



PROSPECTUS



Medicine Master once said: *humans are the only living creatures making the conscious effort to end illness; that effort is called compassion*; and compassion is certainly what we see in those who start their journey to become acupuncturists at ICOM.

In its long history, ICOM has been a major contributor to the development of Acupuncture in the UK. As the oldest College in the country, for half a century, we have strived to instil in our graduates a sense of solidarity and responsibility, healthy discipline, regard and reverence for the suffering of others combined with self-respect and the highest academic standards.

We believe that acupuncture can effectively support and integrate with modern national health systems providing an answer to the global crisis they are experiencing today. A contemporary answer with ancient roots. A medicine that puts patients at the centre of the clinical stage and treats them as individuals, encouraging them to take responsibility for their own health. With education, we follow the same person-centred principle. Our small classes are designed to make the journey of our students akin to the traditional Chinese Pupil/Teacher apprenticeship: a balanced blend of academic rigour and practical clinical applications.

At ICOM you will learn that health and illness are not separate entities but rather the two extremes of a continuum where life unfolds. The more you move away from life and from the optimum yin/yang balance, the more you move towards illness.

This prospectus is a summary of our engagement with Chinese Medicine and, if this resonates with you, ICOM is your place. It would be an honour for us to accompany you through the exciting, eye-opening and unique journey that will make you an acupuncturist.

Elio Basagni



Elio Basagni, Principal

# INTRODUCTION TO ICOM

Established in 1972, ICOM is the oldest acupuncture college in the UK and one of the most prestigious in the western world.

Today, ICOM continues to provide students with the skills and experience to practice acupuncture compassionately, competently and confidently, and to carry on the extraordinary traditions of Chinese Medicine.

Acupuncture is both an art and a science. Our course has wide appeal whether your interest is in the health professions, natural medicines or in oriental philosophies and practices.

You will receive comprehensive training in classical and more contemporary acupuncture approaches, including Five Element acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), as well as the more philosophical classical Stems and Branches acupuncture.

Chinese Medicine and Chinese Philosophy are taught alongside Western Medicine. Theoretical and practical subjects are carefully integrated to prepare you for treating your own patients in our dedicated onsite Teaching Clinic from Year 2 onwards. Development of your clinical and practitioner skills is central to our curriculum.

Students come to us from a wide variety of backgrounds - from education, business or health care, from other holistic therapies or from raising a family.

As a small college, we are able to provide the support to help you to develop your personal and professional abilities to the full. This is achieved through personal

tutoring, subject tutor support, class representatives and through contact with the student administrator and all of the ICOM team.

## Professional Recognition

Upon completion of the course, graduates are awarded a Licentiate in Acupuncture (Lic Ac) which is the equivalent, in level and training, to an undergraduate degree. Graduates are eligible to join the leading acupuncture professional body, the British Acupuncture Council (BACc), which provides insurance, and professional and marketing support services to its members.

Demand for acupuncture treatments continues to grow. BACc members belong to the Accredited Voluntary Register, approved by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA).



*“Deciding to study at ICOM has been the best decision I have made. From my first day, it felt like home. Everyone was so welcoming, supportive, and dedicated to helping us to develop, not only as practitioners, but as people too.”*

Josh Barrow  
Current Student

## Flexible and Varied Work Options

The majority of professional acupuncturists are self-employed. Many work out of other practices, such as GP Practices, or in Complementary Health Centres, alongside osteopaths, chiropractors or physiotherapists. Others set up their own practice and work from home. An increasing number of acupuncturists now provide acupuncture services in the NHS.

Working as an acupuncturist provides you with flexible career options whether you are starting out on your first career or changing career, and whether you want to work full or part time.

*“The Tao is precious and not to be passed on unless a student is sincere and compassionate to human suffering. Only in this way can the great tradition remain pure and virtuous.”*

Maoshing Ni *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine* (Shambhala – 1995)

For further information visit [orientalmed.ac.uk](http://orientalmed.ac.uk)

## WHY STUDY AT ICOM?

Our Acupuncture course is fully accredited by the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board (BAAB) of the British Acupuncture Council, and meets all the required standards of quality assurance processes.

Practised in the East for thousands of years, acupuncture is one of the oldest systems of medicine. Today it is used to treat a wide range of chronic and acute conditions. Its use is recognised by the NHS and the World Health Organization.

## Comprehensive Training in Classical and Contemporary Acupuncture

At ICOM you will receive comprehensive training in classical acupuncture approaches (Yin Yang and the Five Elements, Six Divisions) and more contemporary acupuncture practice (Traditional Chinese Medicine - TCM). In addition, you will also learn about the practical application of the ancient Chinese system of Stems and Branches which lies at the heart of Chinese Medicine.

## Our Heritage

The oldest acupuncture college in Europe, we have been providing classical Chinese Acupuncture training for over fifty years. Many leading figures in the world of Acupuncture trained here, including distinguished lecturers and authors of Acupuncture and Chinese Medical textbooks used by students and practitioners worldwide. Alumni include:

- Peter Deadman and Mazin Al-Khafaji (co-authors of *A Manual of Acupuncture*)
- Peter Firebrace and Sandra Hill (coauthors of *A Guide to Acupuncture*)
- Roisin Golding (author of *The Complete Stems & Branches*)
- Barbara Kirschbaum (author of *Atlas of Chinese Tongue Diagnosis*, Vols 1 & 2)
- Giovanni Maciocia (author of *Foundations of Chinese Medicine* and other definitive Chinese Medicine texts)

## College History

The College was founded by Dr J.D. van Buren in 1972. Already an osteopath, naturopath and homeopath, van Buren began his studies of acupuncture in



1952, travelling around the world to gain as much knowledge as possible in this field. In 1969, he was awarded a Doctorate of Acupuncture in Taiwan as acknowledgement of his mastery of the subject.

In 1972, he founded the International College of Oriental Medicine with branches in England and Holland. Dr. van Buren's unique contribution to Oriental medicine is that he has made the application of the Stems and Branches Theory a reality in clinical practice.

*"It was a rewarding time I will always look back on with real fondness, because it gave me confidence and a great love of learning."*

Sue Donald  
2020 Graduate



To book a place on our next OPEN DAY call **01342 313106**

## A Friendly & Supportive Environment

### Your Clinical Experience

Our College benefits from a fully integrated on-site Acupuncture teaching clinic so you can learn through direct experience. From the beginning of the course you will observe a variety of practitioners treating patients. During the second year of the course you start treating patients yourself and experiencing how the theory translates into practice – your practice.

The final part of the third year is similar to an *internship*, giving students the opportunity to treat patients within the safe environment of the college clinic.

You don't need to find your own patients – we do that for you.

Diagnosis is taught with particular emphasis on pulse-taking, in addition to tongue and body diagnosis.

Our busy clinic is open to the public. We currently have over 15 qualified practitioners working in clinic. Patients of all ages come to the ICOM Acupuncture Clinic from across the South East to be treated for a wide range of acute and chronic conditions and physical, mental and emotional disorders.

*“In diagnosis, observation of the spirit and facial colour, and palpation of the pulses, are the two methods that were emphasised by the ancient emperors and revered teachers.”*

Maoshing Ni *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine* (Shambhala - 1995)

## Our Aims for you

- To provide students with the necessary skills to practise acupuncture safely and competently upon graduation. This will include skills for patient assessment and diagnosis, as well as accurate and informed use of acupuncture techniques, and manual skills.
- To provide students with the skills required to become a competent and effective healthcare practitioner.
- To educate and inspire professional acupuncturists, who will practise with a clear working knowledge of Chinese philosophy, as well as the theory and practice of Chinese medicine.
- To provide students with a sound understanding of Western anatomy, physiology and differential diagnosis/pathology.
- To provide students with a sound basis of professional experience and reflection for their responsibilities as practising acupuncturists.
- To develop reflective practitioners who are able to identify personal and professional goals for continuing professional development and lifelong learning.

Our programme is designed to equip you with the necessary skills and abilities so you can practice acupuncture to the highest standards with complete confidence.

On graduation you will be ready to treat patients with a wide range of health problems, treating the root cause as well as the symptoms.



*Our programme is designed to equip you with the necessary skills and abilities so you can practice acupuncture to the highest standards with complete confidence.*



# STEMS AND BRANCHES

## Wu Yun Liu Qi

In addition to receiving a broad based education in classical and contemporary acupuncture approaches - Yin/Yang, Five Elements and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) - at ICOM you will also be taught about the contemporary application of the classical Chinese Stems & Branches philosophy.

ICOM is the only acupuncture college in the UK to include Stems and Branches in their Acupuncture Licenciante course.

## What is Stems and Branches?

Stems and Branches (Wu Yun Liu Qi) theory is about cycles, transformations and interactions of qi (energy): in nature (climates); in Man; and between Man and his environment.

The ancient Chinese observed the cycles of nature – day and night, and the changing seasons. They recognised that

the natural rhythms of nature underlie the most fundamental aspects of our lives and are thus fundamental to our health. They believed in a holistic world – everything in the universe is made of qi and everything is connected. A vibration in any part affects the whole.

Although everything is made of qi, it is clear that everything in the world around us is not the same – things look and feel different from each other, they have different qualities. In classical Chinese theory there are three ways of categorising phenomena, according to:

- the duality of Yin & Yang
- the correspondences of the Five Elements
- Heaven, Earth & Humanity (Man)

All these concepts are fundamental to all acupuncture approaches (Five Elements, TCM, Stems and Branches) and intertwined in Chinese Medicine.

Humanity is born from the interaction between Heaven and Earth and are thus affected by its cycles and rhythms. In practice, Stems and Branches acupuncture

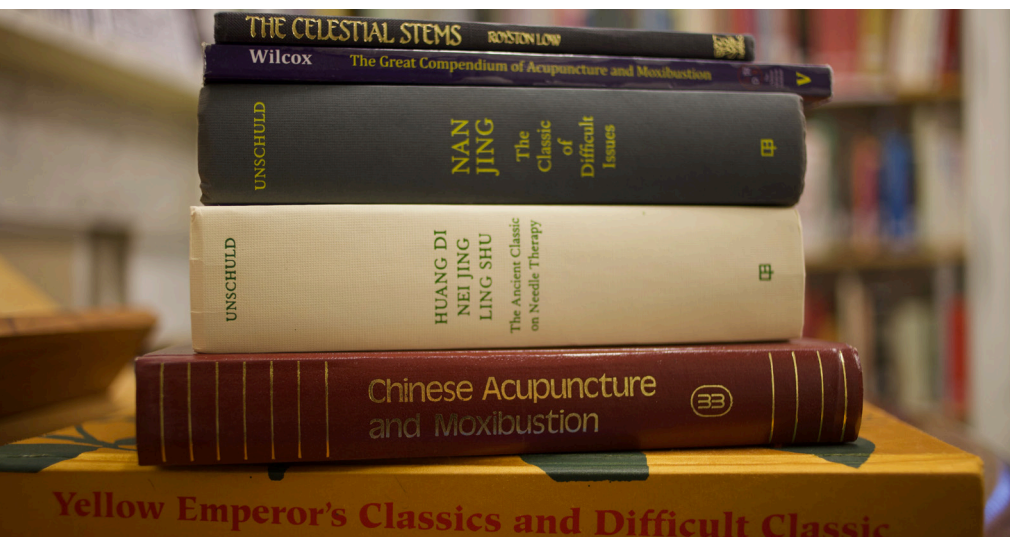
is a style that stresses the relative importance of the relationships between heaven and earth, but it also incorporates the Five Elements and Yin and Yang.

## How is Stems and Branches Used?

The system of Stems and Branches can be used in several ways. Most commonly, it is used to help us understand each patient's constitutional strengths and weaknesses and why disease occurs in that individual. It helps us develop a treatment plan to address the root cause of the patient's problem with acupuncture. It also helps you choose wisely from the vast array of acupuncture points available.

*“Stems and Branches gives you time on your side, to make use of it for yourself and your patients like a windsurfer uses the wind and a gardener uses the seasons. Each moment of time is in itself a quality of qi. Knowing what that quality is and using it for your patient's benefit helps you to be a more effective practitioner.”*

Peter Firebrace  
ICOM Graduate 1983  
and College Principal 1985–1990  
Renowned lecturer on classical  
acupuncture and Chinese Medicine



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## COURSE STRUCTURE

10 credits is equal to 100 hours of learning

Personal and Professional Development (PPD) also includes a minimum of 85 hours of Clinic Observation over the whole programme.

### Study Options

You can choose to study full-time (3 years) or part-time (4-5 years). The 3rd year is only offered on a full time basis because we believe that it is crucial for your professional development to integrate all aspects of Acupuncture practice.

The academic year for all our courses begins in October and ends in June. There are traditional holiday breaks at Christmas and Easter. College hours are generally 9.30am-4.30pm for both online and in-person classes.

### Online Learning

ICOM has now adopted the *flipped classroom* model for teaching, which allows for flexibility for students juggling their studies with work and/or parenthood.

In the flipped classroom, the traditional method of teaching is reversed and materials which would previously have been delivered in the classroom during lectures are now distributed in the form of podcasts, lecture notes and journal articles and absorbed by students prior to the lecture. Activities which would once have been carried out as homework, now take place in the lecture and the student's understanding of the subject is further deepened during these sessions through group activities and problem solving.

### Full time

YEAR 1	Credits
Point Location	20
Chinese Medicine	30
Western Medicine (Anatomy)	20
Western Medicine (Physiology)	20
Personal and Professional Development	20
Research Methods	10
TOTAL	120

YEAR 2	Credits
Point Location	20
Chinese Medicine	30
Western Medicine (Pathology)	20
Traditional Chinese Medicine	10
Personal and Professional Development	20
Research Methods	10
Practical Clinic	10
TOTAL	120

YEAR 3	Credits
Point Location	10
Chinese Medicine	30
Supervised Trainee Clinic	35
Applied Chinese Medicine	10
Personal and Professional Development	15
Research Methods	20
TOTAL	120

### Part time

YEAR 1	Credits
Chinese Medicine	30
Western Medicine (Anatomy)	20
Research Methods	10
TOTAL	60

Point Location	20
Western Medicine (Physiology)	20
Personal and Professional Development	20
TOTAL	60

YEAR 2	Credits
Point Location	20
Chinese Medicine	30
Research Methods	10
TOTAL	60

Western Medicine (Pathology)	20
Traditional Chinese Medicine	10
Personal and Professional Development	20
Practical Clinic	10
TOTAL	60

YEAR 3	Credits
Point Location	10
Chinese Medicine	30
Supervised Trainee Clinic	35
Applied Chinese Medicine	10
Personal and Professional Development	15
Research Methods	20
TOTAL	120

# COURSE CONTENT

Since 1972, our acupuncture training course has been continually refined and developed, with input from our students, staff, practitioners, academics and professional body (BAAB). Our gathered experience, our passion for learning and teaching, and our ultimate quest to train you as a professional acupuncturist, are reflected throughout the course. Our students will leave us with the confidence, inspiration and compassion to make a real difference to people's lives.

The roots of ICOM stand firmly in the classical tradition. This Daoist philosophy is represented in the ancient medical texts the *Nei Jing* and *Nan Jing*, both acknowledged reference sources in Chinese Medicine. Our view is that without a solid understanding of these traditions, Chinese medicine is like a flower cut at the stem and severed from its roots. On these pages are the different subjects which make up our Acupuncture Training course.



As with any system, the whole represents more than the sum of the individual parts. You will find that your learning is integrated across and between the subjects throughout the programme. All of these subject strands are finely woven together to prepare you for your clinical practice.

## Chinese Medicine 1

This unit introduces you to the history, philosophy and theory of Chinese Medicine. Key concepts explored include the Dao, Yin/Yang, Wu Xing (Five Elements), the Chinese Calendar, Zang-Fu (Organs), San Bao (Three Treasures), Qi/Blood/Fluid, Syndromes, Jing Luo (Meridian System) and Diagnosis.

## Chinese Medicine 2

The second year deepens your understanding of the concepts introduced in Year 1, allowing you to see how the philosophy and theory informs practice. Additional lecture topics include: Wu Shen (Five Spirits), Wu Zhi (Five Wills); Origins of the Five Elements; the Six Qi; Six Divisions, progression of fever; the microcosm and macrocosm, and the Extraordinary Fu. You will also learn in depth about the applications of Qi Jing Ba Mai (Eight Extraordinary Meridians).

## Chinese Medicine 3

### Wu Yun Liu Qi (Stems and Branches Theory)

You will have been introduced to Stems and Branches Theory in years 1 and 2, including Tian Gan (10 Heavenly Stems) and Di Zhi (12 Earthly Branches).

In Year 3, you learn how to analyse a patient's constitutional strengths and weaknesses and how the seasonal variations and climates affect our body's natural rhythms. Subjects include: Great Movements (Da Yun), Guest/Host Movements, the 4 Possibilities, Guest/Host Energies, Celestial Concordances, 10 methods of Treatment, Left/Right Law, Fu Xi, King Wen, Luo Shu, He Tu, Lo Pan, Forbidden Meridians and more. You will learn to apply the theory through case history discussions and to link your learning directly to your clinic practice.

## Traditional Chinese Medicine and Applied Chinese Medicine

In these courses you learn how health turns into dis-ease according to the framework of Chinese Medicine. You will understand how different models of practice can be applied to correct these imbalances. These include, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), Five Element and Stems and Branches Theory.

*“The art of Chinese Medicine is the ability to slide between the paradigms - yin/yang, Heaven/Earth/Man, Five Elements, Six Divisions, Ten stems & Twelve branches .... selecting the most appropriate framework to analyse the state of the disease”*

Deborah Woolf

ICOM Lecturer and Graduate 2000

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## Personal and Professional Development 1, 2 and 3

This subject strand provides you with clinical skills such as developing the boundaries of the therapeutic relationship, reflective practice, along with pulse, tongue and body diagnosis.

Pulse taking is an important diagnostic tool. We teach you to develop sensitivity in your pulse taking and focus on this right from the start. You will learn and refine this skill in lots of different ways, both in clinic and in class, so that when you graduate you are fully confident and competent at pulse diagnosis.

Your learning journey from the classroom to the clinic, and beyond, is recorded in your personal portfolio. Your portfolio provides an important opportunity for you to reflect on what you have learned and what it means for you. Meaningful personal reflection allows us to develop ourselves as practitioners and as human beings.

Right from the beginning, you will be learning about how to be a practitioner. This is a very practical subject unit where you will develop the necessary business skills needed to set up and manage your own successful practice. We will teach you how to market yourself and your business, how to deal effectively with administration, including accountancy and book keeping, and also explain the legal and professional responsibilities associated with being a practitioner.

## Point Location 1, 2 and 3

Unlike many acupuncture courses, our course teaches you *all* of the 365 acupuncture points. These are your energetic tools. You also learn in detail

the various point categories as well as point energetics and selection for treatment. This fits together with the Western Medicine anatomy lectures that give you the necessary knowledge of surface anatomy to help you find acupuncture points accurately.

## Western Medicine (Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology)

It is important that practitioners can interact and integrate with our fellow healthcare professionals. In this unit we will teach you the appropriate level of western medicine for you to practise acupuncture, and you will learn how and when to refer patients.

## Research 1, 2 and 3

Research is about investigation, about weighing up our options and making decisions. Good, relevant research can help with integrating the profession of acupuncture into the wider healthcare agenda. This subject pathway equips you with the skills to understand published research studies and how they apply to acupuncture, together with their limitations. You will build on your learning so that you are well prepared to undertake your final year project – an opportunity for you to explore an area of acupuncture that particularly interests you.

## Clinic Practice

Your journey through the various aspects of clinical learning starts with Clinic Observations in Year 1, where you will observe practitioners working in clinic. Your next step is Practical Clinic Part 1 in Year 2, where you start to treat patients

under close supervision within a small support peer group, continuing on into Year 3. The final semester in Year 3 focuses mainly on your clinic practice where you treat patients alone but with the back-up of a senior practitioner, who is on hand should you require any advice. This step-by-step process slowly and surely builds your confidence, ready for the exciting launch of your new career. At ICOM, you don't need to worry about finding practitioners to observe or patients to treat, in order to fulfil your required training hours; we do all of that for you, on site.

Students now have the benefit of our newly modernised clinic rooms which were extensively refurbished and updated in 2019 providing a relaxing and tranquil setting for our patients.



# YOUR TEACHERS

## A Wealth of experience

ICOM's wonderful teaching faculty is, not only passionate about Chinese Medicine, but also about teaching itself.

All staff are PGCert qualified teachers, or working towards this qualification, as well as being practising healthcare professionals, enabling the most effective and skilled delivery of the course and its aims. There is a wealth of experience, knowledge and passion amongst the staff which is a marvellous resource for you as a student.

Our staff are respected members of the wider professional community including serving as external examiners for other accredited courses.

At the start of the course you are allocated a Personal Tutor to support you and your academic progress throughout the programme. This teacher stays with you for the duration of your time with ICOM and liaises with senior management and course tutors, tracking your progress and offering help where appropriate.

ELIO BASAGNI

Principal

Point Location, Chinese Medicine, Personal and Professional Development, Clinic Supervisor

TOM INGS

Director of Studies

Point Location, Chinese Medicine, Personal and Professional Development, Clinic Supervisor

SUZI BROAD Point Location, Chinese Medicine, Clinic Supervisor

BEN CARRIGAN Personal and Professional Development

ALISON DALZIEL Point Location

ROBERT ELLIOT Pathology

BEA ERLER Clinic Supervisor

KIRSTEN GERMANN Clinic Supervisor

ROY HAITZIN Anatomy and Physiology

GALIT HUGHES Clinic Supervisor

KATE JOSEPH Clinic Co-ordinator, Point Location

RICK MUDIE Clinic Supervisor, Applied Chinese Medicine

JINAL SHAH Applied Chinese Medicine, Clinic Supervisor

ROSE STARK Research

TONY TODD Applied Chinese Medicine, Chinese Medicine, Clinic Supervisor

TOM WATSON Traditional Chinese Medicine

LYNNE WILLIAMS Research

JULIETTE WILLETT Personal and Professional Development

DEBORAH WOOLF Chinese Medicine, Personal and Professional Development, Clinic Supervisor





# COURSE INTRODUCTION SESSIONS

Interested? Would you like to know more? Join one of our Course Introduction sessions which currently take place online via Zoom.

- » Watch a presentation about our prestigious course by our Principal, Elio Basagni and Director of Studies, Tom Ings.
- » Chat informally with staff and current students.
- » Take a virtual tour of our college
- » Observe a live acupuncture treatment
- » Talk to other prospective students

## HOW TO APPLY

It's really simple. All you need to do is apply online or download an application form from our website. Send it together with two passport photos to Student Admissions at ICOM. We do not charge an application fee.

## Entry Requirements

Students come to us from a wide variety of different backgrounds. Whether you are a mature student or coming straight from school, your journey to the college is unique to you.

Whatever your current career path, whether it is academic, professional or even parenthood, you can explore the option to study at ICOM with the confidence that your shared experiences will help to shape you as a practitioner.

Our entry requirements include flexibility for mature candidates who do not hold formal academic qualifications. Indeed, some of our most successful practitioners did not have formal qualifications before they began their training with us.

If you can demonstrate passion for learning, willingness to acquire academic skills and a determination to succeed, you will be considered for a place with us.

## Coming for an Interview

You will be required to complete the college application form. Successful applicants will be invited for interview.

Interviews are held throughout the year for the next academic session. These may take place online or in person.

We have a maximum capacity of 18 students, so early application is advised.

## Securing your Place at ICOM

You will be informed whether you have been offered a place usually within 10 days of your interview.

To accept your place, all you need to do is send us written confirmation and your registration fee and your place will be secured.

Visit our website, email [admin@orientalmed.ac.uk](mailto:admin@orientalmed.ac.uk) or phone 01342 313106 to find out the dates for upcoming Course Introduction Sessions. You'll be sent a link to join the Zoom session before the day.



01342 313106 [info@orientalmed.ac.uk](mailto:info@orientalmed.ac.uk)

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