



Candidate Handbook

for the Alberta Acupuncturist
Registration Examination

Prepared by the Examination Committee
of the College of Acupuncturists of Alberta

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Introduction

The College of Acupuncturists of Alberta is the regulatory authority established under the *Health Professions Act* and the Acupuncturist Profession Regulation to regulate the practice of acupuncture in Alberta. The College's primary mandate is to protect the public by ensuring that regulated members provide safe, competent, ethical, and professional care.

The Alberta Acupuncturists Registration Examination (AARE) is a key requirement for registration as an acupuncturist in Alberta. The examination is designed to assess whether applicants have achieved the entry-level competencies required for safe and effective practice. The AARE evaluates the knowledge, clinical judgment, technical skills, and professional responsibilities expected of an entry-level acupuncturist.

This handbook provides comprehensive information about the AARE, including eligibility requirements, application procedures, scoring, results, and other examination policies. Candidates are responsible for understanding and complying with the requirements outlined in this handbook.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to review this handbook thoroughly before applying for or attempting the examination. Familiarity with the examination process and requirements will help ensure a smooth application process and support successful preparation for the examination.

Examination Components

The Alberta Acupuncturist Registration Examination (AARE) consists of multiple components. Candidates must pass all components to be eligible for registration in Alberta.

Online Safety Module

The online safety module is an e-learning module that includes interactive learning activities and a multiple-choice assessment. It is developed based on the College's [Safety Handbook](#) and is designed to strengthen candidates' understanding of safety and risk management in acupuncture practice.

Upon completing the module, candidates will learn to:

- Deliver acupuncture safely and ethically in compliance with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements.
- Apply best practices for infection prevention and control management.
- Apply best practices and safe techniques for acupuncture modalities.
- Respond effectively to clinical emergencies and adverse events.

After successful completion, the e-learning platform will generate a certificate. Keep a copy by taking a photo or saving a screenshot, as this certificate is the **ONLY** proof of completion. Candidates must submit the certificate for registration.

Pan-Canadian Acupuncturists Examination

The Pan-Canadian Examination (PCE) is a national assessment of entry-level acupuncture competencies, developed and administered by the Canadian Alliance of Regulatory Bodies of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists (CARB-TCMPA).

The PCE is delivered at proctored test centres across Canada. Candidates must apply to write the PCE through the College; however, scheduling, administration, accommodation requests, and appeals are managed entirely by CARB-TCMPA. All candidates are required to comply with the examination rules and procedures established by CARB-TCMPA.

For information on the PCE, refer directly to the CARB-TCMPA website, [Home - CARB-TCMPA](#)

Eligibility

To ensure all applicants meet educational standards, applicants for the Alberta Acupuncturists Registration Examination (AARE) must complete or be enrolled in an eligible acupuncture education program.

Alberta-Educated Applicants

Applicants must hold a diploma from an acupuncture education program approved by the Council of the College of Acupuncturists of Alberta. Applicants may be eligible to apply for the examination if they are enrolled in and actively completing the final year of an approved program at the time of application.

Current Alberta-approved programs can be found on the College's website at, [Approved Acupuncture Education Programs – College of Acupuncturists of Alberta](#)

Canadian-Educated Applicants

Applicants educated elsewhere in Canada must have completed an acupuncture program that is assessed as substantially equivalent to an Alberta-approved program.

Applicants may be eligible to apply for the examination if they are enrolled in and actively completing the final year of an approved program at the time of application. Eligibility for Canadian-educated applicants is assessed by the Registrar or the Registration Committee before approval to write the examination.

Internationally Educated Applicants

Internationally educated applicants must hold a diploma from an acupuncture education program that includes a minimum of three (3) years of training in acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine, or medicine with a focus on Chinese medicine. The program must be assessed as substantially equivalent to an Alberta-approved acupuncture program.

Eligibility for internationally educated applicants is determined through an Education Credential Assessment (ECA) completed by an approved assessment organization. The ECA must confirm that the applicant has completed at least three years of relevant training. The College may require additional documentation to support the assessment and determine examination eligibility.

Application Process

The Alberta Acupuncturists Registration Examination (AARE) is administered twice each year, typically in the Spring and Fall. Examination dates, along with application opening and closing deadlines, are published in advance on the College's website.

To be eligible for exam registration, applicants must:

- Create an account on the College's secure Member Portal.
- Complete and submit the online application form through the portal.
- Upload all required supporting documentation, such as proof of educational credentials and any other materials specified in the application instructions.
- Pay the application and applicable exam fees by the deadline.

All applications must be complete and received by the published deadline to be eligible. Late or incomplete submissions will not be accepted.

After the application period closes, the College reviews submissions to verify eligibility and will provide written confirmation of examination registration.

Application Documentation & Fees

Applicants must submit the required documentation for their application to be considered complete. To help you complete your application, you may use the [AARE Application Checklist](#).

Identification

Applicants must provide two **different** pieces of identification. A minimum of one primary identification is required.

PRIMARY IDENTIFICATION	SECONDARY IDENTIFICATION
• Driver's or learner's license • Government identification card • Canadian birth certificate • Passport • Canadian Citizenship Card • Permanent Resident Card • Canadian Immigration Identification Record	• School identification card (student card) • Foreign birth certificate (a baptismal certificate is not acceptable) • Canadian or U.S. driver's license • Secure Certificate of Indian Status • Naturalization certificate • Canadian Forces identification • Vehicle registration (only if applicant's signature is shown)

Education Credentials

Applicants must provide proof of educational credentials by submitting the appropriate documentation based on the jurisdiction in which their education was completed.

EDUCATION JURISDICTION	ACCEPTED DOCUMENTATION
Alberta	- Diploma, OR - Unofficial/official transcripts
Canada (outside of Alberta)	- Diploma - Official/Unofficial transcripts - Detailed course outlines - Program curriculum, including total theoretical, practical, and clinical hours, as well as the number of patient visits completed during clinical training. * The Registrar may also require an ECA or other credential verification where necessary to verify the authenticity or Canadian equivalency of an applicant's educational credential.
International	Education Credential Assessment (ECA) from an approved organization. Detailed information on obtaining an ECA can be found at Educational credential assessment - Canada.ca

Eamination Fees

Current application and examination fees are published on the [College's website](#). Fees for the Pan-Canadian Acupuncturists Exam are established by CARB-TCMPA and can be found on their website.

All fees must be paid in full by the published deadline through the College's Member Portal or by e-transfer. Accepted payment methods and instructions are provided by email upon application approval.

Applications with unpaid or partially paid fees will be deemed incomplete, and the applicant's examination registration will be automatically cancelled. Late payments will not be accepted. Applicants who miss the deadline must reapply for a future examination administration and pay the full fees for that administration.

Application fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Special Accommodations

Online Safety Module Special Accommodations

Special accommodations are not provided for the online safety module. This module is designed to be completed independently and may be taken at the candidate's convenience within the allotted access period. Candidates are able to complete the module at their own pace, including the ability to pause and resume as needed.

Pan-Canadian Special Accommodations

The PCE accommodation requests are handled by CARB-TCMPA under its *Pan-Canadian Examination Accommodation Policy*. Candidates requiring special accommodations for the PCE must follow CARB-TCMPA's process, which includes completing an Accommodation Request Form and submitting supporting documentation directly to CARB-TCMPA by a specified deadline.

Withdrawals and Refunds

Advance Notice Withdrawal

Candidates who wish to withdraw from any component of the Alberta Acupuncturists Registration Examination (AARE) must submit a written withdrawal request (by email) **before the published withdrawal deadline**.

- The request must clearly specify which examination component(s) the candidate is withdrawing from.
- Examination fees will be refunded in full. Application fees are non-refundable and non-transferrable.
- An advance withdrawal will not be recorded as a failed attempt and will not count toward the total number of examination attempts.

Online Safety Module Withdrawal

Once a candidate has been issued access to the online safety module, withdrawal from this component is not permitted. Access to the module is considered immediate delivery of the service.

Refunds will not be issued once the access link has been provided, regardless of whether the module has been completed or accessed.

Pan-Canadian Withdrawal

After the advanced withdrawal deadline, candidates must contact CARB-TCMPA directly and follow the organization's established policy and procedures for late withdrawals.

Examination Administration and Results

Dates and Location

Examination dates and locations will be provided to candidates and posted on the College's website once available.

Language

All components of the Alberta Acupuncturists Registration Examination (AARE) are conducted in **English only**. Interpreters, translation aids, or language assistance of any kind are not permitted in any examination setting.

Examination Validity Period

A passing result for any examination component is valid for three (3) years from the date the examination was administered. If the three-year validity period expires before the candidate completes the registration process, they must retake the applicable examination component to be eligible for registration.

Examination Attempts

Candidates are permitted three attempts for the Pan-Canadian Examination (PCE). The Registrar or Registration Committee may grant approval for a fourth and final attempt if they determine that extenuating circumstances exist.

Candidates requesting a fourth attempt must submit a written request outlining the following:

- The reason(s) for requesting a fourth and final attempt
- Any extenuating circumstances that may have impacted previous exam performance
- A detailed explanation of the steps taken to better prepare, including any relevant continuing education, courses, upgrading or study plans.

Scoring and Evaluation

Safety Module – is scored electronically through the examination platform.

Pan-Canadian Exam -are scored using standardized procedures aligned with best practices established by the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education.

For additional information regarding examination scoring, passing standards, and score reporting, candidates should refer to the *CARB-TCMPA Candidate Handbook*.

Results

Examination results are released through the Member Portal within ten (10) weeks of the examination date. Results are issued as “pass” or “fail” only.

Candidates who are unsuccessful on the Pan-Canadian Examination (PCE) will receive a performance profile report that identifies areas of relative strength and weakness.

For confidentiality reasons, examination results will not be provided by phone or email under any circumstances.

Retakes

Candidates who are unsuccessful in achieving a passing result on the Pan-Canadian Examination (PCE) may reattempt the examination at a future scheduled administration.

To reattempt the examination, candidates are required to submit an application and pay all applicable fees by the published deadlines. Registration for each attempt is subject to availability within the scheduled examination offerings.

Candidates are responsible for monitoring examination dates and ensuring they complete the registration process within the required timelines for their desired administration.

Re-scores, Irregularities and Appeals

Appeals related to the Pan-Canadian Examination (PCE), including concerns about scoring, exam administration, accommodations, or procedural fairness are managed entirely by the Canadian Alliance of Regulatory Bodies of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists (CARB-TCMPA).

Candidates who wish to appeal any aspect of the PCE must follow CARB-TCMPA's established appeals policy and procedures. All requests must be submitted directly to CARB-TCMPA within the timelines and requirements set by their organization.

The College cannot overturn, alter, or review any PCE result or decision.

For detailed information on appeal grounds, processes, timelines, and required forms, candidates must consult CARB-TCMPA's official website.

Online Safety Exam Procedure and Conduct

The following information applies only to the College's Online Safety Module. Candidates writing the Pan-Canadian Examination (PCE) should refer to the *Pan-Canadian Examination Candidate Handbook* for examination procedures and conduct requirements.

Eligible candidates will receive examination instructions, including a secure access link and login information, by email. As the examination platform is secure, all examination-related correspondence will be sent only to the email address provided in the candidate's application. Candidates are responsible for ensuring their contact information is accurate and for regularly monitoring their inbox, including junk and spam folders.

By participating in the Online Safety Module, candidates acknowledge and agree that all examination materials and content are the exclusive property of the College and must not be copied, reproduced, distributed, discussed, or disclosed in any manner.

Candidates are expected to conduct themselves honestly and professionally throughout the examination. Any form of cheating or irregular examination behaviour is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, impersonating a candidate, possessing or using unauthorized materials, providing or receiving assistance during the examination, or sharing examination content before, during, or after the examination.

Any suspected irregular examination behaviour will be reported to the Examination Committee for investigation. The Committee will review the circumstances and determine whether a breach has occurred. Investigations may be initiated at any stage of the examination process, including after the examination has been completed or results have been released.

If a candidate is found to have engaged in cheating or irregular examination behaviour, the College may take one or more actions, including assigning a failing result, denying future access to the examination, reporting the matter to the College for further review, or pursuing additional disciplinary or legal action where appropriate.

Limits of Liability

The College and the Examination Committee make reasonable efforts to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the Candidate Handbook, examination resources, and reports. However, neither the College nor the Exam Committee are liable for any damages arising from errors or omissions in relation to the examinations. This includes, but is not limited to, personal, professional, or financial impacts such as loss of income, salary, or expenses incurred by a candidate, employer, or contractor.

It is the responsibility of each candidate, when registering for the Alberta Acupuncturist Registration Examination, to read and understand these limits of liability and to inform any relevant parties, such as employers, of these limits. By participating in the examinations, candidates agree not to take any action or initiate proceedings against the College, the Exam Committee, or their officers, employees, or agents for any act done in good faith, or for any neglect or default related to the examinations.

References

Online Safety Module

- [Safety Handbook for Alberta Acupuncturists](#)

Other

- [AARE Application Checklist](#)

Version History

Date	Notes
Dec 9, 2025	Revised to include updated information, improved clarity, and removal of sections that will be incorporated into the Examination Application Guide. New College formatting and style guide.
June 11, 2026	Combined with Examination Guide. Acupuncture points and modalities content removed.