

Part Two: The Board's Seventeen Essential Requirements and Other Criteria of Accreditation

Underpinning all the Board's work are agreed principles and professional values. Members of the profession have agreed on two separate lists of value statements, to reflect the fact that two different sets of professional practices need to be represented in all institutions which wish to provide the profession with newly qualified practitioners. In the first list - 2.1.1 below - there are the values and principles that inform the practice of acupuncture itself, and in the second list - 2.1.2 below - are those values and principles that should inform *educational* practice when preparing students of acupuncture to take their place in the profession. Inevitably there is some overlap and repetition in the two lists, which are subject to periodic review by the British Acupuncture Council. In 2006 the BAAC also published the 'Standards of Practice for Acupuncture' and the Board strongly endorses the use of the Standards in curriculum development and with students.

More specific and detailed criteria underpinning the Board's accreditation process and procedures are the Seventeen Essential Requirements which are comprehensively described in 2.2. Together, the principles and the Seventeen Essential Requirements provide the criteria with which institutions seeking BAAB accreditation must become familiar and against which their courses will be judged by the Board's accreditation teams at each stage of the accreditation process.

2.1 Principles and Values for Acupuncture and for Acupuncture Education

2.1.1 Statement of Professional Values from the British Acupuncture Council

The practice of acupuncture seeks to be:

- **patient-centred** – patients are at the centre of the therapeutic process and their individual experiences of health and illness are acknowledged and respected;
- **compassionate** – an approach that brings sensitivity, empathy, humility and compassion to the therapeutic relationship;
- **ethical** – where personal and professional boundaries are monitored and maintained, confidentiality is upheld, dignity is respected, informed consent is ensured and trust is honoured;
- **holistic** – because treatment is based on an understanding that mind, body and spirit are integral, acupuncture can offer the possibility for (re)discovering what it might mean to be fully oneself;
- **dynamic** – an awareness of rhythm, flow, balance, harmony and resonance, and the ways that changes in seasons and cycles of life inform both diagnosis and treatment;
- **therapeutic** – acupuncture acts as a catalyst for change and self-healing;
- **responsive** – the practitioner engages with, and responds to, the changes in the patient's condition over time, and integrates the patient's evolving priorities and choices;
- **enabling** – creating opportunities for patients to learn about themselves and their health and supporting them in making informed choices, such as lifestyle changes, which may advance the healing process;
- **practice-led** – understanding that acupuncture evolves and develops from a synthesis of practice and theory, where practice is both informed by theory and creative of theory;

- **effective** – drawing on acupuncture's roots in both science and tradition, practitioners are committed to providing effective treatments with successful outcomes;
- **creative** – every therapeutic encounter brings with it the potential for a fresh and creative response and for the development of the practitioner's artistry and the patient's self-awareness;
- **reflective** – engaging in an ongoing and cumulative process of self-evaluation with cycles of reflection, deliberation and action;
- **preventive** – the practitioner may identify potential disharmonies, often before symptoms are present, and may work with the patient to restore and maintain good health;
- **collaborative** – working with colleagues and other professionals to ensure that the patient receives the best possible care and advice;
- **accountable** – where practitioners individually and collectively are committed to transparent systems of accountability;
- **competent** – practitioners have a commitment to practising skilfully and competently, which includes knowing the limits of their competence, to recognising that professional judgements are open to question, and to building their knowledge base by giving a high priority to their continuing professional development;
- **safe** – maintaining high standards of hygiene and cleanliness, handling emergencies and adverse events correctly, knowing when and where treatment is contra-indicated, and taking responsibility for referral where appropriate.

2.1.2 Values and Aims of Acupuncture Education

The following statement has been formally adopted by both the British Acupuncture Council and the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board. It constitutes the professional values and educational aims which underlie good practice in acupuncture education.

Acupuncture education aims to be:

- **student-focused** – making programmes accessible, attractive, and challenging in terms of both personal and professional development, whilst recognising the individuality of students and making use of the unique contribution that their wealth of experience and talent may bring to the learning situation;
- **practice-led** – rooted in the art and science of acupuncture as an empirical and practical professional activity informed by theory and creative of theory, and recognising that, as acupuncture is a practice-based profession, teachers will normally remain engaged in practice;
- **patient-centred** – developing practitioners who constantly strive to improve the care of their patients through reflective practice, and who can demonstrate that they are safe, competent, ethical and effective. They need also to be aware of the limits to their competence and when to refer to other healthcare professionals;
- **appropriate** – preparing practitioners who have the knowledge, skills, attitudes and commitment to continuing professional development, necessary to function confidently, competently and with sensitivity, in independent, collaborative and multiprofessional settings;
- **responsive** – capable of adapting to changing healthcare needs and perceptions and to the evolving criteria and expectations of the profession, making full use of research findings to inform curriculum design, delivery and evaluation;
- **collaborative** – creating opportunities for shared learning with other healthcare professions, recognising a common purpose in the wider community;
- **equitable** – providing equality of opportunity in all institutional policies and practices;

- **effective** – achieving the highest standards, whilst making the most efficient use of resources, recognising that there needs to be a sufficient number of students to ensure peer support and to provide a collegiate experience, and that an appropriate teacher/student ratio for practical classes should normally be maintained;
- **accountable** – open to scrutiny and explicable in professional terms.

2.2 The Seventeen Essential Requirements

The Board's professional and educational standards are listed below in seventeen categories using three headings:

The Seventeen Essential Requirements are the seventeen minimum requirements for a licentiate-level course which prepares individuals to enter the acupuncture profession. *All institutions and acupuncture courses will need to demonstrate substantial compliance with these requirements in order to be accredited by the Board.* Where courses are based in a recognised higher education institution, some of the institutional requirements listed below may not apply directly to the faculty offering the course, but appropriate and equivalent evidence of compliance will be sought from the institution as a whole.

The Criteria for Accreditation are the evaluative benchmarks by which the Board determines if an institution meets the Seventeen Essential Requirements. They expand and elaborate upon the Essential Requirements, describing in greater detail aspects upon which the Board expects the institution to focus in its development. Although institutions must comply with the Criteria, these are not intended to be prescriptive as to the exact method of compliance, allowing institutions some flexibility in meeting them. The Criteria do not exceed or alter the Seventeen Essential Requirements themselves.

The Guidelines suggest additional interpretation and definition for certain Criteria. The Guidelines are suggestions provided by the Board for interpreting and meeting the Criteria. An institution is not required to comply with Guidelines; in that respect they differ from the Seventeen Essential Requirements and Criteria. Guidelines are flexible and may be interpreted by different institutions in different ways.

Essential Requirement 1: Policy

The institution shall have an overall policy or mission statement. It should indicate the institution's overall intentions/mission/aims. It should contain the main organisational divisions of the institution and the number and name of all educational courses it offers in the field of health care.

Criterion 1.1 Relationship: This overall policy statement should link with the institution's education policy statement and its strategic plan, and should be formulated and subscribed to, as appropriate, by its governors, staff and students. Within a university setting, the relevant faculty, school or department should provide a policy context for the courses being offered.

Guideline: The statement of policy should provide direction for the institution. The statement should incorporate the purpose for which the institution was founded and the point of view it represents. It should relate to the institution's resources — human, physical and financial.

Criterion 1.2 Policies: The institution must provide clear statements of its course management policies in respect of those matters that support the fair and efficient delivery of the course.

Guideline: Brief written statements should be included about structural matters that impact upon the course and its students: equal opportunities policies; publicity and marketing strategy; recruitment and selection policies, including ways of assessing and giving academic credit to mature students for their life experience and their prior learning (AP(E)L); procedures for quality assurance outside the course itself; policy to encourage the continuing professional development of staff (CPD); policies on staff and student participation and representation in course and institutional committees.

Criterion 1.3 Review: Statements of institutional policy must be reviewed periodically and revised when necessary, using the Board's Annual Critical Course Review process.

Guideline: The re-examination of policy should determine whether the mission statements are still relevant, whether they are being fulfilled, and whether the statements are understood adequately by all those involved. This review process should include comments from representatives of the student body, teaching staff, administration, professional acupuncturists, the public and the governing body.

Essential Requirement 2: Legal Organisation

The institution shall be legally constituted and shall be in compliance with all statutory regulations applicable to it.

Criterion 2.1 Constitution: The institution must provide evidence of its legal constitution and reflect this in its structure, function and policies.

Essential Requirement 3: Institutional Management

The institution shall have a governing body and/or advisory board which include representation reflecting the public interest. In order to conform with ER 3 all teaching institutions and programme leaders are expected to look carefully at, and to refer in their documentation when appropriate, to Appendix J of this Handbook – Principles of Good Governance.

Criterion 3.1 Representation: The governing body (or advisory board), whose duties and responsibilities must be clearly defined, must exercise ultimate and general control over the institution's affairs, and, in so doing, must provide adequate representation of the public interest. In an institution which is a sole-proprietorship, partnership, Registered Charity or Limited Company, a governing body or advisory board shall be created and utilised to satisfy this Criterion.

Guideline: Governing body members should represent the founders, benefactors and the general public served by the institution. The Governing body members should be responsible for directing the accomplishment of the purposes for which the institution was founded, and may therefore be expected to include professionals and educationalists among their ranks. They should be responsible for establishing broad policy and long-range

planning, appointing the Principal and/or Dean, developing financial resources, and playing a major role in the development of external relations.

Guideline: Governing body decisions should be made following representation by all interested parties.

Criterion 3.2 Meetings: Governing body or advisory board meetings must be held at regularly stated times. An Agenda for the meeting must be prepared and accurate minutes of the meeting kept and filed.

Guideline: Meetings of the governing body or advisory board should be sufficiently often and of sufficient length to enable it to fulfil competently its responsibilities to the institution.

Criterion 3.3 Responsibilities: The management of the institution's financial matters should be the responsibility of a body or committee separate from the committee or board responsible for academic affairs.

Essential Requirement 4: Administration

The institution shall have a Director, Principal or Dean whose full-time or major responsibility is to the institution, and an administrative staff of a size and organisational structure which is appropriate to the size and purpose of the institution.

Criterion 4.1 Institutional Administration: The Director, Principal or Dean shall be responsible to the governing body for the entire operation of an institution, and shall be directly responsible for the administration of the policies and procedures as set forth by the governing body.

Criterion 4.2 Academic Administration: Institutions must have defined clearly the academic responsibility for facilitating curriculum development and evaluation of courses, and vested this in a committee or board (e.g. an Academic Board), chaired by the Director, Principal or Dean.

Criterion 4.3 Contract of service: The Director, Dean or Principal should be in possession of a clearly set out contract, agreed by those in overall control of the institution, which provides him or her with a clear and workable framework within which to take full responsibility for the day-to-day direction of the institution.

Essential Requirement 5: Records

The institution shall have appropriate record-keeping systems.

Criterion 5.1 Permanent Records: While observing the requirements of the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation, the institution shall maintain and safeguard accurate academic records which document the attainment of the institution's requirements.

Criterion 5.2 Data: The institution must maintain data which will facilitate the compilation of the following records and statistics: student profiles, showing the number of students enrolled, progressing into each year, graduated, deferred and

readmitted; admissions data showing the number of applications received and accepted; the ages, and the educational and ethnic backgrounds of the student body.

Guideline: These data should be in a form and in such detail that enables analysis for the institution's critical course reviews.

Guideline: Institutions are advised that previous students may request transcripts of their personal academic and learning record when applying for registration in other countries.

Criterion 5.3 *Clinical Records:* The institution must maintain accurate, secure, confidential and complete clinical records of patients currently being treated by students in its own teaching clinic. It must also ensure that students keep similarly complete clinical records of all the patients they treat in other clinical placements.

Criterion 5.4 *BAC Code of Safe Practice:* Institutions must review annually their compliance with the Code of Safe Practice and keep records of their self-audits for a minimum of three years – see Appendix H.

Essential Requirement 6: Equal Opportunities Policy

The institution shall have adopted and implemented a comprehensive policy demonstrating its commitment to equal opportunities.

Criterion 6.1 *Scope:* The policy should underpin all the institution's activities.

Guideline: The policy should explicitly demonstrate its application to students, to full-time, part-time and occasional employees and to patients.

Criterion 6.2 *Implementation:* All institutional procedures, documents and publications must, where appropriate, indicate an awareness of, and a commitment to, equal opportunities.

Guideline: The institution's prospectus, or other official publication, as well as published staff recruitment material, should state explicitly an institutional commitment to equal opportunities and to the institution's desire to reflect diversity in its population.

Guideline: In the course of teaching and learning the institution's staff and students should be encouraged to embrace diversity, and to avoid the use of either written or spoken language which may be deemed to be discriminatory or offensive to particular groups.

Criterion 6.3 *Review:* In common with other institutional policies, the Policy for Equal Opportunities must be monitored for effectiveness, reviewed periodically and revised when necessary.

Guideline: A specific staff member or team should have overall responsibility for monitoring and developing the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Criterion 6.4 *Complaints:* The policy should include fair, efficient and published procedures for receiving and responding to complaints and these procedures should embrace all employees, patients, students and other stake-holders in the institution. (See also Criterion 7.7 for staff grievances and Criterion 8.3 for student grievances.)

Essential Requirement 7: Staffing

The institution shall have staff adequate for the educational courses offered.

Criterion 7.1 Number and Qualifications: The institution shall maintain teaching staff who are appropriately qualified and numerically sufficient to perform the responsibilities assigned to them. All core staff teaching or supervising the practice of acupuncture should be BAcC members or have an equivalent acupuncture education, be members of a professional body with an active Code of Ethics/Professional Conduct and have full professional indemnity insurance.

Guideline: Institutions should use the BAcC's 'Guidelines for Acupuncture Education' to shape all staffing policies, so that for example in the teaching clinic the student-supervisor ratio should conform to the BAcC recommendation of no more than 4:1.

Criterion 7.2 Background and Experience: The general education, the professional education, the teaching experience and the practical professional experience of all teaching staff shall be appropriate to the subject taught. Every staff member shall provide evidence of successful experience, and of continuing professional development, in his or her field and also in the field of education.

Guideline: Institutions should have a recruitment policy of employing teaching staff with a first degree or its equivalent, and a staff development policy of encouraging teaching staff to develop the reflective and critical approach to practice which characterises higher education; in addition, a proportion of the institution's teachers should either have or be working towards a relevant postgraduate qualification, or be committed to undertake practitioner research of a publishable standard.

Guideline: Teaching staff should be developing their knowledge, their understanding and their competence as classroom teachers, as assessors of student learning, as curriculum evaluators and as research-minded practitioners committed to their own continuing professional development as teachers.

Guideline: Staff supervising the clinical experience of students should be developing their awareness of effective approaches to clinical supervision, their compliance with the BAcC's Codes and their commitment to their own continuing professional development as supervisors.

Criterion 7.3 Convictions: All persons employed, or seeking employment, in whatever capacity, shall be required to disclose any convictions, including 'spent' convictions, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. Such persons shall not withhold consent from the institution to make proper enquiries as to their background and suitability, and the institution shall undertake such enquiries.

Criterion 7.4 Policy and Procedures: A staffing strategy should be in place outlining the recruitment, appointment, induction, promotion, retention and development of appropriately qualified staff members. The strategy should include measures to develop all teaching staff's understanding and practice of education, as well as their professional development in their subject.

Part Two: The Board's Seventeen Essential Requirements

Guideline: All teaching staff should be made aware of the institution's commitment to the rigorous, self-critical review process required by the Board, and be encouraged to develop their own form of self-critical reflective practice as a teacher and, where appropriate, as a practitioner.

Criterion 7.5 Professional Development: Conditions of service shall be adequate and equitable, and administered ethically, to provide staff members with academic freedom, adequate preparation time and opportunities for professional growth and development. A named member of staff should have responsibility for the staff development policy.

Guideline: Staff contracts should specify responsibilities clearly and staff appraisal should be carried out regularly.

Guideline: Each staff member should have an agreed development plan and the institution's provisions for professional development should be reviewed periodically.

Guideline: Staff should be encouraged to develop a research-minded approach appropriate to professional courses in higher education.

Guideline: Staff should be encouraged to understand and respect the diverse traditions within acupuncture.

Criterion 7.6 Communication: Provision shall be made for regular and open communication among members of the staff, and between the staff and administrative officers of the institution.

Guideline: The staff shall adopt, subject to the approval of the governing body, a set of guidelines which delineate staff administration and responsibilities within the institution. The staff shall hold regular meetings to consider educational policies and issues. Minutes of these meetings shall be taken by a member of the staff elected to do so and shall be kept in a permanent file within the institution.

Criterion 7.7 Grievances: The institution must have fair, efficient and published procedures for receiving, reviewing and responding to grievances expressed by any member of its staff. (See also Criterion 6.4 for general complaints and Criterion 8.3 for student grievances. *NB This may be a single comprehensive policy.*)

Criterion 7.8 BAAC Code of Safe Practice: Clinic supervisors and other practitioner-teachers who work in clinics with students must annually review their compliance with the Code of Safe Practice (see Appendix H).

Essential Requirement 8: Students' rights and responsibilities

The institution shall develop a statement of the rights, privileges and responsibilities of students and of disciplinary proceedings for failing to meet those responsibilities. The statement will include the limitation of the Institution's accountability regarding students' future acceptance into BAAC membership. This statement shall be made available to students through the prospectus, student handbook, or other appropriate means. All students' services and activities provided by the institution should reflect the institution's objectives.

Criterion 8.1 Association: Policies shall foster professional associations among students, staff, and the administration, and provide opportunities for the development of individual potential.

Criterion 8.2 Opportunity to be heard: Provision shall be made for obtaining students' views and for their participation in institutional and course decision-making.

Criterion 8.3 Grievances: The institution must have fair, efficient and published procedures for receiving, reviewing and responding to grievances expressed by students. The institution shall include the Board's address in its published policy on student complaints so that if a student registers a legitimate complaint, believing that the institution has breached an Essential Requirement, Criterion, Policy, or Procedure of the Board, the student may contact the Board. (See also Criterion 6.4 for general complaints and Criterion 7.7 for staff grievances.)

Guideline: The institution should include, in students' handbooks, specific guidance about precisely when a complaint to the Board might be appropriate. Extracts from the Board's Handbook may be included if thought helpful.

Criterion 8.4 Policy: The institution shall have a clear disciplinary policy outlining all the processes involved, and the rights of students who are alleged to have breached the institution's expectations of student responsibilities.

Guideline: Such policy will normally be clear about the nature of student misconduct and about different stages of the disciplinary procedure, including the number and type of relevant warnings, the support systems available to students 'in trouble' and how to access the appeals procedure.

Criterion 8.5 Potential fitness to practise acupuncture: Declaration of Health Status and Criminal Records: The institution shall have a clear statement, reflected in their prospectus and all relevant student publications, that eligibility for BAAC membership on graduation is dependent not only on satisfactorily completing the course, but also on the individual graduate being judged by the BAAC as fit to practise as a professional acupuncturist.

The institution shall have a clear policy requiring students to have made a health and criminal record declaration on admission and to disclose to the institution if their health status deteriorates or they acquire a criminal record during their course. Institutions may choose to consult the BAAC for an indicative judgement if there is a doubt, but this is indicative only and the case proper will be dealt with formally on eventual application to the BAAC for membership according to the procedures which it has adopted.

Guideline: The institution will make clear to potential and enrolled students that, while they will do what is possible to ensure that graduates will be able to register as BAAC members, the decision is that of the BAAC.

Essential Requirement 9: Learning Resources

The institution must provide learning resources and equipment adequate for the educational courses offered, or must have made specific, long-term written arrangements for reasonable access by students to such resources.

Criterion 9.1 Resources and Access: The institution must have its own library, collection of learning resources and appropriate information technology for students, or it must have executed long-term written contracts providing for the use of other specific library resources, with adequate and reasonable accessibility.

Guideline: The library's materials, services and related learning resources, including IT equipment should facilitate and improve learning, foster inquiry and intellectual development, and support the educational programme.

Guideline: The library and learning resources should be housed in a convenient location, be available to students, staff and the community, as appropriate, and they should contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the institution.

Guideline: There should be a designated member of staff to oversee the running of the library and other learning resources.

Guideline: All students should have access to a computer within the institution, for the preparation of assignments and for internet access.

Essential Requirement 10: Institutional Resources

The institution must provide facilities which are safe, accessible, functional, appropriately maintained and sufficient to house the course and to provide for its effective functioning, and to accommodate the staff and the student body. It shall provide a clinic and appropriate media and learning equipment adequate for the educational courses offered and, if necessary, shall have made specific arrangements for clinical learning in other healthcare settings.

Criterion 10.1 Classroom and clinic size and equipment: The institution shall provide clinic and classroom space, properly equipped and appropriate to its curriculum and size.

Criterion 10.2 Health and Safety: Facilities shall meet all applicable legislation including fire and first aid, health and safety standards. In addition, the clinic's premises and facilities must enable staff and students to comply with the BACC's Code of Safe Practice.

Criterion 10.3 Behaviour in Clinic: The institution shall have a clear policy about all aspects of behaviour in the clinic and in clinical practice.

Guideline: There should be a named member of staff with overall responsibility for all aspects of the clinic.

Guideline: Institutions should have a policy on whether and in what circumstances teaching staff (including clinical supervisors), who are employed by the institution to teach students and therefore to be involved with their assessment, are also permitted to treat students in their role as an acupuncture practitioner.

Criterion 10.4 Staff Facilities: Adequate facilities, space for meetings and appropriate media and learning equipment shall be available for the support of administrative, teaching and other staff, as well as for students.

Guideline: Facilities and equipment should be adequate for staff to maintain and process student records.

Criterion 10.5 Off-Campus Control: The institution must be directly responsible for all of its off-campus educational activities, and have systems for approving and monitoring off-campus clinical training.

Guideline: If components of the course are conducted at sites geographically separated from the main campus, the Principal, Dean, or other senior staff member should ensure that all educational components and services are of equivalent quality to that which is offered at the main site.

Essential Requirement 11: Finance

The institution shall have an adequate financial base for existing course commitments, must demonstrate adequate financial planning and must have an appropriate financial management system. In the case of an institution which is a sole-proprietorship, separate books and bank accounts for the course are required.

Criterion 11.1 Resources: The institution shall be financially stable, working to a business plan, and with resources sufficient to carry out its objectives and to support adequately its courses and activities, now and in the foreseeable future.

Guideline: The institution should have the financial capacity to respond to financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

Guideline: If an accumulated deficit has been recorded, a realistic plan to eliminate such deficit should be presented clearly, understood and approved by the governing body.

Guideline: The institution should demonstrate that if it were to cease functioning as an educational establishment or if the course were to be discontinued, it could make arrangements to complete the students' programme in a manner acceptable to the Board and without any extra financial burden on the students.

Criterion 11.2 Control: The institution shall have control of its financial resources and budgetary process and be free from undue influence or pressure from external funding sources or agencies.

Criterion 11.3 Expenditure: The income of the institution shall be expended to provide adequately for: instruction; administration; learning resources; student services and activities; staff development; course promotion and advertisement; course development; maintenance; equipment; supplies; and all other specific functions that are consistent with the goals of the course or the institution.

Criterion 11.4 Budgetary Process: The process by which the institution's budget is established, and resources allocated, must be defined clearly and implemented consistently.

Criterion 11.5 Management: The financial management system shall be set up to allow for a reviewed audit, each year, by an independent registered auditor.

Criterion 11.6 Insurances: Adequate and proper insurances shall be in place, including cover for employer's liability, third-party liability, buildings and contents, loss of business income, and professional indemnity insurance relating to the carrying out of acupuncture treatment by students. Contents cover should be on a 'new-for-old' basis.

Criterion 11.7 Audit: For the most recent year a full audit, certified by the independent registered auditor, must be available to provide a detailed and accurate picture of the financial status of the institution since the preceding year's audit. It must include a balance sheet, certified for one year, the statement of income and expenditure and any change in the balance of funds, all certified by an outside accountant. This audit shall be reviewed by the appropriate individuals or responsible groups within the institution.

Criterion 11.8 Indebtedness: Adequate resources shall be available to meet debt-service requirements of short-term and long-term indebtedness without adversely affecting the quality of the course.

Criterion 11.9 Payment and Refund Policy: The institution must state clearly the options available to students in the payment of fees and this statement must be tied to a fair, consistent and transparent fee structure and fee policy. Whatever fee options are offered to students, no payment should be accepted for more than one year of a course in advance. Any refund policy must be uniformly and fairly followed, in respect of tuition paid for by students but not taken up.

Essential Requirement 12: Official Publications

The institution must publish, and make available to students and to the general public, official publications which honestly and accurately set forth:

- 1. the current purposes and educational intentions;**
- 2. the entrance requirements and procedures;**
- 3. the rules and regulations for conduct and attendance;**
- 4. the opportunities and requirements for financial aid (if applicable);**
- 5. the procedures for discipline and/or dismissal (for academic and other reasons);**
- 6. the grievance procedures for students;**
- 7. the fees, their mode and timing of payment and equitable refund policies;**
- 8. the course completion requirements;**
- 9. the members of the administration;**
- 10. the professional education and qualifications of full-time and part-time staff;**
- 11. the members of the governing body and/or advisory board;**
- 12. the outline syllabus, academic calendar and course schedule;**
- 13. the institution's admissions and credit-transfer policies;**
- 14. an accurate description of each component of the course of study;**
- 15. a description of learning and other physical resources;**
- 16. the details of the qualification to be awarded upon successful completion of the course;**
- 17. any legal requirements for practice which may be applicable; and**
- 18. reference to the institution's policy on equal opportunities.**

Criterion 12.1 Honesty and Accuracy: Publicity, advertising and other literature shall represent the institution's educational opportunities to students and the public, in language which is accurate, honest, clear and unambiguous.

Guideline: Wherever possible, institutions should use the same wording in its descriptions of acupuncture practices and approaches as the BAAC uses in its Code of Professional Conduct and its Code of (and Guide to) Safe Practice, and which reflects the principles and values outlined in Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 of this Handbook.

Criterion 12.2 Disclosure: Courses, services and personnel not available during a given academic year must be identified clearly.

Criterion 12.3 Representation of opportunities: Publicity and advertising shall not misrepresent employment, career, or licensing prospects for successful students.

Criterion 12.4 Status with the Board: The institution shall report accurately its status and relationship with the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board in all relevant publications aimed at the public or students.

Criterion 12.5 Other Institutions: No institution shall make comparative reference in its publications to other institutions or accredited courses which are in a formal relationship with the Board.

Essential Requirement 13: Educational Policy

The institution or faculty shall have a formally adopted educational policy which includes the preparation of acupuncture professionals as independent and accountable healthcare practitioners. This shall be in proper relationship to the institutional or faculty intentions/objectives/mission as stated in the Institutional Document under Essential Requirement 1.

Criterion 13.1 Content: The statement of policy must include a brief description of the institution's or faculty's objectives and the effects the educational course is designed to have on students.

Criterion 13.2 Relationship: The institution or faculty must be able to link its statement of policy with its educational intentions, its resources, its current or projected courses, services and activities, and with the qualifications it awards.

Guideline: The statement of policy should guide the adoption of priorities in allocating resources, and should ensure consistency in the conduct of the institution's activities.

Guideline: Planned curriculum changes in course content, approaches to learning, mode of study, overall number of students or frequency of student intake should be reflected explicitly in changes to resource allocation.

Criterion 13.3 Staff ownership: All staff who have worked as teachers on the acupuncture course within the institution on more than an ad hoc or one-off basis, during any one academic year, must have had opportunities to contribute to and agree the educational policies of the institution or faculty, and to take part in the

Annual Critical Course Review. They should be able to demonstrate knowledge of those institutional policies which are relevant to the acupuncture course as a whole.

Guideline: Evidence should indicate the processes set up to involve staff in shaping and reviewing educational policy, and also the means by which they acquire knowledge about all institutional policies which are relevant to the acupuncture course as a whole.

Guideline: Named staff should have responsibility for specific elements of the course, (which may be expressed as subjects, modules, units, etc.), and for their ongoing monitoring, evaluation and curriculum development.

Criterion 13.4 Review: Statements of educational policy must be reviewed periodically and revised when necessary.

Guideline: The re-examination of policy should determine whether courses are relevant to stated objectives, whether the objectives are being met, and whether the statements of those objectives are understood adequately by all those involved. This review process should include comments from representatives of the student body, teaching staff, administration, practising acupuncturists and the governing body or advisory board.

Essential Requirement 14: Educational Programme

Admissions: The institution shall have adopted a statement explaining the prerequisites for entry and the methods for assessing prior learning, including the evaluation of credit transfer, other sponsored learning and experiential learning. This statement shall normally include as a minimum prerequisite for entry into the professional programme, at least 5 GCSEs at Grades A-C, or the equivalent Intermediate GNVQ, and 2 'A'-levels (or 4 A/S levels) or the equivalent Higher GNVQ. Mature students without these qualifications may be considered on merit. The institution shall ensure that prospective students are, at the point of entry and as far as is possible, fit to be prepared as acupuncturists.

Criterion 14.1 Policy Publication: The institution's admissions policy must be clearly stated in the institution's publications.

Criterion 14.2 Policy Planning: The admissions policy must involve careful planning and regular monitoring to determine whether it is serving the needs and interests of students, and the expressed objectives of the institution.

Criterion 14.3 Criteria: The admissions policy should make clear its criteria for accepting, or not accepting, various entry qualifications, and the criteria for assessing applicants without the standard entry prerequisites should be explicit and transparent.

Criterion 14.4 Prerequisites: If the institution is offering courses as a substitute for the minimum entry requirements above, for example Return to Study or 'Access' courses for mature learners, these must be clearly identified as courses distinct from the professional acupuncture course when accreditation is being sought. The institution must demonstrate that appropriate resources are available to sustain these courses without adversely affecting the acupuncture course.

Criterion 14.5 Potential fitness to practise acupuncture: Declaration of Health Status and Criminal Records: The institution shall ensure as far as they are able, that students entering the programme are fit to be prepared as acupuncturists, and meet

the BAcC requirements regarding declaration of health status and criminal record. Institutions may choose to consult the BAcC for an indicative judgement if there is a doubt, but this is indicative only and the case proper will be dealt with formally on eventual application to the BAcC for membership according to the procedures which it has adopted.

Essential Requirement 15: Programme of Study

The course shall satisfy minimum requirements in respect of course content, course length, professional clinical competence, and other standards of education established by the British Acupuncture Council in its Guidelines for Acupuncture Education, and must be designed to provide students with the information necessary to practise as independent acupuncturists.

Criterion 15.1 Course Length: The minimum length of the professional acupuncture course shall be three years full-time or the part-time equivalent. The hours must be based on a three year total of 3600, of which no fewer than 1200 hours must be structured time when students are in direct contact with a member of staff of the institution and no fewer than 400 hours in direct care/treatment of patients.

Criterion 15.2 Completion Certificate: To each person successfully completing the professional course, the institution shall award a certificate, diploma, or degree, following both general practice in higher education and relevant legislation.

Guideline: Independent colleges should provide a certificate of successful course completion indicating that such completion leads to a licentiate in acupuncture. If affiliated to a university, appropriate wording on the certificate must be agreed. Degrees may only be awarded by approved universities or higher education institutions, and they may wish to keep their degree certificate separate from the licentiate certificate which may only be issued on completion of an accredited acupuncture course.

Criterion 15.3 Relationship to Purpose: An institution offering a professional licentiate course in acupuncture should offer a course of study which is explicitly related to its statement of education policy, and it must be accurately described in its prospectus.

Criterion 15.4 Quality of learning: The course must be appropriate to an institution of higher education offering a professional licentiate course in acupuncture, and students should receive equivalent levels of personal support and, as far as possible, a collegiate experience of higher education styles of teaching and learning.

Guideline: The curriculum should contribute to the personal growth of students by helping them to understand fundamental theory, to develop responsible, independent judgement, to think critically and become 'research-minded', to appreciate the complexities of professional practice and to weigh up competing values.

Guideline: The course should be sufficiently rigorous in breadth and depth to enhance the education of independent acupuncture practitioners by developing their critical appreciation of the diversity of acupuncture traditions and approaches.

Guideline: The course should aim to establish in students the habit of lifelong learning in preparation for continuing professional development.

Criterion 15.5 Quality of Teaching: The teaching of students shall be a high priority for the institution; the curriculum shall be both stimulating and of a high academic standard, enabling students to prepare for safe, independent, professional practice in acupuncture, by gaining the knowledge and skills and developing the capacities outlined in the core curriculum published in the BAcC's Guidelines for Acupuncture Education.

Criterion 15.6 Code of Safe Practice: Before undertaking clinical practice on the course, students should be both conversant with, and demonstrably competent in, the standards of hygiene and clean needle technique as published in the BAcC's Code of Safe Practice. Before completing their course, students should have undertaken a clinical self-audit of their use of, and compliance with, the Code of Safe Practice.

Criterion 15.7 Code of Professional Conduct: During their course students shall have studied the BAcC's Code of Professional Conduct (and the associated Code of Disciplinary Procedures), and have become thoroughly familiar with the content of these codes and with their relevance to their future practice as morally accountable professionals.

Guideline: Institutions should assess their students' understanding of the Codes through the use of personal portfolios which contain reflective accounts of their practice experiences and which demonstrate an understanding of the limits of their current competence.

Criterion 15.8 Clinical Teaching: The institution shall provide a clinical programme of sufficient size, variety and quality to fulfil its educational purposes. Clinical teaching and practice shall consist of formal tuition and practical clinical training, and shall include supervised care of patients which allows the student to take increasing levels of responsibility for patient care, as indicated in the BAcC's Guidelines for Acupuncture Education.

Guideline: The majority of the clinical training undertaken by each student should take place in the institution's own clinic under the institution's own specialist supervisors.

Guideline: When a proportion of the students' clinical experience (i.e. clinical practice, not observation) is gained at off-campus premises, there should be written agreements covering the use of those premises, specifying how the institution's objectives, course requirements, and standards of clinical training are to be carried out.

Guideline: The institution should ensure that each student has the opportunity to observe, participate in, and, under supervision, take responsibility for the care of a varied caseload of patients receiving acupuncture. Supervision should be sufficient to ensure the safe and competent care of patients. Students should be enabled to reflect on their practice, to analyse it critically and relate it to theoretical perspectives.

Guideline: Appropriate emphasis should be placed on the political, social and economic aspects of the provision of acupuncture health care. Students should be aware of the expertise of other healthcare professional practitioners and of the circumstances when patients might benefit from referral to them.

Criterion 15.9 Professional Competencies: The syllabus shall lead to those minimum professional competencies to be attained through clinical experience which are included in the BAcC's Guidelines for Acupuncture Education

Guideline: Course leaders are advised (but not required) to develop their curriculum on the BAcC's Standards of Practice for Acupuncture, which may also usefully be studied by senior students as sound preparation for their practice as graduates.

Criterion 15.10 Pastoral Care: There should be a clear policy on pastoral and tutorial support for students and evidence of its effectiveness in supporting students.

Essential Requirement 16: Assessment

The assessment of students' achievement shall be applied systematically throughout the course. A variety of measures shall be employed to ensure the acquisition of knowledge, core skills, competence, behaviour and attitudes commensurate with each stage of the course leading, ultimately, to the performance expected of a fully trained, independent practitioner.

Criterion 16.1 Assessment calendar: The institution shall have developed an appropriate set of assessment stages through the course, which should be presented in diagrammatic terms and which should be related to all elements (subjects, modules, units, etc.) of the curriculum. Detail should be offered to provide evidence of an assessment system which can keep each student, and the institution, informed about that student's educational progress. This detail should include indicators or measures of clinical acupuncture competence, such that a clear-cut decision can be reached at the end of the course, in respect of each student, about the awarding of a licence to practise.

Guideline: Examinations, written assignments and clinical evaluation should be used to document the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

Guideline: Each level of clinical teaching should have clear intentions linked to a clear means of assessing whether appropriate achievement has been attained.

Guideline: The institution and teaching faculty should have an effective and efficient system to monitor students as they progress through clinical teaching. Students who have difficulties should be identified early, and such weaknesses should be documented and communicated to the student and other relevant persons (Clinical Director, Dean, or other). Suspension, dismissal, or the assignment of remedial work, if necessary, should be determined in a just and timely manner.

Guideline: One person (Clinical Director, Dean, or other) should be responsible for collating the variety of assessment information obtained during the clinical teaching, and for following students' progress.

Guideline: There must be ways of ensuring that policy and procedures regarding academic progress and grading are fair, consistent, published and made available to students.

Criterion 16.2 External Examiners: The institution shall have appointed, either directly or in conjunction with a linked university, at least two external examiners whose primary role is to assess the standards being achieved by students in relation to standards expected and demonstrated on similar courses nationally. In particular they will ensure:

- that students' overall standards of achievement in both the academic and practical components of the course are commensurate with, and judged in line with, standards normally applying in higher education;
- that assessment intentions and methods support the learning of the profession's core;
- that all assessments are conducted fairly and without prejudice.

Guideline: At least one of the external examiners should be a BAAC member currently teaching in an institution offering an acupuncture course, demonstrably knowledgeable of the standards and requirements of the profession and at least one should be experienced in assessing students in higher education contexts.

Guideline: The procedures for appointing such external examiners should be clearly set down.

Guideline: The roles and responsibilities of such external examiners should be clearly set down in an examinations policy. Examiners should play a role in monitoring:

- a) the wording, and
- b) the marking, of

the key assessments of the course, and should always be present at final examination board meetings, or, in exceptional circumstances, should agree in writing with the examination board's decisions before any results are published.

Guideline: External examiners should write annual reports which identify the institution's strengths and weaknesses in respect of assessment. These should be included as part of course documentation and quality assurance procedures that are presented to the Board.

Guideline: Both before and after Stage Three or 'full' accreditation by the Board, the external examiners should report on course development and be monitoring course standards each year as the course develops.

Essential Requirement 17: Evaluation

A summary of course evaluation systems and quality assurance procedures should be provided. The institution shall evaluate the effectiveness of its education, and the accomplishment of its stated intentions, by measuring and documenting the achievement of a sufficient number of students and graduates in verifiable and internally consistent ways.

Criterion 17.1 Annual Evaluation: The institution must have procedures in place for carrying out annual evaluations of its structures and curriculum in relation to its educational mission and philosophy.

Guideline: Students' evaluation of courses and the teaching faculty should be one of the key perspectives considered in determining whether the institution is meeting its objectives, alongside evaluative inputs from course managers, teachers in classroom and clinic, external examiners, administrators, Board officers and other stakeholders as appropriate.

Guideline: Retention rates, drop-out rates, completion rates, and the average length of time students take to complete the course should be calculated, maintained, and used in helping to measure the outcomes of the course. These data should also be analysed for indicators or trends in relation to success and failure, and to the sorts of difficulty experienced by students on the course.

Criterion 17.2 Action Planning: Such regular evaluation policies and procedures should lead to planned development articulated in detailed action plans which include the time scales and named persons responsible for their implementation, and which therefore have a demonstrable impact upon the development of the course.

Guideline: The documented evaluations and planned development should form the basis for the Annual Critical Course Reviews and, at intervals, the Major Periodic Reviews which are required by the Board. (See Part Four of this Handbook.)