

## 1. Optional provider submission template for TEF 2023

### Provider context

1. The College of Integrated Chinese Medicine (CICM) is the largest Acupuncture College in the country, created in 1993. The College delivers a BSc Honours Degree in Acupuncture validated by University College of Osteopathy (UCO), previously Kingston University (KU) and accredited by the British Acupuncture Council (BAcC).
2. The College is Registered with the Office for Students (OfS) with authority to levy the basic fee. It continues to meet all of the required Conditions of Registration.
3. The College Strategic Plan defines the Colleges Mission to provide an appropriately recognised professional and academic qualification that meets the education and professional standards laid down by the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board (BAAB).  
[1 CICM Strategic Plan December 2022]
4. The minimum entry requirements for the programme are two relevant A levels or equivalent. This requirement is often exceeded by students possessing first Honours Degree. The College recognises prior and experiential learning for those without Level 3 qualifications.
5. All students are interviewed by staff. Students without recognised Level 3 qualifications are required to undertake additional written assessment tasks and to successfully complete the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) processes as laid down in the UCO policy. Applicants are invited to disclose any learning or physical disabilities so that suitable adjustments can be made. Some students are diagnosed with a learning disability during their studies. The College has successfully made suitable adaptations to accommodate the needs of those with learning and physical disabilities.
6. The College admits two cohorts per calendar year, one in April and one in October. The April intake attends College at weekends, whilst the October intake attends during the week.
7. In 2018, the most recent QAA Quality and Standards Review, all assessed OfS Conditions of Registration were judged to have been met. No 'Recommendations' were made. The Report highlighted as good practice "*(t)he responsiveness of the College to issues raised by students both formally and informally, which leads to the identification of opportunities for enhancement (Enhancement)*." [2 QAA Quality and Standards Review Report]
8. The College's validation partners evaluate the College's performance annually. In 2016 Kingston University, the College's validation partner, concluded in an institutional review that the College was to be commended for the quality of the student experience, leading to well-qualified and confident graduates. They recognised the quality of the documentation relating to assessment, in particular assessment briefs and personalised assessment. There was also clear evidence of effective adaptation of learning and teaching methods to suit different student learning styles. There was judged to be effective student support which continues beyond graduation. [3 Internal Subject Review KU; 2016]

9. The BAAB found effective practice during a Periodic Review. They recognised the College's peer observation as being good practice. They observed that there was a strong sense of inclusion and community and that staff were supported to gain teaching qualifications. They found that staff had supportive relationships with students, enabling them to become confident and critically engaged. Written feedback was judged to be 'individual, positive and helpful'. The reviewers commended the arrangements for supporting students in Regional Support Groups and pairing of clinical supervisors. [4 British Acupuncture Accreditation Board Periodic Review Report]
10. Annually, KU makes a partner institutional risk assessment, The College has consistently been awarded a 'green' assessment, denoting the lowest risk. The most recent risk assessment exercise for 2022 similarly reported 'green' level risk. Similarly, the BAAB annual monitoring of annual reports has confirmed consistently high standards.  
[5 KU Institutional Risk Assessment 2022] [6 2022 Annual Report response from BAAB]
11. The TEF Student Contact for the College has chosen not to make a student submission.

The TEF Student Contact has been kept informed about the TEF process and has had an opportunity to contribute feedback as part of student consultative arrangements, including Student Consultative Committee meetings and the Quality Assurance Committee. A draft of the submission has been shared.

## **Student experience**

### **Teaching, feedback and assessment**

12. The College has embedded outstanding teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are highly effective and tailored to supporting its students' learning, progression, and attainment. The course content and delivery inspire students to actively engage in and commit to their and stretches students to develop knowledge and skills to their fullest potential.
13. The College delivers a programme that enables students, once graduated, to progress into self-employment as registered acupuncture practitioners. Students choose to study the programme because of its instrumental role in enabling them to become competent and skilled practitioners. The course seeks to provide a firm understanding of underpinning acupuncture theory and practice, whilst providing embedded practice in a public-facing clinic whilst under close supervision. The opportunity to study and develop skills alongside experienced qualified acupuncture educators inspires students to actively engage with their studies. The programme of study is successful in facilitating entry to the profession.
14. Students can be assured that the Degree programme prepares them effectively for progressing to professional employment as an acupuncturist. The course is recognised by a relevant PSRB, the BAAB as having met defined standards. Completion of the academic programme and supervised clinical hours prepares the student thoroughly for individual registration. They must apply by providing evidence of graduation and a licence to practise. Once they graduate and begin practicing, their names appear on the BAAC register and they can advertise their registered status. The course has been designed to ensure that graduates demonstrate the educational standards required by BAAC for registration.

15. The acupuncture programme is designed to develop key and transferable skills. These skills are widely recognised as being most relevant for students progressing into professional work, usually in a self-employed capacity. The skills developed within the programme are aligned with the six areas of professional values and principles described in the British Acupuncture Council's (BAcC) Standards of Practice for Acupuncture (SPA): Practice Context; Diagnosis and Treatment; Communication and Interaction; Safety; Professional Development and Business Management. Additionally, the skills have also been mapped to the BAcC Education Standards.  
[7 BAcC Initial Accreditation Approval Confirmation] [26 UCO BSc Hons Degree Programme Specification 2021]
16. The validated and accredited programme continues to meet recognised standards. The College reports annually to BAcC on the effective delivery of the programme and proposed enhancements. A development plan is drafted and implemented and this is monitored by BAAB who periodically review the provision. The forthcoming review is scheduled for March 2023.  
[8 CICM Annual Report and Development Plan to BAcC 2021-22]
17. Students experience excellent teaching and learning strategies whilst studying the programme. Satisfaction levels with teaching and learning are being maintained at a high level. The 2022 TEF Dashboard for Student Experience Indicator Value for 'Teaching on my course' reported a satisfaction level of 92.8% against a quoted benchmark value of 86.8%. This value had a statistical significance value of 85.9% and was judged by OfS to be 'materially above the sector benchmark' The 2022 NSS Survey, completed by 81% of eligible students (sector benchmark 69%) reported very high satisfaction rates for 'teaching on my course' at 93%, compared to a sector benchmark of 80%. Students reported that staff were good at explaining things (92%), had made the subject interesting (92%), that the course was intellectually stimulating (92%) and that the course had challenged students to achieve their best work (96%).
18. Students describe high levels of satisfaction with the learning opportunities offered by the College in the 2022 NSS survey. 81% responded to the survey. Overall, 90% of respondents expressed satisfaction with learning opportunities. 92% of students reported that opportunities for them to explore ideas and concepts in depth (compared to the sector benchmark of 80%). 96% of students agreed that their course had provided opportunities to apply what they have learnt (compared to sector benchmark of 77%).  
[9 National Student Survey (NSS) 2022]
19. Students are strongly motivated to achieve by skilled educationalists who are also qualified acupuncturists. They deploy effective and appropriate skills whilst demonstrating effective differentiation to meet the individual needs of a diverse student group. Students are required, with support, to take increasing levels of responsibility for their own learning and skills development in preparation for independent practise as acupuncturists. Throughout the programme there is an appropriate focus on safe and effective practice and professional conduct in accordance with the BAAB Professional Standards.  
[10 Peer Observation Annual Report 2022]
20. Good theoretical, observational and acupuncture skills foundation skills are established during Level 4 study. At Level 5 students focus on developing practise, including diagnosis and treatment planning. At Level 6, students are prepared to assume more clinical responsibility whilst under professional supervision. The clinical phase runs concurrently with Level 6 study

and beyond. This clinical phase develops students' skills in patient management and care. They are expected to demonstrate their ability to exercising supervised responsibilities for diagnosis and treatment until they become fully proficient in their independent decision-making.  
[11 Programme Handbook 2022-23] [12 Clinic Handbook 2022-23]

21. The College facilitates scholarly activity amongst its staff to support innovation, professional practice and employer engagement and this contributes to an outstanding academic experience for its students. The College defines scholarship according to Boyer's model (1990). This describes four different models of scholarship: scholarship of discovery; scholarship of integration; scholarship of application/engagement; scholarship of teaching and learning. College lecturers are most active in the scholarships of application/engagement and teaching and learning.
22. Lecturers involved in the scholarship of integration synthesise information across acupuncture disciplines including Chinese Medicine, Conventional Medicine and Alternative Therapies. They develop and deliver a coherent programme of study linking and integrating topics within the discipline of acupuncture. The College offers a distinctive integrated form of acupuncture training combining study of Traditional Chinese Medicine and the 'Five-elements' models. Lecturers share their expertise in the two traditions, working together to design and implement a coherent curriculum from theoretical and practical perspectives. Discipline leaders collaborate with teachers and clinic supervisors to develop a shared understanding of the College model and to ensure consistency of delivery. The College provides opportunities for scholarly activity to take place through programme leaders being provided with dedicated development time and opportunities for their teams to work together during three cross-college staff development days. From 2022-23, each Programme Leaders will be provided with dedicated development time for programme staff  
[15 College Development Day: August, February, May schedules 2021-22] [16 Programme leaders Meetings August 2022-January 2023]
23. College staff are active within the scholarship of application/engagement. They engage frequently with peers from other acupuncture institutes, the validating university partner and the PSRB, The British Acupuncture Accrediting Board (BAAB). lecturers are engaged with their peers from other acupuncture providers

Through the wide range of collaborative links staff have regularly reflected on the curriculum and programme delivery in the light of good practice identified from other providers including the validating collaborative partner.

[16 Programme leaders Meetings August 2022-January 2023] [17 CICM Staff CVs]

24. The College is actively involved with developing a community of practice amongst qualified acupuncturists through its CPD provision for a network of qualified professionals. This is linked to a short course professional graduate programme in specialisms such as paediatrics and Tuina techniques. These are designed to meet the training needs of qualified acupuncturists. There is good evidence that the scholarship of application/engagement has enhanced the experience for students. At Level 4 students are required to conduct fifteen hours of clinical observation, spending time observing qualified practitioners. The College has developed a network of qualified practicing acupuncturists able to provide work-based placements. This network has been enhanced by the College's work to facilitate qualified acupuncture practitioners CPD activity. The practice observations have enabled them to contextualise their theoretical and practical studies and prepare for the clinical phase. Kingston University commended the College for "the high level of student support which continues beyond graduation".

[18 CPD Programme and Session Outline 2022-23] [3 Internal Subject Review KU; 2016]

25. Staff are active in the scholarship of teaching and learning, undertaking systematic study of teaching and learning processes related to acupuncture training. Lecturers are active as authors of published acupuncture textbooks, currently available in print. Lecturers regularly present evaluation and reflections as acupuncturists and educators at conferences and seminars of their peers. RAV has written two textbooks that has been widely adopted by acupuncture training providers on paediatric acupuncture.

## Assessment

Assessment strategies are used effectively to encourage a critical, enquiring, reflective and scholarly approach to learning. Each year KU reports an institutional risk assessment and each year the College has been awarded a 'green' assessment, denoting the lowest risk assessment that they award. The risk assessment exercise for 2022 reported a risk level at 'Green', described as 'low risk'. Similarly, the BAAB annual monitoring has confirmed consistently a high standard of assessment.

[6 2022 Annual Report response from BAAC] [5 KU Institutional Risk Assessment 2022]

26. The effectiveness of assessment processes is assured by moderation processes for assessment instruments and assessment decisions. Feedback from external examiners is used scrupulously to address areas for identified for enhancement through a process of development planning shared with the validation partners, external examiners, deliberative committees and the governing body. Detailed development plans are drafted and approved by the validating university. These are shared with staff and students. The Quality Assurance Committee carefully monitor them.

[19 Quality Assurance Committee Minutes 2021-22]

27. The feedback received from External Examiners is consistently good. In addition to confirming that academic standards are high, the examiners identified a wide range of good assessment practice. In August 2022 reports they identified consistent strengths in the provision UCO External Examiners in 2022 highlighted that:

"Overall, as a group, the students demonstrated high level of both theoretical knowledge and clinical practical skills' (standards)

'The project provided very clear marking criteria and comprehensive feedback"(quality of the course design)

'It is notable that whereas the assessment was challenging and discriminating most of the cohort obtain high marks.'(quality of course design)

'The assessment was highly congruent, with very good marking criteria and implicit, constructive feedback.' (quality of course design)

"All assessments were of a high standard in particular the assessment briefs and marking criteria." (quality of course design)

"The marking and moderation were exceptional with excellent and comprehensive feedback to students with good evidence of a nuanced discussion between markers. Feedback is focused on moving the student forward." Assessment, Marking and moderation)

'The high percentage of high marks awarded to challenging and discriminating assessments reflected the college commitment to delivering high standard education.' (achievement of students)

"Excellent approach to teaching and assessing of 5 element skills. The assessment contains well balanced combination of theoretical and practical skills that is easily marked and highly congruent." (Learning teaching and assessment)

"As of last year, the marking criteria structure for the practical skills are designed very well. (learning, teaching and assessment. (Learning teaching and assessment)

[20 External Examiner Report KU August 2022] [21 External Examiners' Reports August 2022]

28. The TEF benchmark accrued data for assessment and feedback shows that NSS student satisfaction levels for the College at 75%, slightly below the sector benchmark of 79%. However, the most recent NSS survey of final year students, completed by 81% of eligible students, (compared to a sector average of 69%) in 2022 reported an overall grade for Assessment and Feedback as 77% satisfaction. This is slightly higher than the TEF dashboard measure and the 2022 benchmark of 69%. Individual question responses reported that 86% of students that responded reported that the criteria used for marking have been made clear in advance, compared to a sector benchmark of 70%. Marking and assessment were judged to have been fair by 76% of respondents and was above the sector benchmark of 69%. Students reported that helpful comments had been provided on their work compared to the sector benchmark of 70%. The timely return of assessment was 67% compared to a benchmark of 66%. The College is committed to demonstrating prompt return of assessment feedback. It has adopted a four, rather than five week turn-around time. It has established effective processes that operate whenever a member of assessment staff experiences long-term illness leading to absence. [22 2022 TEF Indicator Assessment and Feedback] [9 National Student Survey (NSS) 2022]

Students receive detailed individual feedback and also receive written class feedback. A moderator's report is prepared for each assessment and is shared with members of the teaching team,

The feedback to students makes it clear how explains how marks have been awarded and provides guidance about how students could improve future assessments.

[23 Assessment Moderator Reports 2021-22] [24 Class feedback reports 2021-22]

29. All assessments are returned within working four weeks, well within the five working weeks set out in the UCO assessment policy. This standard is carefully monitored. Students benefit from timely feedback as they prepare their next assignments. Where students have been referred in assessment, they are provided with additional tutorials with the unit leader to identify priorities before resubmission. Additional teaching may be provided to support students to achieve the learning outcomes. Where students would benefit from additional study and academic skills support they may be referred to the learning support tutor for further tutorials. This support is designed to ensure that students do not present for re-assessment with the same skill and understanding level as when they were assessed on the first occasion. [25 Sample tutorial records]
30. At Level 6 synoptic assessment allows students to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes from across the vertical themes in the course. At Level 6 all students undertake an independent research project to explore in depth an area of chosen interest and demonstrate and apply the academic knowledge and skills acquired from the course. The research skills developed whilst undertaking the project prepares students for post-graduate study and further practice-based research. [26 UCO BSc Hons Degree Programme Specification 2021]

31. The British Acupuncture Council Annual Conference provides a platform for the presentation of outstanding research projects and potential for publication is flagged.

### **Resources, support and student engagement**

32. Most teaching staff have a qualification in education and training as well as a recognised acupuncture qualification. All must be registered with an approved professional body and be in current practise. In order to maintain professional registration, acupuncturists must be able to report and provide evidence for a required amount of continuous professional development. All teachers on the Conventional Medical Sciences units have relevant conventional medical qualification and clinical experience.

[17 CICM Staff CVs] [28 Teacher's Induction programme 2022-23]

33. All staff are required to participate in peer observation. Peer observations of teaching and learning assists with sharing of good practice, stimulating innovative ideas and enhancing creativity of teaching. Teachers share experiences of peer observation at College staff development days. Staff have reported in performance reviews that the opportunities have made a positive impact their teaching. [29 Peer Observation Protocol 2022-3]
34. Staff are also required to participate in an annual staff review. The focus of the review is on teaching learning and assessment and reflects the outcomes of peer observation and the College's strategic priorities. Staff development proposals for short and long courses are evaluated according to the impact on the student experience and supporting achievement of the learning outcomes. Those proposals that align with the College's priorities receive part sponsorship.
35. Programme leaders are responsible for arranging and organising reviews for staff teaching on their programme. They have a good understanding of the standard of teaching and assessment expected within their programme area and allows them good opportunities to identify and to share good practice in Programme Leader days. College Development Days offer opportunities for programme leaders to clarify assessment standards and consistency. [30 Performance Review Protocol 2022-23] [31 Programme Leader Days (Draft) July 2023]

The College provides a supportive learning environment. Students have access to a wide and readily available range of outstanding quality academic support tailored to their needs. All students are provided with explicit timetabled study and academic skills development as an enrichment element of the course. This enables students from whatever background to develop effective skills that will enable them to be successful. It raises their confidence and abilities so that they can prepare work at the appropriate standard. The study skills programme is reinforced by further study and academic skills development by specialist tutors within units at Level 4 within an extended induction programme. Study and academic skills, particularly those related to research, are developed further at Levels 5 and 6. Study and academic skills development is reinforced within the personal tutor scheme, practical skills practice groups and regional support groups. Learning support for students with learning and physical disability is provided by a specialist advisor, who is also a practicing Acupuncturist. She provides study skills sessions for students that are referred for enhanced guidance following assessment or have chosen to self-refer. The Regional Support Groups are small groups with a tutor, based at a geographical location more convenient for the students. The groups meet about 9 times a year. This provides regular additional support for students in a range of skills and topics tailor-



made to the student groups' needs and are highly valued by the students. The clinical 'paired supervisor offers additional perspective on each student's clinical progression. This enhances their range of experience and adds to the validity of assessment of practice. It allows supervisors to discuss both patients and students with each other, which encourages sharing of experience and problem solving.

[32 College Timetable 2022-23] [33 Study Skills Scheme of Work and lesson plans 2022-23] [11 Programme Handbook 2022-23] [12 Clinic Handbook 2022-23]

36. The TEF dashboard indicator for academic support reports an indicator value of 83%. This compares with a benchmark value of 78%. The 2022 NSS survey with 81% of eligible students responding reported an overall satisfaction level for academic support of 91% compared to a sector benchmark of 74%. Student were satisfied with their ability to contact staff when they needed to (96%), 81% reported that they had received sufficient advice in relation to their courses (compared to the sector benchmark 72%) and 96% reported that good advice was available when they needed to make study choices.

[34 2022 TEF Indicator Assessment and Feedback] [9 National Student Survey (NSS) 2022]

37. The College provides physical and virtual learning resources tailored and used effectively to support outstanding teaching and learning. The College offers well-equipped flexible accommodation for theory and practical teaching. Professional-standard treatment rooms support the clinical phase of the course. Significant enhancements have been made to the College IT infrastructure to provide a robust student email system and an upgraded Wi-Fi access. The College has also enhanced the library services staffing and continue to invest in library stock and electronic materials. The College provides students with access to a VLE. This has been upgraded and is under direct management of the College rather than the validation partner. The VLE is used to facilitate students' independent study and their access to a range of resources. Significant investment has been made in digital resources.

[35 Budget Expenditure Learning Resources 2021-22]

38. The TEF dashboard indicator for Learning Resources was 70.4% compared to the sector benchmark of 80.3%. This is materially below the benchmark from a statistical perspective. The 2022 NSS results for Learning Resources reported satisfaction levels slightly above the sector average at 83% (compared to 81%). The level of satisfaction was improved compared to the 2021 NSS result (58%) [Reference] 81% of students considered that IT resources and facilities provided have supported their learning well. 88% of students consider the library resources, on-line resources and learning spaces to be appropriate. This is a considerable improvement since 2021 NSS where satisfaction with the library and other resources was 52%. 81% of students surveyed considered that they had sufficient access to course-specific resources. This is slightly below the sector benchmark (82%, but considerably greater levels of satisfaction recorded in the 2021 NSS survey (62%).

[36 2022 TEF Indicator Learning Resources] [9 National Student Survey (NSS) 2022]

## Student Engagement

39. The College embeds engagement with its students and this leads to continuous improvement to the experiences and outcomes of its students. The College constantly reviews its processes with students and gathers information about the impact they have on the quality of teaching, assessment and learner experience. Students are actively engaged with the deliberative processes that informs the College about the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Issues arising from meetings are circulated to staff for comment and, where necessary, action. A report is then made to the committee and the wider student body.



The College has commissioned focussed surveys on students' experience. In 2021 a survey on the effectiveness of on-line teaching was carried out. In 2022 an Equality and Diversity survey was completed by students. In 2023 students will be surveyed on their experience of using on-line resources, to be followed by a student focus group in February 2023.

40. The survey on the effectiveness of on-line teaching took place in the summer term 2021. This was in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, between lockdowns. Much of the College's activity had transferred on line. Overall, most students that responded (80%) reported satisfaction with the arrangements that had been put in place. Over half (59%) highlighted the creativity that teachers had brought to the on-line learning environment. Students also highlighted that they benefitted from having good access to set texts along-side them whilst they participated in on-line teaching and learning activities. 83% of those that replied to the survey reported that they welcomed on-line study as a more relaxed environment where they felt comfortable participating in activities. 90% of those that responded judged that on-line learning had enabled time to be used more productively. Many students travel to the College from across the UK and require an overnight stay.
41. The survey on the effectiveness of the College's arrangements for equality and diversity took place in the Autumn term 2022. Of those who responded, student satisfaction overall with the college's approaches to equality and diversity. The College is engaging in a series of focus groups with students with a range of protected characteristics to inform planning for activities that will form part of the tutorial programme. The feedback has also informed the College's activities linked to College Development Days. A further survey is proposed that will reflect the feedback from the first survey and the associated focus groups. The two surveys have been presented to the College Council and Quality Assurance Committee for further discussion. [37 Council minutes 2021-22] [19 Quality Assurance Committee minutes 2021-22] [38 Student Liaison Committee minutes] [39 Reports on thematic student surveys]
42. The TEF measure related to Student Voice shows an indicator value of 76% compared to the sector benchmark of 74%. The 2022 NSS survey of eligible students 83% reported overall satisfaction with Student Voice. This compares with a sector benchmark of 67%. 88% of students reported that they had had the right opportunities to provide feedback on my course (compared to sector benchmark of 79%). A lower level of satisfaction was reported with students' clarity about how their feedback had been acted upon (73% compared to sector benchmark of 52%) reported satisfaction levels with their expression of student voice at the College. [40 2022 TEF Indicator Student Voice] [9 National Student Survey (NSS) 2022]

### Student outcomes

43. The College deploys and tailors approaches that are highly effective in ensuring its students succeed in and progress beyond their studies. Students are provided with an opportunity to deploy their acupuncture skills within a public-facing clinic located at the College. The clinic is staffed by qualified acupuncturists who are also experienced educators. The acupuncturists hold clinical responsibility for the patients whilst students implement approved treatment plans under direct supervision. Each student is allocated two clinical supervisors. Students record their clinical practice in a reflective log which is regularly reviewed by the student's clinical supervisor. The reviews of the reflective log is used to identify areas of further development and access to patient types that may be required. The students are required to complete 200 hours to enable them to register as a professional acupuncturist with the BAAB. The supervised clinical experience prepares students to be effective in their independent practise once they graduate and receive their licentiate to practise.
- The professional
- recognition of the Honours Degree by the BAAB facilitates students in gaining registration and progressing efficiently into self-employed professional practice as acupuncturists.  
[12 Clinic Handbook 2022-23] [7 BAAB Initial Accreditation Approval Confirmation]
44. Students are prepared to be able to confidently manage the self-employment aspects of their professional work. Credit-bearing modules contain learning outcomes that require student to demonstrate their understanding of managing a business and preparing business plans to a good standard. This skills development occurs at levels 5 and 6 of the programme. The course components are taught by an acupuncture practitioner with a business education specialism. The College's focus on aspects of business management of independent practice of acupuncture is a key aspect of the College's success in facilitating graduates' successful progression into independent practice.[26 UCO BSc Hons Degree Programme Specification 2021]
45. Students are required to undertake observations of independent acupuncture in their first year. They establish relationships with practitioners with the support of the College. The placement provides an opportunity for undergraduates to gain an insight into the professional practice of experienced acupuncturists and to observe a range of clinical practice. Some students might observe several practitioners in a variety of settings. Students are required to record their experiences of observations in a log. This is then reviewed with their personal tutor. Guidance is provided about opportunities for students to observe professional practice in contrasting settings. Students use the opportunities for observation of professional practice to contextualise their studies, in particular location of acupuncture points and their application in a range of different conditions.
46. The observations of clinical acupuncture practitioners were suspended during the COVID 19 pandemic in an effort to curtail infectious transfer. This has led subsequently to a reduction in the numbers of practitioners currently offering placements for College students. This has been mitigated by extending the clinical practice and providing observation opportunities within the public clinic. [12 Clinic Handbook 2022-23] [26 UCO BSc Hons Degree Programme Specification 2021]
47. The rates of continuation and progression reported in the TEF indicators shows that the College rates broadly in line with the sector benchmarks. Continuation rates are 91.4% (sector benchmark 91.3%). Progression rates are 87.5% (sector benchmark 89.5%). However, achievement rates are lower at 70.9% (sector benchmark 88.5%). The achievement rate dashboard shows 100% confidence that it is materially below the benchmark.  
[41 2022 TEF Indicator Success]

48. There has been a relatively high rate of deferral in accordance with academic regulations of the validation partner, particularly over the last two years. This is because we recruit adult students that experience unpredictable events in their lives, both economic and social. Many students experienced challenges arising from the COVID-19 outbreak. This included issues relating to their experience of infection and in some cases 'long COVID'.

49. Students who feel they need to defer their studies are provided with significant support and guidance to ensure that they have all the available information with which to make their decision. In almost every case, deferral has not been influenced by a student's ability to achieve. The students must meet the criteria for deferral laid down by the university validating partner. Students must keep in contact with the College during the deferral and abide by agreements made on the point of return. Usually, students are accommodated with the next cohort. Approximately 25% of deferred students return after one year and a further 10% after two years.

50. The College has made significant enhancements to the support provided for students at the first indication that attendance and or assessment outcomes are unsatisfactory. Such interventions have significantly increased the take-up of students support and additional subject-related tutorials. Experience shows that if academic progress can be maintained, then students are in a better position to manage the challenges in their personal life and to avoid needing to defer. Many students find the College environment a supportive and a fixed point of stability in their lives. Students are actively encouraged to share their wider concerns with College staff, especially their personal tutor. Progression issues are regularly reviewed by Programme Managers and the College Executive.

[16 Programme leaders Minutes August 2022-January 2023] [42 Executive Committee Minutes August 2022-23]

51. The College seeks to identify 'risk factors' relating to cohort profiles that can inform targeted interventions of support before wider issues affect progress. Attendance is closely monitored and intervention follows as soon as sessions are missed. Where students choose not to complete formative assessment tasks they are flagged for support

Where students request more than one extension for summative assessment they are contacted to review the forthcoming assessment and schedule to determine whether there are special circumstances that have not been disclosed to the College. Where issues related to personal circumstances are disclosed, students are referred to the relevant agencies. Should a student miss an assessment deadline, they are contacted immediately to discuss the barriers to submission and to explore whether they are eligible for an approved extension.

By these means, the College has been successful in ensuring that academic progress issues are carefully managed and do not add to the complex challenges students face in their personal lives. Students' take-up of support is high.

[43 College Admissions Policy 2022-23] [44 Admissions Task 2022-23] [45 Learning Support Policy]

52. The College follows a range of strategies to ensure that students are carefully selected and supported to achieve. The College has robust recruitment practises to ensure that students have the appropriate skills on entry and that they fully understand the nature of the course and

what is expected of them. The College has established excellent student support processes to ensure that students' progress and achieve successfully.

53. The College's recruitment process involves applicants being invited to participate in an Open Day at the College or a virtual event. Once an application is received applicants are invited to attend on-line or face-to-face interviews. The interview is to ensure that candidates have all the required information and to conduct a qualifications check. The interview involves two members of staff and explores the applicant's motivation for pursuing a career in Acupuncture. Students without Level 3 or above qualifications but extensive relevant experience will be invited to undertake a comprehension exercise and to complete a pre-disclosed essay. Once interviewers are satisfied that the applicant has the required motivation and key skills they will be offered a place on the programme. This careful selection helps to ensure that students are effectively briefed in preparation for their study and have the requisite skills judged to be necessary for success.
54. The College encourages students to declare any learning support needs as soon as possible in the recruitment and enrolment process so that learning support and/or adjustments can be put in place promptly. The earlier such support can be put in place, the more likely students will progress and achieve. [43 College Admissions Policy 2022-23]

### **Educational gain**

55. The College seeks to articulate the range of educational gains it intends for its students. It explains why these are highly relevant to its students and their future ambitions. It is made clear that the Honours Degree is instrumental in permitting graduates to successfully register as an acupuncturist with the BAcC and progressing into private practice. It is also made clear that the Honours Degree is fully recognised as an academic award and permits progression into appropriate post-graduate study programmes and other forms of graduate employment or professional education roles.
56. For students without a first Honours degree, the educational gain in terms of becoming a graduate is significant. Some may have entered without Level 3 qualifications but with significant relevant prior experience. For such graduates, the learning gain in terms of qualification level at the end of the course is substantial. For some individuals, such progression may not have been readily available in another educational setting.
57. For students that already hold a first Honours Degree, they may not have moved their qualification level further, but will have gained a valuable skill set with direct entry into a new professional occupational area. This also provides such students with a wider range of progression opportunities into post-graduate education or to take up new professional education roles.
58. Students are facilitated to develop a range of transferable skills related to managing own learning and performance that will enable them to demonstrate that their skills remain current in their professional practice. Students are provided with valuable opportunities to become involved in the deliberative processes of the College,

Such opportunities provide students with experience of strategic and quality related issues that they may wish to deploy in a range of roles within professional associations or as Board members of educational institutions.

59. Similarly, students have opportunities to work alongside experienced acupuncture practitioners and to reflect on a range of different approaches and techniques deployed. This greater awareness of the potential and scope for the application of a range of application of skills by experienced professionals is an important aspect for students seeking to join a community of practice. Students are encouraged to seek to establish a mentor who will continue to guide them as their skills extend and deepen through practise using similar processes of observation and reflection.
60. The College's approaches to supporting its students to achieve these learning gains are evidence-based, highly effective and tailored to its students and their different starting points. Students studying the programme have a wide range of prior and experiential learning. It is important that this is recognised when facilitating the development of key and transferable skills. For example, students may have a background in other professions associated with medicine such as nursing and physiotherapy. They have well established and effective skills in meeting the needs of individuals in a variety of settings. To facilitate this process, the recruitment process enables information about the experience of new entrants to be gathered and subsequently shared with programme teaching teams. Similarly, the induction process provides further opportunities for individuals to share their prior experiences with fellow students and their tutors. Wherever possible, the experience gained from previous roles is drawn upon by tutors in strategies that seek to co-create learning within the classroom and in practical settings between students and teachers.
61. The College is at the very early stages of evaluating the gains made by its students. As part of evaluation of the observation of clinical practitioners, questions will be included that seek to identify the nature of their experience and how they might apply learning once they work in the public-facing clinic and in subsequent practice. Similarly, the College seeks to establish formal exit interviews where students are required to undertake as preparation an evaluation of the transferable skills they have developed throughout the course. This will provide an opportunity to collect individual testimonials and to identify ways that the learning gain strategies may be developed further.

## References

- 1 CICM Strategic Plan December 2022
- 2 QAA Quality and Standards Review Report
- 3 Internal Subject Review KU; 2016
- 4 British Acupuncture Accreditation Board Periodic Review Report
- 5 KU Institutional Risk Assessment 2022
- 6 2022 Annual Report response from BAAC
- 7 BAAC Initial Accreditation Approval Confirmation
- 8 CICM Annual Report and Development Plan to BAAC 2021-22
- 9 National Student Survey (NSS) 2022
- 10 Peer Observation Annual Report 2022
- 11 Programme Handbook 2022-23
- 12 Clinic Handbook 2022-23
- 13 Boyer, E. L. (1990), *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. (PDF), Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
- 15 College Development Day August, February, May schedules 2021-22
- 16 Programme leaders Meetings August 2022-January 2023
- 17 CICM Staff CVs
- 18 CPD Programme and Session Outline 2022-23
- 19 Quality Assurance Committee Minutes 2021-22
- 20 External Examiner Report KU August 2022
- 21 External Examiners' Reports August 2022
- 22 2022 TEF Indicator Assessment and Feedback
- 23 Assessment Moderator Reports 2021-22
- 24 Class feedback reports 2021-22
- 25 Sample tutorial records

Provider name: The College of Integrated Chinese Medicine  
UKPRN: 10001546

26 UCO BSc Hons Degree Programme Specification 2021

27 BAAC Annual Conference Programme 2021, 2022

28 Teacher's Induction programme 2022-23

29 Peer Observation Protocol 2022-23

30 Performance Review Protocol 2022-23

31 Programme Leader Days (Draft) July 2023

32 College Timetable 2022-23

33 Study Skills Scheme of Work and lesson plans 2022-23

34 2022 TEF Indicator Assessment and Feedback

35 Budget Expenditure Learning Resources

36 2022 TEF Indicator Learning Resources

37 Council minutes 2021-22

39 Reports on thematic student surveys

40 2022 TEF Indicator Student Voice

42 Executive Committee Minutes August 2022-23

43 College Admissions Policy 2022-23

44 Admissions Task 2022-23

45 Learning Support Policy