



NCCAOM® Certification In Acupuncture



Achieving Certification

In addition to meeting the requirements specified in *The Application Process* (see page 25 of this handbook) the applicant must:

- 1) Successfully pass the following examinations:
 - a. Foundations of Oriental Medicine
 - b. Acupuncture with Point Location
 - c. Biomedicine, and;

- 2) Proof of completion of the CCAOM Clean Needle Technique (CNT) course. Refer to page 19 of this handbook for the CNT requirements. Full NCCAOM Certification will not be awarded until this requirement is met.

Note: The CNT course completed date, as noted on the CNT certificate, must be completed within six years prior to the award of NCCAOM certification.

Eligibility Routes

- Route #1: Formal Education: Graduate or pre-graduate from ACAOM accredited program - United States applicants only

- Route #2: Formal Education: International applicants

- Route #3: Apprenticeship: United States and International applicants

- Route #4: Combination of Formal Education and Apprenticeship: United States and International applicants



Route 1: Formal Education: Graduate or Pre-graduate from an ACAOM Accredited Program - United States Applicants Only

Applicants using this route must be a graduate or pre-graduate from an academic program accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM) or an academic program in candidacy status with ACAOM. ACAOM's requirements are described in the ACAOM Accreditation Manual available at www.acaom.org/manuals.htm. Table 2 below indicates the minimum number of hours of academic course work that must be completed to be eligible to sit for each required exam.

Applicants for NCCAOM certification in acupuncture are allowed to test on a pre-graduation basis after completing the required hours based on the date the applicant entered the academic program as shown in Table 2 below. All pre-graduation applicants must have their pre-graduation application form (available at the applicant's school) signed by their designated school official.

Table 2: Pre-graduation Hour Requirements for Taking Examinations Required for Certification in Acupuncture.

Required Examinations for Certification in Acupuncture	Matriculation (Enrollment) Date	Completed Hours
Acupuncture with Point Location Biomedicine Foundations of Oriental Medicine	Prior to July 1, 1999	1,350
	On or After July 1, 1999	1,490

Pre-graduation applicants are advised to consult with the school's program director regarding the best time to take the national certification examination(s). Each school may have their own internal policies regarding when they will submit the transcript on behalf of their students. Once the applicant has completed the minimum hours (as listed above), the transcripts and approval of each examination must be received directly from school (signed by the program official).



Note: Candidates must graduate, meet the ACAOM graduation hour requirements and have sent their official graduation transcripts to the NCCAOM before achieving full NCCAOM certification. Please refer to the ACAOM graduation hour requirements chart on pages 16-17 of this handbook.

Route 2: Formal Education: International Applicants

Important Notice – Beware!

The National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) does not accredit any colleges or institutions. The NCCAOM does not have a formal affiliation or licensing agreement with any colleges or institutions. The NCCAOM is aware that misleading and inaccurate information has been posted on certain websites claiming a special relationship between the NCCAOM and some non-government approved institutions. The NCCAOM has ordered these institutions to remove the misleading and erroneous information from their websites but some of this information is still found on the web. If you see such claims on any institution's web site, please send the website link, to Irene Basore at [info @ thenccaom.org](mailto:info@thenccaom.org) so that the NCCAOM can take appropriate action. Thank you.

Applicants using this route must have graduated from academic institutions outside of the United States that meet the following requirements:

A) Approval by a foreign government's Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, or equivalent foreign government agency.

OR

B) Approval by a foreign private accreditation agency that has an accreditation process and standards substantially equivalent to that of ACAOM, and that is recognized for that purpose by the appropriate government entity in that foreign country.

International educational programs attempting to meet the eligibility requirements under either A or B above must ALSO be deemed to have equivalency in total hours and distribution of hours as required by ACAOM standards at the time of application.

The applicant's education will be reviewed using the NCCAOM international education criterion above.


Graduates from an international academic educational institution must first apply to either the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) or the World Education Services (WES) for a course by course educational transcript evaluation. Foreign credentialing agencies do not "approve" foreign educational institutions but rather determine whether a school is recognized by a foreign governmental agency, such as a Ministry of Health or Ministry of Education.



- To apply to AACRAO applicants may download the Foreign Education Review Application (FERA) from the NCCAOM website (see “Educated Outside of the United States” found under the “Applicant” page on the NCCAOM website; www.nccaom.org). A completed FERA application, an official transcript and diploma/degree along with the current FERA fee should be mailed to:

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
International Educational Services
One Dupont Circle, NW
Suite 520
Washington, D.C. 20036-1135

For additional information please visit the AACRAO website at www.aacrao.org.

-  To apply to WES for a credential evaluation online, applicants should go to www.wes.org. Note that WES must receive the applicant’s documents as specified in the scroll-down menu at www.wes.org/required for the particular country where the applicant attained their degree/diploma. One evaluation will be sent to the applicant and the other to the U.S. organization indicated on the application. (Please request it is sent to the NCCAOM). WES typically completes its credential review within seven business days after receipt of the WES application and documents according to www.wes.org/required. In some cases, WES may have to contact a particular school abroad for verification of documents, and this may necessarily extend the length of the equivalency review.

To send documents to World Education Services please use the following addresses:

By Postal Mail:	By Express Courier
World Education Services	World Education Services
P. O. Box 5087	64 Beaver St. #146
Bowling Green Station	New York, NY 10004
New York, NY 10274-5087	USA
USA	

For additional information please visit the WES website at www.wes.org.



The foreign education review process typically takes 8 weeks to complete; however, the NCCAOM does not guarantee this time frame. Please wait until notification from AACRAO or WES that the foreign education review is complete before submitting the NCCAOM application packet to NCCAOM.

Supplemental Education for Certification; Internationally Educated – All International applicants applying for certification, who have earned degrees/diplomas in acupuncture and/or Oriental Medicine but, who do not meet the ACAOM hourly requirements for biomedicine and/or communication/counseling/ethics/safety are allowed to take supplemental education at an ACAOM school or a U.S. College/University accredited by an agency which is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or at a regionally accredited institution.

AOM supplemental hours and courses must be completed at an ACAOM accredited or ACAOM candidate school. The supplemental education may be obtained at more than one ACAOM accredited or ACAOM candidate school.

The supplemental education cannot exceed 660 hours. The supplemental education is subject to NCCAOM's Eligibility Committee approval. This policy applies to applicants denied certification eligibility based on insufficient course hours.

Route #3: Apprenticeship for United States and International Applicants

Apprenticeship is defined as training completed under a preceptor who assumes responsibility for the theoretical and practical education of the apprentice.

Requirements for Eligibility via Apprenticeship-

- A maximum of two apprentices may study under a single preceptor at any one time.
- An apprentice may only study under one preceptor during the apprenticeship.
- NCCAOM does not pre-approve apprenticeship programs or preceptors. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide required documents when the application is submitted.
- Applicants who apply through the apprenticeship route must meet all of the following requirements:
 - Completion of an apprenticeship program with a minimum of 4,000 contact hours with no less than three years and no more than six years in acupuncture. Contact hours are defined as clock hours that the apprentice spends under the direct supervision of the preceptor. Off-site supervision is not included.



AND

- After the first year, the apprenticeship program must include increasing responsibilities in patient contact, up to and including the final stage of complete diagnosis and treatment under the preceptor's supervision.

AND

- The apprenticeship program must be under the direction of a **qualified preceptor**. A preceptor is considered qualified if he/she meets at least one of the following criteria:
 - Government or state licensed practitioner.

OR

- Practice at a minimum level of 500 acupuncture patient visits by more than 100 different patients for five consecutive years immediately prior to becoming the applicant's preceptor.

AND

- The preceptor's practice was at a minimum level of 500 acupuncture patient visits by no fewer than 100 different patients during each year of the apprenticeship program. Patient visits were in general health care practice. Specialized limited practice, such as smoking withdrawal and/or addictions, may have been included in the practice but do not count as one of the 500 general-health acupuncture patient visits per year.

Documentation Required for Apprenticeship-

Applicants under this route of eligibility must submit all of the following documents:

1. A notarized letter from the preceptor that includes the following information:
 - A detailed description of the apprenticeship, including start and finish dates, breaks, total number of contact hours each year, the amount of time spent in theoretical instruction, and the level of involvement with patient/client treatment.
 - A description of preceptor's practice, including the number of patient/client visits per year and the type of practice.
2. A statement of the number of apprentices being supervised by the preceptor during the specified time.
3. Documentation of preceptor's practice showing five years.
4. Notarized affidavits, from two healthcare professionals, which include written testimony based on personal knowledge of dates, volume, scope and type of practice of the preceptor.



5. Representative sample of applicant's notes, typewritten.
6. Proof of completion of the Clean Needle Technique (CNT) course. Refer to page 19 of this handbook for the CNT requirements. Full NCCAOM Certification will not be awarded until this requirement is met.

For additional details please contact NCCAOM by email at [info @ thenccaom.org](mailto:info@thenccaom.org).

Route #4: Combination of Formal Education and Apprenticeship for United States and International Applicants

Applicants using this route are awarded points for meeting the requirements in both the Formal Education and Apprenticeship categories. Applicants must earn a total of 40 points. A combination of points must be earned from each category and cannot exceed 30 points from one category to establish eligibility.

Earning Points for Education-

Formal Education - Applicants should follow the guidelines for Route #1 and #2,

1. Formal Education
 - a. Applicants are awarded 10 points for each year of formal acupuncture education (as specified in Route #1 and #2). One year is defined as 450 hours.
 - b. Points are awarded for incomplete education obtained from an academic program that meet the criteria described in *Route #1: Formal Education: Graduate or Pre-graduate from an ACAOM accredited program - United States Applicants only* (see page 27 of this handbook) and/or *Route #2: Formal Education: International Applicants* on page 28 of this handbook.
 - c. Applicants may earn a maximum of 30 points under this category.
2. Apprenticeship
 - a. Applicants under this category are awarded 10 points per 1,000 contact hours with a preceptor. A maximum of 10 points may be earned per calendar year or a 12-consecutive-month period.
 - b. The apprenticeship hours must meet the criteria described under Route #3: Apprenticeship.
 - c. Applicants may earn a maximum of 30 points under this category.
 - d. For additional information on this route of eligibility please contact NCCAOM by email at [info @ thenccaom.org](mailto:info@thenccaom.org).