



Tips on Choosing a TCM School in Ontario

In considering a career as a Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioner and/or Acupuncturist, choosing the school is one of the most important decisions to make. It is both a large investment of time and money so investigate the school yourself and talk to as many different schools as possible. In Ontario, diploma programs in Traditional Chinese Medicine are offered at public colleges and private schools. The following suggestions are a guide in considering a potential school:

Personal Needs and Preferences

- What size school is preferred?
- Living in a small town? In the city?
- Calculate living expenses and what is affordable?
- Is commuting a viable option?
- What kinds of living arrangements are available?
- Are good supports (friends and family) close by?

The “Feel” of the School

- Is the staff friendly and helpful?
- Are classes open for visits and to sit in?
- Does the school set appropriate admission standards?
- Are written materials provided that clearly explain the school’s policies, tuition and other expenses, and application process?
- Does the school sign a contract with its students?
- Is the atmosphere of the school welcoming?
- Is there the opportunity to speak to current students and/or graduates? Is the introduction / message from the Registrar resonating?

The School’s Reputation and Standing

- How long has the school been in business?
- Does it have a reputation for high standards?
- What is its history of success at the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario Registration Examinations? (see [Pan-Canadian Exam Results Classified by Ontario Schools](#))
- Is the school approved for [Ontario Student Assistance Program \(OSAP\)](#)? Does it offer other financial aid programs (bursaries, scholarships, awards, and work-study programs)?
- Does the school have positive name recognition with employers?
- Will being a graduate of this school enhance employability/opportunities for successful practice?
- Does the school participate actively in the regulation of Traditional Chinese Medicine profession?

The Quality of the School and the Program

- Does the school's curriculum meet the [Entry Level Occupational Competencies for the Practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Canada](#) approved by the College?
- Are its facilities adequate to deliver its program?
- How many direct patient contact hours does each student receive in the clinical experiences?
- Do the clinical experiences provide diversity of involvement with many types of clients and health conditions?
- Are all clinical experiences fully supervised by on-site registered Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners/Acupuncturists?
- What are the student/teacher ratios in the school's various educational experiences?
- Does the school have teachers with strong reputations in the subjects they teach?
- Are there registered members of the College on staff in all subject areas?
- What is the school's faculty turnover rate?
- Does it have an on-going instructor professional development program?
- Does it have a continuing education program for its graduates?
- Can students pursue their particular interests in the school's program?
- Are the school's academic policies clearly stated?
- What happens if a student fails?
- Are students given transcripts/progress reports during the program?
- Does the school have a code of ethics and support the principles of professionalism?

Services Available to Students

- Does the school have a library and quiet study area?
- Does it have a student lounge?
- Is tutoring available?
- Are there remedial clinics?
- Is there study skills support?
- Are there services for students with special needs?
- Is there a student guidance/counselling service?
- Do the students have a representative voice that is listened to?
- Are students fully covered for insurance?
- Do students feel well served by the school?