

Work Experience Policy

Document Summary

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Work-Based Learning and Clinic Policy

1. Policy Statement

This policy governs professional clinical training delivered exclusively within the on-site teaching clinic of The City College of Acupuncture. Following the discontinuation of initial teacher training awards, Pearson Higher National programmes delivered by The City College do not contain compulsory work placements or work-based learning elements. This policy applies solely to third-year acupuncture and licentiate students undertaking mandatory clinical practice as required for professional qualification and registration.

2. On-Site Clinic for Acupuncture Students

Third-year acupuncture students must complete their prescribed clinical training hours within the on-site teaching clinic in accordance with the professional accreditation criteria established by the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board (BAAB). Clinical practice provides authentic patient contact, diagnosis, treatment planning, and needle technique under the direct oversight of qualified clinic supervisors registered with the British Acupuncture Council (BAC). Students must complete all scheduled clinical sessions, practical logbooks, and reflective portfolios to qualify for the Licentiate in Acupuncture.

Student Responsibilities:

- Adhere strictly to the clinic's Code of Conduct and all college policies, including Safeguarding and Patient Confidentiality.
- Maintain professional standards of conduct and patient care.
- Attend all scheduled clinic sessions and complete all required documentation promptly and accurately.
- Ensure all necessary professional indemnity insurance is in place before commencing clinical practice.
- Record and reflect on all clinical experiences for assessment and peer review.

College Responsibilities:

- Provide a safe, clean, and professional clinical environment that meets all health and safety regulations.
- Ensure experienced and qualified clinic supervisors are present to oversee all student-led treatments.
- Provide clear guidance on clinical procedures, patient management, and record-keeping.
- Maintain patient records securely and confidentially in accordance with GDPR.

3. Health and Safety

Clinical practice carries strict statutory health and safety obligations.

All students, supervisors, and clinical staff must observe rigorous infection prevention and clean needle protocols in line with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Health and Safety (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013.

- Single-use sterile acupuncture needles must be opened in the presence of the patient and disposed of immediately into approved, UN-certified sharps bins located at each treatment couch
- Treatment couches, equipment, and work surfaces must be sanitised with hospital-grade disinfectant between every patient appointment.
- In the event of a needle-stick injury, the student must execute the clinic emergency wash protocol immediately, inform the Clinic Supervisor, and complete an institutional Incident Report Form within 24 hours.
- Clinical waste and sharps containers must be collected, stored, and incinerated through registered hazardous waste contractors in accordance with environmental health legislation.

4. Patient Consent, Draping, and Clinical Boundaries

The teaching clinic operates with complete transparency to protect patient welfare and maintain professional boundaries.

- Voluntary, informed written consent is obtained from every patient prior to the commencement of assessment or treatment, confirming that the patient understands they are being treated by a student practitioner under academic supervision. Students must ensure that the consent has been signed and must reconfirm the patient's consent to treatment before each treatment session.
- Professional draping techniques must be used during every session to ensure patient modesty, comfort, and physical privacy.
- Patients have the right to request a chaperone or withdraw consent to treatment at any point during a session.
- Intimate professional boundaries must be maintained at all times, and any romantic, sexual, or exploitative behaviour toward a clinic patient constitutes gross misconduct under Office for Students Condition E5 and the Fitness to Practise Policy.

5. Patient Confidentiality and Clinical Records Management

All patient intake forms, diagnostic records, treatment notes, and medical histories constitute special category personal data under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). The confidentiality, security, and appropriate handling of patient information must be maintained at all times.

- All patient records are stored within the Jane App. Although the system can be accessed remotely, students are expected to complete clinical records during clinic sessions wherever possible and to minimise access outside the College. Students are responsible for ensuring that patient information is not viewed, disclosed, or accessed by any unauthorised person. Please note that all access to Jane App, including off-site logins, is monitored and recorded.

- These requirements align with BAcC, College, and UK GDPR standards and are designed to safeguard patient confidentiality. Any breach of confidentiality or inappropriate handling of patient information will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.
- Any case material used for classroom discussions, case studies, presentations, assignments, or portfolio assessments must be fully anonymised. All identifying information, including names, dates of birth, addresses, contact details, and other personal identifiers, must be removed.
- Where paper records are used, they must be stored securely in locked archive cabinets. Electronic records must be protected through appropriate security measures, including role-based access controls and multi-factor authentication where applicable.
- Patient records must be retained securely for a minimum of eight years following the conclusion of treatment, or until the age of twenty-five in the case of patients treated as children or young adults, in accordance with BAcC professional guidance and relevant statutory record-retention requirements.