

Northern College of Acupuncture

College Annual Report for 2022-2023

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1 Executive Summary

1) The 2022 intake of students was of:

- 37 for the BSc in Acupuncture
- 12 for the MSc/PGDip in Nutrition Science and Practice

We did not offer our online MScs in Advanced Oriental Medicine (Research and Practice); Advanced Complementary Medicine (Research and Practice); and Advanced Nutrition (Research and Practice), which failed to recruit sufficient students in 2021. We are reviewing our postgraduate provision and aiming to launch new courses.

2) Twenty students graduated in 2023 with the BSc in Acupuncture, four of these with first class honours. Five students graduated with the MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice, one with distinction. Two students graduated with the MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine, one with distinction, and three students graduated with the PGDip in Chinese Herbal Medicine. One student graduated with the MSc in Advanced Nutrition (Research and Practice).

3) Rates of students withdrawing, suspending study, transferring to part-time study or splitting one year of modules over two years continued to run at a much higher rate than prior to the Covid pandemic. Causes stated by students were primarily financial and health-related. This was a clear effect of the combination of the cost of living crisis and the longer term health effects following the Covid-19 pandemic.

4) This year teaching and learning returned to relative normality in the wake of the pandemic. Some classes in acupuncture and nutrition remained online, and the herbs course continued to run as a mostly online course. The acupuncture clinic is operating in pre-pandemic form, the nutrition clinic now offers clients a choice of face to face or online appointments, and the herbs clinic now operates entirely online.

5) We continued our academic enhancement activities, including work on College-wide enhancement themes, and we began work on developing options for new courses.

6) In the National Student Survey we achieved scores that were above the HE healthcare sector average for 16 out of the 26 individual questions. In the Teaching Excellence Framework we achieved a bronze overall, comprising a silver for the student experience and bronze for student outcomes.

7) Membership of our online Practitioner Hub continued to grow. The Hub continued to provide an online community for our alumni and other practitioners, with CPD courses and the option to join online supervision groups. This year the Hub began to offer in-person CPD courses to complement the online courses, and we developed a one year online CPD course in Chinese Medicine Nutrition, which recruited 21 students for a start in October 2023. The Hub also ran a very well received NCA weekend conference in York.

8) Our teaching clinics continued to offer a high quality professional service at much reduced rates, both to the local community and, in the case of the online clinics, also to people further afield. Patient surveys and feedback generally demonstrate a high level of satisfaction.

9) We continued to develop our research activity, with a particular focus on the first pilot stage of a major study of acupuncture and nutrition for atrial fibrillation.

10) College staff continued to contribute to the work of our professional bodies and the HE sector in a variety of ways.

11) Staff development activity and research and scholarship activity continued, with some teaching staff engaging in high levels of research and scholarship activity.

12) We report on 3 publications and 3 conference presentations by MSc alumni.

13) Our validating partnership with the University College of Osteopathy (UCO) continued into its third year, enabling our students to continue to access student loans and providing a supportive partnership with an HE provider that teaches cognate subject areas and understands the particular challenges for small specialist providers.

14) We reviewed our overall strategy and identified opportunities for development of new courses.

15) We had a surplus of £10,031 in 2022-23, following on from 2021-22 when we had a deficit of £55,391. Our intake of new students in 2022 was reasonable considering the financial uncertainties caused by the current cost of living crisis, but numbers were lower overall. In addition, we again experienced higher than expected rates of students withdrawing, interrupting study, transferring to part-time study or spreading one year of study over two years. Our analysis of this shows that finance and health were the primary causes of student drop out. However, our expenditure was well controlled and the final outcome was a surplus.

16) Although we are taking steps to further improve our already well received student support, our budgeting for 2023-24 continues to make more pessimistic assumptions about students withdrawing, interrupting studies, transferring to part-time study and spreading their studies over longer time periods. Our careful advance planning has meant that we have been able to function effectively through first the pandemic and then the cost of living crisis, but the effect on the lives of our mature student population continues to impact on us. We are undertaking detailed planning for new income generation and this combined with our usual adaptability will enable us to continue to provide our educational and clinical services while continuing to invest prudently in staff, activities and projects which are expected to benefit our future income, and which will further advance our charitable objectives. In the meantime, with a small surplus in 22-23 we have been able to protect our minimum reserves, enabling us to face any future uncertainties with confidence, and protecting the overall financial health of the College.

17) Our overall strategic aims for 2023-2026 are:

1. To advance the subject areas and professions in our areas of interest, grow their professionalisation and research base to promote acceptance of our disciplines for the wider public good.

2. To provide an inclusive, supportive, high quality, research informed and stimulating learning environment for the diversity of our student population.
3. To achieve a stable and sustainable position for the College within the higher education sector.

In support of these aims, our priorities are:

1. We will enhance our approach to teaching, learning and student support which engages students and enables their learning and personal growth for their future success.
2. We will strengthen our endeavours to underpin subject areas and educational activities with research, by contributing to and steering research initiatives which promote the understanding of our disciplines and evaluate their efficacy, and by developing relevant collaborations in both education and research.
3. We will create opportunities for the passion and enthusiasm of our staff to emerge, by continuing and strengthening our commitment to ongoing staff development which supports their professional development, encourages them to work at the College, and enhances students' learning experience.
4. We will create staged and sustainable growth for our educational provision and will review our identity to ensure it is fit for the future.
5. We will continue to engage with regulatory developments in UK higher education, working with professional and statutory regulatory bodies, pursuing our own degree awarding powers, and achieving a change in our Office for Students status to fee cap provider.
6. We will develop our IT infrastructure, ensuring that it meets the needs of all aspects of the College's activity.

We have identified several opportunities to develop new courses, which are expected to contribute to increased income from 2024.

2 Preface: The Purpose of the College Annual Report

This report is agreed by the College's Board of Directors / Trustees at their Annual General Meeting. It then fulfils the following functions:

1. It is made available to the College's stakeholders: staff, students, and patients.
2. It is made available to the public by publication on our website.
3. It is submitted to the Charity Commission, for whom it addresses their requirement for an annual report.
4. It is submitted to our University/University College partners, for whom it addresses their requirement for a Resources Statement and Plan.
5. It is submitted to the Accreditation Committee of the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board, for whom it addresses their requirement for an annual resource report.
6. It is submitted to the Nutritional Therapy Education Commission, for whom it addresses their requirement for an annual resource report.
7. It is submitted to the Accreditation Board of the European Herbal and Traditional Medicine Practitioners' Association, for whom it addresses their requirement for an annual review report.

The College's Financial Statements are submitted to Companies House annually. They include the executive summary from this report.

The College's financial year runs from 1st July to 30th June. Those parts of this report which relate to academic matters apply to the academic year, which is taken to run from 1st August to 31st July.

3 Preface: The Requirements of the Professional Accrediting Bodies

3.1 *British Acupuncture Accreditation Board*

This report corresponds to the requirement for an annual resource report, which is required to include the following:

1. An account of actual expenditure deployed by the institution or faculty during the previous year to support student learning, e.g. resources spent on library, student IT access, classroom or clinic equipment, etc.; *Sections 10, 13 and Appendix A*
2. Detailed financial statement; *Section 10 and Appendix A*
3. Details of any current or future expenditure plans; A commentary on any significant financial problems faced by the institution and / or course, and how these are being addressed; *Sections 6, 8, 10*
4. Details of any changes that have taken place or are planned to take place in the staffing of the course, including the CVs of new staff; *Section 11 and individual Course Annual Monitoring Reports*
5. Details of any changes or planned changes in the physical location of the course; *Section 13*
6. Details of any changes or planned changes in the clinical facilities available to staff or students or to the general public as patients; *Section 13*
7. Details of any changes or planned changes in any other facilities and resources available to staff, students or patients; *Section 13*

3.2 *European Herbal and Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association*

This report corresponds to the requirement for an annual resource report, which is required to include the following:

1. Changes to institutional structure, personnel and roles; *Sections 5 and 11*
2. Examples of staff development undertaken by academic and clinical staff; *Section 12*
3. Confirmation from the named correspondent that the course continues to be viable and that resources are available to underpin the continuation of the course for current and future student intakes; *Section 10 and Appendix A*

3.3 Nutritional Therapy Education Commission

This report corresponds to the requirement for an annual resource report, which is required to include the following:

1. A commentary on any significant financial problems faced by the institution and/or course and how these are being addressed, along with details of any current or future expenditure plans. *Section 10.*
2. Details of any current or future expenditure plans; A commentary on any significant financial problems faced by the institution and / or course, and how these are being addressed; *Sections 8, 10.*
3. Details of any changes that have taken place or are planned to take place in the staffing of the course, including the CVs of new staff; *Section 11 and individual Course Reports*
4. Details of any changes or planned changes in the physical location of the course; *Section 13*
5. Details of any changes or planned changes in the clinical facilities available to staff or students or to the general public as patients; *Section 13*
6. Details of any changes or planned changes in any other facilities and resources available to staff, students or patients. *Section 13*
7. An account of actual expenditure deployed by the institution or faculty during the previous year to support student learning, e.g. resources spent on library, student IT access, classroom or clinic equipment, etc.; *Sections 6, 10, and Appendix A.*
8. Detailed financial statement and any related reports, in keeping with Essential Requirement 11; *Section 10 and Appendix A*

4 The College's Philosophy, Aims and Charitable Objectives

We aim to be a leading and pioneering establishment of educational excellence in the fields of traditional Chinese and Oriental medicine (acupuncture, herbal medicine and tuina massage) and nutrition, with a reputation for significant research activity.

Charitable objectives

Our charitable objectives are:

- To provide education and promote high standards of practice in the science and art of acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine and nutrition for the protection and benefit of the public, to be available to any suitably qualified person regardless of colour, class, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability provided such disability is compatible with the provision of safe and effective treatment;
- To provide for, promote and engage in investigation and research into the science and art of acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine and nutrition and to disseminate the results of research;
- To encourage the progress of and to improve standards of education and practice in acupuncture, Chinese medicine and nutrition by providing post-graduate education for practitioners;
- To provide education in and treatment with acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine, nutrition and other complementary therapies at preferential charges for members of the public regardless of race, class, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability where members of the public would otherwise be deprived of education and/or treatment by reason of financial hardship.

Values

We aim to be a person-centred, progressive, sustainable community embodying integrity and quality.

Person-centred

Compassion and respect at the heart of everything we do

Buzzwords: Safe; Nurturing; Diverse; Mutual respect and responsibility; Reaching full potential

Quality

A centre of professional, clinical, educational and research excellence

Buzzwords: Effectiveness; Purpose; Standards

Progressive

Striving to move forward and open to creative change, respecting traditional and modern approaches

Buzzwords: Responsive; Listening; Adaptable; Resilient; Innovative; Curious; Playful; Exploring

Sustainable

Growing our future in a reflective, sustainable way: environmentally, clinically and financially

Buzzwords: For our planet, people, professions; Continuity

Community

Working with common goals and values, connected to wider communities

Buzzwords: Collaboration and connectedness; Strengthening connections; Supportive; Self-critical; Vibrant

Integrity

Creating an open, honest, ethical and reflective environment

Buzzwords: Academic rigour; Self-development; Awareness

We approach our work with:

- Encouragement for everyone to develop their own style of practice, drawing on a diverse repertoire of approaches and techniques.
- A combination of intellectual rigour and critical thinking with compassion, skill and the broad development of the practitioner.
- Mutual respect among all at the College.

We believe that:

- Chinese medicine and nutrition have the potential to heal and transform at all levels of body and mind.
- Students are our future and the future of the profession. They are at the centre of our work.
- The education of students and practitioners is a holistic activity, involving values, spirit, mind and body.
- Open-minded investigation and research by practitioners are essential to the future vitality of the traditions of Chinese medicine and nutrition.
- Learning is a life-long activity - we aim to foster an ethos of reflective and continuous professional development.

We serve students, staff, practitioners, patients and clients, and ultimately the general public, by providing an environment and ethos that promotes the study and practice of acupuncture, Chinese medicine and nutrition. To achieve this we:

- Set high standards for clinical, academic and professional excellence, with robust quality assurance and strong academic support and pastoral care.
- Provide regular formative feedback to students and staff to enable continuing development and the confidence to practise in an effective, professional and reflective way.

5 Institutional Structure and Policy

5.1 Nature of the charity

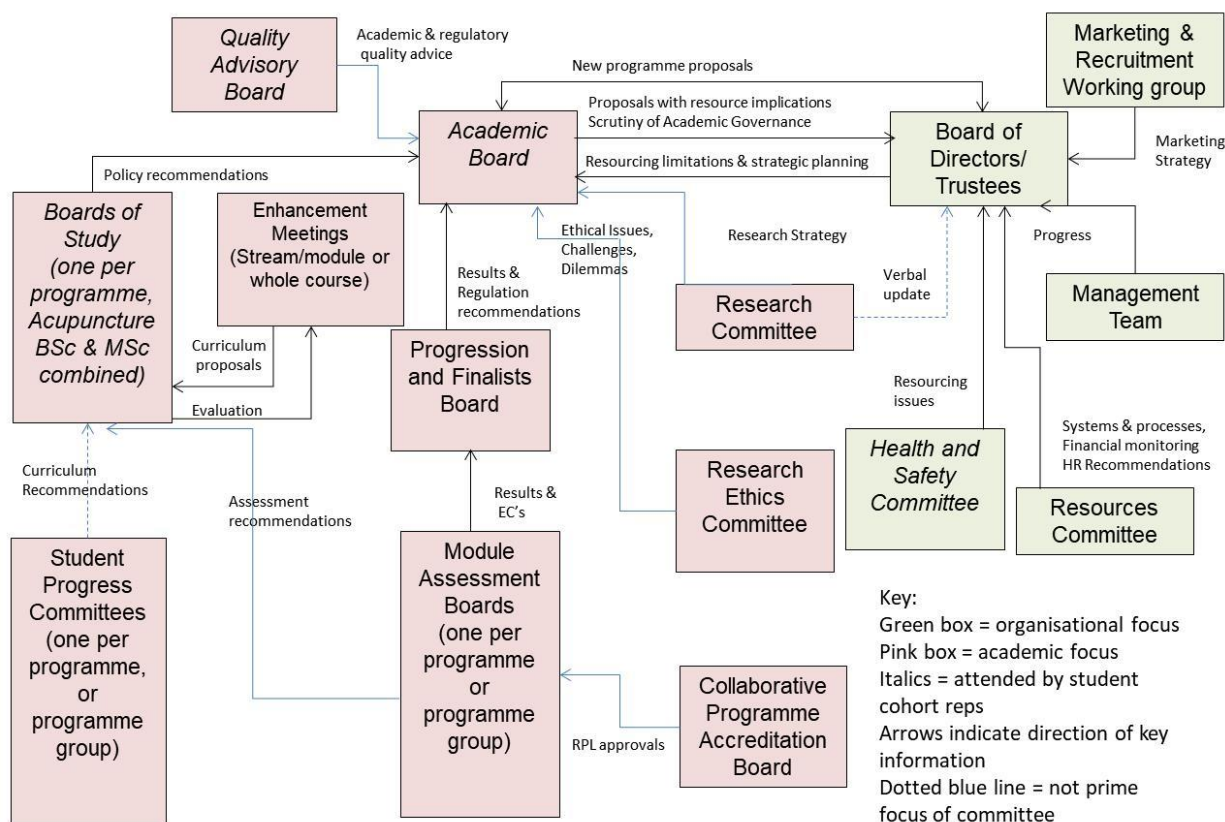
The College's governing document is its memorandum and articles of association. It is a limited company (2400056) and a registered charity (1081184).

The College is registered by the Office for Students (OfS), which is the regulatory body for Higher Education (HE) in England, established by Act of Parliament. All registered HE providers are regulated by the OfS and must meet a set of regulatory requirements. Registration confers access to student support funding for our students. Our provider number is 10004740.

The College's trustees are also its directors. The executive officer is the Principal, Richard Blackwell.

5.2 Organisational structure – boards and committees

The relationships between the boards and committees of the Northern College of Acupuncture can be illustrated as follows:



Overall responsibility for governance rests with the Board of Directors/Trustees, while the Academic Board is responsible for all decisions on academic policy.

This structure and the membership of our Boards and Committees ensure that both College staff and students have substantial input into our decision-making processes. The Academic Board, Boards of Study and Health & Safety Committee all have student representatives. The Board of Directors and Ethics Committee have public interest representatives. The Academic Board is advised by experienced external academics.

All formal meetings have agendas and are minuted. Some informal enhancement or management meetings are recorded with simple action points.

5.3 *The Foundation for Research into Traditional Chinese Medicine*

The Foundation for Research into Traditional Chinese Medicine (FRTCM) is the research wing of the College. The Foundation was originally established as a separate charity and later incorporated into the College (in 2011), which by that time was itself a charity. The Foundation brought with it a small fund which is used to support research work by students which has the potential to lead to publication.

The FRTCM undertook two key studies on the safety of acupuncture (MacPherson et al 2001; MacPherson et al 2004), following which the FRTCM collaborated with the College's teaching clinic and Sheffield University on a large pragmatic controlled trial into the provision of an acupuncture service for back pain. This was at that time the UK's largest ever research study into acupuncture, with major funding from the Department of Health. Patients were followed up for two years after treatment and the results of the trial were published in the British Medical Journal (Thomas et al, 2006; Ratcliffe et al, 2006). This research means that acupuncture is now one of the best evidenced interventions for back pain.

Since the back pain trial the FRTCM has been involved in collaboration with the acupuncture research effort at the University of York. This work was led by former College Principal and founder, the late Hugh MacPherson, who more recently was Chair of the Board of Trustees/Directors of the College and Professor of Acupuncture Research at the University of York. His work led to a wide range of publications including research into acupuncture for irritable bowel syndrome (MacPherson et al, 2012) and osteo-arthritis of the knee (e.g. Corbett et al, 2013), and MRI studies of the brain's response to acupuncture (e.g. Asghar et al, 2012). An important meta-analysis of the specific effects of acupuncture combined 29 high quality trials of acupuncture for painful conditions in a single database of 18,000 patients and concluded that "significant differences between true and sham acupuncture indicate that acupuncture is more than a placebo" (Vickers et al 2012 and Vickers et al 2018). A major recent project explored the benefits of an acupuncture service or a counselling service for patients with moderate to severe depression (MacPherson et al, 2013), and another published trial explored the benefits of acupuncture or Alexander lessons for chronic neck pain (MacPherson et al., 2015). (For an interview summarising the findings of the research mentioned above [here](#)).

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5.4 The Board of Directors / Trustees

Helen Thomas (Chair)

Helen is a freelance education consultant with over 25 years' experience in higher education. She has extensive experience in quality management and enhancement, professional standards in teaching and learning, and accreditation and validation processes.

Nicholas Haines

Nick was co-founder of the College. He is an entrepreneur, international speaker, author, strategist, teacher in Chinese energetics, the creator of the Vitality Test and co-founder of the Five Institute, and a Kindness Ambassador. He has past experience as an acupuncturist and owner of a complementary therapies clinic.

David Jay

David is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and a former Company Accountant, Financial Director and small business owner.

Graham Webb

Graham runs a marketing sales and management training business. He was previously a Senior Lecturer and Manager in both HE and FE. He has worked in IT and at BBC TV and radio and has extensive marketing experience in commercial settings. He is also a Director/Trustee of The Educational Trust and member of the Academic Advisory panel of a Dubai university.

Kate Wicklow

Kate is an experienced member of the HE policy community with extensive experience with a variety of providers and a focus on the experience, needs and rights of students. She is currently a Policy Manager for GuildHE and a reviewer for the QAA. She is also a trustee of a London university's student union.

Eric Liu

Eric has extensive commercial experience in China and the UK, including negotiation, financial modelling, market research and business strategy. He is currently a Business Associate at a Boutique Healthcare Corporate Advisory Firm.

Harriet Lansdown

Harriet is an acupuncturist who has been extensively involved in acupuncture research and acupuncture education in the HE sector, as a teacher, course leader, external examiner and educational consultant. Most recently, she was lead accreditation officer for the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board.

Tiago Horta Reis da Silva

Tiago is a registered nurse and lecturer in Nursing Education at Kings College London, and a practitioner and teacher of traditional Chinese medicine.

Board meetings are also attended by the Principal. Other members of the management team attend for relevant agenda items as appropriate.

Advisor to the Board: Mark Tempest

Mark is a lawyer, mediator and business leader. His legal speciality is in the field of civil litigation and dispute resolution, he is at the forefront of promoting mediation in favour of going to court, and he has held senior management positions in several leading law firms.

Changes to the Board: during 2022-23 John Galloway resigned from the Board, and Harriet Lansdown and Tiago da Silva joined.

5.5 Relationship with other organisations

We are an independent College operating in the Higher Education sector.

We are a member of Guild HE, which is an officially recognised representative body for UK Higher Education. Guild HE aims to be the advocate of choice for smaller and specialist higher education institutions and its members include universities, university colleges, further education colleges and specialist institutions from both the traditional and private (“not for profit” and “for profit”) sectors. Member institutions include some major providers in professional subject areas including art, design and media, music and the performing arts; agriculture and food; education; business and law, the built environment; health and sports.

In 2022-23 we provided the following courses:

- BSc (Hons) in Acupuncture
- MSc/PGDip in Nutrition Science and Practice
- MSc/PGDip in Chinese Herbal Medicine

All of these courses are validated by our validating partner, the University College of Osteopathy (UCO). This means that students who registered on courses commencing in 2022 will receive their degree from UCO on successful completion of their course, together with students from earlier intakes who chose to transfer their registration to UCO.

Recruitment to our three online MSc courses for practitioners was badly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and these courses were not offered in 2022. These courses were:

- MSc in Advanced Oriental Medicine (Research and Practice), MSc in Advanced Complementary Medicine (Research and Practice) and MSc in Advanced Nutrition (Research and Practice)

We are most grateful to our new partner, UCO, for their support and rigour. We are pleased to be partnered with an institution which teaches subjects cognate with our own, and which is a specialist smaller provider with an understanding of the challenges and rewards this status brings.

Students registered with our previous partner Middlesex University completed their studies in 2022 and they have all received their final award. A small number of online MSc students remain registered with London South Bank University. Their courses continued on “teach out” in 2022-23, meaning that these courses are not taking new students but have continued for

existing students, who will receive their award from this partner on successful completion of their course.

Formal quality assurance feedback is given at the Assessment Boards and Boards of Study, and our validating partner appoints external examiners for each of our courses. There is also a substantial process of regular reviews, including annual monitoring reports and periodic major reviews/re-validations. The College and our validating partner each appoint a link tutor to ensure a good flow of communications.

The College's acupuncture courses were re-accredited in 2019-20 by the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board (BAAB), following a successful re-accreditation review. Our next re-accreditation review will be in 2026. As a result of our accredited status, students who are awarded the BSc in Acupuncture are eligible to apply for membership of the professional body, the British Acupuncture Council (BAC).

Renewal of accreditation of our course in Chinese herbal medicine by the Accreditation Board of the European Herbal and Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association also took place successfully in 2019-20. Our next re-accreditation will be in 2025. As a result of our accredited status, students who successfully complete the Postgraduate Diploma in Chinese Herbal Medicine, or the taught part (first two years) of the Master of Science in Chinese Herbal Medicine, are eligible to apply for membership of the professional body, the Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine (RCHM).

Successful re-accreditation of our MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice by the Nutritional Therapy Education Commission was confirmed in 2022. Re-accreditation is normally valid for a period of three years. Accredited status means that students who successfully complete the Postgraduate Diploma Nutrition Science and Practice or the taught part (first two years) of the Master of Science in Nutrition Science and Practice, are eligible to apply for registration by the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC) and for membership of the professional body, the British Association for Nutrition and Lifestyle Medicine (BANT).

Each of the accrediting bodies receives our annual course monitoring reports. The BAAB and EHTPA conduct an annual review process and respond to our annual course monitoring reports. In addition, the BAAB, EHTPA and NTEC conduct substantial processes of major review/re-accreditation every 3 to 6 years.

The British Acupuncture Council and the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council are recognised by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care, which is accountable to parliament. The registers of these bodies are approved by the Authority as Accredited Voluntary Registers. This means that the public can be further assured that these bodies meet high standards in governance, standard-setting, education and training, management, complaints and information. Members of approved registers can use the Authority's kite-mark.

6 The Covid-19 Pandemic and Cost of Living Crisis

The academic year 2022-23 marked a return to relative normality in the wake of the pandemic. Students on the acupuncture and nutrition courses returned to face to face classes for the majority of the teaching, but we retained a hybrid model, with some classes continuing to be provided online. These classes are streamed live as synchronous online classes, distinct from the asynchronous online e-learning sessions which were already part of the curriculum prior to the pandemic. Clinical skills classes ran normally in College.

For the student intake in 2021 we offered the herbs course as a mostly online course, with just one weekend of attendance in College at the start of the first year, and one at the start of the second year. The rest of what was previously classroom teaching is now delivered via synchronous online classes, and the herbs teaching clinic runs entirely online. These changes enabled us to recruit a larger number of students to the herbs course, and we are pleased to report that this trend has continued, since the year end, with the 2023 intake.

Our nutrition teaching clinic now offers clients both in-person and online appointment options, with students and the clinic supervisor attending in College. The acupuncture teaching clinic ran normally throughout 2022-23, following Covid secure guidelines from the government and our professional body, the British Acupuncture Council, as necessary.

The easing of the restrictions introduced due to the pandemic was initially expected to benefit student recruitment in 2022, but the unanticipated war in Ukraine and its major effects on the cost of living was a significant setback. The economic shock and uncertainty impacted on recruitment, which continued to be lower than before the pandemic.

Understandably, the cost of living problems also meant that during 2022-2023 more students than usual chose to withdraw, suspend studies or spread one year of modules over two years. We offer the flexibility to enable students to suspend or spread out their studies, and this has been appreciated, but a significant proportion of these students do not manage to return. Our analysis of reasons for withdrawal or suspension of studies shows three major causes. The first is financial, the second is health problems (of the student themselves and/or of close family), and the third is personal reasons (which are often complicated by issues of finance and/or health, and include changes to working patterns).

We have learned that many of our students like to have some online classes. They value the saving of time and of travel and accommodation costs, and mostly they find their learning from the online classes can be at least as good as being present in the classroom. However, many of our students equally much like being together in class at the College, spending time with like-minded people. Hence our current hybrid model. We are exploring options for the future which could offer students more choice about the proportion of online versus in-person classes they prefer.

We continue to monitor the situation, and we are hopeful that the cost of living pressures will ease and the post-pandemic situation will stabilise, giving cause for optimism for the future.

7 Activities during the year in relation to our charitable objectives

7.1 EDUCATION

7.1.1 Admission of Students

Course	Number of Students Registered in 2019	Number of Students Registered in 2020	Number of Students Registered in 2021	Number of Students Registered in 2022
BSc (Hons) in Acupuncture	37	30	46	37
PG Diploma in Nutrition Science & Practice	n/a	n/a	1	0
MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice	22	20	13	12
PG Diploma in Chinese Herbal Medicine	n/a	n/a	4	n/a
MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine (2021) / Prof Dip in Chinese Herbal Medicine (2019)	8	n/a	11	n/a
MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine (1 year top-up) (2021)	n/a	n/a	3	n/a
MSc in Advanced Oriental Medicine (Research and Practice)	9	7	0	n/a
MSc in Advanced Complementary Medicine (Research and Practice)	1	2	0	n/a
MSc in Advanced Nutrition (Research and Practice)	6	2	0	n/a

Although recruitment to the BSc in Acupuncture continued to benefit from the availability of student loans for part-time students (which began in 2021), the impact of the cost of living crisis on recruitment to both acupuncture and nutrition is evident.

7.1.2 Graduation of Students

Undergraduate Course	Year	Total Passes	1st	Upper 2nd	Lower 2nd	3 rd
BSc (Hons) in Acupuncture	2018	28	4	18	6	0
	2019	19	3	10	4	1
	2020	25*	7	10	6	1
	2021	11	3	8	0	0
	2022	17**	3	10	4	0
	2023	20	4	10	6	0

*2020 one pass was an ordinary degree

**2022 two awards delayed due to the pandemic have been added to these figures, two students exited and one interrupted study.

Postgraduate Courses	Year	Total MSc Passes	MSc with distinction	MSc with merit	MSc pass	Exited with PGDip*	Exited with PGCert**
MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice (including MSc Nutritional Therapy Legacy Students)	2018	-	-	-	-	2	0
	2019	6	1	1	4	8	0
	2020	5	0	2	3	9	2
	2021	5	0	2	5	0	0
	2022	7	0	3	4	3	0
	2023	5	1	3	1	0	2
MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine	2018	1	-	-	1	-	0
	2019	-	-	-	-	2	0
	2020	2	0	1	1	2	0
	2021	1	-	-	1	9 Professional Diploma***	0
	2022	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	2023	2	1	1	0	0	1
MSc in Advanced Oriental Medicine (Research and Practice)	2018	-	-	-	-	2	0
	2019	4	-	-	4	1	0
	2020	6	1	1	4	0	0
	2021	1	0	1	0	1	2
	2022	2***	0	0	2	1	0
	2023	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
MSc in Advanced Complementary Medicine	2018	-	-	-	-	-	0
	2019	-	-	-	-	-	0
	2020	3	0	0	3	0	0
	2021	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	1	0	0	1	0	0

(Research and Practice)	2023	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
MSc in Advanced Nutrition (Research and Practice)	2018	-	-	-	-	-	0
	2019	-	-	-	-	1	0
	2020	0	0	0	0	1	1
	2021	0	0	1	0	1	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2023	1	0	0	1	0	0

Postgraduate Courses	Year	Total PGDip Passes	Exited with PGCert**
PG Diploma in Chinese Herbal Medicine	2022	n/a	0
	2023	3	n/a

*The PGDip is a qualification to practise for the Nutrition Science and Practice and Chinese Herbal Medicine courses.

**The PGCert is a certificate worth 60 credits at level 7.

***The MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine was no longer running but we did have a two-year Professional Diploma course running that started in October 2019 and ended in July 2021. We had one legacy student finish their MSc.

***2022 AOM one outstanding mark to be confirmed/added to these figures

7.1.3 National Student Survey

The NSS survey is sent to all final year undergraduate students who have completed at least one year on their final course (so this excludes RPL students and any who were in the first year of their split of year 3 – they will be surveyed next year). At NCA most of our courses are at postgraduate level so the NSS covers only our BSc in Acupuncture students.

Our **2023** response rate was:

NCA response rate	76%
Healthcare sector average response rate	71%

The overall satisfaction rate of the students with their course was:

Year	NCA	Healthcare sector average
2023	NSS no longer ask this question	
2022	100%	76.29%
2021	82.61%	75.41%
2020	86.36%	82.65%

Overall satisfaction of NCA students has always been consistently higher than the sector average, and we were delighted with our score of 100% in 2022. It is disappointing that the question about overall satisfaction, which always favoured small and specialist providers, has now been removed from the NSS.

In 2023 the NSS made some changes to the questions asked. We therefore show below the responses to the individual questions from the 2023 survey, but we are unable to show scores from the previous year for comparison:

Questions (Those highlighted yellow are the overall score for the section)	% of NCA students that agreed with the statement in 2023	% of healthcare sector students that agreed with the statement in 2023
Teaching on my course	85.94	84.88
1. How good are teaching staff at explaining things?	81.25	90.64
2. How often do teaching staff make the subject engaging?	81.25	80.48
3. How often is the course intellectually stimulating?	87.50	84.32

4. How often does your course challenge you to achieve your best work?	93.75	84.18
Learning opportunities	88.75	81.35
5. To what extent have you had the chance to explore ideas and concepts in depth?	87.50	82.43
6. How well does your course introduce subjects and skills in a way that builds on what you have already learned?	81.25	83.97
7. To what extent have you had the chance to bring together information and ideas from different topics?	93.75	82.68
8. To what extent does your course have the right balance of directed and independent study?	81.25	76.22
9. How well has your course developed your knowledge and skills that you think you will need for your future?	100.00	81.66
Assessment and feedback	85.00	77.78
10. How clear were the marking criteria used to assess your work?	93.75	75.76
11. How fair has the marking and assessment been on your course?	68.75	80.64
12. How well have assessments allowed you to demonstrate what you have learned?	75.00	80.90
13. How often have you received assessment feedback on time?	100.00	79.55
14. How often does feedback help you to improve your work?	87.50	72.22
Academic support	81.25	83.47
15. How easy was it to contact teaching staff when you needed to?	81.25	83.21
16. How well have teaching staff supported your learning?	81.25	83.79
Organisation and management	75.00	73.61
17. How well organised is your course?	68.75	72.58
18. How well were any changes to teaching on your course communicated?	81.25	74.59
Learning resources	81.25	86.22
19. How well have the IT resources and facilities supported your learning?	87.50	84.03
20. How well have the library resources (e.g. books, online services and learning spaces) supported your learning?	81.25	89.46
21. How easy is it to access subject specific resources (e.g. equipment, facilities, software) when you need them?	75.00	85.51
Student voice	85.42	71.89
22. To what extent do you get the right opportunities to give feedback on your course?	93.75	80.47
23. To what extent are students' opinions about the course valued by staff?	87.50	74.42

24. How clear is it that students' feedback on the course is acted on?	75.00	60.86
25. How well does the students' union (association or guild) represent students' academic interests?*	70.00	71.89
Mental wellbeing services	71.43	75.42
26. How well communicated was information about your university/college's mental wellbeing support services?	71.43	75.42
Freedom of Expression	93.75	85.87
27. During your studies, how free did you feel to express your ideas, opinions, and beliefs?	93.75	85.87

*NCA does not have a student union so question 25 should be disregarded.

NCA scores were higher than the sector average for 16 of the individual questions, out of 26. Those questions where we scored lower than the sector average provide helpful guidance to us on areas for improvement. Academic and mental wellbeing support particularly stand out, and these are already a key focus for improvement at NCA.

7.1.4 Teaching Excellence Framework

Though not obligatory for NCA as a small provider, we opted to participate in the Office for Students' Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). This is a national scheme run by the Office for Students (OfS) that "aims to encourage higher education providers to improve and deliver excellence in the areas that students care about the most: teaching, learning and achieving positive outcomes from their studies". As the OfS explains:

The TEF does this by assessing and rating universities and colleges for excellence above a set of minimum requirements for quality and standards.

Universities and colleges that take part in the TEF receive an overall rating as well as two underpinning ratings – one for the student experience and one for student outcomes.

The ratings reflect the extent to which a university or college delivers an excellent experience and outcomes for its mix of undergraduate students and across the range of its undergraduate courses and subjects. The ratings last for four years.

We achieved a rating of bronze overall, with silver for the student experience and bronze for student outcomes. The TEF panel report states that the panel "judged on the whole, the best fit to be Bronze as the student experience and student outcomes features are typically high quality with some very high quality features".

We are pleased with this outcome, particularly given our small size. For the next TEF in 2027 we aim to continue to provide a very high quality student experience, and to both gather more data on student outcomes and improve on our retention rates.

7.1.5 Registration with the Office for Students

We successfully maintained our registration with the statutory regulator for HE in England, the Office for Students, submitting reports as required.

Registration means that our students continue to be eligible to apply for undergraduate student loans and maintenance loans, and for postgraduate loans.

7.1.6 Statistical Submissions

We subscribe to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and supply them with a detailed annual statistical return describing our student population.

7.1.7 Graduate Outcomes Survey

We participated in the survey of graduate outcomes, which replaced the survey of destination of leavers from Higher Education (DHLE).

7.1.8 Academic Enhancement

We report on enhancement activities in relation to each of our courses in the annual Course Monitoring Reports for each course. In addition, the Academic Board works to identify overall themes for College-wide enhancement. Currently these are:

1. Improve help for students on academic writing and study skills.
2. Improve early identification and effective communication of student support needs.
3. Enhance suggested reading lists.
4. Improve student engagement with their studies.
5. Review student workload.
6. Review balance of online and in-person teaching.

These enhancement themes are recorded and monitored in our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). For each of these areas the Academic Board identifies specific actions which are documented and monitored in the QIP. Good progress is being made in each of these areas.

7.1.9 Student Support

We undertook work to improve our information sharing and pro-active response in relation to student support needs. We designed a new system for identifying needs and concerns, responding in a timely manner, tracking outcomes and sharing support information (with consent) with key staff.

7.1.10 Provision for CPD and Alumni – the Practitioner Hub

The Practitioner Hub was launched in early 2021. This review covers some of our achievements of 2022/2023 and looks at our aims for the next year as well as offering a short update on our staff team.

Our membership aims to:

1. Encourage community by providing a safe space for professional and personal growth. Monthly lectures with live question and answer sessions provide opportunities to engage in discussions with the community of practitioners. We aim to counter the professional isolation which is so common among the healing professions with a sense of connectedness and belonging.
2. Provide inspiring content. Each month the Hub provides an hour of content for members' Continuing Professional Development. These micro lectures are intended to inspire members' practice as well as helping to develop specific skill sets or focus on clinically relevant topics. The lectures are available to all members to watch live online or catch the recording afterwards in our archive.
3. Members can also choose to subscribe to online closed supervision groups, run by professional supervisors who are also practitioners within the field of practice (Acupuncture, Chinese Herbal Medicine, Nutrition). Attending a supervision group enables practitioners to explore issues which arise in their practice and feel supported with them. Issues which may be explored include building a practice, boundaries, payment, relationships with patients, and working to avoid burnout.

Membership of the Hub is currently 60 practitioners (45 last year) paying various amounts depending on membership level. The cost of running this service comes in around £600 per month including NCA staff time, external supervisors and speakers; we take in over £800 per month. In the next six months we are aiming to grow our membership to 75 people.

In-person Courses

We are continuing to encourage membership engagement and in 2022-23 we began to deliver more substantial CPD courses, both online and in-person, which are discounted for Hub members. These typically one or two day CPD events in 22-23 were:

- Hannah Pearn's Acupuncture for Natural Fertility course – a 2 day course at NCA – one testimonial: "I got more out of this weekend than any other fertility training I've done. Much clearer to understand and more practical and usable information delivered in an engaging manner." Hannah is returning to NCA in November 2023 to run another course on Acupuncture for supporting Assisted Conception.
- Master Tung's Acupuncture 3 part series (each one a day workshop) with Alex Humphries – part 3 was attended by 14 people and we have already received requests to run this series again – planned for 2025.

Hugh MacPherson Memorial Lecture

We continue to build our global connections through our annual online Hugh MacPherson Memorial lecture which currently has over 300 people on the mailing list who are spread widely around the world. This is also an opportunity to celebrate and support the field of acupuncture research as well as maintaining the NCA's place on the global stage.

Alumni

Our focus in the next year is to invite more alumni into the Practitioner Hub, we are just beginning the process of collating contact details for alumni so that this homecoming for acupuncturists can be well coordinated.

Chinese Medicine Nutrition Diploma

A key project during the year was the development and marketing of a longer CPD course for acupuncturists. This is an online one year diploma in Chinese Medicine Nutrition, drawing on expertise from our Chinese medicine (acupuncture and herbs) and nutrition faculty. The course starts in October 2023 and at the time of writing we have recruited 21 students, well exceeding our target of 10 people for our inaugural year. This high ticket offering is projected to bring in a surplus of £18,000.

Syllabus:

Term 1 - 13th Oct '23 - 15th Dec '23

13/10/23 Introductory session with Sally and Hannah

20/10/23 Reviewing energetics of foods & organ functions with David

27/10/23 Digestion from a contemporary nutrition perspective with Kirsten

03/11/23 Gut microbiome and blood sugar management with Kirsten

10/11/23 Digestion from a TCM perspective with David

17/11/23 Simple spleen nourishing foods cooking demo with Hayley

24/11/23 Menstrual cycle with Lindsay

01/12/23 Male and Female Fertility with Lindsay

08/12/23 Perimenopause, Menopause and healthy aging with Lindsay and Sally

15/12/23 Blood Nourishing foods cooking demo with Hayley

Term 2 - 12th Jan '24 - 15th Mar '24

12/01/24 Exploring dietary approaches with Sally and Hannah

19/01/24 Psychological perspectives of eating with David

26/01/24 Themed cooking demo with tutor TBC

02/02/24 Applied scope of practice with Sally and Hannah

09/02/24 Musculo-skeletal health with Kirsten

16/02/24 Shen health with David

23/02/24 Immunity and auto-immunity with Kirsten

01/03/24 Adverse reactions to foods with Hannah and Sally

08/03/24 Enhancing restricted diets with Hannah and Sally

15/03/24 Themed cooking demo with tutor TBC

Term 3 - 12th Apr '24 - 14th Jun '24

12/04/24 Perspectives on weight management with Lindsay

19/04/24 Skin health with Kirsten

26/04/24 Medicinal mushrooms with Hayley

03/05/24 Mushrooms cooking demo with Hayley
10/05/24 Environmental toxins and parasites with Lindsay
17/05/24 Food security & sustainability with Finola
24/05/24 Fermentation with Robin
31/05/24 Fermentation cooking demo with Robin
07/06/24 Cancer treatment support with Kirsten
14/06/24 Integrating Chinese Medicine Nutrition into your acupuncture practice with Hannah and Sally

NCA Conference 2023

This year the Hub organised a full NCA weekend conference, with the aim of providing an opportunity for Hub members and other practitioners to come together in person for inspiration and learning. We were pleased to achieve attendance of 100 practitioners, and delighted with their feedback which praised the conference as a friendly, meaningful and uplifting experience.

Programme:

Friday evening Hub members buffet at NCA

Saturday

10:00

Welcome - Hannah Swift

10:15-11:45

CONNECTION, SUPPORT AND BALANCE – HOW MENTORING CAN HELP

Cathy Chapman

12:15-13:00

LISTENING HANDS: USING THE HANDS AS AN EXTENSION OF THE HEART

Alex Humphries

13:00-14:00 Lunch (provided)

14:00-15:30

HOW HEART RATE VARIABILITY CONNECTS OUR CELLS TO THE UNIVERSE

Mel Hopper-Koppelman

16.00 - 17.15

EXPLORING THE HEART-MIND CONNECTION IN CANCER SURVIVORSHIP

Beverley De Valois

17:15 Wrap Up - Chris Buckley

Dinner - local restaurants recommended

19:00-21:30

PARTY

DJ Den + DJ Deadman

Sunday

Welcome - Sarah Simpson

10.15 - 11.45

HOW LONG INFECTIONS AFFECT THE HEART-PSYCHE-SPIRIT AXIS

Monica Wilde

12:15 – 13:30

THE USE OF ACUPUNCTURE IN CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY

Robin Sunley

13:30- 14:30 Lunch (provided)

14:30 – 16:00

CULTIVATING THE SHEN IN THE CHINESE NOURISHMENT OF LIFE TRADITION

Peter Deadman

16:00 Wrap Up - Richard Blackwell

Staff team update

Hannah Swift will continue to lead The Practitioner Hub in the next year, though her specific focus is on leading the Chinese Medicine Nutrition Diploma. To support the running of in-person events, Sarah Simpson has come on board - with her recent acupuncture degree and her past of events management she brings a wealth of ideas and experience. The Practitioner Hub is also administratively supported by Sofie Kitts who does our social media and Tom Laverick who organises and edits our video content. Marketing support from Denise Magson has been much appreciated and overviews with Richard Blackwell keep the whole thing rolling without too much overwhelm!

7.2 CLINICAL SERVICES

Three teaching clinics operate from the College: acupuncture, nutrition and Chinese herbal medicine. All clinics offer a high quality and professional service to the local community and beyond, with professional treatment at reduced rates. Patient surveys and feedback generally demonstrate a very high level of satisfaction including praise for the students, with occasional suggestions for improvement.

The acupuncture clinics run Monday to Saturday, with 7 different experienced acupuncture practitioners being supervisors. Recent feedback from the students on the quality of their experience in clinic has been very good. A multibed clinic runs on the Monday, with 2 supervisors and up to 16 patients being seen, and the main clinic has one supervisor and up to 7 patients attending per day. The reopening of Saturday clinics was driven by student need and is also popular with patients who work during the week. All acupuncture clinics remain busy with a small waiting list.

The acupuncture clinic space has seen massive improvements within the last year, including new flooring, updated lighting, and re-decoration. One treatment room is hired out 3 days a week to other practitioners which enables the College to gain income from a room that would otherwise be unused.

A new venture was started in January 2023 which is an external multibed clinic (York Community Acupuncture Clinic) to provide more access to quality low cost acupuncture. The aim is that this clinic builds in numbers and will be able to take acupuncture students for clinic days.

The herbs clinic continues to run completely online enabling patients to attend from all over the country, with two clinics per week and 8 patients seen in total per week. Patient numbers

are kept low to allow time for students to discuss, reflect and learn from each case. There is a waiting list for the herbs clinic, partly due to the summer break and waiting for new students to start and also because of the excellent reduced rates to access appointments.

The nutrition clinic remains a hybrid model where the supervisor and students are in College while clients can choose to attend in-person or online. Four clients per day can be seen. Numbers seen each day are again kept low for learning purposes.

During the year (1 Jul 22 – 30 Jun 23) the numbers of filled appointments were:

Acupuncture Main clinic = 1265

Acupuncture Multibed = 340

Herbs clinic = 316

Nutrition clinic = 104

The clinics provided 5.1% of our total income (2022: 5.2%), reflecting the return to more normal services and the high levels of demand.

Our teaching clinics make an invaluable contribution to the training of our students as practitioners, and they enable us to meet one of our charitable objectives by providing treatment to members of the public who would otherwise be deprived of treatment by reason of financial hardship.

7.3 RESEARCH

NCA Research Strategy

Our Research Strategy was reviewed and revised. It is published on our public-facing website, increasing the College's research profile and giving our research activities a visible target.

There is an ongoing issue for the College in that research, while a key part of our activities, does not represent a direct revenue stream and in fact (in revenue terms) operates only as a negative on the overall College balance sheet. While we actively market our research profile as part of our USPs within our subject areas and to that extent may consider research an indirect contributor to revenue streams, our status as an Approved (no fee cap)

Provider precludes us applying for many research grants. We therefore cannot easily attract the commercial and academic research revenue streams or public recognition for which government-financed universities are eligible; instead, for major research projects, we currently rely on collaborations with larger Universities. With this in mind, particularly at a time of financial vulnerability due to the cost of living crisis and uncertain levels of recruitment, we are focusing on the teaching of appropriate research skills for our pre-qualifying courses. This will protect our research objectives while continuing to build the skills base in our therapeutic

professions and enhancing student learning opportunities. In future years when revenue overall is not quite so pressured, we will expand our research activities at a College level again by introducing various initiatives including seeking to work with charities on small-scale feasibility projects. We are also continuing to explore our options for becoming an Approved (Fee Cap) Provider in future, making us eligible to apply for a wider range of grants.

Research Project Modules

The research project modules in the third year of the MSc courses ran for the fourth year. Students produce a mix of outputs including a reflective research diary, a poster and a journal article which forms the basis of a submission for publication soon after final marks are confirmed. This is gradually helping to increase NCA's publications profile.

Clinical Outcomes Research and Audit

Our Clinical Outcomes Research and Audit project (CORA) gathers clinical outcomes data across the College's teaching clinics using the Measure Yourself Medical Outcomes Profile (MYMOP) questionnaire. This is shared with the research organisation Meaningful Measures (which owns and administers MYMOP) as part of an aggregated dataset made available to researchers for investigation of the effectiveness of our therapies. We have continued for the second year using the MYMOP Digital Portal in our Acupuncture teaching clinic, and this year we also integrated it into our Nutrition and Chinese Herbal Medicine clinics. This will have multiple benefits, including improving the quality of data gathered, introducing students to a simple but effective NHS-approved tool which they may use in their own private clinics, and removing the arduous job of data sharing with Meaningful Measures at year-end.

NCA Research Showcase and Student Research Directory

Students who achieve a mark of ≥ 60 for their research project are supported to record their research as an online presentation, and these presentations are housed permanently on our Research Showcase on the nca.ac.uk public-facing website. This enhances students' learning opportunities post-graduation, establishes a public platform for them and their work, and increases the College's research profile. We place advertisements in key professional journals alerting colleagues to these presentations and providing links to view them. We are hopeful that this will prove an effective way of disseminating the valuable research undertaken by NCA staff and students.

We also maintain the Student Research Directory, a public-facing directory of our MSc students' pre- and post-submission research which is located on the nca.ac.uk website. This helps to establish a platform for our students' work, which they can build upon in the future, and increases the College's research profile. Interested readers can contact the College to be put in touch with the researchers.

Support for Publication

The Support for Publication (SfP) programme supports undergraduate and postgraduate students to publish the results of their research. The package includes support from a supervisor and the Research Ethics Committee, plus a small grant from the Foundation for Research into Traditional Chinese Medicine (for all students, not only those studying a form of TCM) to cover the costs of writing-up and/or peer review.

The annual Hugh MacPherson Memorial Lecture

The 2022 Hugh MacPherson Memorial Lecture, which is free of charge and online, was an outstanding success, with more than 100 attendees from a global audience attending to hear Drs Claudia Citkovitz and Lisa Conboy discussing complex adaptive systems and what they mean for research into complementary medicine.

Work with affiliated researchers

Work continued on Sessions of Acupuncture and Nutritional Therapy Evaluation for Atrial Fibrillation (Santé-AF), a small-scale randomised controlled trial. Santé-AF is the PhD project of our Research Director, carried out under the auspices of the Clinical Trials Unit at the University of York with the support of the NIHR Clinical Research Network. The trial has now finished data collection and is moving into data analysis and write-up. Several journal articles will result, including some valuable outputs which will benefit practitioners of acupuncture and nutritional therapy in working with atrial fibrillation; these will also result in some “masterclasses” offered to all NCA students, staff and graduates.

Research and practice-building

Stemming from the Support for Publication platform, our Research Director trialled an initiative with nutrition graduates to support them to use their MSc research to build their practice. This initiative combines entrepreneurial skills with marketing and publicity skills, based on students’ research and publications. We would like to develop this programme in future years to enfranchise NCA graduates from all courses.

7.4 Other Activities in Relation to our Objectives

7.4.1 Facilities Development

The College is responsible for the maintenance of the inside of the building and our Landlord, York Conservation Trust, is responsible for the outside of the building. Our Facilities Team ensure the building is kept in good condition, with dedicated building maintenance days each week and regular improvements are made to keep our equipment up-to-date. Statutory services are carried out on a reoccurring basis to ensure we’re complying with Health & Safety Regulations and matters are dealt with in a timely fashion. We completed a schedule of improvements to enhance our facilities this year. The focus this year was on upgrading the lighting on the back stairwell and basement teaching room, along with replacing the flooring in our Clinic rooms.

7.4.2 Marketing

We continued to implement our marketing strategy and to monitor the external environment. The marketing strategy is developed by the Marketing Manager with input from the Principal and the Recruitment and Marketing Working Group (which includes two of our trustees). It is approved annually by the Board of Trustees/Directors. The Board also receives regular marketing updates throughout the year.

Our good reputation and the relationship building aspect of our marketing work continue to be vital, and we are continuing to build our profile on social media.

7.4.3 IT

We have either updated or streamlined many of our IT systems and completed many projects during the 2022-23 academic year, including updates to computer hardware, teaching room equipment, websites, student database, application system and VLE. Later in this report we provide further detail on upgrades to teaching room equipment (Section 14.3.2), the Virtual Learning Environment (Section 14.4.3) and the student database (Section 14.4.4).

7.5 Staff Activities

We report here on the contributions College staff make to the work of our professional bodies and the HE sector, and on their scholarly and research activities:

Faculty member	Contributions to our professions and the HE sector – e.g. external examining, accreditation teams, committee membership etc.	Scholarly and research activities – publications including journal articles, involvement in research, development of clinical practice, presentations etc.
Amanda Gordon Acupuncture Course Director	Member of the Council of Heads of Acupuncture Courses	
Eileen Gibbon Herbs Course Director	Member of the Council of the Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine (RCHM) and represents the RCHM on the EHTPA Accreditation Board.	
Jane Jamieson Nutrition Course Director	Member of Open University Validation Panel for BSc Clinical Herbalism, Lincoln College	

<p>Lisa Snelling Online MScs Course Director</p>	<p>Fellow of the Shiatsu Society UK and contributor to the Shiatsu Society Board meetings on Research promotion and education of the practice and in educating students.</p> <p>Registered teacher of Shiatsu FwSS(T) and preparing to deliver programmes promoting the use of Shiatsu in mainstream body-based therapies such as physiotherapy, patient recovering from surgery, neurological atrophies such as ALS and MS and in supporting those receiving treatment for cancer.</p> <p>Peer review of publications in preparation on the topic of Shiatsu for specific health issues.</p> <p>Reviewer: European Journal of Integrative Medicine.</p> <p>Publication: Shiatsu for MS</p>	<p>Presentation of PhD research to the <i>Research Council from Complementary Medicine</i>, London, August 2023). Therapist Effects in Shiatsu for People with MS.</p> <p>Publications in Preparation</p> <p>Esmonde, L. Swainston, K. van Wersch, A. Exploring Therapist effect in CAM research using TriVi. For <i>Complementary Medicine Research</i></p> <p>Esmonde, L. Swainston, K. van Wersch, A. Quality of Life as an outcome measure for treating people with Multiple Sclerosis using Shiatsu. For <i>Journal of Evidence-Based Integrative Medicine</i> and</p> <p>Esmonde, L. Swainston, K. van Wersch, A. The importance of philosophy of thought in CAM research. For <i>Journal of Integrated Medicine</i></p>
<p>Ava Lorenc MSc Supervisor</p>	<p>External roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Associate Editor for European Journal for Integrative Medicine – Trustee and administrator for RCCM – Member of the scientific advisory board for the National Centre for Integrative Medicine – Reviewer for various journals 	<p>Scholarly and research activities</p> <p>Lorenc A, Rooshenas L; Conefrey C; Wade J; Farrar N; Mills N; Paramasivan S; Realpe Rojas A; Jepson M. Non-Covid-19 UK clinical trials and the Covid-19 pandemic: impact, challenges and possible solutions. <i>Trials</i> 2023 24, Article number: 424 (2023)</p> <p>Dretzke J, Lorenc A, Adriano A, Herd C, Mehanna H, Nankivell P, Moore DJ, the PETNECK team. (2023) Systematic review of patients' and healthcare professionals' views on patient-initiated follow-up in treated cancer patients. <i>Cancer Medicine</i> https://doi.org/10.1002/cam4.6243</p> <p>Horwood J, Pithara C, Lorenc A, Kesten J, Murphy M, Turner A, Farr M, Banks J, Redwood S, Lambert H, Donovan JL (2022) The experience of conducting collaborative and intensive pragmatic qualitative (CLIP-Q) research to support rapid public health and</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewer for a number of peer-reviewed journals • External examiner for PhD student at University of Technology Sydney 	<p>healthcare innovation. <i>Frontiers in Sociology</i> doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2022.970333</p> <p>Lorenc A, Greaves C, Duda J, Brett J, Matheson L, Fulton-Lieuw T, Secher D, Rhodes P, Ozakinci G, Nankivell P, Mehanna H, Jepson M, on behalf of the PETNECK2 Research Team. Exploring the views of patients' and their family about patient-initiated follow-up in head and neck cancer: a mixed methods study. <i>European Journal of Cancer Care</i> 2022 doi: 10.1111/ecc.136.41</p> <p>Lorenc A, Jepson M, Conefrey C, Wade J, Farrar N, Rooshenas L (2023) Conducting UK clinical trials during and post the Covid-19 pandemic: impact, challenges and solutions. PS9D-03, ICTMC 2022: 6th International Clinical Trials Methodology Conference https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7741866</p> <p>Contributor to 6th International Clinical Trials Methodology Conference 2022 Book of Abstracts</p> <p>Realpe A, Beasant L, Lorenc A, Douglas S, Kenny L, Rai D, Mills N (2023) Co-producing an RCT with autistic adults: lessons on trial design and conduct for engaging perceived hard-to-reach populations. PS3A-02, ICTMC 2022: 6th International Clinical Trials Methodology Conference https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7741866</p>
Maggie Thorpe MSc Supervisor	Research supervision for the BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy at the Institute for Optimum Nutrition (ION), partnered with University of Southampton	
Steve Woodley Online MScs Research Project Module Leader		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented a poster of my own research at the 70th Annual Congress of the Society for Medicinal Plant and Natural Product Research (GA) in Thessaloniki on 28-31st August 2022 • Delivered a talk on my research at the Pukka-Lipton Science event on 18th April 2023
David Hartmann MSc Supervisor, Module Leader		Scholarly research to prepare 29 online postgraduate presentations for four teaching institutions, two conferences, seven online platforms and two professional associations.

<p>Sandro Graca MSc Supervisor, Module Leader</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director at Evidence Based Acupuncture • Board of Directors of the Society for Acupuncture Research • Director of International Membership of the Obstetrical Acupuncture Association 	<p>PhD Scholarship at University of Wolverhampton (School of Health and Society, Faculty of Education, Health and Wellbeing, University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton WV1 1LY, United Kingdom)</p> <p>Publications in the last 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McDonald J, Graca S, Citkovitz C, Taylor-Swanson L. A Review of Key Research and Engagement in 2022. J Integr Complement Med. 2023;29(8):455-461. doi:10.1089/jicm.2023.0283 • Currently 4 manuscripts going through peer-review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Mapping the clinical practice of traditional, complementary, and integrative medicine in oncology in western countries: a multinational cross-sectional survey" - Matthias Huemer, Sandro Graca, Sarah Bitsche, Guenter Hofmann, Mike Armour, Martin Pichler. ○ "Assessing the role and impact of research in clinical practice among acupuncturists in western countries: a multinational cross-sectional survey" - Matthias Huemer, Sandro Graca, Sarah Bitsche, Guenter Hofmann, Mike Armour, Martin Pichler. ○ "Anti-obesity pharmacological agents for polycystic ovary syndrome: a systematic review and meta-analysis to inform the 2023 International Evidence-Based Guidelines" - Alyse Goldberg, Sandro Graca, Jing Liu, Vibhuti Rao, Selma Feldman Witchel, Alexia Pena, Rong Li, Aya Mousa, Chau Thien Tay, Loyal Pattuwage, Helena Teede, Bulent O. Yildiz, Carolyn Ee. ○ "Inositol for Polycystic Ovary Syndrome: a meta-analysis to inform the 2023 update of the International Evidence-Based PCOS Guidelines" - Victoria Fitz*, Sandro Graca*, Shruthi Mahalingaiah, Jing Liu, Lily Lai, Ali Butt, Mike Armour, Vibhuti Rao, Dhevaksha Naidoo, Alison Maunder, Guoyan Yang, Vaishnavi Vaddiparthi, Selma F. Witchel, Alexia Pena, Poli Mara Spritzer, Rong Li, Chau Tay, Aya Mousa, Helena Teede, Carolyn Ee. <p>Presentations:</p> <p>2 presentations at the 20th TAO Kongress (28-30 September, 2023 in Graz, Austria)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Acupuncture points for menstrual / pelvic pain and cancer pain – from research into clinical practice</i> • <i>The future is now! - Building your strong evidence-informed acupuncture practice</i>
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		<p>1 presentation at the ARRC Symposium & BAAC Annual Conference (15 to 17 September, 2023 in Staffordshire, UK)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>From the classics to the journals – and now the hospitals: building a strong evidence-informed and integrative practice of acupuncture</i> <p>2 presentations at the 6th Kongress der SMS: Chinesische Medizin im klinischen Alltag (8-10 September, 2023 in Tutzing, Bavaria, Germany).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Evidence based acupuncture – state of the art</i> • <i>Acupuncture evidence in PCOS and fertility treatment</i> <p>Online presentation at the Acupuncture NZ Annual Conference (25 to 27 August 2023 in Wellington, New Zealand)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop your career and support acupuncture's future: build a strong evidence-informed practice for menstrual and reproductive health</i> <p>4-hour Live Webinar for Healthy Seminars, on August 13, 2023 (4 CEU/PDA/CPD) <i>Polycystic Ovary Syndrome: Evidence-Informed Practice of Acupuncture and TCM</i></p> <p>1 presentation at the Australasian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Annual Conference (4-6 August 2023 in Australia)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Help Writing Tomorrow's Classics – Building Your Strong Evidence-Informed And Integrative Practice Of Acupuncture For Menstrual And Reproductive Health</i> <p>1 presentation at the Society for Acupuncture Research 2023 International Conference May 18-21, 2023 New York City, NY, USA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fine Needles Supporting Sperm, Eggs, and Petri Dishes – Our Role in Integrative Reproductive Health</i> <p>Online presentation at the XII Congresso Brasileiro de Medicina Chinesa & III Congresso Internacional da Faculdade EBRAMEC (22 to 28 May, 2023 in Brazil)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Evidence Informed Practice of Acupuncture for Polycystic Ovary Syndrome</i> <p>Online presentation at the Dutch Traditional Chinese Medicine Congress 2022 (5 and 6 November 2022)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Harmonising Practice-Informed Research and, Evidence-Informed Practice of Acupuncture</i>
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		<p>1 presentation at the 35th ICMART World Medical Acupuncture Congress (14-16 October 2022 in Bologna, Italy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Acupuncture for menstrual and reproductive health: evidence-informed practice and practice-informed research</i>
Minh Khai Mai-Thi Lecturer		<p>Continuing PhD fellow at the University of Oslo, Norway (due to be completed in 2025). The working title of my dissertation is: 'Remapping the Emotional Landscape in Late Song: Emotions, Psychosomatics, and Clinical Strategies in Chen Wuze's Seven Affects Doctrine'.</p> <p>Aug 24.-27.2022: Panel/paper presentation at the European Association for Chinese Studies conference (EACS 2022) in Olomouc, Czech republic. Title of presentation: 'Chen Wuze's Medical Notion of the 'Seven Affects' 七情: Origin, Meaning and Significance'</p> <p>Jun 8.-11.2023: Paper presentation at the 16th International Conference on Daoist Studies in Leeds, UK. Title of presentation: 'Balancing Alertness, Reactivity, Relaxation, and Sleep: The regulatory Roles of the Hún-Pò in a Late Ming Medical Commentary'</p>
Dr Lara McClure Herbs Research Project Module Leader and MSc Supervisor		<p>Collaboration with the University of Leeds on a service evaluation of the NCA multibed acupuncture clinic. Also presented on this project at the Association of Community Multibed Acupuncture Clinics conference in November 2022.</p> <p>Supporting five MSc alumni with publication.</p>
Cheng Hao Zhou Lecturer	External Examiner for the White Crane Academy of Chinese Herbal Medicine	
Rebecca O'Cleirigh	Worked with Acupuncture NZ on therapeutic products legislation	Presented to Acupuncture New Zealand conference Aug 2022 on therapeutic products legislation
Rachel Pagones Nutrition Research Project Module Leader	Member of the Society for Integrative Oncology Acupuncture Special Interest Group (SIO SIG) Member of the panel of the TCM Academy Oncology Acupuncture International Certificate Program	
Annie Walker	External examiner for the BSc in Acupuncture (validated by the	

Module Leader	University College of Osteopathy) at the College of Integrated Chinese Medicine	
Marisa Matos Lecturer	Chair of Voluntary Sector Gateway, West Lothian Volunteer for Long Covid Scotland	Scholarly research to create a day course on Long Covid for Nutritional Therapists
Helen Spriggs Lecturer	Member of Diet and Nutrition Working Group for the International Consortium on Ehlers Danlos Syndromes and Hypermobility Spectrum Disorders	Chaired session and Q & A panel at The Ehlers Danlos Society's International Scientific Symposium, Rome Sept 2022. Scholarly research for CPD event and article for Institute for Optimum Nutrition magazine on Hypermobility and the Ehlers Danlos Syndromes: Clinical Considerations
Jude Blair Clinical Skills Tutor	Taught a course on the ear acupuncture protocol of the National Acupuncture Detoxification Association, hosted by the NCA, the proceeds from which were donated to the charity World Medicine	

7.6 Publications and Presentations by Students and Alumni

Publications:

Giese, N. & Heirs, M.K. (2023), Development of provisional acupuncture guidelines for pelvic pain in endometriosis using an e-Delphi Consensus Process J of Integrative and Complementary medicine 29(3), pp. 169-180

Giese, N.; Gilbert, E.; Hawkey, A.; Armour, M. Unmet Needs of Australians in Endometriosis Research: A Qualitative Study of Research Priorities, Drivers, and Barriers to Participation in People with Endometriosis. *Medicina* 2023, 59, 1655. <https://doi.org/10.3390/medicina59091655>

May N & Bennett A (2023). The Impact of Acupuncture on Self-Perceived Stress and ADHD Core Symptomatology in an Adult, Atomoxetine-taking ADHD Participant. Insights from an In-depth Single Case Study. *Integrative Medicine*, 22, 3, 28-36

Presentations:

Pavlina Fialova. Presentation at the RCCM Conference, 2023:

“Chinese Herbal Medicine can support patients with localised prostate cancer who have been assigned to the Active Surveillance treatment pathway.”

<https://www.ncablog.co.uk/nca-herbs-research-on-the-road/>

Two studies were presented at the Association of Community and Multibed Acupuncture Clinics, held at the NCA In 2022:

Tomas Lewis. A service evaluation study in collaboration with the University of Leeds. This was a mixed-methods patient-focussed study which explored the impact of the NCA's Multi-bed acupuncture teaching clinic (MBATC) on service-users and their self-reported clinical outcomes. This study was undertaken as part of final year MBChB studies at the University of Leeds, supported by the NCA.

John Livesey PhD. A narrative review of literature aimed at evaluating whether there is evidence of high quality studies supporting Facial Cosmetic Acupuncture (FCA). Secondly, it aimed to ascertain whether there were opportunities for additional clinical research of high quality.

7.7 MSc Research Projects

Completed MSc Research Projects:

Pavlina Fialova, MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine – How can Chinese herbal medicine practitioners support localised prostate cancer patients in active surveillance in the UK? – A Delphi study.

Emma Houston Jupp, MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine – Does Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang offer a multisystem, multitarget approach to the treatment of ME/CFS? - A selective literature review.

Dawn Clarkson, MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice - The effects of nutritional therapy for a 56-year-old lean and physically active woman with prediabetes: A mixed methods case study.

Hannah Weaver, MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice - The effect of nutritional therapy on the management of functional GI symptoms in a 43-year-old female with hypothyroidism: a retrospective case report.

Helen Toher, MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice - The effect of nutritional therapy for symptoms of polycystic ovarian syndrome in a 47-year-old female with a body mass index >25kg/m².

Julia O'Hara, MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice - The effect of nutritional therapy for a 19-year-old semi-professional football player with exercise-associated muscle cramps: A mixed methods case report.

Sophie Kingsley, MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice - The role of nutritional therapy in weight management in a 42-year-old female with rheumatoid arthritis and hypothyroidism: A case study.

7.8 Outreach

After the curtailment of our outreach activities due to the pandemic, one recommenced this year. Our acupuncture students made a one-day visit to James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough which included hearing about the development and delivery of acupuncture within the hospital setting (oncology and cardiothoracic surgery), communicating with patients with cancer and their carers, practical sessions on auricular and body acupuncture, and visits to the radiotherapy and chemotherapy departments.

7.9 Contributions from Volunteers

In relation to the contributions to the work of the College made by volunteers over the year, trustees, graduates, and students have generously given of their time to attend meetings of Boards and Committees.

In normal circumstances we report on NCA alumni who have been going overseas to study and to work, often working as volunteers supporting global or local health charities and helping local people with their treatment skills. These activities are still picking up after the pandemic but planning for the future is underway again.

7.10 Good Practice

- Creation of new online CPD one year diploma course in Chinese Medicine Nutrition
- Improving our information sharing and pro-active response in relation to student support needs and concerns.
- Improved access to online resources, including databases and e-books.
- Further development of VLE to improve navigation and transition to Moodle 4.
- Involvement of a wide range of staff and students in our activities, including our work to continually improve what we do.
- Pleasing levels of scholarly and research activity among staff.

Other items of good practice are identified in the Annual Monitoring Reports for each course or programme.

8 Events affecting us since the year end

8.1 *Registration of new students*

Between the year end and the publication of this report we have had our student intake in September 2023. This intake was of:

- 32 new students for the BSc in Acupuncture; and one returning student;
- 12 for the MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice, one for the PGDip, and four for upgrade pathways;
- 12 for the MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine, and five for the PGDip

We were pleased with these intake figures in the current financial circumstances. The nutrition intake was similar to last year, and the BSc in Acupuncture recruited slightly better than expected. Nonetheless, these numbers are considerably lower than in earlier years.

We also recruited 21 students to a new one year online CPD course in Chinese Medicine Nutrition.

We did not offer the Online MSc courses this year. We are currently planning new courses, including future postgraduate provision.

9 Future Plans

Our overall strategic aims for 2024-2026 are:

1. To advance the subject areas and professions in our areas of interest, grow their professionalisation and research base to promote acceptance of our disciplines for the wider public good.
2. To provide an inclusive, supportive, high quality, research informed and stimulating learning environment for the diversity of our student population.
3. To achieve a stable and sustainable position for the College within the higher education sector.

In support of these aims, our priorities are:

1. We will enhance our approach to teaching, learning and student support which engages students and enables their learning and personal growth for their future success.
2. We will strengthen our endeavours to underpin subject areas and educational activities with research, by contributing to and steering research initiatives which promote the understanding of our disciplines and evaluate their efficacy, and by developing relevant collaborations in both education and research.
3. We will continue to engage with regulatory developments in UK higher education, working with professional and statutory regulatory bodies, pursuing our own degree awarding powers, and achieving a change in our Office for Students status to fee cap provider.

4. We will create opportunities for the passion and enthusiasm of our staff to emerge, by continuing and strengthening our commitment to ongoing staff development which supports their professional development, encourages them to work at the College, and enhances students' learning experience.
5. We will create staged and sustainable growth for our educational provision and will review our identity to ensure it is fit for the future.
6. We will develop our IT infrastructure, ensuring that it meets the needs of all aspects of the College's activity.

The Board has agreed that we should aim to have a more integrated course offer giving more options and greater flexibility to students, and achieving greater simplicity for staff. Specific areas of development that are currently active include:

- Proposals for new courses and for modifications to existing courses, in response to changing needs and expectations in the market. This includes the development of micro-credentials in anticipation of the Lifelong Learning Entitlement. We have appointed a Partnerships and Services Lead to investigate the market, network with colleagues and potential partners, and identify the most promising opportunities.
- Proposals for collaborations with multibed clinics around the UK, in relation to teaching and potential for provision of services to the NHS.

10 Strategic Issues

Currently the key strategic considerations for the College relate to student numbers and the factors that impact on these, particularly cost of living concerns and possible changes to eligibility for student loans. The uncertainties at the present time underline the need for organisational resilience. We are also continuing to discuss the possibility of re-applying for degree awarding powers in future, and we will be revisiting our application for a change of status to Approved (Fee Cap) Provider. All these matters are constantly monitored, and they inform our five year strategic plan.

Other strategic considerations are:

- Competition from other courses in the North of England. Two acupuncture courses in Manchester, which are not BAAB-accredited, offer substantially lower fees. For nutrition we also have a competitor in Manchester, the College of Naturopathic Medicine.
- Rates of withdrawal and interruption of studies on our courses have increased considerably over the last three years. The BSc in Acupuncture has been particularly affected. Key reasons are financial and health-related. We are actively working to further improve our student support provision in response to this change.
- It is possible that in future, as the evidence for efficacy mounts and as acupuncture is increasingly used within the NHS, Universities in the region may again consider starting new courses. Similarly, the growing public interest in nutrition may lead Universities to launch new courses in this area, and they have already redesigned existing courses in order to better compete, by adding content on providing one-to-one nutrition advice. Our fees are comparable with Universities, but our undergraduate students are eligible for

smaller loans for our courses compared to a University-based equivalent. This potentially puts us at a disadvantage, although we are confident that our reputation and the quality and accessibility of our provision balances this out. The availability of postgraduate loans to our students is definitely helpful to us. We will continue to monitor developments in the sector. We will also continue to develop a pattern of flexible course provision which is attractive to mature students who are unable to undertake standard University courses, and we will continue to build on our reputation for excellence in the field.

- Recruitment to our courses can be affected by external factors such as changes in the economic climate and changes in the media profile of acupuncture, herbal medicine and nutrition. The pandemic and the current cost of living crisis may have an impact for several years. The public media profile of our subject areas continues to be largely positive, and greatly boosted by the decision by NICE to recommend acupuncture as a best option for chronic primary pain. Attacks from critics of our subject areas are now met much more effectively, with firmer responses and a stronger evidence base than was once the case. We continue to closely monitor developments in the evidence base. We are particularly encouraged by the strengthening of the evidence base for acupuncture during recent years, and we are proud of our active support for those within our professions who engage in informed and reasoned debate with critics, and in adding to the evidence base.
- The pace and scale of changes in the professional and educational environment in which we operate poses challenges to a small college. Our ability to respond flexibly and quickly, and the fantastic support and understanding of our staff, have helped the College to cope with changes like these thus far.
- The challenge of providing sufficient resources to support research. We will continue to increase access to online research resources, and to encourage increasing engagement of our staff in scholarly and research activity. The high quality of our team of research supervisors is also very important in providing good support for students. We will continue to work on developing the College's engagement with research as an institution, and to promote scholarly work and research activity among our staff. For substantial research projects such as clinical trials we will continue to rely on collaborations with Universities and other bodies.

11 Financial Statements and Commentary for 2022-2023

Our audited financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2023 are in appendix A.

11.1 Commentary on the financial results for 2022–2023

11.1.1 Income

Our income totalled £1,049,358 (2022: £1,099,758). Our budget projection was for income of £1,134,369 so our actual income was below the projected figure. Although we had an encouraging intake of new students, we experienced higher than expected rates of students withdrawing, interrupting study, opting for part-time study, or spreading one year of study over two years. Our analysis is that this was due to the impact of the cost of living crisis following on after the Covid pandemic. Our population of mostly mature students struggled with factors including financial difficulties, illness (including Covid and long Covid) affecting both themselves and their families, and a variety of personal challenges. For some it became impossible to continue with their studies as planned. Rates of students withdrawing, interrupting study or extending study had been substantially higher in the previous two years, and we had adapted our budget assumptions in light of this, but the rates were even higher this year.

As a percentage of our total income, BSc in Acupuncture course fees contributed 70% (69% last year), MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice 14% (14% last year), online MScs 1% (5% last year), MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine 6% (6% last year), and the Practitioner Hub 3% (1% last year).

Recruitment of new students to the BSc in Acupuncture was buoyant again, partly due to favourable rules on student loans. Recruitment of new students to the MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice remained lower than pre-pandemic. We did not offer our online MScs in 2022, remaining income from this course being from students in teach out. In light of their failure to recruit in 2021 we decided to take some time to review and reconsider our strategy for our online courses. The MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine recruits a new intake in alternate years, with the next new intake in 2023.

Overall clinic income was 12% lower than budgeted. Income from the acupuncture clinics was 22% lower than expected, income from the nutrition clinic was in line with budget, and income from the herbs clinic was 12% over budget. There had been an exceptionally high demand for the acupuncture clinic in 21-22, immediately after the pandemic lockdowns. This year though, our analysis is that acupuncture clinic bookings (typically for a course of weekly treatments) were particularly affected by the cost of living crisis. It is notable that our multi-bed clinic, which offers the lowest treatment fees and quicker treatment, remains in great demand. Overall, the teaching clinics contributed 5.1% of our total income (5.2% last year).

11.1.2 Expenditure

Our overall expenditure was £1,037,482 (2022: £1,155,149), 13% lower than the budgeted figure of £1,189,367. We had budgeted cautiously and our employee costs and teaching and learning costs were under budget.

11.1.3 Use of Restricted Funds

Funding worth £1,845 was awarded to MSc students to support their research work from our restricted fund donated by the Foundation for Research into Traditional Chinese Medicine. This fund is to support student research likely to lead to publication. The fund balance is now £16,860.

11.1.4 Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet

This year we had a surplus of £10,031.

In light of the continuing cost of living crisis, our budgeting for 2023-24 continues to make more pessimistic assumptions about students withdrawing, interrupting studies, and spreading their studies over longer time periods. We will also be putting additional resource in student support services.

Our careful advance planning has meant that we have been able to function effectively through first the pandemic and then the cost of living crisis, but the effect on the lives of our mature student population continues to impact on us. We are undertaking detailed planning for new income generation and this combined with our usual adaptability will enable us to continue to provide our educational and clinical services while continuing to invest prudently in staff, activities and projects which are expected to benefit our future income, and which will further advance our charitable objectives. In the meantime, with a small surplus in 22-23 we have been able to protect our minimum reserves, enabling us to face any future uncertainties with confidence, and protecting the overall financial health of the College.

11.1.5 Total funds

Total unrestricted funds are £298,639. We also hold a further £16,860 in restricted funds.

11.2 Ensuring Viability and Sustainability

11.2.1 Internal Control

We maintain a Risks and Issues Register which is considered by our Boards and Committees regularly through the year, reviewed by the Board of Directors/Trustees, and used to inform future planning in line with our charitable objectives. When a Board or Committee identifies a changed or increased risk, or a new risk, this is escalated to the Board of Directors/Trustees. The register includes a scoring system for the likelihood of risks becoming a reality, the impact of risks if they become a reality, the degree of control we have over the risk, and the

possible speed of escalation of the risk. Risks that are covered include business, operational, compliance with law and regulatory bodies, financial, management and governance, and customer service risks.

The duties of the Board of Directors/Trustees include duties to “monitor the professional, commercial and reputational risks facing the College, ensuring that there are effective systems of control and risk management” and to “ensure that the long-term viability of the College is maintained through monitoring the performance of the College, including financial and managerial aspects”. To assist in these duties the Board receives reports from the Resources Committee and Principal at every meeting.

No significant internal control weaknesses or failures have arisen during 2022-23 or since the year end.

11.2.2 Financial Management

Our annual financial statements are produced in compliance with the requirements of the Charity Commission as per the Charity Act 2011, and of the Office for Students.

Our actual financial figures compared to budget are considered regularly through the year by the Resources Committee and Board of Directors/Trustees. We produce a quarterly budget monitoring report and a balance sheet to inform these processes of regular scrutiny.

We continue to scrutinise our spending and maintain ongoing tight financial control.

Our budgeting process for 2023-28 has been robust, with scrutiny of every element of income and expenditure, and a good level of contingency. The most volatile and uncertain aspect of our budget continues to relate to income from student tuition fees, and fluctuations in student numbers remain a source of potential vulnerability. This vulnerability was heightened by the Covid-19 pandemic and now by the cost of living crisis. Although overall student recruitment in 2022 was good, with stronger recruitment to some courses balancing lower recruitment to others, there was an increase in withdrawals, interrupted studies, and students spreading their studies over longer time periods. In our budgeting for 2023-24 we have assumed that these higher levels of withdrawal, interruption and spreading study over more time will continue, in light of the continuing cost of living crisis. We have followed our usual practice of preparing detailed spreadsheets and financial projections for a variety of future scenarios, with varying numbers of students on different courses, and taking into account the potentially higher number of withdrawals, interruptions and changes to study patterns. This has enabled us to produce a realistic budget which despite a projected deficit still includes elements of investment in opportunities for increasing our income in the future.

All areas of cost have also been reviewed. The budget has been discussed thoroughly with the Board of Directors/Trustees, prior to agreement. We believe our budgeting process is robust, and that the agreed budget meets high standards of accuracy and prudence.

11.2.3 Scenario Planning and Sensitivity Analysis

Although there is reason to be optimistic about continuing availability of loans to eligible students, and reasonably steady recruitment to courses in future years, nonetheless fluctuations in student numbers can continue to occur. Our good student numbers in our intakes since 2018 support this optimism, but we remain aware that such fluctuations do happen. In particular, with our population of mostly mature students we are monitoring any Government announcements which may affect eligibility for student loans.

In light of the current and future economic uncertainties, the Board has carefully considered a range of alternative future scenarios, including those where student numbers fall again, or retention rates remain poor. We are satisfied that across the range of possible scenarios we have clear strategies which will enable us to continue to meet our responsibilities to our students.

The Board receives a detailed “wind-down budget” every year, which is our three-year plan for a scenario in which we have to close to new students and need enough funds to see our existing students through their remaining years of study. The “wind-down budget” shows we would need a predicted reserve of £185,000 at the time of a Board decision to wind-down. Our lease includes a clause allowing us to give nine months notice to quit in the event of a decision to close the College after teaching out our courses, which helps us plan for an effective wind-down process with a reserve of this size. The Board has agreed the sum of £185,000 as our minimum reserve, subject to investment decisions taken in light of the current strategic situation and the level of risk and opportunity. We produce a new wind-down budget every year and Board adjusts the reserve figure accordingly.

Our reserve at 30th June 2023 was £298,639 in unrestricted funds, with a further £16,860 in restricted funds. The unrestricted funds exceed our minimum requirement.

11.3 Future Plans

11.3.1 Budget and Financial Forecasts

We are particularly cautious in our budgeting process and our projections for future years are based on relatively pessimistic assumptions, as is prudent. Since the year end we have seen a reasonably good recruitment of new students for our BSc in Acupuncture, with recruitment to our MSc in Nutrition is similar to last year, and recruitment to the MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine is at an all time high. However, the benefits of these good numbers of new students are balanced out by the smaller numbers of continuing students. Our final budget for 2023-24, approved by the Board of Directors/Trustees in October, reflects realistic assumptions on student numbers. We are projecting a deficit of £23,926. These projections allow us to maintain our reserves (which are forecast to reduce to £291,574) well above the minimum reserve of £185,000. We are planning a number of initiatives to update our existing courses and launch new courses, and as these come to fruition we are projecting a gradually improving situation from 2024 onwards. We will continue to maintain the necessary minimum reserve agreed by the Board as we invest cautiously in projects which have the potential to increase our income.

We have sufficient funds and reserves to support our planned budget for 2023-24 as we pursue our strategic plan and undertake our regular activities of: maintaining validation and accreditation for all our courses; maintaining registration with the Office for Students; continuing to develop and quality assure our courses, online provision and clinics; developing new courses as potential sources of additional income; developing our facilities, policies, regulations and procedures as necessary; supporting staff development; supporting research and scholarly activity; and pursuing our marketing strategy.

11.3.2 Assumptions Made in Developing Financial Forecasts

The final approved budget for 2023-24 is based on actual student numbers as of 1st October 2023. Our projections for 2023 and subsequent years are based on the following figures:

Course	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Mean
BSc Acupuncture	39	35	33	46	42	39
MSc/PGDip Nutrition Science and Practice	19	20	16	14	14	17
MSc/PGDip Chinese Herbal Medicine	-	8	-	15	-	11.5

In less turbulent times we would base our projected future student numbers on the means of recent years, as in the above table, adjusted according to specific information on changes to courses or likely demand. However, in the last two years we have been aware that the current cost of living crisis is likely to continue to impact on our student numbers. We revised our target numbers for 2023 downwards during 22-23, because we could see that numbers were down month on month. Revised targets were 30 for acupuncture, 12 for nutrition science and practice, and 15 for the MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine. The exception here is the MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine, where we increased the target – this course is now almost entirely online which greatly increases the geographical area from which we are able to recruit. Since the year end our actual intake for each course was slightly higher than these targets.

We have based our projections for the BSc in Acupuncture in 2024 on the actual numbers achieved in 2023 – 33 for acupuncture. We have based our projections for 2024 on the actual number achieved in 2023 with a small increase to 35, based on falling inflation at that time. Thereafter we have assumed a return to the mean of 39 for 2025, and then 40 for 2026 and 2027.

We have assumed stable numbers for 2024 and beyond of 16 for nutrition science and practice, 17 for Chinese Herbal Medicine and 28 for our new course in Chinese Medicine Nutrition.

We have plans for a small number of new courses. Until these plans are more developed, we have not included income from them in our projections.

Student withdrawal rates

Our budgeting includes assumptions on rates of students withdrawing or interrupting their studies. These assumptions also include students who choose to spread their studies over more years than usual, which reduces our fee income from those students in any one year. The assumptions are based on drop out rates in previous years.

In the past, based on previous years, we have assumed an overall “drop out” rate for the BSc in Acupuncture of 15% in the first year. Based on the rates in 2021-22, and 2022-23, and mindful of the continuing economic uncertainties, we have increased this to 20% in our projections for full time students in 2022-23 and subsequent years. For second and third year students the rate has remained at 10%, and we have assumed this rate for 2023-2024 and subsequent years.

For the MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice, student retention was improved in 2022-23, although there were some losses between the Access Course and the start of the MSc proper. We have therefore assumed a drop out rate in both the first year and second year cohorts in 2023-24 of 33% (including the Access Course), and a rate of 25% between second and third year.

The MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine had a drop out rate of 20% in 2021-22. We have assumed the same rate in 2023-24 and subsequently.

Fees income and costs

We quote fixed fees for each year of each course, rather than an initial fee with an unspecified annual inflationary increase. For 2024 we have added a below inflation increase of 4% to the fees for most of our courses, but we did not significantly increase fees for the BSc in Acupuncture.

For financial forecasting purposes, except where we have accurate forward information on costs, we have assumed continuing inflationary increases in costs of 5% for most costs, based on National Statistics Office projections.

Student Support Funding

We have assumed that eligible undergraduate and postgraduate students will continue to be able to access student support.

There has been an average of 10 students a year enrolling for the BSc who are not eligible for student finance.

Capital investment plans

We are planning a modest investment on furniture, IT equipment and other equipment in 2023-28. We will also be investing in the development of new courses, but we will be absorbing these costs within our running costs.

Existing and proposed borrowings

We do not have any existing borrowing and we are not planning any future borrowing.

Leases

The lease on our building was successfully re-negotiated for a ten year term in 2021. We have agreed a staged rent increase in 2022-23 and 2024-25, which is budgeted for. We have a well-established relationship (since 2000) with our landlord, the York Conservation Trust, themselves a charity. The Trust's charitable purpose is to care for historic buildings in York by maintaining ownership of them, so the relationship is a stable one for the medium to long term. We have no other leases or similar liabilities.

11.4 Financial Policy

Working capital held by the College is kept in an interest-bearing bank account. Reserves are held in two higher interest accounts with two different banks.

The College does not at present award any grants.

12 Changes to Personnel and Roles

12.1 Management and Administration Staff

This year we appointed to vacancies for existing roles for:

Nutrition Course Director
Receptionist (x2)

We appointed to new roles for:

Joint Acupuncture Course Director
Partnerships and Services Lead
Marketing, Admissions and Events Officer (replacing our Marketing and Admissions Officer)
College Services Assistant (replacing our College Services Officer)

The role of Clinical Education Lead was expanded and renamed as Clinic Director.

One of our two part time IT Officers left. We responded by expanding the role and ours of the remaining Officer, whose role was renamed as Lead IT Officer.

12.2 Teaching Staff

Our core teaching staff teams remain reasonably stable from year to year. Details of the teaching staff teams are provided in the Course Handbooks. There is also further information in the annual course monitoring reports on our teaching staff, with CVs of new staff appended.

13 Staff Development

A number of staff (academic and administrative) completed online training in Prevent.

Our IT Officer took a Salesforce course to further develop our student information system.

Members of the teaching teams attended numerous CPD events within the professional communities, including a number that were related to the treatment of long Covid. We continue to support the development of our teaching staff as practitioner-scholars/researchers and as practitioner-educators, including funding for CPD events. In a significant innovation, NCA staff are now invited to join the Practitioner Hub (see Section 7.1.9) for a heavily discounted rate of only £15 a year to access all the monthly lectures and the archive of recordings, and they can also access a discount of 15% off most of our CPD courses.

Several members of staff attended conferences of the British Acupuncture Council, Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine, and British Association for Nutrition and Lifestyle Medicine. The Association of Community Multibed Acupuncture Clinics conference was held at the NCA in November 2022, and was attended by several members of staff.

Various groups of lecturers and clinical skills tutors meet during the year to collaborate on assessment processes and course developments and to undertake peer review. Course Directors and other senior Lecturers work closely with less experienced staff, and shadowing and team teaching are among the ways we support their development.

Further staff activities, particularly CPD, research and scholarly activity, are detailed in the Annual Monitoring Reports for our individual courses.

13.1 Staff Development for Support Staff

The College is now a member of Guild HE and all admin and management have had the opportunity to sign up to various network groups.

Various in-house training took place as needed, mostly in the area of IT.

We held an evaluation, planning and team day for our admin and management team. The programme for the day is below:

Time	Session	Details
09:30-10:00	Arrival & refreshments	Help yourself to a hot/cold drink.
10:00-10:15	Welcome Group Agreement Intros	
10:15-10:30	Opening session (Richard)	
10:30-10:50	Guild HE session (Kate)	
10:50-11:15	Your Objectives NCA Values	
11:15-11:30	Tea Break	Help yourself to a drink.
11:30-12:30	Evaluation session	
12:30-13:30	Lunch	Sandwiches provided by Café 84.
13:30-15:15	Planning session	
15:15-15:30	#Goals	
15:30-16:15	Feedback & Social Drinks	For anyone unable to join us for the team session, this is an opportunity to unwind and relax with the rest of the team.
16:15-18:00	Team session	Just for a bit of fun... Leave College at 16:15 to go to Hole in Wand (Coppergate) for a 16:30 session start.

14 Resources Statement and Plan

14.1 Management and Administration

The management and administration team for 2022-23 comprised:

Principal
Acupuncture Course Director
Herbs Course Director
Nutrition Course Director
Course Director for online Research and Practice MScs
Research Director
Librarian
Registrar and College Services Manager
College Services Assistant
Student Services Manager
Student Services Officer
Marketing and Admissions Manager
Marketing Officer
Finance Manager
Finance Assistant
Clinic Reception Manager
Receptionist
Receptionist
IT Officer (Systems & Security)
IT Officer (Web & VLE Support)
Clinical Education Lead
Professional Development Lead

Details of individual staff can be provided to validating and accrediting bodies on request.

14.2 Teaching Staff

We are fortunate to have excellent teaching teams for our courses. Our lecturers have considerable experience both as practitioners and as teachers. Most of them teach for us part-time and also work as practitioners. This is appropriate for courses offering a professional training and is a requirement of the accrediting bodies.

A brief résumé of each lecturer's experience is given in the course sections of our website and also in our course prospectuses, which can be downloaded from our website (www.nca.ac.uk).

14.3 Premises

The College and our teaching clinics continue to be located at 61 Micklegate in the historic centre of York. One or two teaching sessions were located at the Priory Street Centre, five minutes' walk away.

Our facilities and equipment will continue to be improved in accordance with our needs and with budgetary resources.

14.3.1 Disabled Access

Our premises offer full wheelchair access to the whole building for staff, students and patients. The only exception is access to the toilets in the basement, but there is an accessible toilet on the ground floor. All floors are accessible via the lift. Entry is via the back door, where there are no steps. Parking spaces are reserved for disabled use.

Special needs of staff, patients, and students with disabilities are addressed on a case-by-case basis and all reasonable steps are taken to respond to them, including seeking expert advice when appropriate.

14.3.2 Teaching Rooms

During the 2023 summer break, we replaced the 60-inch and 50-inch TV screens in two of our three teaching rooms respectively, with new 85-inch TV screens. These bigger and newer screens provide much better accessibility for staff and students when in class. We are continuing to review and assess the equipment needs for the teaching rooms, to ensure we have the most effective and efficient set-up for our various needs.

14.4 Library, Learning and Online Resources

14.4.1 Library, Learning and Online Resources Provision

Journals and databases: Online, the College subscribes to ScienceDirect's Health and Life Science collection (full-text journal articles from over 1200 journals published by Elsevier), as well as to two EBSCO databases, Alt HealthWatch and Allied and Complementary Medicine (AMED) that focus on complementary, holistic and integrated approaches to health care. We have online subscriptions to the Journal of Chinese Medicine (JCM), and to the European Journal of Oriental Medicine (EJOM), giving students access to the archive for these journals.

Besides these paid-for subscriptions, students are encouraged to research widely, to cover as much of the literature as possible, and are supported in the use of other databases and resources by the Librarian, in person and by 'how to' guides. Students are also encouraged to use the journals, databases and other resources offered by their professional bodies.

Amongst our hard-copy journal holdings, we hold complete runs of JCM and EJOM, and parts of several other useful journals. We also hold print versions of all NCA MSc dissertations.

Wi-Fi broadband throughout the building provides internet access, including access to the Student Hub which holds the library catalogue, and links to our resources and guidance.

Books: We have around 3,000 books and e-books. We hold at least one copy of all core texts, and we hold multiple copies of popular titles and key texts. Where there is more than one copy of a text, one copy is reference-only, hence always available for consultation, which is especially useful during teaching or clinic sessions. Books have colour-coded labels which makes finding (and re-shelving) volumes easier, and core texts are additionally identified visually. We recently received a generous donation of several hundred Chinese Medicine books from a College alumnus and these will be accessioned over the coming months. Where new books are required, electronic copies are now our first choice, so we now have c.40 electronic books, accessed via the library pages on Sharepoint.

A selection of core texts is held (reference-only) in both acupuncture clinics. Other teaching resources include posters and charts on the walls of classrooms and clinic rooms, and a range of models of spines and other joints, held in the basement teaching room.

Study skills materials: We continue to enhance our collection of study skills advice (in the form of documents and videos on Sharepoint), guided by student/staff requests and by noting what needs are most frequently observed. The resources are revised annually. Support sessions given to individual students are now recorded by the Student Services Manager, via Salesforce.

For a relatively small institution, the NCA has access to excellent resources; using our books and journals together with online materials and the expertise and creativity of our staff, we support our students' educational needs.

14.4.2 Library Management

The member of the management team responsible for the library is the College Manager. There is a librarian, Cath Mortimer. The librarian works 14 hours per week, with this time scheduled across the week to be of maximum assistance to students and staff, including at the weekend (during term time). Much of this is in person, but one-to-one sessions via Teams, using screen sharing, are also particularly effective. The monthly Library News posts by email keep everyone informed about interesting developments, changes in our provision etc. as well as asking for ideas for new resources.

The librarian's duties include selecting and purchasing books/resources, maintaining subscriptions, updating the catalogue and collections, supporting induction, editing referencing guides, assisting staff and students with resources, supporting study skills and monitoring the copyright situation.

14.4.3 Virtual Learning Environment

The College's virtual learning environment (VLE) is a combination of Moodle, along with various Office 365 apps such as SharePoint and Microsoft Teams. SharePoint is used as the document repository for the VLE, Microsoft Teams for online teaching sessions, and Moodle for forum discussions, assignment submissions, and e-learning sessions. The VLE provides a wide range of resources for staff and students, including access to curriculum materials, learning materials, College documents and forms, and links to external resources. The materials can be easily updated and assist in keeping staff and students well informed. During the 2022-23 academic year, we began exploring the possibility of using the newer version of Moodle (Moodle 4) to see if we could better integrate that with our Office 365 subscriptions, hoping to achieve a more seamless VLE navigation experience for staff and students. This upgrade to Moodle 4 was undertaken during the 2023 summer break, ahead of the 2023-24 academic year, and now enable students to seamlessly move between Moodle and the Office 365 apps thanks to the Single-Sign-On (SSO) integration between Moodle and Office 365. We have also begun gathering feedback from students as we continue to develop and improve Moodle 4 throughout the 2023-24 academic year.

14.4.4 Student Information System (SIS) (Salesforce)

We continue to improve our efficiency and record-keeping. We are always developing our student information system to accommodate for the continually evolving requirements that go along with being a HE provider, including the Data Futures programme, which has now been implemented. The SIS is being developed for use from the point of application and stores all personal information, concerns about students, student marks and HESA information, and we are able to generate reports as required.

15 Conclusion

This was another challenging year as we gradually moved beyond the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic, only to move straight into the cost of living crisis, largely caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. There have been significant impacts on student recruitment and retention, but despite these challenges our financial situation remains strong and we are maintaining our usual high standards.

Our shift to more online operations during the pandemic has led us to rethink future course delivery options. This forms part of an evolving process of identifying opportunities to enhance our existing courses and develop new courses.

Our Practitioner Hub has been a notable success this year, with increasing membership, a successful weekend conference in York, and successful development and recruitment of students to our new CPD diploma course in Chinese Medicine Nutrition.

There is a clear increase in student support needs and we have been developing our response to this. Students already praise our high levels of support but we are determined to do more, to enable all our students to succeed.

Our marketing and admissions team again put in exceptional effort this year, without which our student recruitment would have been considerably weaker.

We had a small surplus at year end, helping us to protect our reserves. Our future projections are encouraging and we continue to hold sufficient reserves, enabling us to plan with confidence for future years and to continue to resource our development plans, including the development of new courses.

Our partnership with the University College of Osteopathy continues to be supportive and enabling. This productive collaboration provides a stable basis for future years.

We continue to evaluate both our overall activity and each of our courses individually, taking account of feedback, and then identifying and implementing ongoing improvements. We are also proud of the level of scholarly and research activity among our teaching staff and students.

The strength of the College as a cohesive academic community has again been demonstrated, and acceptance of the value of our subject areas continues to grow. While we anticipate continuing economic uncertainty in 2023-24, we will continue to adapt, develop new initiatives, and serve our students, patients and clients.

16 Appendix A – Financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2023

Charity registration number 1081184

Company registration number 02400056 (England and Wales)

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	K Wicklow	
	E C Liu	
	H Thomas	
	N Haines	
	D Jay	
	G Webb	
	H Lansdown	(Appointed 20 October 2022)
	T M Horta Reis da Silva	(Appointed 9 February 2023)
Secretary	D Jay	
Charity number	1081184	
Company number	02400056	
Registered office	61 Micklegate York YO1 6LJ	
Auditor	Henton & Co LLP 124 Acomb Road York YO24 4EY	
Bankers	Santander plc Bridle Road Bootle L30 4GB	

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

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NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the Companies Act 2006, "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) and Regulatory advice 9: Accounts direction issued by the Office for Students.

Objectives and activities

The charity's objects are to provide education in the art of acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine and nutrition and there has been no change in these during the year.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Strategic report

The description under the headings "Achievements and performance" and "Financial review" meet the company law requirements for the trustees to present a strategic report.

Achievements and performance

- 1) The 2022 intake of students was of:
 - 37 for the BSc in Acupuncture
 - 12 for the MSc/PGDip in Nutrition Science and Practice

We did not offer our online MScs in Advanced Oriental Medicine (Research and Practice); Advanced Complementary Medicine (Research and Practice); and Advanced Nutrition (Research and Practice), which failed to recruit sufficient students in 2021. We are reviewing our postgraduate provision and aiming to launch new courses.

- 2) Twenty students graduated in 2023 with the BSc in Acupuncture, four of these with first class honours. Five students graduated with the MSc in Nutrition Science and Practice, one with distinction. Two students graduated with the MSc in Chinese Herbal Medicine, one with distinction, and three students graduated with the PGDip in Chinese Herbal Medicine. One student graduated with the MSc in Advanced Nutrition (Research and Practice).

- 3) Rates of students withdrawing, suspending study, transferring to part-time study or splitting one year of modules over two years continued to run at a much higher rate than prior to the Covid pandemic. Causes stated by students were primarily financial and health-related. This was a clear effect of the combination of the cost of living crisis and the longer term health effects following the Covid-19 pandemic.

- 4) This year teaching and learning returned to relative normality in the wake of the pandemic. Some classes in acupuncture and nutrition remained online, and the herbs course continued to run as a mostly online course. The acupuncture clinic is operating in pre-pandemic form, the nutrition clinic now offers clients a choice of face to face or online appointments, and the herbs clinic now operates entirely online.

- 5) We continued our academic enhancement activities, including work on College-wide enhancement themes, and we began work on developing options for new courses.

- 6) In the National Student Survey we achieved scores that were above the HE healthcare sector average for 16 out of the 26 individual questions. In the Teaching Excellence Framework we achieved a bronze overall, comprising a silver for the student experience and bronze for student outcomes.

- 7) Membership of our online Practitioner Hub continued to grow. The Hub continued to provide an online community for our alumni and other practitioners, with CPD courses and the option to join online supervision groups. This year the Hub began to offer in-person CPD courses to complement the online courses, and we developed a one year online CPD course in Chinese Medicine Nutrition, which recruited 21 students for a start in October 2023. The Hub also ran a very well received NCA weekend conference in York.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

8) Our teaching clinics continued to offer a high quality professional service at much reduced rates, both to the local community and, in the case of the online clinics, also to people further afield. Patient surveys and feedback generally demonstrate a high level of satisfaction.

9) We continued to develop our research activity, with a particular focus on the first pilot stage of a major study of acupuncture and nutrition for atrial fibrillation.

10) College staff continued to contribute to the work of our professional bodies and the HE sector in a variety of ways.

11) Staff development activity and research and scholarship activity continued, with some teaching staff engaging in high levels of research and scholarship activity.

12) We report on 3 publications and 3 conference presentations by MSc alumni.

13) Our validating partnership with the University College of Osteopathy (UCO) continued into its third year, enabling our students to continue to access student loans and providing a supportive partnership with an HE provider that teaches cognate subject areas and understands the particular challenges for small specialist providers.

14) We reviewed our overall strategy and identified opportunities for development of new courses.

Financial review

We had a surplus of £10,031 in 2022-23, following on from 2021-22 when we had a deficit of £55,391. Our intake of new students in 2022 was reasonable considering the financial uncertainties caused by the current cost of living crisis, but numbers were lower overall. In addition, we again experienced higher than expected rates of students withdrawing, interrupting study, transferring to part-time study or spreading one year of study over two years. Our analysis of this shows that finance and health were the primary causes of student drop out. However, our expenditure was well controlled and the final outcome was a surplus.

Our careful advance planning has meant that we have been able to function effectively through first the pandemic and then the cost of living crisis, but the effect on the lives of our mature student population continues to impact on us. We are undertaking detailed planning for new income generation and this combined with our usual adaptability will enable us to continue to provide our educational and clinical services while continuing to invest prudently in staff, activities and projects which are expected to benefit our future income, and which will further advance our charitable objectives. In the meantime, with a small surplus in 22-23 we have been able to protect our minimum reserves, enabling us to face any future uncertainties with confidence, and protecting the overall financial health of the College.

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level of not less than £185,000 each year. The trustees consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised, or they will be able to decide to close their courses to new students but continue operating while existing students complete their studies. The unrestricted fund balance as at 30 June 2023 was £298,639 (2022: £286,763). Additional reserves are being held for use in projects including supporting students with their research projects. The restricted fund balance as at 30 June 2023 was £16,860 (2022: £18,705).

Internal Control

We maintain a "risks and issues register" which is considered by our Boards and Committees regularly through the year, reviewed by the Board of Directors/Trustees, and used to inform future planning in line with our charitable objectives. When a Board or Committee identifies a changed or increased risk, or a new risk, this is escalated to the Board of Directors/Trustees. The register includes a scoring system for the likelihood of risks becoming a reality, the impact of risks if they become a reality, the degree of control we have over the risk, and the possible speed of escalation of the risk. Risks that are covered include business, operational, compliance with law and regulatory bodies, financial, management and governance, and customer service risks.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

The duties of the Board of Directors/Trustees include duties to “monitor the professional, commercial and reputational risks facing the College, ensuring that there are effective systems of control and risk management” and to “ensure that the long-term viability of the College is maintained through monitoring the performance of the College, including financial and managerial aspects”. To assist in these duties the Board receives reports from the Resources Committee and Principal at every meeting.

No significant internal control weaknesses or failures have arisen during 2022-23 or since the year end.

Plans for future periods

Out overall strategic aims for 2023-2026 are:

1. To advance the subject areas and professions in our areas of interest, grow their professionalisation and research base to promote acceptance of our disciplines for the wider public good.
2. To provide an inclusive, supportive, high quality, research informed and stimulating learning environment for the diversity of our student population.
3. To achieve a stable and sustainable position for the College within the higher education sector.

In support of these aims, our priorities are:

1. We will enhance our approach to teaching, learning and student support which engages students and enables their learning and personal growth for their future success.
2. We will strengthen our endeavours to underpin subject areas and educational activities with research, by contributing to and steering research initiatives which promote the understanding of our disciplines and evaluate their efficacy, and by developing relevant collaborations in both education and research.
3. We will create opportunities for the passion and enthusiasm of our staff to emerge, by continuing and strengthening our commitment to ongoing staff development which supports students in their professional development, encourages them to work at the College, and enhances students' learning experience.
4. We will create stages and sustainable growth for our educational provision and will review our identity to ensure it is fit for the future.
5. We will continue to engage with regulatory developments in UK higher education, working with professional and statutory bodies, pursuing our own degree awarding powers, and achieving a change in our Office for Students status to fee cap provider.
6. We will develop out IT infrastructure, ensuring that it meets the needs of all aspects of the College's activity.

We have identified several opportunities to develop new courses, which are expected to contribute to increased income from 2024.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly has no share capital.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

K Wicklow

J R Galloway

(Resigned 14 October 2022)

E C Liu

H Thomas

N Haines

D Jay

G Webb

H Lansdown

(Appointed 20 October 2022)

T M Horta Reis da Silva

(Appointed 9 February 2023)

The serving trustees have the power to co opt new trustees. New trustees are assisted through their induction by existing trustees and officials of the charity. None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £5 in the event of a winding up.

Qualifying third party indemnity provisions

The duties of the Board of Directors/Trustees are:

- To ensure the College's sustainability by working with the Principal and management team to agree the College's vision/philosophy, and strategic direction.
- To ensure that the vision and ethos of the College are sustained and that the College works to achieve its strategic aims and charitable objectives.
- To ensure that the long-term viability of the College is maintained through monitoring the performance of the College, including financial and managerial aspects.
- To monitor the professional, commercial and reputational risks facing the College, ensuring that there are effective systems of control and risk management.
- To protect the reputation of the College by being assured that clear regulations, policies and procedures that adhere to legislative and regulatory requirements are in place, ethical in nature, and followed.
- To uphold the College's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and to ensure that academic staff have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs and privileges they have at the College.
- To receive assurance that academic governance is effective by working with the Academic Board to maintain academic and research standards, ensure enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment, and ensure that academic risks are effectively managed*.
- To promote equality and diversity throughout the institution, including in relation to its own operation.
- To work with the Principal and management team to be assured that effective control and due diligence take place in relation to institutionally significant external activities**.
- To review demands made by the processes of university validation and professional accreditation, assess the resource implications of these demands, and determine what response the College should make.
- To ensure that the College's governance structures and processes are fit for purpose by referencing them against recognised standards of good practice, including the HE Code of Governance.
- To appoint the Principal, support and to advise him/her in delivery of the College's objectives, and terminate his/her contract as appropriate.
- To appoint either two Directors or one Director and one senior member of the College staff to undertake appraisal of the Principal.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

- To receive requests for mediation from staff and implement mediation processes as appropriate, when the College's standard processes (including the "sorting out" process) have been used without achieving a satisfactory outcome.
- To receive appeals at the appeal stage of the staff disciplinary and grievance procedures, and to nominate a Director to decide on the appeal.
- To nominate one or more Director(s) to the Hearing Committee of the appeals stage of the student grievance procedure or of the Student disciplinary procedures, when appropriate.

* Including partnerships and collaboration, recruitment and retention of students, provision of information, quality assurance and research integrity.

** External activities with substantial potential for financial or reputational risk, including fund-raising, donations, corporate sponsored research, subsidiaries, partnerships and other commercial activities.

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that Henton & Co LLP be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The trustees' report, including the strategic report, was approved by the Board of Trustees.

H Thomas

Trustee

19 October 2023

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

The trustees, who are also the directors of Northern College of Acupuncture for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Northern College of Acupuncture (the 'charity') for the year ended 30 June 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the statement of financial position, the statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 30 June 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- in all material aspects meet the requirements of the OfS's accounts direction.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees' report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE TRUSTEES OF NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

We have obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the Charity through discussions with senior management and review of the regulatory framework of any professional or membership bodies that the Charity is a part of. The Charity uses third parties to ensure that it remains up to date with changes and to review compliance with all its legal and regulatory requirements. In making our assessment of detecting irregularities, including fraud, we have discussed the issue with management who have advised that there have been no changes and the Charity remains compliant with its legal and regulatory requirement. Nothing has been brought to light in completing our audit work that contradicts this.

The laws and regulations identified as significant include Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, those produced by the Office for Students, health and safety legislation, employment laws, data protection, and relevant tax laws.

In making our assessment of the susceptibility of the Charity's financial statements to material misstatement, we have also considered how fraud might occur. Our risk assessment procedures include: enquiry of members and management to understand the high level policies and procedures in place to prevent and detect fraud and reading Board minutes.

As a result of these procedures we identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas:

- revenue recognition and in particular the risk that revenue is recorded in the wrong period; and
- subjective accounting estimates.

Both risks arise due to a potential desire to present stronger results. As required by auditing standards we also identified and addressed the risk of management override of controls.

We performed the following procedures to address the risks of fraud identified:

- reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation;
- auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business;
- assessing significant accounting estimates for bias; and
- testing the timing and recognition of income and, in particular, that it was appropriately recognised.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE TRUSTEES OF NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

No instances of material misstatement or fraud have been noted in the audit of the accounts for the year ended 30 June 2023.

The engagement partner has assessed that the engagement team has the appropriate competence and capabilities to identify or recognise non-compliance with laws and regulations, affected by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the Charity's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed. No matters of non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud were identified by the engagement team.

Our audit procedures were designed to respond to risks of material misstatement in the financial statements, recognising that the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery, misrepresentations or through collusion. There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures performed and the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we are to become aware of it.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Brett Davis (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Henton & Co LLP

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
124 Acomb Road
York
YO24 4EY

19 October 2023

Henton & Co LLP is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

		Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Notes							
Income from:							
Charitable activities	3	1,046,158	-	1,046,158	1,098,565	-	1,098,565
Investments	4	3,200	-	3,200	1,193	-	1,193
Total income		1,049,358	-	1,049,358	1,099,758	-	1,099,758
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	5 6	1,037,482	1,845	1,039,327	1,155,149	-	1,155,149
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net movement in funds		11,876	(1,845)	10,031	(55,391)	-	(55,391)
Fund balances at 1 July 2022		286,763	18,705	305,468	342,154	18,705	360,859
Fund balances at 30 June 2023		298,639	16,860	315,499	286,763	18,705	305,468

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		13,951		15,118
Current assets					
Stocks	12	3,600		3,600	
Debtors	13	42,671		45,315	
Cash at bank and in hand		470,125		464,995	
		<u>516,396</u>		<u>513,910</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	<u>(214,848)</u>		<u>(223,560)</u>	
Net current assets			301,548		290,350
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>315,499</u>		<u>305,468</u>
Income funds					
Restricted funds	15	16,860		18,705	
Unrestricted funds		298,639		286,763	
		<u>315,499</u>		<u>305,468</u>	

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 30 June 2023, although an audit has been carried out under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 19 October 2023

D Jay
Trustee

R Blackwell
Accountable Officer

Company Registration No. 02400056

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	19		5,228		(15,376)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(3,298)		(2,988)	
Investment income received		3,200		1,193	
Net cash used in investing activities			(98)		(1,795)
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents			5,130		(17,171)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			464,995		482,166
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			470,125		464,995

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Northern College of Acupuncture is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is 61 Micklegate, York, YO1 6LJ.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the the Companies Act 2006, and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) and Regulatory advice 9: Accounts direction issued by the Office for Students. The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Fee income is recognised in the period in which students are studying.

Clinic receipts are recognised in the period in which the service is provided.

Grants for immediate expenditure are accounted for when they become receivable. Grants received for specific purposes are treated as restricted funds. Grants which are received for future accounting periods are deferred and recognised in those periods.

Income from the sale of goods is recognised when receivable by the charity.

Rent is recognised when receivable by the charity.

Interest is recognised when receivable by the charity.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred and is classified under the headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures and fittings	15%/20%/25% reducing balance
-----------------------	------------------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Stocks

Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell. Cost comprises direct materials and, where applicable, direct labour costs and those overheads that have been incurred in bringing the stocks to their present location and condition. Items held for distribution at no or nominal consideration are measured the lower of replacement cost and cost.

Net realisable value is the estimated selling price less all estimated costs of completion and costs to be incurred in marketing, selling and distribution.

1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.12 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

1.13 Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Charitable activities

	Teaching fees	Clinic receipts	Sales of books	Practitioner Hub	Total	Total
	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Sales within charitable activities	953,683	59,603	3,630	29,242	1,046,158	1,098,565

For the year ended 30 June 2022

	Teaching fees	Clinic receipts	Sales of books	Practitioner Hub	Total
	£	£	£	£	2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Sales within charitable activities	1,024,024	58,128	3,361	13,052	1,098,565

Note on grant and fee income:

	2022-23	2021-22
Grant income from the OfS	0	0
Grant income from other bodies	0	0
Fee income for taught awards (exclusive of VAT)	£937,228	£1,010,944
Fee income for research awards (exclusive of VAT)	N/A	N/A
Fee income from non-qualifying courses (exclusive of VAT)	£16,455	£13,080
Total grant and fee income	£953,683	£1,024,024

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

4 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2023	2022
	£	£
Rental income	1,693	693
Interest receivable	1,507	500
	<u>3,200</u>	<u>1,193</u>

5 Details of grant and fee income

	2023	2022
	£	£
The source of grants and fee income is as follows:		
Fee income for taught awards	953,683	1,024,024
Total grant and fee income	<u>953,683</u>	<u>1,024,024</u>

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

6 Charitable activities

	College and clinic 2023 £	College and clinic 2022 £
Staff costs	537,155	562,092
Depreciation and impairment	4,465	7,563
Needles and moxa	3,841	5,616
Laundry and sharpz	639	2,147
Herbs	7,608	12,497
Lecturers fees	183,603	211,877
Lecturers other	14,370	11,841
University registration fees	24,422	84,375
Teaching aids	2,387	4,744
Accreditation and validation	43,954	45,632
Library and e-learning	13,292	13,187
Books resale	1,202	693
Research	1,111	1,780
Other charitable expenditure	197,228	187,584
	<u>1,035,277</u>	<u>1,151,628</u>
Share of governance costs (see note 7)	4,050	3,521
	<u>1,039,327</u>	<u>1,155,149</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	1,037,482	1,155,149
Restricted funds	1,845	-
	<u>1,039,327</u>	<u>1,155,149</u>

7 Support costs

	Support costs £	Governance costs £	2023 £	2022 £
Audit fees	-	4,050	4,050	3,521
	<u>-</u>	<u>4,050</u>	<u>4,050</u>	<u>3,521</u>
Analysed between				
Charitable activities	-	4,050	4,050	3,521
	<u>-</u>	<u>4,050</u>	<u>4,050</u>	<u>3,521</u>

Governance costs includes payments to the auditors of £4,050 (2022- £3,521) for audit fees.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

8 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year. No trustee expenses have been incurred by the charity.

9 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Teaching	12	13
Administration	18	17
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	30	30
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Employment costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	497,784	517,944
Social security costs	30,307	34,349
Other pension costs	9,064	9,799
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	537,155	562,092
	<hr/>	<hr/>

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

9 Employees

(Continued)

No employees received employee benefits of more than £60,000.

The head of the College received a basic salary of £58,656 (2022 : £57,508) and pension contributions of £1,321 (2022 : £1,321).

The Principal's basic salary is 1.8 times (2022: 1.7 times) the median pay of staff, where the median pay is calculated on a full-time equivalent basis for the salaries paid by the provider to its staff. The Principal's total remuneration is 1.8 times (2022: 1.7 times) the median total remuneration of staff, where the median total remuneration is calculated on a full-time equivalent basis for the total remuneration paid by the charity to its staff.

There were no payments to the Principal in lieu of pension contributions, of dividends, of performance-related pay or other bonuses, and no other taxable or non-taxable benefits or other remuneration. There were no salary sacrifice arrangements. All pension contributions are identified above.

Justification of the Principal's remuneration

The College is a small HE provider, with around 200 students, and is also a registered charity. As is usual for small providers, the Principal's key tasks cover a wide range from the strategic to the operational, and they include financial, professional and legal responsibilities as well as involvement in marketing and managing the senior academic team.

The Principal has been in post for 24 years. Under his leadership the College has expanded its provision from one MSc course to five MSc courses and one BSc course, has survived substantial economic challenges, especially the 2008 banking crisis, has built up its financial reserves, and enhanced its reputation as a quality provider with a strong commitment to research. In recent years the College has had successful reports from the Quality Assurance Agency for HE and been registered with the Office for Students. In the National Student Survey the College consistently achieves high scores for overall student satisfaction and generally scores which are above the sector averages.

The Principal's performance is judged via an annual performance review conducted by two members of the Board of Directors/Trustees, and on an ongoing basis at regular meetings of the Board of Directors/Trustees.

Compensation for loss of office

There were no payments as compensation for loss of office to any staff member during the year.

10 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £
Cost	
At 1 July 2022	126,755
Additions	3,298
	<hr/>
At 30 June 2023	130,053
	<hr/>
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 July 2022	111,637
Depreciation charged in the year	4,465
	<hr/>
At 30 June 2023	116,102
	<hr/>
Carrying amount	
At 30 June 2023	13,951
	<hr/> <hr/>
At 30 June 2022	15,118
	<hr/> <hr/>

12 Stocks

	2023 £	2022 £
Raw materials and consumables	3,600	3,600
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

13 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	13,231	24,607
Other debtors	420	1,831
Prepayments and accrued income	29,020	18,877
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	42,671	45,315
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Other taxation and social security	7,989	9,160
Trade creditors	24,143	21,346
Other creditors	7,391	540
Accruals and deferred income	175,325	192,514
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	214,848	223,560
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

15 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 July 2021	Incoming resources	Balance at 1 July 2022	Resources expended	Balance at 30 June 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Supporting students	18,705	-	18,705	(1,845)	16,860
	<u>18,705</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18,705</u>	<u>(1,845)</u>	<u>16,860</u>

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Fund balances at 30 June 2023 are represented by:					
Tangible assets	13,951	-	13,951	-	15,118
Current assets/(liabilities)	284,688	16,860	301,548	18,705	290,350
	<u>298,639</u>	<u>16,860</u>	<u>315,499</u>	<u>18,705</u>	<u>305,468</u>

17 Operating lease commitments

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Within one year	50,000	50,000
Between two and five years	220,000	215,000
In over five years	110,000	165,000
	<u>380,000</u>	<u>430,000</u>

18 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2022 - none).

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

19	Cash generated from operations	2023 £	2022 £
	Surplus/(deficit) for the year	10,031	(55,391)
	Adjustments for:		
	Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(3,200)	(1,193)
	Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	4,465	7,563
	Movements in working capital:		
	(Increase)/decrease in stocks	-	2,527
	Decrease in debtors	2,644	42,051
	(Decrease) in creditors	(8,712)	(10,933)
	Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	5,228	(15,376)
20	Analysis of changes in net funds		
	The charity had no debt during the year.		

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE

ADDENDUM TO ACCOUNTS

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Called up share capital £	Total Funds £	Total £
AT 1 JULY 2020	–	355,014	355,014
Surplus for the year		5,845	5,845
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	–	360,859	360,859
Dividends paid and payable	–	–	–
TOTAL INVESTMENTS BY AND DISTRIBUTIONS TO OWNERS	–	–	–
AT 30 JUNE 2021	–	360,859	360,859
(Deficit) for the year		(55,391)	(55,391)
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	–	305,468	305,468
Dividends paid and payable	–	–	–
TOTAL INVESTMENTS BY AND DISTRIBUTIONS TO OWNERS	–	–	–
AT 30 JUNE 2022	–	305,468	305,468
Surplus for the year		10,031	10,031
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	–	315,499	315,499
Dividends paid and payable	–	–	–
TOTAL INVESTMENTS BY AND DISTRIBUTIONS TO OWNERS	–	–	–
AT 30 JUNE 2023	–	315,499	315,499

I confirm that the above figures have been derived from the audited accounts of the company.

Brett Davis (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Henton & Co LLP
Chartered Accountant & Statutory Auditor
124 Acomb Road
York
YO24 4EY