

# SAFETY EXAMINATION GUIDE

## 中醫針灸執業安全考試考生手冊



The College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners  
and Acupuncturists of British Columbia (CTCMA)  
卑詩省中醫針灸管理局

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## Introduction

This handbook includes the policies and procedures for the Safety Examination. The regulatory body for Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Practitioners and Acupuncturists in British Columbia is the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of British Columbia (CTCMA). CTCMA will be referred to as “the College” in this handbook. The College is responsible for governing TCM Practitioners and Acupuncturists in accordance with the *Health Professions Act (BC)* and the Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists Regulation of British Columbia.

Although accurate at the time of publication, changes may take place without prior notice. While the College will try to advise candidates of important changes, the College reserves the right to make changes in fees, examinations, policies and procedures at any time without advance notice.

The most recent version of this Handbook, application forms and policies may be found on the College’s website.

## Purpose of Examination

The College is mandated by the provincial government to protect the public’s right to safe, effective and ethical TCM services by regulating the practice of TCM.

The purpose of the Safety Examinations is to determine if candidates have acquired the minimum entry-level competency in safety for practice as an Acupuncturist, Herbalist, TCM Practitioner, or Dr. TCM to be considered for registration by the provincial regulatory body. The public is thus protected when receiving treatment from registered professionals. The examination(s) must be written by all candidates, including graduates from Canada and those completing their education outside of Canada.

## Contact Information

College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners & Acupuncturists of British Columbia (CTCMA)  
900-200 Granville St,  
Vancouver, British Columbia,  
Canada, V6C 1S4  
Phone: 604-742-6563  
Toll-Free: 1-855-742-6563  
Fax: 604-357-1963  
[www.ctcma.bc.ca](http://www.ctcma.bc.ca)  
[info@ctcma.bc.ca](mailto:info@ctcma.bc.ca)



## About the Examination

The Examinations are designed to assess safety knowledge in infection control, risk management, acupuncture, and herbology required for practice. The content of the Acupuncturist and Herbalist examinations are based on the Safety Program Handbook.

The Safety Examination required to satisfy the registration requirements are as follows:

	EXAMINATIONS REQUIRED	
	Acupuncture Safety	Herbology Safety
To become R.Ac.	X	
To become R.TCM.H		X
To become R.TCM.P	X	X
To become Dr.TCM	X	X

A passing result on the examination indicates that the candidate has demonstrated the minimal standard of competence. A fail result indicates that the candidate has not yet demonstrated the minimal standard of competence.

### Acupuncture Safety Examination

This open book examination will have three sections: one to assess competencies in infection control, one to assess competencies in risk management; and one section relating solely to safety in TCM Acupuncture. It will consist of 40 multiple-choice questions. Candidates will have 1.5 hours to complete this examination.

### Herbology Safety Examination

This open book examination will have three sections: one to assess competencies in infection control, one to assess competencies in risk management; and one section relating solely to safety in TCM Herbology. It will consist of 40 multiple-choice questions. Candidates will have 1.5 hours to complete this examination.

### Open Book

Unlike a typical examination which assesses a candidate's ability to memorize facts and figures, the Safety Examinations for Acupuncture and Herbology are open book. The open book examination assesses a candidate's ability to understand, analyze and apply existing knowledge to clinical situations.

A candidate taking the Safety Examinations for Acupuncture or Herbology is allowed access to the Safety Program Handbook through the College's website during the examination. However, a hard copy of the Safety Program Handbook will not be allowed.

### Dr.TCM Safety Examination (Discontinued)

The Dr.TCM Safety Course has been discontinued effective April 2022. Applicants to register as Doctors of TCM with the College are required to provide evidence of their successful completion of the safety course and examination as TCM Practitioners.



## Reciprocity Safety Examination (Discontinued)

The safety examination is no longer a registration requirement to apply for full registration through reciprocity. Therefore, the Reciprocity Safety Examination has been discontinued.

## Technical Specifications

The following tables provide the weighting (percentage) of competencies for Acupuncturist and Herbalist by the four (4) practice areas:

Practice Areas	Acupuncturist Exam Percentage	Herbalist Exam Percentage
Infection Prevention and Control	20 ~ 25%	22 ~ 28%
Risk Management of TCM Practice	36 ~ 42%	38 ~ 46%
Safe Procedures & Processes: Acupuncture	36 ~ 42%	
Safe Procedures & Processes: Herbology		32% ~ 36%

## Format of Examinations

The multiple-choice questions are presented as independent questions. Every question will consist of a stem (question) and four possible options. There is only ONE correct or best answer for each question.

## Languages

All the stems (questions) and options (answers) will be displayed in both English as well as Chinese. The Chinese translation is for informational purposes only, and is not a substitute for the English. The English version is the only definitive and official version. If there are any discrepancies between the information provided in English and the translation of that information, the English version shall prevail. Any such discrepancies are not binding and are of no legal effect.

## Acupuncture Points

Acupuncture points will be referred to by the names in Appendix 1 (Table of Points: CTCMA-BC Dangerous/Cautious Points) of the Safety Program Handbook. Acupuncture points that are not listed in Appendix 1 of the Safety Program Handbook will be referred to in Pinyin names and WHO standard nomenclature.

## Traditional Chinese Medicine Herbs

Traditional Chinese Medicine herbs will be referred to by the names in Appendix 2 (Index of Materia Medica) of the Safety Program Handbook.



## Procedures

### Examination Requests

All examinations must be requested at least 3 weeks prior to the examination write date. The first step is to contact an approved invigilator to see when they have an availability that fits with your preference. Once an available session is confirmed with an invigilator, a candidate may apply for an examination by completing the Apply for Safety Exam online form and complete the payment on the College's website. Once the online form and payment is completed, candidates are required to email or fax the print-out or screenshot of the exam confirmation receipt and payment receipt to the College. Once your application is processed and approved by the College, secure your booking with your invigilator by making your payment for the invigilation fee. You may check your updated application status through the Registrant Portal. All examinations must be completed within the time allotted to complete the examination.

Please note: Invigilator fee is set by each invigilator or their institution and is made to the invigilator directly. Invigilation fee can vary between various institutions. Make sure to be familiar with the invigilator's fee schedule and booking policies (e.g., cancellation, booking changes). Invigilator fee is a separate fee from the examination fee.

### Application Status

Candidates may check the updated status of application through Registrant Portal. A confirmation email will be sent to the candidate as soon as the examination request is approved.

### Examination Invigilation

#### **Important Update**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many examination / assessment centres remain closed for external bookings to take the CTCMA Safety Exam(s) at their facilities. The CTCMA Safety Examination at this time is primarily offered as an Online Exam with Remote Proctoring.

**Remote Proctored Examination Centers** - allows applicants to write the Safety Examinations safely and conveniently without travelling or commuting during the Covid-19 pandemic

- 445 Vancouver Island University ([assessments@viu.ca](mailto:assessments@viu.ca))
- 443 Selkirk College ([exams@selkirk.ca](mailto:exams@selkirk.ca))

**In-Person Examination Centers** – allows applicants to write the Safety Examinations in-person at testing centers

- BCIT Burnaby Campus ([BCIT\\_Burnaby\\_Test\\_Ctr@bcit.ca](mailto:BCIT_Burnaby_Test_Ctr@bcit.ca))
- BCIT Downtown Vancouver Campus ([BCIT\\_DTC\\_TEST\\_Ctr@bcit.ca](mailto:BCIT_DTC_TEST_Ctr@bcit.ca))

Please refer to the list on the Safety Examination Application Page of the College's website for the most up-to-date approved invigilators and invigilation centres -information.



## Request for Invigilator Review and Approval

If a candidate wishes to write an examination at a location other than any of the approved invigilators, the candidate must write at a public post-secondary institution such as a public university or technical institute. If a public university or technical institute is not accessible, the candidate must write at a public library, provided it is approved by the Registrar. It is the responsibility of the candidate to find a suitable invigilator for use in writing their examinations.

Candidates who are putting forward a request for an individual or an organization that is not an approved invigilator should do so at least 45 days prior to their anticipated examination write date. This will ensure that the invigilator information is available to the College when an examination request is made. Candidates who do not follow this procedure may experience delays in the processing of their examination request.

The request for invigilator review and approval may be completed by submitting the Invigilator Review and Approval Form through any of the following methods:

- a) By fax to 604-357-1963
- b) By email to [info@ctcma.bc.ca](mailto:info@ctcma.bc.ca)

## Invigilator Criteria

An invigilator must be fluent in written and verbal English and fall into one of the following categories:

- A professor or instructor at a public post secondary institution in Canada;
- A full time administrative or professional staff member of a public library or a library in a public school in Canada.

An invigilator cannot be any of the following:

- Friend.
- Neighbor.
- Co-worker.
- An individual with a supervisory relationship to the candidate.
- Family member or relative.
- A CTCMA registrant, unless approved by an authorized representative of the College as designated by the College's Registrar.
- An individual who resides at the same address as the candidate.

## Invigilation Environment Criteria

An approved invigilator or invigilation centre must be able to provide an environment that meets the following conditions:

- A safe and quiet examination writing environment that is free from distraction and disruption.
- The ability to ensure that an examination is invigilated in accordance with the College's Invigilation Standards and in accordance with the Examination Invigilation Procedures of the examination.
- The ability to ensure that a candidate does not have access to the examination outside of the scheduled write date and time.
- The ability to ensure that the candidate writes the examination within the allotted time to do so.
- The ability to provide a desktop or laptop computer that is compatible with the technology that is required to host the online examination and is located in an environment that is suitable to the writing of an examination.



## Special Accommodations

Candidates with a disability are expected to make arrangements with their approved invigilator or invigilation centre for special accommodations.

Candidates with a disability who requires exceptional examination accommodations that their approved invigilator or invigilation centre is unable to accommodate must submit a request for consideration (in writing, signed, dated, and enclosed with supporting documentation) to the College at least 45 days prior to their anticipated examination write date. The accommodation request may be submitted through any of the following methods:

- a) By fax to 604-357-1963
- b) By email to [info@ctcma.bc.ca](mailto:info@ctcma.bc.ca)

## Refund

The College's Safety Examination fee is non-refundable. A candidate who is absent from the examination due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. illness, death in the family) must submit written notification (signed, dated, and enclosed with supporting documentation) to the Registrar within fourteen (14) days of the examination date to apply for a refund. The refund request may be submitted through any of the following methods:

- a) By fax to 604-357-1963
- b) By email to [info@ctcma.bc.ca](mailto:info@ctcma.bc.ca)

## Taking an Examination

### Valid Identification

Candidates must present a valid form of photo identification to an invigilator prior to being allowed to write an examination. This identification must be government issued (passport, driver's license, etc.).

### Online Examination Delivery

The approved invigilator or invigilation centre will be provided with instructions, and a secure password to access an online examination in advance of a candidate's scheduled examination write date.

### Examination Attempt

At the beginning of the invigilation of the examination, a candidate must verify that the correct examination has been provided. Once a candidate has viewed an examination, unless the wrong examination has been sent to the approved invigilator or approved invigilation centre, it will be considered to have been an attempt at the examination and the examination will be considered written.

If a candidate discovers he/she has been sent or are writing the wrong examination he/she should bring the discrepancy to the immediate attention of the examination invigilator. The examination invigilator must immediately contact the College at 604-742-6563 or email to: [info@ctcma.bc.ca](mailto:info@ctcma.bc.ca) and ensure that the candidate remains at the invigilation site for further instruction.

In the event that the College is closed, the examination invigilator must contact the unit on the following business day. Further instructions will be provided to the invigilator and the candidate at that time.



### **Examination Time Allotment**

Candidates will be allowed only 1.5 hours to complete their Acupuncturist or Herbalist examination. An examination will be considered void if the candidate has exceeded the allowed time that has been specified for the examination. A timer will be available during the examination on the computer screen.

### **Examination Re-booking**

Candidates must follow the rules and regulations of the approved invigilator or invigilation centre. The College would not be involved in brokering any arrangements between a candidate and approved invigilator or invigilation centre.

### **Examination Related Fees**

Candidates are responsible for paying all associated fees that are assessed by the College, an approved invigilator or an approved invigilation centre for the services related to an examination.

The College fee for each examination sitting is \$75.

### **Examination Results**

Examination results will be emailed to candidates upon completion and processing of an examination. Results will NOT be provided over the telephone or by fax.

### **Retaking an Examination**

#### ***Failed Examination Once***

A candidate who failed an examination once may repeat the failed examination by submitting a new Safety Examination application.

#### ***Failed Examination Twice or More Times***

Any candidate who fails an examination twice or more times is not eligible to repeat the examination unless the candidate completes a 30 days self-study. Upon completion of a 30 days self-study, a candidate may repeat the failed examination by submitting a new Safety Examination application.

A self-study provides an opportunity for candidates to review course materials and better prepare for the examination. It is the responsibility of candidates to plan and complete a self-study.

### **Confidentiality and Security of Test Materials**

Security precautions eliminate unfair advantages among the candidates and avoid the high human/financial costs of replacing examination materials. That is why the strictest security measures are taken to protect the content of the examination before, during and after the examination.

All examination materials are protected by copyright. The College takes strict security measures to protect examination materials during all phases of development and administration including: development and review of material; reproduction, transportation and disposal of materials; and administration of material to candidates.



## Code of Conduct

Candidates are subject to the Rules of Conduct as described below. Candidates who contravene the Rules of Conduct may be denied participation, may have results invalidated and/or may be denied registration. Each candidate, by the act of participating in a Safety Examination, agrees to the following Code of Conduct:

1. Candidates acknowledge that the examination and the items therein are the exclusive property of the College.
2. Candidates acknowledge that they CANNOT remove any part of the examination from the test site, nor can they give or receive assistance from another candidate during the examination.
3. Candidates acknowledge that their participation in any act of cheating, as described below, may be sufficient cause for the College to terminate their participation, to invalidate the results of their examination, or to take any other necessary action.
4. Cheating refers to any act or omission by a candidate that could affect the result of that candidate, another candidate, or a potential future candidate. These acts include:
  - a) non-eligible individuals posing as eligible candidates;
  - b) bringing study or reference materials to the test area;
  - c) giving or receiving assistance to or from another candidate during the examination;
  - d) removing or attempting to remove examination material by any means, electronic or otherwise, from the testing site;
  - e) receiving or giving information about the written component or the clinical component either BEFORE OR AFTER the examination. For example, releasing information about questions such as diagnosis, or tasks and activities involved in the examination. Note: this includes discussing examination items or other information about the examination with examiners or other candidates after the examinations.

## Scoring

### Marking the Examination

The answers are electronically scored. Each multiple-choice question is worth one point. A correct answer receives a score of one point and an incorrect answer receives a score of zero. There is no penalty for incorrect or blank responses. If you are not certain, select your best option.

The passing score for the examination is set by the Education and Examination Committee.

- The passing score for the Acupuncture and Herbology Safety Examination is 70%.