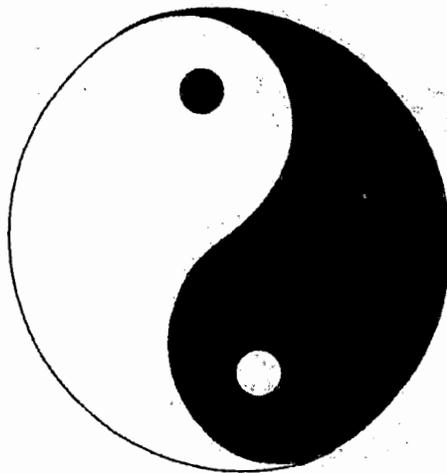


Preparation Guide



California Acupuncture Licensing Examination

August 2016

California Acupuncture Board
1747 N. Market Boulevard, Suite 180
Sacramento, CA 95834

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SECTION 1: ABOUT THE EXAMINATION

Purpose of the Examination

Section 101.6 of the California Business and Professions Code (B&P Code) requires that the Acupuncture Board establish that each applicant for an acupuncture license possesses the minimum level of competence necessary for safe practice. Accordingly, candidates must meet the educational and experience requirements set forth in B&P Code Section 4938, and take and pass a written examination that measures the competencies necessary for independent practice.

Examination Development

The acupuncture licensing examination is developed in accordance with the legal and technical guidelines for producing a valid examination. The entire examination process occurs under the direction of test validation and development specialists.

Examination development begins with an occupational analysis. The occupational analysis is a study of the profession to determine the specific tasks and the knowledge required for independent practice. The results of that study constitute the examination outline, which specifies the content areas of the examination and the weighting of each content area. All content and associated weighting are in direct proportion to the importance of each area in overall practice (see Appendix A).

A copy of the 2015 occupational analysis/validation report can be accessed on the Internet at the Acupuncture Board's examination web page at:

www.acupuncture.ca.gov/students/examination.shtml

You must have a copy of Adobe Reader ® to read this file.

Licensed practitioners who are currently working in independent practice write the examination questions. Practitioners receive training in constructing the questions for licensure as well as writing questions that measure entry-level competence. The questions must reflect the examination outline.

Licensed practitioners who were not part of the original examination question development process then evaluate these newly developed questions for technical accuracy. Practitioners in these workshops review the content and structure of the questions, making any needed revisions. Only after the licensed practitioners review and approve the questions will the new questions be added to the pool of examination questions used in the California Acupuncture Licensing Examination (CALE).

SECTION 3: EXAMINATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Examination Details

The examination consists of 200 multiple-choice questions, which is broken into two parts. Each part contains 100 questions. You will have two hours and thirty minutes to complete each part. You will be given a 45 minute break in between the two parts. During the break you will not be permitted to remain in the testing area; it is strongly recommended that you use this time to eat a meal and stretch. Candidates with special accommodations will need to refer to their identification notice for specific details.

Examination Scheduling

You will receive a letter from the Acupuncture Board stating your eligibility to take the California Acupuncture Licensing Examination (CALE). This letter will also provide you with specific information about the location and time the examination will be given.

The written examination will be administered at the Sacramento Convention Center on **Wednesday, August 10, 2016**. Plan on arriving at the testing site well in advance of your scheduled time. Allow time for traffic, parking, and unforeseen delays. No one will be admitted once the examination instructions begin. Candidates who miss the morning testing session will not be allowed to participate in the afternoon testing session.

Directions to the Examination Site

The Sacramento Convention Center is located at 1400 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95814.

Directions from San Francisco / Oakland:

1. Take I-80 EAST towards SACRAMENTO
2. Take I-80 EAST (Business Route) to SACRAMENTO / SOUTH LAKE TAHOE
3. Take I-5 ramp towards REDDING / LOS ANGELES
4. Keep SLIGHT LEFT at fork towards ramp I-5 NORTH / REDDING
5. Merge onto I-5 NORTH / REDDING
6. Take J Street / DOWNTOWN Exit
7. Go STRAIGHT on J Street (merge onto J street)
8. The Sacramento Convention Center is approximately twelve blocks from the J street exit on the RIGHT

Directions from Sacramento International Airport:

1. Exit Airport and take I-5 SOUTH to SACRAMENTO / YUBA CITY
2. Right on I-5 SOUTH
3. Take J Street / DOWNTOWN Exit
4. Go straight on J Street (merge onto J street)
5. The Sacramento Convention Center is approximately twelve blocks from the J street exit on the RIGHT

Directions from North Lake Tahoe / Auburn:

1. Take I-80 WEST towards SACRAMENTO
2. Take I-80 Business Route (Capital City Freeway) towards SACRAMENTO/CA-99 SOUTH
3. Take CA-160 SOUTH towards CA-160 / DOWNTOWN SACRAMENTO
4. CA-160 becomes 12th Street
5. Turn LEFT onto J Street. The Sacramento Convention Center is approximately two blocks from the corner of 12th and J Streets on the RIGHT

SECTION 5: EXAMINATION MATERIALS

Examination Outline

The examination covers five content areas that reflect the current job competencies in the practice of acupuncture in California. The five content areas and their associated weights include the following:

1. Patient Assessment (31%)
2. Developing a Diagnostic Impression (10.5%)
3. Providing Acupuncture Treatment (35%)
4. Prescribing Herbal Medicinals (10.5%)
5. Regulations for Public Health and Safety (13%)

Appendix A provides the complete examination outline with associated weights and descriptions. Appendix B provides several sample questions from each of the content areas.

Examination Pulse List

Several items on the examination will contain descriptions of pulse characteristics or will require you to choose the correct pulse characteristic based on information presented in the items. These items will contain only the English names as described in the New Essentials. Appendix C provides a list of New Essentials terms that describe pulse characteristics that may be used on the examination.

Examination Point List

Several items on the examination will contain descriptions of point locations or signs and symptoms for point prescriptions. Appendix D provides a list of the nomenclature used to identify the points.

Examination Single Herb List

Several of the items on the examination pertaining to herbal medicine will contain questions relating to single herbs. Appendix E provides a list of herbs that may be the basis for single herb questions on the examination.

Examination Herbal Formulas List

Several of the items on the examination pertaining to the herbal medicine content area will contain questions relating to herbal formulas. Appendix F provides a list of the herbal formulas that may be used in the examination for the herbal formula questions.

**APPENDIX A: EXAMINATION OUTLINE FOR THE
CALIFORNIA ACUPUNCTURE LICENSING EXAMINATION**

I. Patient Assessment (31%)

The practitioner obtains patient's history and performs a physical examination to determine presenting complaint and interrelationship among symptoms. The practitioner understands general indications, pharmacological properties, and potential interactions of herbs, supplements, and Western medications. The practitioner uses diagnostic testing procedures to augment Oriental Medicine assessment methods.

- (A) **Obtain Patient's History (16.5%)** - Assess patient's presenting complaints by gathering patient health and treatment history.
- (B) **Perform Physical Examination (12%)** - Assess patient's condition using Western and Oriental medical examination techniques.
- (C) **Evaluate for Supplements and Western Pharmacology (1%)** - Assess patient's use of herbs, supplements, and Western medications to determine impact on patient's condition.
- (D) **Implement Diagnostic Testing (1.5%)** - Assess patient's condition by using results from Western diagnostic tests.

II. Diagnostic Impression and Treatment Plan (10.5%)

The practitioner evaluates clinical manifestations to determine the relative strength and progression of disease. The practitioner evaluates patterns of disharmony according to theories of Oriental medicine to establish a diagnosis and treatment plan. The practitioner demonstrates knowledge of how pathology in Western medicine relates to disease in traditional Oriental Medicine.

**APPENDIX A: EXAMINATION OUTLINE FOR THE
CALIFORNIA ACUPUNCTURE LICENSING EXAMINATION**

III. Providing Acupuncture Treatment (35%)

The practitioner implements knowledge of the actions, indications, and categories of points to create a point protocol which balances and treats disharmonies. The practitioner uses anatomical landmarks and proportional measurements to locate and needle points on the body. The practitioner identifies clinical indications and contraindications for the use of acupuncture microsystems and adjunct modalities. The practitioner evaluates patient response at follow-up visit and modifies treatment plan.

- (A) **Point Selection Principles and Categories (17.5%)** – Select acupuncture points and combinations, including microsystems (e.g., auricular, scalp), to provide therapeutic treatment for disharmonies.
- (B) **Point Location and Needling Techniques (5.5%)** - Locate acupuncture points, insert needles, and apply needling techniques.
- (C) **Implement Adjunct Modalities (7%)** – Enhance treatment effectiveness by utilizing supportive treatments and recognizing contraindications.
- (D) **Patient Education (5%)** – Provide Oriental Medicine education to patient regarding lifestyle, diet, and self-care.

IV. Herbal Therapy (10.5%)

The practitioner selects herbal formulas based on diagnostic criteria, and then modifies herbs and dosages according to patient's condition. The practitioner identifies situations and conditions where herbs and herbal formulas would produce undesired effects.

**APPENDIX A: EXAMINATION OUTLINE FOR THE
CALIFORNIA ACUPUNCTURE LICENSING EXAMINATION**

V. Regulations for Public Health and Safety (13%)

The practitioner adheres to professional, ethical, and legal requirements regarding business practices, informed consent, and collaboration with other health care providers. The practitioner understands and complies with laws and regulations governing infection control measures. The practitioner adheres to legal requirements for reporting known or suspected abuse

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE QUESTIONS

I. Patient Assessment

1. An Acupuncturist examines a patient and finds a deviated and stiff, but normal-colored, tongue. Which of the following conditions would be indicated by this patient's tongue presentation?
- A. Epilepsy
 - B. Bell's palsy
 - C. Trigeminal neuralgia
 - D. Cerebral vascular accident

Answer: D

2. A 35-year-old male patient reports that he has had a persistent cold and has been treating himself for the past two months with Yin Qiao San (Honeysuckle and Forsythia Powder) that he bought in a store. His fever, body aches, and sore throat are gone. His main complaint now is that he still has a dry hacking cough that keeps him up at night. He is also restless and constipated. Which of the following tongue and pulse characteristics should be seen in this patient?
- A. Red cracked tongue; rapid, excess pulse
 - B. Red tongue with a geographic coating; rapid, thready pulse
 - C. Light red tongue with a thick yellow coating; rapid, rolling pulse
 - D. Light red tongue with a thin yellow coating; rapid, superficial pulse

Answer: B

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE QUESTIONS

II. Developing a Diagnostic Impression

3. A 23-year-old female patient who is phlegmatic complains of amenorrhea for the past two months, as well as severe pain and pressure in her lower abdomen for the last two days. She also complains of nausea, dizziness, and disinterest in food although she drinks a lot of soda. She states that she cannot get enough sleep, that she has been particularly stressed at work, and that recent, constant fights with her boyfriend are wearing her down. She has a pale complexion and a slow demeanor. Her tongue is pale with red around the sides, and her pulse is rolling and string-taut. The patient has a history of irregular menstrual periods. What diagnosis should be considered, and how should the patient be treated?
- A. Depression; treat with needles and herbs
 - B. Amenorrhea; treat with needles and herbs
 - C. Ectopic pregnancy; refer to a medical physician
 - D. Adrenal insufficiency; refer to a medical physician

Answer: C

4. Which of the following conditions would lead to a differential diagnosis of chronic rather than acute bronchitis?
- A. Weak Spleen causes Phlegm Damp to rise to the Lung, and Wind Cold invades the Lung
 - B. External Excess hinders spreading functions of the Lung Qi, and Phlegm Damp prevents Qi from descending
 - C. Weak Spleen causes Phlegm Damp to rise to the Lung, and Deficient Kidney cannot make Lung Qi descend
 - D. External Excess hinders spreading functions of the Lung Qi, and Excess in the Lung coincides with Deficient Kidney

Answer: C



Examination Content

The content of the California Acupuncture Licensing Examination is based on the results of a comprehensive occupational analysis, which is revised every four or five years, most recently in 2008. Licensed acupuncturists in California were surveyed in order to identify the tasks, knowledge, skills and abilities that are important components of the acupuncture professions.

The following percentages indicate the portion of the test devoted to each major topic. For further definition of the content areas, please refer to Tables 18 and 19 in the 2008 Occupational Analysis / Validation Report found on this web site.

Content Area: Patient Assessment

33%

The practitioner obtains patient's history and performs a physical examination to determine presenting complaint and interrelationship among symptoms. The practitioner determines the effects of Western medications the patient is taking. The practitioner uses modern diagnostic testing procedures to augment traditional assessment methods.

- (A) Obtaining Patient History (15%)
- (B) Performing a Physical Examination (14%)
- (C) Evaluation for Western Pharmacology (3%)
- (D) Implementing Diagnostic Testing (1%)

Content Area: Developing a Diagnostic Impression

17%

The practitioner evaluates clinical manifestations to determine the relative strength and progression of disease. The practitioner evaluates patterns of disharmony according to theories of Oriental medicine to arrive at a final diagnosis. The practitioner demonstrates knowledge of how pathology in Western medicine relates to disease in traditional Oriental medicine.

- (A) Form a Diagnostic Impression (7%)
- (B) Differentiation of Syndromes (4%)
- (C) Patient Education and Referral (4%)
- (D) Develop Treatment Plan (2%)

Content Area: Providing Acupuncture Treatment

32%

The practitioner implements knowledge of the therapeutic effects of points and combinations of points in modifying pain, normalizing functioning, and treating disharmonies. The practitioner uses anatomical landmarks and proportional measurements in locating points on or near body surfaces. The practitioner identifies clinical indications for using alternate treatment modalities.

- (A) Point Selection Principles (8%)
- (B) Point Categories (8%)
- (C) Point Location and Needling Techniques (5%)
- (D) Provide Auxiliary Treatment (8%)
- (E) Implement Microsystems (1%)
- (F) Observation and Modification (2%)

Content Area: Prescribing Herbal Medicinals

11%

The practitioner prescribes herbs and formulas based on diagnostic criteria. The practitioner modifies formulas and dosage of herbs according to patient's condition. The practitioner identifies situations and conditions where herbs and formulas would produce undesired effects.

- (A) Identification of Herbs (5%)
- (B) Prescribing and Administering Herbs (6%)

Content Area: Regulations for Public Health and Safety

7%

The practitioner understands and complies with laws and regulations governing hygiene and the control of pathogenic contaminants. The practitioner applies legal guidelines for office practice and maintenance of patient records. The practitioner adheres to legal requirements for reporting known or suspected abuse.



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Examination Requirements

Individuals wishing to practice acupuncture in California must first obtain a state license, which requires qualifying for and passing California's written examination (Business and Professions Code section 4938). The examination tests the competency of entry level acupuncturists.

In order to qualify for California's examination, an applicant must furnish satisfactory evidence of completion of one of the following:

1. An educational and training program approved by the Board pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 4938(b)(1)
 - a. For students who were enrolled in an approved acupuncture and Oriental medicine training program before January 1, 2005, must complete a minimum of 2,348 hours of theoretical and clinical training pursuant to California Code of Regulations, section 1399.436 **or**
 - b. For students who enrolled in an approved acupuncture and Oriental medicine training program on or after January 1, 2005, must complete a minimum of 3,000 hours of theoretical and clinical training pursuant to California Code of Regulations, section 1399.434.
2. A tutorial program in the practice of acupuncture (consisting of a minimum of 3,798 hours of theoretical and clinical training), which is approved by the Board per Business and Professions Code section 4938(b)(2) and California Code of Regulations, section 1399.420-432;
3. In the case of an applicant who has completed education and training outside the United States and Canada, documented educational training and clinical experience that meets the standards established pursuant to Business and Professions Code sections 4939 and 4941.

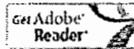
California does not recognize out-of-state licensing (reciprocity) nor does it accept for licensure those individuals who take and pass the national examination (administered by the [National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine \(NCCAOM\)](#)). Therefore, licensees from other states or those individuals who have passed NCCAOM's examination may not practice until they have qualified for, taken and passed the California examination.

The Acupuncture Board administers the California Acupuncture Licensing Examination (CALE) and offers the examination in Mandarin, Korean and English. The CALE is based on and validated by an occupational analysis. The passing score on the examination is determined by subject matter experts (SMEs) who use a criterion-referenced scoring method.

Applications for examination must be received in the Sacramento office at least 120 days prior to the date of the examination for which the application is made. The application requires personal and demographic information, including relevant transcripts/diplomas, be submitted to the Board's office. Diplomas and transcripts must be official documents. All foreign language documents must be accompanied by an English translation certified by a translator who can attest to the accuracy.



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