

Education Standards

A concise public-facing document setting out the education and entry standards expected of practitioners seeking membership of the Irish Acupuncture Register.

1. Purpose

This document sets out the baseline education standards used by the Irish Acupuncture Register when assessing applicants for membership.

Its purpose is to provide a clear and proportionate framework that supports public protection, practitioner accountability, and confidence for external stakeholders such as insurers.

2. General principle

Applicants for practising membership should hold a recognised qualification in acupuncture or Traditional Chinese Medicine, together with sufficient clinical education and supervised practical training to support safe and competent practice.

3. Expected areas of training

The Register expects an applicant's training to include both theoretical and practical components relevant to safe professional practice.

- Foundational theory of acupuncture and/or Traditional Chinese Medicine
- Clinical assessment, case-taking, and treatment planning
- Safe needling practice and relevant adjunctive techniques
- Clinical hygiene, infection prevention, and consent
- Professional ethics and practitioner responsibilities
- Supervised clinical training or equivalent practical experience

4. Clinical competence

Formal qualification alone is not the only consideration. Applicants should also be able to demonstrate that they are clinically competent, understand professional boundaries, and can recognise when referral or further investigation is required.

5. Overseas and non-standard qualifications

The IAR recognises that training pathways may vary. Qualifications obtained outside Ireland, or through routes that differ from the most common training model, may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In such cases, applicants may be asked to provide further evidence so that the Register can assess whether the training is broadly equivalent in level, content, and clinical preparation.

6. Insurance and ongoing standards

All practising members must hold valid professional indemnity insurance.

Admission to the Register also requires agreement to abide by the Constitution, Code of Ethics, Scope of Practice, Safe Practice Guidelines, CPD Policy, and associated governance documents.

7. Ongoing maintenance of standards

The Register expects members to maintain competence through continuing professional development, reflective learning, and annual confirmation of ongoing compliance with professional requirements.

8. Statement of proportionate approach

The IAR adopts a proportionate approach to education standards. The aim is to ensure safe, competent, and accountable practice without imposing unnecessary or inappropriate rigidity on a diverse professional discipline.