

Course specification and Curriculum Map for MSc/PGDip in Chinese Herbal Medicine

1. Course title	MSc/PGDip in Chinese Herbal Medicine
2. Awarding institution	Health Sciences University
3. Teaching institution	Northern College of Acupuncture 61 Micklegate, York, YO1 6LJ
4. Course accredited by	European Herbal and Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association (EHTPA) (of which the Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine is a member)
5. Final qualification	MSc/PGDip
6. Academic year	2024-2025
7. Language of study	English
8. Mode of study	Distance Learning

9. Criteria for admission to the course

Standard Applications: The course is designed for qualified acupuncture practitioners both from the UK and overseas whose training included TCM with a BSc, or a Dip Ac or LicAc with relevant and responsible work experience equivalent to degree-level learning. This will normally be experience of practising as an acupuncturist, or in a healthcare or complementary medicine related field. Applicants must be registered with a relevant professional body.

In most cases applicants from the UK will have recognised qualifications from institutions accredited by the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board (BAAB), whose courses accord with the BAcC's Standard for Education and Training in Acupuncture.

Applicants who are graduates of the following institutions are accepted as having the required level of TCM training:

- Northern College of Acupuncture;
- London College of Traditional Acupuncture;
- College of Integrated Chinese Medicine;
- City College; and
- the Universities of Westminster, Middlesex, London South Bank, Salford, Lincoln, Leeds, Manchester & Glyndwr.

For overseas applicants, we will ask for details of training and map these against the key features of the acupuncture course at the NCA.

Non-Standard Applications: Acupuncturists whose training did not include TCM, such as 5 Element practitioners who have subsequently studied TCM either via self-study or CPD, will be assessed by mapping the key features of the acupuncture course of the Northern College of Acupuncture against the key features of their training, for which we require documented details. Applicants will usually also

be required to sit an examination. Other special cases will also be considered on their merits for example by using our template for MSc/PGDip by experience applications and providing documented details as appropriate.

Graduates from the following institutions are required to have undertaken additional training in TCM as it is essential that applicants understand TCM theory and are able to formulate a standard TCM diagnosis:

- College of Traditional Acupuncture;
- International College of Oriental Medicine;
- School of Five Element Acupuncture; and
- The Acupuncture Academy

Applicants from non-BAAB accredited courses and overseas practitioners

When an applicant graduated from a College or course prior to its being accredited by the BAAB, graduated from a course which is not currently accredited by the BAAB, or graduated from an overseas course, the College will normally seek a portfolio of documentation and use the interview process to explore details of their initial training, their experience as a practitioner and their CPD. The training should be mapped against the key features of the acupuncture course of the Northern College of Acupuncture and where the candidate does not have a first degree the “Template for MSc by experience applications” can also be used as the basis of a document for this portfolio.

The training should also be mapped against the following requirements of the EHTPA:

- Anatomy, Physiology and Pathophysiology (biomedicine perspective)
- Diet and Nutrition (in part)
- Assessment and Diagnostic Skills (case taking, physical examination, understanding test results, red flags, drugs)
- Context of Practice (including practitioner skills, ethics, reflective practice)

Applicants may also be required to sit an examination.

A final decision is made by the admissions staff.

For further guidance on this, please contact the Registrar.

Other special cases

Other special cases will be considered on their merits in line with the above policy.

English language requirement: For students for whom English is not their first language we normally require an IELTS score of 6.5 or equivalent for Masters level study.

Interviews

We will normally interview all applicants who are not alumni of the NCA.

For applicants who are alumni, at the discretion of the Principal or Course Director, a formal interview can be waived and replaced with a discussion about the course and study requirements.

10. Aims of the course

The course aims to:

- provide an education and training to produce graduates who will be competent, safe and caring practitioners in Chinese Herbal Medicine (CHM);
- enable students to establish systematic and critical knowledge of the diverse theoretical base of traditional CHM ;
- enable students to practise professionally and independently to fulfil professional body and all legal requirements;
- develop students as reflective practitioners and autonomous lifelong learners with the professional curiosity to want to further knowledge, understanding and skills and to conduct research that will underpin evidence-based practice.

11. Course outcomes

A. Knowledge and understanding

On completion of this course the successful student will have knowledge and understanding to :

A1. Apply critical understanding of herbs and formulae to work confidently with the complexity and multiplicity of Chinese medicine's patterns and frameworks.

A2. Make appropriate critical judgements and formulate safe and effective CHM treatments, integrating their application of the fundamental concepts of Chinese medicine with their theoretical and clinical knowledge

A3. Critically evaluate risks and benefits of treatment with CHM, critiquing evidence and applying principles of pharmacology, pharmacognosy and toxicology to questions of efficacy, quality assurance and safe practice.

A4. Critically appraise a range of research methodologies relevant to CHM, and develop systematic knowledge and understanding of own research area.

Teaching/learning methods

Students gain knowledge and understanding through:

Key lectures, group work, case study and problem-solving exercises, seminars, presentations, discussions, e-learning sessions, directed home-study, self- directed study.

Assessment Method

Students' knowledge and understanding is assessed by:

Written assignments, presentations, analytical case scenario, examinations, research proposal, write up of a Research Project along with a Journal article and Poster, portfolio preparation (including PDP, reflective accounts, anonymous case records, clinical competency logs, clinical case-based exercises and worksheets, additional reading, seminars and classes etc.).

B. Cognitive (thinking) skills On completion of this course the successful student will be able to: B1. Extract, critically evaluate and synthesise information from relevant modern and traditional literature to contribute to academic and research activity and inform and improve clinical practice. B2. Work confidently with complexity, contradiction and gaps in the knowledge base and its clinical application, generating new interpretations and responses, and debating and evaluating a range of perspectives. B3. Formulate sophisticated differential diagnoses based upon a range of models from Oriental medicine theory and design effective, creative and elegant herbal treatment strategies. B4. Critically reflect on holistic pattern-based thinking and linear thinking, making syntheses and debating the evaluation of one paradigm from the perspective of a different paradigm.	Teaching/learning methods Students learn cognitive skills through: Key lectures, group work, case study and problem-solving exercises, seminars, presentations, discussions, e-learning sessions, directed home-study, self-directed study. Assessment Method Students' cognitive skills are assessed by: Written assignments, presentations, analytical case scenario, examinations, research proposal, write up of a Research Project along with a Journal article and Poster, portfolio preparation (including PDP, reflective accounts, case studies, clinical competency logs (students' self-assessment, along with supervisors' assessments), clinical learning records, clinical case-based exercises, additional reading, seminars and classes etc.).
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C. Practical skills On completion of the course the successful student will be able to: C1. Competently utilise clinical reasoning skills and diagnostic skills (verbal and non-verbal) necessary for the clinical practice of Chinese herbal medicine. C2. Demonstrate competency in skilled clinical practice based on critical reflection and the application of detailed knowledge as a contemporary herbal practitioner working within the context of the traditional philosophical framework of Oriental medicine. C3. Design effective individualised herbal formulae, responding to the unique configuration of each case and making appropriate modifications as the presentation changes during the course of treatment. C4. Practise within the boundaries set by relevant professional bodies and legal frameworks. C5. Develop strategies for environmentally sustainable practice, based on a critical awareness of conservation issues in relation to the materia medica.	Teaching/learning methods Students learn practical skills through: Workshop seminars, practical skills teaching, experiential learning, group work, teaching clinics, discussions, keynote lectures, seminars, formative assessment. Assessment Method Students' practical skills are assessed by: Competency assessments (students' self-assessment, along with supervisors' assessments), reflective accounts, portfolio (including PDP plan, clinic competence logs, supervisors' assessments, additional reading, log of additional seminars and classes etc.), clinical case learning records, clinic worksheets and clinic case-taking exercises.
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D. Graduate Skills On completion of this course the successful student will be able to: D1. Practise CHM as an autonomous practitioner, extending their scope of practice within their professional boundaries and functioning safely and effectively as a member of a professional community. D2. Practise in the best interests of patients, with awareness of ethical dilemmas and ability to formulate solutions to them, and working in compliance with the law and professional codes. D3. Guide their own academic and professional development, drawing on the capacity to critically reflect on their own learning and a conscious recognition of their own purpose and personal style. D4. Develop critical self-awareness and strategies for self-maintenance by pro-actively reflecting on and learning from experience. D5. Research and write autonomously, working with a range of theoretical perspectives and clinical interpretations, evaluating and synthesising information and ideas, and creating responses to problems that expand or re-define existing knowledge. D6. Engage in critical debate employing self-reflection and criticality of understanding. D7. Deploy a broad range of other transferable skills developed during the course including team working, problem solving, presentation skills, communication skills and IT skills.	Teaching/learning methods Students acquire graduate skills through: Key lectures, group work, discussions, clinical observation and practice, case study and problem-solving exercises, seminars, presentations, discussions, e- learning sessions, directed home-study, self-directed study. Assessment method Students' graduate skills are assessed by: Reflective accounts, portfolio (including reflective journal, PDP plan and tracker, clinic competence logs, self-assessment of competencies along with supervisors' assessments, CPD plan, additional reading, log of additional seminars and classes etc., records of achievements), assignments, presentation, examinations, case histories, essays, research proposal, write up of a Research Project along with a Journal article and Poster.
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12. Course structure

12. 1 Overall structure of the course

YEAR One

NCA7100 – Herbs and Formulae (yearlong) 20 credits

NCA7101 – Chinese Herbal medicine in Context (yearlong) 20 credits

NCA7102 – Herbs Clinic 1 (yearlong) 20 credits

At this point students may exit with a Post-Graduate Certificate (PGCert) in Chinese Herb Studies.

YEAR Two

NCA7103 – Managing Diseases & Conditions (yearlong) 40 credits

NCA7104 – Herbs Clinic 2 (yearlong) 20 credits

At this point Post-Graduate Diploma students will complete their course and MSc students may exit with a PGDip in Chinese Herbal Medicine. All students will have arrived at the point where the requirements of the EHTPA, the professional accrediting body, have been met, and all students will receive the PGDip in Chinese Herbal Medicine as an intermediate award.

YEAR Three

NCA7105 – Research Project (yearlong) 60 credits

Typically it will take 2 years to qualify to practise Chinese herbal medicine and 3 years to complete the Masters, but this can sometimes be extended.

12.2 Levels and Modules		
Level 7		
COMPULSORY	OPTIONAL	PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS
Students must take all of the following: NCA7100 – Herbs & Formulae NCA7101 – Chinese Herbal Medicine in Context NCA7102 – Herbs Clinic 1 NCA7103 – Managing Diseases & Conditions NCA7104 – Herbs Clinic 2 NCA7105 – Research Project	There are no optional modules.	Students must pass all modules with a minimum passmark of 50%. For NCA7100 an overall passmark for the module is required. For all other modules, all assessment items within each module must be passed individually.

12.3 Non-compensatable modules	
Module level	Module code
7	NCA7103 NCA7104 NCA7105

13. A curriculum map relating to learning outcomes for modules

See curriculum map below

14. Information about assessment regulations

As a general rule practical skills are not graded, but are assessed as Pass / Fail, as emphasis is on ensuring competence at a basic level of safety and effectiveness. Although this work is not given graded marks, your feedback will identify if you have performed skills particularly well in the eyes of the marker(s) and moderator(s). This also applies to observation assessments.

All written work, as it easily lends itself to grading, will attract a percentage mark

Average Percentage Mark in Taught Component	Mark for Dissertation	Award
70-100	70 or above	Distinction
60-69.99	60 or above	Merit
50-59.99	50 or above	Pass
Less than 50	Less than 50	Fail
Incomplete with good cause	Incomplete with good cause	Deferred

Post-Graduate Diploma in Chinese Herbal Medicine
Requires 120 credits including a minimum of 100 at Level 7

Final Award:

Master of Science in Chinese Herbal Medicine
Requires 180 credits including a minimum of 160 at Level 7

15. Placement opportunities, requirements and support (if applicable)

Students are expected to undertake 29 days of clinical work, as detailed in the Clinic Handbook.

16. Future careers (if applicable)

Upon successful completion of the Post-graduate Diploma in Chinese Herbal Medicine you are eligible to apply for membership of the Register of Herbal Medicine, and once accepted you can then go on to practise Chinese herbal medicine professionally.

As a registered practitioner you are able to progress to further postgraduate studies for practitioners of Chinese herbal medicine, and attend professional practitioner seminars offered by the Northern College of Acupuncture and other teaching institutes.

Upon successful completion of the MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine you will also be eligible to apply to continue your Chinese herbal medicine research studies to attain a PhD through other institutions.

17. Particular support for learning (if applicable)

Learning Support Tutors

These tutors are available to provide one-to-one support to students on request to the Registrar.

18. HECoS code (or other relevant coding system)	100237
19. Relevant QAA subject benchmark group(s)	n/a

20. Reference points

European Herbal and Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association (EHTPA) – Core Curriculum
 Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine – Codes of Practice and Ethics
 HSU Academic Quality Framework
 QAA FHEQ Guidelines
 QAA Quality Code

21. Other Information

NCA website www.nca.ac.uk

NCA E-Learning website <http://www.elearnwithnca.co.uk>

RCHM website www.rchm.co.uk/

European Herbal and Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association website
<http://ehtpa.eu/>

Please note course specifications provide a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information about the course can be found in the student course handbook and the HSU Regulations.

11.1 Curriculum map for MSc/PGDip in Chinese Herbal Medicine

This section shows the highest level at which course outcomes are to be achieved by all graduates, and maps course learning outcomes against the modules in which they are assessed.

11.2 Course learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding		Practical Skills	
A1	Apply critical understanding of herbs and formulae to work confidently with the complexity and multiplicity of Chinese medicine's patterns and frameworks	C1	Competently utilise clinical reasoning skills and diagnostic skills (verbal and non-verbal) necessary for the clinical practice of Chinese herbal medicine.
A2	Make appropriate critical judgements and formulate safe and effective CHM treatments, integrating their application of the fundamental concepts of Chinese medicine with their theoretical and clinical knowledge	C2	Demonstrate competency in skilled clinical practice based on critical reflection and the application of detailed knowledge as a contemporary herbal practitioner working within the context of the traditional philosophical framework of Oriental medicine
A3	Critically evaluate risks and benefits of treatment with CHM, critiquing evidence and applying principles of pharmacology, pharmacognosy and toxicology to questions of efficacy, quality assurance and safe practice.	C3	Design effective individualized herbal formulae, responding to the unique configuration of each case and making appropriate modifications as the presentation changes during the course of the treatment.
A4	Critically appraise a range of research methodologies relevant to CHM, and develop systematic knowledge and understanding of own research area.	C4	Practise within the boundaries set by relevant professional bodies and legal frameworks.
		C5	Develop strategies for environmentally sustainable practice, based on a critical awareness of conservation issues relating to the materia medica.
Cognitive Skills		Graduate Skills	
B1	Extract, critically evaluate and synthesise information from relevant modern and traditional literature to contribute to academic and research activity and inform and improve clinical practice.	D1	Practise CHM as an autonomous practitioner, extending their scope of practice within their professional boundaries and functioning safely and effectively as a member of a professional community.
B2	Work confidently with complexity, contradiction and gaps in the knowledge base and its clinical application, generating new interpretations and responses, and debating and evaluating a range of perspectives.	D2	Practise in the best interests of patients, with awareness of ethical dilemmas and ability to formulate solutions to them and working in compliance with the law and professional codes.
B3	Formulate sophisticated differential diagnoses based upon a range of models from Oriental medicine theory and design effective, creative and elegant herbal treatment strategies.	D3	Guide their own academic and professional development, drawing on the capacity to critically reflect on their own learning and a conscious recognition of their own purpose and personal style.

B4	Critically reflect on holistic pattern-based thinking and linear thinking, making and debating the evaluation of one paradigm from the perspective of a different paradigm.	D4	Develop critical self-awareness and strategies for self-maintenance by pro-actively reflecting on and learning from experience.
		D5	Research and write autonomously, working with a range of theoretical perspectives and clinical interpretations, evaluating and synthesising information and ideas, and creating responses to problems that expand or redefine existing knowledge.
		D6	Engage in critical debate employing self-reflection and criticality of understanding.
		D7	Deploy a broad range of other transferable skills developed during the course including team working, problem solving, presentation skills, communication skills and IT skills.

Course outcomes																			
A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7
Highest level achieved by all graduates																			
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7

Module Title	Module Code by Level	Course outcomes																										
		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	
Herbs Clinic 1	NCA7102	☐	☐	☐					☐	☐	☐				☐	☐	☐	☐			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Herbs & Formulae	NCA7100	☐	☐						☐	☐	☐	☐					☐		☐				☐		☐	☐	☐	
Chinese Herbal Medicine in Context	NCA7101	☐	☐	☐	☐				☐	☐		☐						☐	☐		☐	☐	☐		☐	☐	☐	
Managing Diseases & Conditions	NCA7103	☐	☐	☐	☐				☐	☐	☐	☐			☐		☐	☐	☐		☐	☐	☐		☐	☐	☐	
Herbs Clinic 2	NCA7104	☐	☐	☐					☐	☐	☐				☐	☐	☐	☐			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Research Project	NCA7105				☐				☐	☐		☐				☐	☐	☐	☐			☐		☐		☐	☐	