adverse and Emergency Situations in Acupuncture    General Acupuncture Techniques
Day 3	The Meridian System Surface Anatomy of the Meridians and Common Acupuncture Points (1)
Day 4	Surface Anatomy of the Meridians and Common Acupuncture Points (2)
Day 5	Mechanism of Action of Acupuncture Practice in Pain and Musculoskeletal Disorders, e.g. TA theories / WA neuroscience
Day 6	Myofascial Trigger Point Therapy and Dry Needling Acupuncture in neurological rehabilitation
Day 7	Introduction to Acupuncture Related Techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electroacupuncture</li> <li>• Moxibustion</li> <li>• Cupping</li> <li>• Coining (Guasha)</li> </ul>
Day 8	Clinical Placement

Day 9	Clinical Placement
Day 10	Student Presentation Written Examination Practical Examinations

*Based on 8 hours of teaching / practice per day.*

*Example 2 – Classroom teaching with clinical practice done by students at their place of practice*

Day 1	Basic Concepts of Acupuncture and the Spectrum of Practice Western or Modern Medical Acupuncture (MMA) Mechanisms and Therapeutic Effects of MMA Indications and Contraindications for Acupuncture
Day 2	Clinical Reasoning for Acupuncture in Physiotherapy Basic Concepts of Traditional Chinese Medicine Safety and Hygiene in Acupuncture Treatment Adverse and Emergency Situations in Acupuncture General Acupuncture Techniques
Day 3	The Meridian System Surface Anatomy of the Meridians and Common Acupoints (1)
Day 4	Surface Anatomy of the Meridians and Common Acupoints (2)
Day 5	Surface Anatomy of the Meridians and Common Acupuncture Points (3)
Day 6	Acupuncture Treatment for Common Musculoskeletal Conditions Evidence Based Practice for Acupuncture in Physiotherapy
Day 7	Myofascial Trigger Point Therapy and Dry Needling
Day 8	Acupuncture Related Techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Electroacupuncture</li> <li>□ Moxibustion</li> <li>□ Cupping</li> <li>□ Coining</li> </ul>
Day 9	Acupuncture Treatment for Common Neurological Conditions Introduction to Auricular Acupuncture (Auriculotherapy)    Introduction to Scalp Acupuncture
Day 10	Case Studies Student Presentation (2) Written and Practical Examinations

- *Students may be issued an interim certificate showing to employers or local authorities that they were educated in the safe and hygienic application of acupuncture so that they may perform some clinical application in their own clinical setting after the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> session.*
- *Based on 8-hours teaching/practice per day*