



Western Acupuncture

Theoretical Concepts of Western Acupuncture

Information Sheet 2011

What is the basic idea behind the papers?

Western acupuncture is a practice derived from Traditional Chinese acupuncture. In the Western acupuncture approach, acupuncture needles are used to treat patients, utilising Western clinical reasoning that is based on anatomy, neurophysiology and pathology.

The Theoretical Concepts of Western Acupuncture paper offers practitioners the opportunity to study the contexts in which acupuncture is situated, and to comprehend the issues relevant to Western acupuncture research. The complex understandings inherent in providing acupuncture treatment provide an underpinning to acupuncture treatment.

The Western Acupuncture paper involves the safe and effective practice of acupuncture needling using Western medical clinical reasoning to support acupuncture treatment. The neurophysiological mechanisms involved when applying acupuncture are evaluated, thus expanding your clinical reasoning skills.

Who are these papers for?

These papers are for a wide range of practitioners with a relevant undergraduate degree qualification who wish to utilise acupuncture as one of the tools of their practice. It will be of interest to orthodox health professionals (including physiotherapists, podiatrists, nurses, oral health professionals, doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors, etc.) and complementary and alternative therapists.

What experience/qualifications do I need to take these postgraduate papers?

The Western Acupuncture paper requires that you have a working knowledge of anatomy, physiology and the fundamentals of nervous system function. Ideally, you will have some experience of working with people with pain, or musculoskeletal or neurological dysfunction. As a benchmark, we recommend that you have anatomy and physiology knowledge at least at first year undergraduate/diploma/certificate level

from a university or similar institute. Because you will be encouraged to be practicing acupuncture on your patients, all participants require a relevant current Practising Certificate.

When will the paper run?

Theoretical Concepts of Western Acupuncture runs through Semester One. In March there will be a two-day introduction to the paper, when you will need to come to Auckland. This is strongly recommended but if you have advanced skills in Critical Analysis of research literature, and some understanding of acupuncture, this is not compulsory. For the rest of the semester you can study extramurally.

The Western Acupuncture paper is held across both Semesters One and Two. It commences in March/early April. Four one-week blocks at AUT on the North Shore are provided. The one-week blocks are usually in March/April, May, July and October.

How much time will I need to commit to the paper?

Theoretical Concepts of Western Acupuncture: You should expect to work somewhere around 12 hours per week (or about 200 hours) in total on this paper. This includes reading, analysis and discussion of provided literature. This will be done through participation on AUT Online and the preparation of assessments.

Western Acupuncture: The four, one week blocks are an important component to the course. It is advised that you try not to work at your usual employment during the weeks before/after class. You should expect to work somewhere around 12 hours per week (or about 400 hours) in total on this paper. This includes reading class material, other supporting literature, and the preparation of assessments. You are expected to be assimilating Western acupuncture into your everyday professional practice.

Do I need to be proficient on a computer?

For the online version of the paper you will need to be proficient on a computer and be familiar with AUT Online. You will need an internet connection (broadband is ideal) and will need to know how to download & upload files, navigate around websites, and communicate using online discussion forums and wikis. Support is provided for the development of these skills and most can be learned through experience. For both versions of the paper, you will need to be able to search for literature using library databases and download relevant material. Support regarding database use is also available.

How is the paper taught?

A variety of teaching and learning strategies for both papers are utilised.

Theoretical Concepts of Western Acupuncture includes small-group work, classroom discussions on acupuncture and critical analysis of research for the two days at AUT. The remainder of the paper involves small-group work on AUT Online, with critique, discussion, questioning and analysis of set readings. Further monitoring of other groups adds to the debate. Those who actively participate have been shown to develop insightful and advanced understanding of acupuncture as a practice.

Western Acupuncture is more classroom-based. Teaching and learning strategies include formal lectures, small group work, practical classes, case-study evaluation and

presentation, online discussions, and the presentation of specialist acupuncture knowledge by guest clinicians.

What is the paper's content?

Theoretical Concepts of Western Acupuncture:

- Acupuncture history and dissemination
- Western and Traditional Chinese Acupuncture philosophies of practice
- Critical analysis of research literature
- Acupuncture and research

Western Acupuncture:

- Safe acupuncture practice
- Common acupuncture points and meridians
- Neurophysiological mechanisms activated by acupuncture
- Clinical reasoning based on neurophysiological mechanisms
- Different acupuncture treatment strategies, e.g. auriculotherapy, electroacupuncture, trigger point needling etc.
- Traditional Chinese acupuncture

What kind of reading materials will I need?

A CD-ROM of readings will be provided as a resource for both of the papers.

You will need to purchase an Acupuncture Atlas prior to the commencement of the Western Acupuncture paper. Information on which atlases are available, and where to purchase them, will be provided.

There are several acupuncture textbooks and acupuncture-related databases available in the AUT Library Online.

How will the papers be assessed?

Theoretical Concepts of Western Acupuncture: There are two forms of assessment.

- The first assessment relates to both the online work done over the semester. The quality of individual student's discussion is marked and a 1000-word summary of the important notions explored during the online period.
- The second assessment is a Critical Analysis assignment (2500 words), in which the student will systematically analyse the quality of acupuncture research for a clinical condition of the student's choice.

Western Acupuncture: There are three forms of assessment.

- An essay (3500 words) explaining neurophysiological principles utilised in acupuncture treatment of a clinical condition of the student's choice.
- A practical exam, where a case study is presented. Acupuncture needling of the case-study treatment is demonstrated, and further tutor questioning of acupuncture needling is undertaken.
- A Clinical Portfolio (5000 words), which consists of case studies drawn from your own clinical practice, demonstrating advanced clinical reasoning and reflective skills.

Who is leading the paper?

Both papers are run by Susan Kohut with support from Peter Larmer. Input from several expert clinicians with advanced acupuncture knowledge is included. Susan is a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences at AUT University.

Peter Larmer is Head of Physiotherapy at AUT University. They are both physiotherapists, each having over 20 years of acupuncture experience.

How much does the paper cost?

20-point papers, such as Theoretical Concepts of Western Acupuncture at AUT, cost approximately \$1,050.

40-point papers, such as Western Acupuncture at AUT, cost approximately \$2,100.

When and how do I enrol?

As both papers are limited to 40 students and routinely reach capacity several months before the start of the paper, try to enrol in the on-campus paper (Western Acupuncture), in particular, as early as possible.

Details on how to enrol can be found at the AUT University website:

<http://www.aut.ac.nz/> or <http://www.aut.ac.nz/postgraduate/>

Answers to frequently asked questions about postgraduate study at AUT can be found here: <http://www.aut.ac.nz/postgraduate/faqs.htm>

Regards
Susan