



International Acupuncture and Dry Needling Association of Physiotherapists

www.iadapt.physio

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IADAPT Accreditation Scheme for Basic Acupuncture Education for Physiotherapists / Physical Therapists (80-hours)

The International Acupuncture and Dry Needling Association of Physiotherapists (IADAPT) is the Acupuncture and Dry Needling Specialty-group of World Physiotherapy. IADAPT is a physiotherapist-based group, with expertise in needling therapies with physiotherapy related specific background knowledge and scope of practice. It is important for IADAPT to preserve both basic scientific needling knowledge background and scope of practice in physiotherapy / physical therapy. Biomedical approaches of acupuncture are essential and may be combined with the aspects of traditional Chinese/Asian acupuncture frameworks.

Objectives

This scheme is designed to set out standards for and accredit programs that meet the requirement of IADAPT for acupuncture education for Physiotherapists (Physical Therapists). 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 program 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).**
 - a** Safety and Hygienic Practice
 - b** Indications and Contraindications
- 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.**
- 6. Logbook of teaching and clinical hours with structured reflection on learning**

A minimum of 80 contact hours is considered the basic requirement to ensure **safe acupuncture practice for Physiotherapists / Physical Therapists.**

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**
- **Logbook of teaching and clinical hours with structured reflection on learning**

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.

Up to 10% of the lectures may be given through face-to-face online teaching where interactions between the lecturer and students are possible, but not pre-recorded videos.

Up to 5% of the 80-hours may relate to face-to-face assessment and clinical presentations, such as presenting case studies. 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.

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.

Proof of competency by formal evaluation is mandatory and will assess all learning outcomes of all modules. It is recommended that formal evaluation of students is undertaken using a variety of assessment tools, including, but not limited to:

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 a 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 physiotherapists / physical therapists. 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. They must include in the application proof of the studentship, successful completion of the program, and certification of the student membership of a World Physiotherapy Member Organisation.

Monitoring of Accredited Programs

Institutions offering an IADAPT accredited program should provide IADAPT with **basic information regarding the delivery of the accredited course**, including the course title, lecturers, links for online presentations and links to publicly available course information (e.g., course webpages or registration pages). This information allows IADAPT to maintain records of accredited activities and facilitates monitoring of program delivery when required.

Institutions offering an IADAPT accredited program are expected to continue delivering the curriculum, faculty structure and assessment procedures described in their accreditation application. IADAPT needs to be notified of any changes that may occur.

During the accreditation period, the institution should notify IADAPT of any **significant changes** to the curriculum, teaching faculty, or assessment structure. Minor timetable or logistical changes do not require notification.

IADAPT may periodically request confirmation that the program continues to meet accreditation requirements. This may include submission of updated curriculum outlines, teaching schedules, or other relevant documentation.

Where necessary, IADAPT may conduct a **review of the accredited program**. This may include an online meeting with the course provider, review of teaching materials, or, in exceptional circumstances, an **on-site visit or observation of teaching** to ensure that the program is delivered in accordance with the accredited standards.

Complaints and Adverse Events

IADAPT may also receive and review complaints or reports of adverse events related to accredited programs, both faculty as well as students may submit these via email to contact@IADAPT.physio . Where necessary, IADAPT may request clarification or additional information from the institution.

If substantial deviation from the accredited program is identified, IADAPT may request corrective actions to ensure continued compliance with accreditation standards.

Renewal of accreditation

Accreditation is valid for a period of four years. Institutions wishing to continue using IADAPT accreditation must apply for renewal prior to the expiration of the accreditation period.

The renewal application should include confirmation that the program continues to meet the IADAPT standards, along with documentation of any curriculum changes implemented since the previous accreditation.

Withdrawal or Suspension of Accreditation

In exceptional circumstances where an accredited program no longer meets IADAPT standards, IADAPT may review the accreditation status of the program.

Where concerns are identified, IADAPT will first seek clarification from the institution and may request corrective actions. If significant concerns remain unresolved, IADAPT reserves the right to suspend or withdraw accreditation.

Fees

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

Application Procedure

Complete relevant forms and submit via email to contact@iadapt.physio or accreditation@iadapt.physio. All fees should be paid to the bank account of IADAPT via Bank Transfer or PayPal. 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 Needling Common Acupuncture Points
Day 4	Surface Anatomy of the Meridians and Needling Common Acupuncture Points
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: • Electroacupuncture • Moxibustion • Myofascial Cupping
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 in class and 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 Needling Common Acupoints TCM mechanisms underpinning the acupuncture effect
Day 4	Surface Anatomy of the Meridians and Needling Common Acupoints Neuroscience mechanisms underpinning the action of local and segmental needling
Day 5	Surface Anatomy of the Meridians and Needling Common Acupuncture Points TCM and / or Neuroscience mechanisms underpinning the action of systemic effects from needling
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: • Electroacupuncture • Moxibustion • Cupping • Guasha / coining
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

Based on 8-hours teaching/practice per day

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 4th or 5th session.