



**Quality Assurance Program Handbook  
For Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture (TCMA)**  
November 2022 (Updated: September 2024)

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College of  
**COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH  
PROFESSIONALS OF BC**



## Handbook

The information included within this handbook is intended to assist TCMA registrants in their compliance with the requirements of the Quality Assurance Program (QAP) by providing guidance and clarity on the various aspects of the Practice Support Program (PSP).

### TCMA Quality Assurance Program (QAP)

As part of CCHPBC's mandate to regulate practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture (TCMA), the College is required to maintain a **Quality Assurance Program (QAP)**.

The purpose of the QAP is to promote and facilitate high practice standards and competencies, ensuring that TCMA registrants deliver safe and ethical care in an evidence-informed and self-reflective manner. Whereas traditionally, regulators viewed continuing education as a matter of taking education courses and earning specified numbers of credits, it is now agreed that building competence involves more than simply earning course credits. Contemporary regulation is now a matter of supporting registrants throughout their careers and facilitating their ability to develop *personal learning plans*.

Meeting QAP requirements is not only necessary for registration renewal with the College, but also an important step in maintaining the public's trust.

### Practice Support Program (PSP)

The PSP is designed to support TCMA registrants in ongoing career development by promoting professional behaviour, self-evaluation, peer mentorship and continued learning. This supportive approach works by facilitating registrant development in all workplace settings and across their career-span, respecting that TCMA registrants are responsible health professionals with a broad scope that are expected to be lifelong learners. TCMA registrants are expected to continually assess and improve their practice in the interest of providing safe and ethical health care to the public.

The PSP currently consists of two components—five steps in total, plus an Activity Log—to be completed every Quality Assurance (QA) cycle (2 years/ 24 months).

The first component (Step 1) is **Assessment**, and it provides the basis upon which the remaining four steps comprising **Professional Development** can be completed.

Through the PSP, TCMA registrants take responsibility for their own professional growth by developing personalized learning objectives and professional development plans that are tailored to meet their unique practice situations and career goals.



## PSP is a QAP Requirement for Registrants

The **PSP** is a requirement of the College's QAP and replaces the previous requirements of the Continuing Competency Program. Compliance with the Continuing Competency Requirements Policy is required for renewing TCMA registration with the College as stated in [CCHPBC Bylaws Schedule 5: Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture: Registration, Examinations, and Professional Liability Insurance paragraph 6.2.1.4.](#)

A normal QA cycle starts April 1 and ends 24-months (2 years) later, March 31.

For current QA cycles starting **on or after** August 1, 2023, completion of the full 5-Step PSP is in effect. By completing the full 5 step PSP including the Activity Log, TCMA registrants can fulfill the minimum CCHPBC Bylaw requirements to obtain 50 CE hours every 2 years (24 months). A minimum of 4 CE hours must focus on ethical practice related to the Career-Span Competencies (CSC) 1-6.

For current QA cycles that started **before** August 1, 2023, TCMA registrants are only required to complete PSP Step 1. Completion of PSP Step 1 will result in earning 10 CE credits towards the required 50 CE credits. The remaining CE credits can be achieved by either completing PSP steps 2 to 5 or completing Category A, B, C, D.

*Note: CE hours from one QA cycle can not be banked or carried forward into a new QA cycle. Courses necessary to fulfill TCMA registration requirements, such as Standard First Aid and Level C cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR-C) **cannot be counted as CE credits for PSP.***

TCMA registrants who are registered as "dual" or who hold registration as another regulated health professional (e.g. RMT, ND, or chiropractor) need to complete the QAP requirement for **both professions**.

Information on **Continuing Competency Requirements** can be found under the "Continuing Competency Requirements" tab on the [TCMA Registrant Practice Resources page](#).

## How Do I Complete My Continuing Education (CE) Requirement within the PSP Framework?

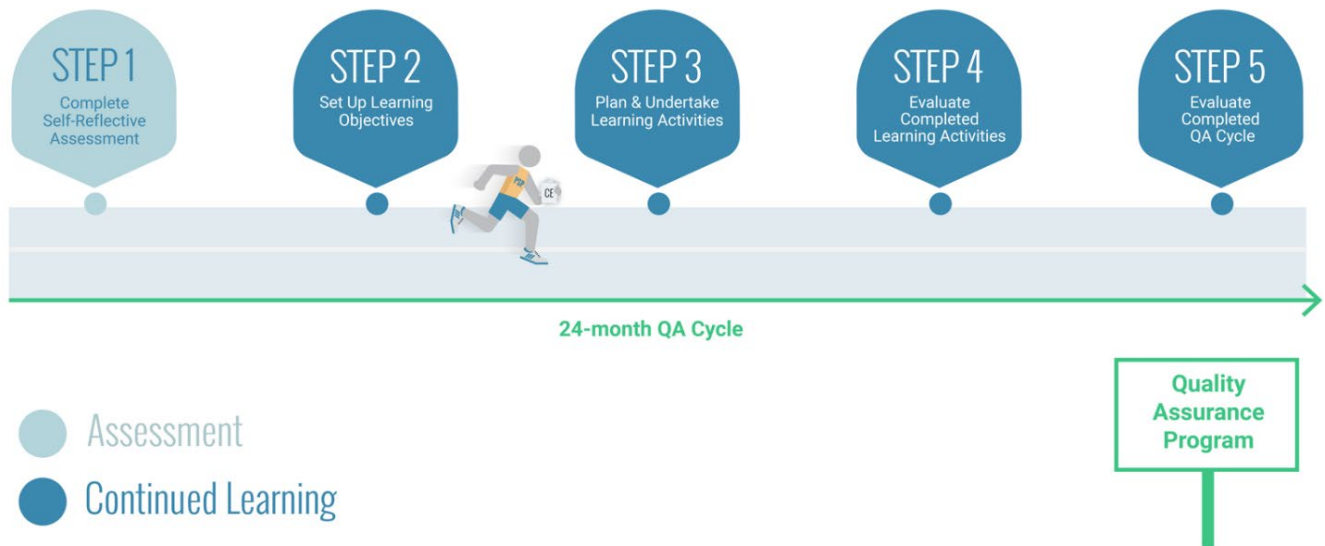
By completing all 5-Steps of the PSP, TCMA registrants may earn the required minimum of 50 CE.

- Step 1: Complete Your Self-Reflective Assessment (10 CE)
- Setting Up Learning Objectives (10 CE)



- Step 3: Planning & Undertaking Learning Activities (1 CE per hour of activity)
- Step 4: Evaluating Completed Learning Activities (5 CE per evaluation; up to 20 CE total)
- Step 5: End of QA Cycle Overall Evaluation (5 CE)

## Completing the Steps of the PSP



Completed samples of the 5 steps of the PSP are available on the College's website through the Registrant Practice Resources page for Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists, under "[QA Programs Templates and Activity Log](#)"

### Step 1: Complete Your Self-Reflective Assessment (10 CE)

#### A. Assessment

- Log in to the TCMA [Registrant Portal](#) from the College's website, using your username and password. Click on 'MY ACCOUNT,' and then on the 'Practice Support Program' tab. You will see a 'Start New Self Assessment' button. Click this button to begin a new Assessment. *Note: A printable version of the Self-Reflective Assessment Tool can be accessed [here](#) and completed by hand.*
- Using the [14 Career-Span Competencies \(CSC\)](#), you will be guided through a process of self-reflection that helps evaluate strengths, set goals, and identify areas in which additional learning could be beneficial. Click 'Save and Continue' at the bottom to proceed to the next CSC. You are required to rate all indicators for each CSC in order to be able to go to the next CSC. After a CSC is completed, the data is saved automatically.



- When you have completed all 14 CSCs, click ‘Submit’. The software will automatically generate a Self-Assessment Summary that shows your results. Then, by clicking on the ‘Export’ button, you can download your summary in a choice of standard formats.

#### Tips for Step-1:

- Step-1 may be completed in one sitting, or over several days. The software will save your work as you progress.
- The program will autogenerate individual CSCs for you. Click on each CSC, review the interpretation and select the performance indicator that most closely describes how you feel about your performance relative to that CSC. Click ‘Save and Continue’ at the bottom and proceed to the next CSC. You are required to rate all indicators for each CSC to be able to go to the next CSC. After a CSC is completed, the data is saved automatically.
- If you don’t feel that you can provide a rating for a particular performance indicator, you can choose one of two rationales, R10 or R11, to explain your feelings. If you feel that an indicator is not relevant to your situation, just choose N/A. You will probably only use these options rarely. With reflection, most registrants often determine how a particular performance indicator can apply to their personal work situation.

The information recorded during **Assessment** is confidential. The College may use aggregated and anonymized information for the purpose of evaluating and updating the program over time.

### **B. Professional Development—Your Professional Development Plan**

The purpose of drawing up a *Professional Development Plan*, in the **Professional Development** stage of the PSP, is to make sure that learning time is focussed on specific topics that can be targeted to have a positive impact on *your* practice.

Using the information gathered in the **Assessment**, create and (later) evaluate your learning program. Use the *Self-Reflective Assessment* and the resulting *Self-Assessment Summary* for reference to guide learning options. The learning objectives that you propose in your Professional Development Plan will become your personal customized plan. Be realistic and thoughtful so that you can obtain maximum benefit from the learning.

**Professional Development Plan** templates and completed samples can be found on the College’s website through the Registrant Practice Resources page for Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists, under “[QA Programs Templates and Activity Log](#)”.



## Step 2: Setting Up Learning Objectives (10 CE)

To ensure that you are utilizing your full QA cycle to accomplish your goals, Step 2 Learning Objectives is best begun as soon as possible after completing Step 1 (Assessment). Use the [Learning Objectives](#) template to help set your learning objectives.

### Tips for Step-2:

By stating your learning needs and interests as **SMART** goals, you will find it easier to work on them during your QA cycle.



**S = Specific** Learning goals should be specific, and you are encouraged to develop a few specific goals, rather than just a single, 'one size fits all' learning goal. This will allow you to make the most efficient use of the time available during your QA cycle.

**M = Measurable** Consider measures related to time, such as diagnosis time, or time to set up a treatment plan, update patient files etc. Other measures might relate to number of articles read, topics discussed with peers, etc. This allows your evaluation and self-reflection to be supported by objective measurable data.

**A = Audience-specific** Learning goals should be set to improve your own practice so that *your* professional service and care to *your* particular patients can benefit the most.

**R = Realistic** Learning requires studying, practising, and participating in a learning activity. Some activities might take longer than others, so set a reasonable amount of learning for a two-year period – not too few activities so as not to realize any benefits, and so many that you are overwhelmed. It's the quality of the learning and the extent to which it can help with your practice that matters most.

**T = Time-Bound** Set up a schedule for your learning and establish a timeframe in which you plan to complete each of your learning objectives.

## Step 3: Planning & Undertaking Learning Activities (1 CE/hr of activity)

Use the [Plan & Complete Activities](#) template to help select and plan the learning opportunities that can best fulfill your objectives, carefully scheduling them over your full QA cycle. The learning opportunities you undertake should align with the 14 Career-Span Competencies under the PSP.



There are many learning and training opportunities available. Choose quality learning provided by reputable organizations and sources. Some learning opportunities might be offered by vendors with whom you are already familiar, such as CE providers and TCM professional associations. You may find learning resources in other professional fields as well as courses and professional development activities offered by universities or other professional organizations.

Time your activities so that you make wise use of the time in your QA cycle. Some activities, such as self-reading, professional discussions, and mentorships, require commitment to organize and plan. You are free to and will likely modify and add learning activities throughout your cycle.

### Tips for Step-3:

The Continuing Education (CE) activities that TCMA registrants undertake as part of the PSP should meet the learning objectives identified in their *Professional Development Plan in Step-2*. TCMA registrants may find this [Learning Resource Guide](#) by the Career-Span Competence Collaborative helpful in identifying learning opportunities.

## What Qualifies as Learning Activities?

Before enrolling in or selecting a learning activity, consider the following:

- Does the course content align with the learning goals you've identified?
- Does it relate to the [14 Career-Span Competencies](#) under the PSP?
- Does it meet the [TCMA Continuing Competency Requirements](#)?
- If the course is instructor-led, does the instructor have the appropriate qualifications and experience?
  - Instructors must have at least 7 years of experience in the treatment/competency/skill they are teaching OR a university degree with 3 years of experience in the treatment, competency, or skill they are teaching, and
  - Instructors must demonstrate thorough knowledge of the subject matter or possess credentials recognized by the College.

### 1. Direct Participatory, Formal Programs

This includes live, in-person or online interactive workshops, seminars, or training where attendance is taken and monitored and where there is an assessment tool for the course.

Examples:

- Live in-person seminars presented by a professional association.
- Recorded online courses with password log-in and tracking access and which include quizzes.



- Some courses are hybrid, that is, with both online and in-person components.

## 2. Self-Study

This includes TCMA registrant's own review of academic journals, professional publications, bylaws, and standards. It can also include online and distance learning courses, and webinars, when no attendance is taken and/or when no assessment tool is available.

Examples:

- Recorded courses or webinars offered with no tracking access or assessment quiz.
- Reading of academic journals or other publications.

## 3. Structured Interactive Activities

These are regularly scheduled or routine consultations with peers, or case conferences.

Examples:

- AGM and related education seminar attendance.
- Case discussion with peers.
- Clinical rounds held for practitioners.

## Step 4: Evaluating Completed Learning Activities (5 CE per evaluation; up to 20 CE total)

As you work through your *Professional Development Plan* you'll want to self-reflect and evaluate. In *Step 4: Evaluation Completed Learning Activities*, you should ask yourself how the learning activity(ies) that you completed helped you meet the learning objectives (Step 2) set in your *Professional Development Plan*.

The [Evaluate Activities](#) template provides some self-reflective questions to guide you through this step. You may claim 5 CE for each learning activity evaluation that you complete. No more than 20 CE may be claimed in Step 4.

Completion of the self-reflection questions might provide you with inspiration to develop additional or different learning objectives and find further learning activities to support your *Professional Development Plan*.

## Step 5: End of QA Cycle Overall Evaluation (5 CE)

At the end of your cycle, you'll use the [QA Cycle Evaluation](#) template to record your final thoughts and reflections on how the steps of the PSP have informed your practice. You may use the questions provided in the template to help you assess





what you have learned, whether your practice has been impacted, and if you feel you have progressed since drawing up your *Professional Development Plan*. This will help you plan for your next cycle.

## Documentation

### Report your Participation; Claim your CE Credits

Report your participation in **Assessment** and **Professional Development** in the [TCMA Continuing Competency Activity Log](#). You must have completed PSP **Assessment**, Step 1, to claim CE for the four steps in PSP **Professional Development**.

You are not required to send in any additional information to the College to record this CE activity unless you are specifically asked to do so during a CE audit.

Credits can be reported as follows:

#### **Assessment**

Step 1: Self-Reflective Assessment (10 CE credits)

#### **Professional Development**

Step 2: Setting Up Learning Objectives (10 CE credits)

Step 3: Planning & Undertaking Learning Activities (1 CE credit per hour of activity)

Step 4: Evaluating Completed Learning Activities (5 CE credits per evaluation; up to 20 CE)

Step 5: End of QA Cycle Overall Evaluation (5 CE credits)

Information on **Continuing Competency Requirements** can be found under the “Continuing Competency Requirements” tab on the [TCMA Registrant Practice Resources page](#).

## Audit Process

Each year the College randomly selects a number of renewing TCMA registrants, who are at the end of a reporting period, to audit the individual records of Continuing Competency Activity Log.

**All TCMA registrants must make a declaration during annual registration renewal that they are complying with College Bylaws.**

If it is your reporting year, please make sure you are fulfilling all requirements when making your declaration during TCMA registration renewal, you have a record of the PSP templates and Continuing Competency Activity Log completed, and you are keeping records and supporting documents of activities in the Professional



Development Plan. If a TCMA registrant is selected for the audit, they will receive a written request to send in their Continuing Competency Activity Log (as the first step). *TCMA registrants only need to provide proof of complying with this requirement when requested by the College.*

## Resources

### A. TCMA Continuing Competency Program Requirements

The Continuing Competency Program Requirement can be located under the “Continuing Competency Requirements” tab on the TCMA [Registrant Practice Resources](#) page.

### B. TCMA Professional Development Plan Templates and Completed Sample Sets

PSP Step 1 - 5 templates and completed sample sets can be located under the “QA Programs & Activity Log” tab on the TCMA [Registrant Practice Resources](#) page.

### C. TCMA Continuing Competency Activity Log and Completed Samples

TCMA Continuing Competency Activity Logs and completed samples can be located under the “QA Programs & Activity Log” tab on the TCMA [Registrant Practice Resources](#) page.

## For more information

Have further questions? Please email [QAPrograms@cchpbc.ca](mailto:QAPrograms@cchpbc.ca).