



British
Acupuncture
Council



Independent Admissions

The independent admissions route to Full BAAC membership

February 2024

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Introduction

The British Acupuncture Council (BAcC) is committed to ensuring the promotion and delivery of high standards of acupuncture practice. In accordance with the [Professional Qualifications Act \(2022\)](#), we operate an independent admissions process for acupuncturists who have obtained professional acupuncture qualifications overseas or on a UK-based programme that was not accredited by the [British Acupuncture Accreditation Board](#) at the time of completion of their studies.

The following document sets out full guidelines on the assessment criteria and process for applicants who apply for Full membership of the BAcC through the Independent Admissions route.

Ensuring parity with the BAcC's Educational Standards

The BAcC recognises its duty to ensure that members of the public can access acupuncture treatment delivered safely by trained professionals. Meeting this obligation is facilitated by the BAcC's accreditation with the [Professional Standards Authority \(PSA\)](#). As such, membership of the BAcC is based on meeting the fitness to practice requirement, in accordance with the [BAcC Standards of Practice for Acupuncture \(SPA\)](#) and the [Codes of Professional Conduct](#) and [Safe Practice](#).

Training and qualifications undertaken by applicants who apply through the BAcC's Independent Admissions route will be mapped against the [BAcC's Educational Standards](#) to ensure parity with the standards existing members are expected to meet as a condition of Full membership.

The BAcC Educational Standards represent an agreed core of professional knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and skills approved by the BAcC. They describe the educational and clinical outcomes required to meet the entry requirements for professional membership of the BAcC.

Assessment overview

In the first instance assessment of applicants is focused on their main acupuncture qualification (other relevant degree-level qualifications will be considered, alongside the application).

The main principle for admission to BAAC membership via this route is that education and training must have taken place on an acupuncture programme that is:

- 1 At level 6 (e.g., bachelor's degree) on the RQF or above.
- 2 Meets study hours' equivalency at a minimum of 3,600 hours, including 400 hours of supervised clinical practice.
- 3 Is judged to meet the [BAAC's Educational Standards](#).

Assessment fee

A non-refundable fee is due upon submission of a completed Independent Admissions form and accompanying documentation requested for assessment. **Where applicants are eligible for Full membership upon completion of assessment, this fee will be partially offset against membership fees.**

The BAAC Membership team will confirm receipt of completed Independent Admissions forms and accompanying documentation by email.

Applicants will then have 7 days to make payment via our online payments form. All applicants are asked to quote *IA assessment* as their payment reference.

Where payment is not received within 7 days, the BAAC will assume the applicant has withdrawn their application and the application will be closed.

Additional charges

- i Please note, incomplete applications will incur an administration charge on each occasion an applicant fails to submit complete documentation for which further administrative time is required.
- ii Where verification of educational qualification(s) is required, applicants will be directed to [DataFlow](#), global providers of specialized Primary Source Verification solutions. They will be asked to initiate verification of their credentials with DataFlow directly. This will incur additional costs, payable to DataFlow by credit card. Upon completion of their checks, DataFlow will provide applicants with a final report, accessible to the BAAC also through a dedicated DataFlow portal.

Application for membership

Independent Admissions form

Applicants are asked to complete a form (online or emailed by the BAAC's membership team, upon request) asking for the following information relating to the applicant's main acupuncture qualification:

- Qualification/degree title.
- Name and country of institution offering qualification/degree.
- Details of external accreditation/recognition of the institution.
- Dates of applicant's study.

Transcript

All applicants under the Independent Admissions route must also submit transcripts/a copy of syllabus or hyperlink to the programme syllabus of their acupuncture course for evaluation of equivalency and currency.

Supporting evidence

Where other relevant level 6 (degree-level) training illustrates how a candidate meets the BAAC's Educational Standards, they are invited to submit full details to support their application.

Supporting evidence will primarily be used to determine whether training and expertise acquired on other degree-level programmes is sufficient to counter any areas where the BAAC's Educational Standards and associated learning outcomes have substantially – but not fully – been met through the main acupuncture training undertaken alone.

Supporting evidence should include:

- Qualification/degree title and name of institution.
- Details of external accreditation/recognition of the institution.
- Copy of degree certificate.
- Transcript/a copy of syllabus or hyperlink to programme syllabus.

English language proficiency

Communication is a vital element of the practitioner-patient relationship and as such, applicants who are nationals of countries outside of the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI) list of [majority English-speaking countries](#), or who have not undertaken their academic studies in English, may need to prove English language proficiency with a recent secure [English language test \(SELT\)](#).

The results of a secure English language test should demonstrate a level of proficiency equivalent to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) [level B2](#) (e.g., the language course [English for Healthcare Professionals](#)). For comparative purposes, BAAB-accredited colleges equate this to be an overall IELTS academic test score of 6.0-6.5.

Assessment process

Stage 1

Applicants are asked to read the [BAcC Educational Standards](#) to assess whether their acupuncture training (potentially combined with supplementary degree-level training, where relevant) will meet these. This initial self-assessment will help applicants decide whether they want to continue with application, considering the non-refundable fee attached to assessment.

If an applicant wishes to proceed, they are asked to complete the BAcC's Independent Admissions form and submit this, along with their acupuncture course transcript and details of any relevant level 6/degree-level training that helps to demonstrate they meet the BAcC Educational Standards.

The BAcC's Independent Admissions form is available [online](#) or can be requested by emailing the BAcC's membership team.

Stage 2

The BAcC membership team will confirm receipt of the completed Independent Admissions form and documentation sent for assessment, along with a link to the BAcC online payments form. **Applicants are then expected to make payment of the assessment fee within 7 days.**

Stage 3

Where payment is confirmed within 7 days, an assessment report will be created, and 2 assessors will be assigned to undertake assessment. Applicants can expect at least one assessor to be a practitioner of acupuncture.

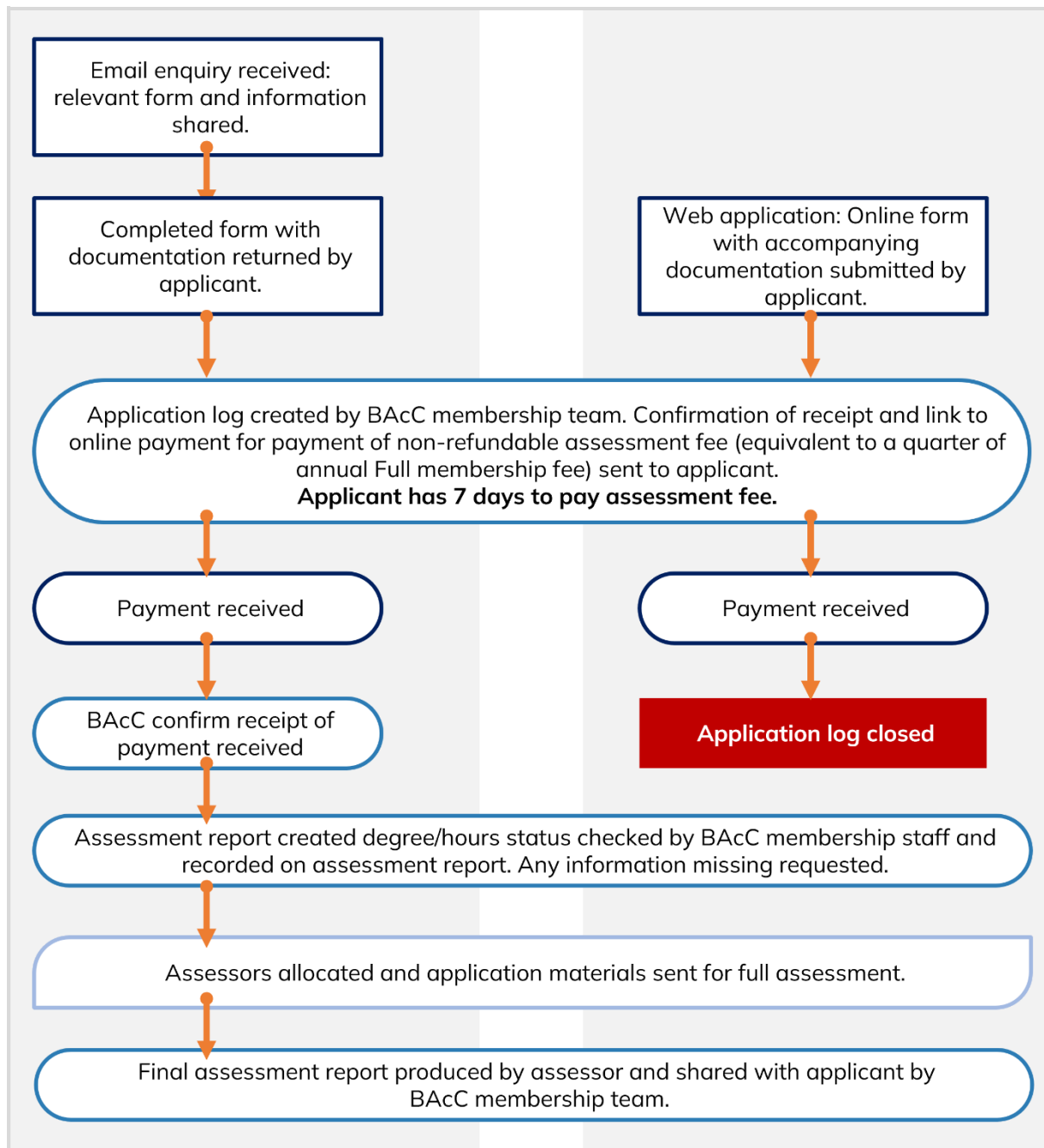
The assessors will then map the applicant's qualification(s) against the [BAcC's Educational Standards](#) and assess, in a written report, whether the information meets these.

Stage 4

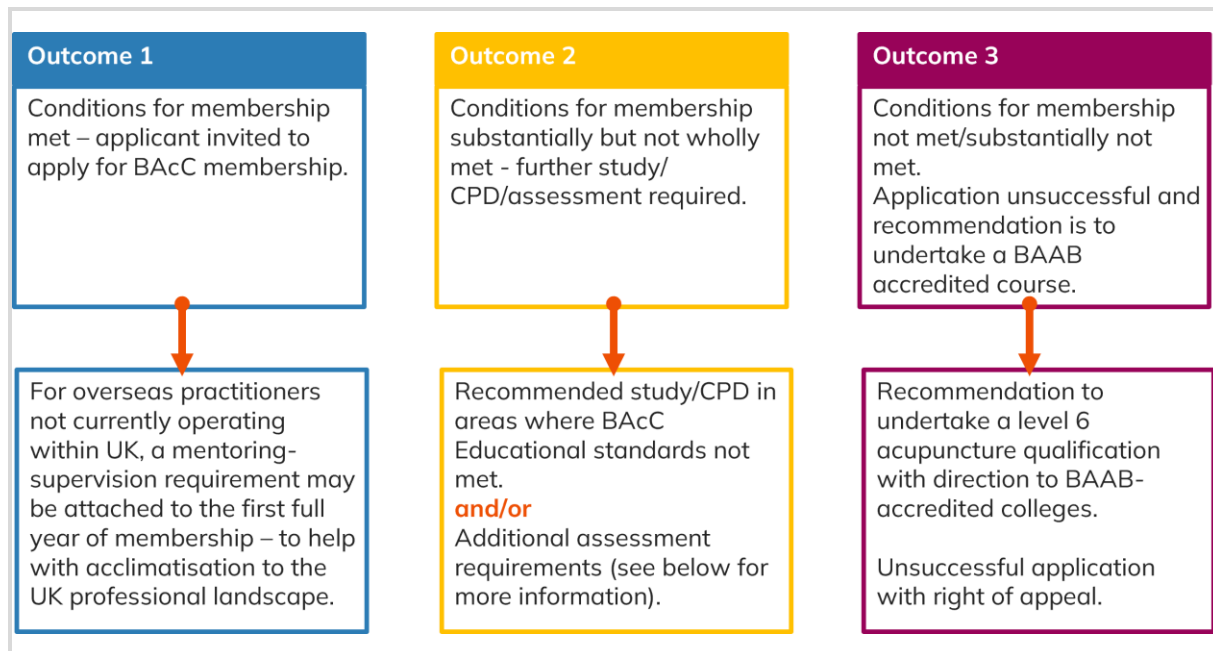
The applicant will be notified of the assessment outcome and where unsuccessful, have the right to appeal. More information on the appeals process can be found later in this document.

On the following page is a comprehensive diagrammatic representation of the assessment process, from application to outcome:

The assessment process; the application to outcome



Assessment outcomes



Outcome 1

Conditions for membership met

Where conditions for BAcC Full membership are met, the applicant will be invited to apply for membership and sent the standard BAcC membership application form for completion. The BAcC membership team will be on hand to provide any guidance where required.

Where deemed helpful to the applicant, a mentoring-supervision condition may be attached to the applicant's first full year of membership – to aid with acclimatisation to the UK's professional landscape.

Mentoring-supervision

For applicants coming from overseas to practice in the UK for the first time, it is quite likely a mentoring-supervision condition will be attached to the first full year of membership - to help support with entrance into the UK professional landscape.

This will be undertaken by a BAcC mentor-supervisor. All BAcC mentor-supervisors are experienced acupuncturists who have received mentoring-supervision training. They have a thorough understanding of the practice of acupuncture within the UK healthcare system, in addition to extensive experience of establishing a UK-based practice and operating within the general business landscape.

These mentoring-supervision sessions will incur an additional fee on top of the subscription fee for Full membership of the BAcC. The fee for mentoring-supervision is set by the mentor-supervisor.

Where a degree of mentoring-supervision is proposed as a condition of membership, the applicant will be asked to work with a mentor-supervisor of their choosing from the BAaC Mentoring-Supervision Register and undertake a minimum of 6 sessions over their first 12 months of BAaC membership. The mentor-supervisor will then be asked to confirm attendance following completion of 6 sessions.

Mentoring-supervision sessions should be based around topics raised by the applicant's critical reflection of the [BAaC Standards of Practice for Acupuncture \(SPA\)](#) and meet the aims/learning outcomes listed below.

Aims/learning outcomes:

- understanding of the practice of acupuncture in the UK health system.
- embedding of reflective practice as a tool for developing professionalism.
- ensuring the BAaC Codes of [Professional Conduct](#) and [Safe Practice](#) are fully understood and implemented.
- achieving local authority, HMRC and other legal requirements for setting up in practice.
- support in engaging with and becoming part of the professional acupuncture community.
- support in establishing a successful practice in the UK.

If problems arise during a supervisory period, (such as missing meetings or other professional or compliance issues), the mentor-supervisor or mentee may raise concerns with the BAaC membership manager at any time.

Minor issues should be resolved by the membership manager in the first instance, working in consultation with the membership assessors. More serious issues may be referred to the BAaC's Professional Conduct Committee for their consideration.

Outcome 2

Conditions substantially but not wholly met and further assessment required

There may be instances where an applicant meets the majority of learning outcomes contained within the BAaC Educational Standards but there are some areas where further work or evidence is required.

In these instances, there will be additional assessment requirements, designed to support each applicant and ensure they can meet entrance criteria for Full membership of the BAaC. For example, applicants may be asked by the assessors to:

- Undertake further study and/or continued professional development in areas where they do not meet the BAaC Educational Standards in full. This may also include a set number of mentoring-supervision sessions with BAaC mentor-supervisors, who are all experience acupuncturists. The themes of the mentoring-supervision sessions will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

And/or:

- Submit a portfolio, including:

- Written case histories.
- A piece of written reflective practice showing how the applicant has learned from their experiences – guidance would be provided.
- The applicant's curriculum vitae (CV), or resume.
- A summary of the applicant's time in practice, average number of patients treated per month, types of conditions and patients treated, and any specialist areas the applicant has.
- Details of any CPD, other teaching or educational activities undertaken – pertinent to the assessment process.
- Membership of any professional groups or organisations.
- Any other information the application deems pertinent to the BAaC assessment process.

And/or:

- Undertake a case study assessment and interview:
 - 60 minutes set for completion of case study assessment, assuming no notification of special requirements. Case study and questions provided at start of assessment.
 - Interview with the two assessors and a BAaC staff member observer, subsequent to the case study assessment and relating to it and any portfolio of work the applicant may have been asked to submit.

And/or:

- Undertake Clinical Assessment and Discussion (CAD) - to assess clinical competence in a live clinical setting - to include:
 - Observation by an assessor as they meet and conduct a clinical assessment with two patients new to them.
 - Discussion with assessor, in which applicant presents a brief summary of the main features of the case history including:
 - the range of diagnostic hypotheses.
 - the rationale for and outcomes of clinical examinations.
 - the significance of the clinical findings and how these inform the diagnosis.
 - diagnosis and point prescription.
 - Relevant treatment (no more than 3 acupuncture points) demonstrating applicant's:
 - point location skills.
 - clean needle technique.
 - communications skills.
 - other techniques such as moxibustion, or electro-acupuncture as appropriate.

Where any of these elements are required as part of the extended assessment process, applicants will be given fixed time periods in which to complete each area they are asked to undertake. **Please note, additional assessment requirements may incur an additional cost.**

Outcome 3

Conditions for BAAC membership substantially not met

Where applicants substantially do not meet the conditions for BAAC membership, they will be advised their application has been unsuccessful and the recommendation will be to undertake level 6 (degree level) training. They will have 28 days in which to appeal the decision. More information on the appeals process can be found below.

Assessment timeline

Applicants can expect to receive notification of their initial assessment outcome and accompanying report within 6 weeks (at times of high demand this period may be extended but the applicant will be kept informed).

In instances where the primary assessment has led to applicants being advised of 'outcome 2', timing for the extended assessment period will vary, dependent on the additional elements the applicant is required to undertake.

Assessors

Assessors are experienced BAAC-member acupuncturists and/or educationalists with expertise in assessment and extensive knowledge of the BAAC Educational Standards.

The appeals process

Applicants have the right of appeal in the event their application is unsuccessful. The appeals process is as follows:

- 1 Within 28 days of their application being unsuccessful, an applicant should write to the BAAC's Chief Executive Officer explaining their case and why they feel the outcome of the assessment process is unfair. Letters and emails should be headed 'Confidential'.
- 2 The Chief Executive Officer will confirm the applicant's letter/email has been received within seven days and nominate a member of the BAAC's Governing Board to chair and convene an appeals panel. The appeals panel will consist of three (a Chair and two assessors who were not involved in the initial assessment).
- 3 The panel will then consider all documentation submitted by the applicant as part of the application process and/or the assessors final assessment report.
- 4 Following the appeals panel's consideration, the Chair will inform the applicant in writing that either:

- a they accept the applicant's case and will allow them to resubmit their application, including any changes they wish to make to their documentation. Their application will then be reviewed by different assessors and re-assessed by them.
- b they do not accept the applicant's case and they remain unsuccessful in their application for membership.

Please note, the ruling of the appeals panel is final.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The British Acupuncture Council (BAcC) is committed to developing a diverse, equal, and truly inclusive workplace and community. In line with the [Equality Act 2010](#), we do not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

For more detail, please read the BAcC's [statement of commitment](#) to equality, diversity and inclusion.

The BAcC respects the privacy of all applicants, candidates and graduates.

These Admissions Procedures and associated documents are informed by the principle and values which underlie the work of acupuncturists and are subject to periodic review by the British Acupuncture Council (BAcC).

Any instruction, requirement, regulation, guideline or form may be amended at any time. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission of the BAcC.

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