

Fukushima Prefecture School for the Blind Faculty of Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy (Vocational Training Course)

We support those who, despite having a visual impairment, aim to participate and contribute to society by becoming nationally qualified.



What is the Faculty of Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy?

“Traditional Japanese physiotherapy” is a general term that encompasses acupuncture, moxibustion, and *anma*, a traditional form of Japanese massage. The term refers to theories and techniques of maintaining and improving health through the application of a physical stimulus to the body using the bare hands, needles or heat.

The Unlikely History of the Blind in Japan and Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy

Japan's history of vocational training for, and vocational independence of, people with visual impairments is said to be unique. Throughout Japan's long history, there have been several organisations based on the principle of mutual cooperation that were composed solely of blind people. One such organisation was the *Todoza*, a guild for blind men, which flourished in the Edo Period (from 1603 to 1868) under the approval and protection of the Shogunate.

Members of the guild received training in Japanese instruments such as the biwa, koto or shamisen, or in acupuncture, moxibustion, or *anma* massage, enabling them to become active members of society through their own vocational independence. More than 100 years before schools for the blind began to appear in Europe, Japan already had a well-established system of vocational training for those with visual impairments.

In the Edo Period, Waichi Sugiyama, who was the *Sokengyo* (the highest rank of the *Todoza*) and who was completely blind himself, became the court acupuncturist of Tsuneyoshi Tokugawa, the 5th Shogun.

Sugiyama developed a revolutionary acupuncture method of using a hollow tube to guide the needle, and went on to establish an acupuncture training centre, where he devoted himself to nurturing future generations of acupuncturists. He is remembered as the foremost pioneer in the education of acupuncture, moxibustion, and *anma* massage.

Sugiyama's acupuncture training centre continued the systematic training of the blind in these three practices for around 200 years after its establishment until the year 1871. With the modernization of the education system in the Meiji Period (1868-1912 CE), the education of people with visual impairments began to be carried out at dedicated schools for the blind. Training in acupuncture, moxibustion, and *anma* massage for vocational purposes was institutionalised once more within these schools and faculties of traditional Japanese physiotherapy have continued to provide such training ever since.

In short, the vocational training provided by faculties of traditional Japanese physiotherapy at modern-day schools for the blind can be traced back more than 130 years ago in terms of the history of schools for the blind in Japan, and even further back to Waichi Sugiyama's training centre, 230 years ago.

It is because of this history that even now, Japan is the only country in the world where people with visual impairments can work as acupuncturists/moxibustion practitioners.



Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy's Role in Modern Society

Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy as Alternative Medicine



Acupuncture, moxibustion, and *anma* massage provide symptomatic improvement or relief by strengthening the body's natural ability to heal. They are regarded as treatment methods that place little stress on the body and there has been a growing demand for them in recent years as forms of alternative medicine.

The range of applications of these treatments has spread to include such fields as orthopedics, sports medicine, geriatrics, occupational safety and health, and beauty care.

Working as a Traditional Japanese Physiotherapist

In Japan, to work as an *anma* practitioner, acupuncturist, or moxibustion practitioner requires a separate qualification for each. Students must train for three years and obtain a certain number of credits before taking the national exams, which are held once a year. If the student fails the exam, they will be unable to work in that occupation. While many medical occupations are not permitted to carry out medical treatment without the orders of a doctor, traditional Japanese physiotherapists are recognised as independent practitioners and are permitted to carry out "therapeutic activities" (defined as activities similar to medical treatment) on an independent basis.



What you will learn at the Faculty of Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy

In the Healthcare and Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy Course, students train for three years with the aim of become licensed anma practitioners. In the Post-Graduate Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy Course, students study to become additionally qualified as acupuncturists and moxibustion practitioners.

Students will only become qualified by acquiring a certain number of credits over the course of three years of training in order to graduate. Then, students in the Healthcare and TJP course must passing the Anma Practitioner (Healthcare & TJP) National Examination, and students in the Post-Graduate Course must passing three national exams to become fully licensed in each profession: one for anma massage, one for acupuncture, and one for moxibustion. (Note: students will not be fully qualified/licensed simply by graduating.)

The content of the classes that students attend over the three years are naturally not easy, covering fundamental medical knowledge such as anatomy, and anma, acupuncture and clinical healthcare practicals. However, by acquiring factually accurate knowledge and advanced techniques, students will be able to grow into effective traditional Japanese physiotherapists. In effect, what the students learn here today is nothing more than the progress build upon the foundation laid by the early pioneers in the Todoza in the Edo Period and at Waichi Sugiyama's training centre, a foundation developed through diligent learning and strict discipline.

One could say that the true meaning of becoming qualified to practice anma, acupuncture, or moxibustion is a barrier-free occupation that allows you to stand on your own two feet to contribute and participate in society.

Course Curriculums

Healthcare and TJP Course	Post-Graduate TJP Course
<u>Fundamental Subjects</u> Japanese Language Geography and History Civics · Mathematics Science · Physical Education Art · Foreign Language Home Economics Communications	<u>Fundamental Subjects</u> Natural Science (Information Processing · Statistics) Philosophy (Logic · Psychology) Foreign language Physical Education
<u>Advanced Fundamental Subjects</u> Anatomy · Physiology Introduction to Healthcare Hygienics · Public Health Studies Introduction to Clinical Medicine Clinical Medicine Theory Physiatry	<u>Advanced Fundamental Subjects</u> Anatomy · Physiology Introduction to Healthcare Hygienics · Public Health Studies Introduction to Clinical Medicine Clinical Medicine Theory Physiatry
<u>Advanced Subjects</u> Overview of Eastern medicine Introduction to Acupuncture Points Clinical Healthcare and TJP Anma Massage Theory Anma Massage Practical Clinical Healthcare and TJP Practical Individual Research and more	<u>Advanced Subjects</u> Overview of Eastern medicine Introduction to Acupuncture Points Clinical Healthcare and TJP Anma Massage Theory Acupuncture Theory Moxibustion Theory Anma Massage Practical Acupuncture Practical Moxibustion Practical Clinical Healthcare and TJP Practical Individual Research and more

Career Paths After Graduation

Once you graduate from the faculty of Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy, and pass the national exams, which are administered by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the following career paths may be available to you.

- Employment at an Acupuncture, Moxibustion and Massage Clinic
- Further your education at Tsukuba University Acupuncture and Physical Therapy Teacher Training School
- Work as an acupuncture, moxibustion, and anma massage practitioner at a hospital rehabilitation clinic
- Work as a “healthkeeper” (an in-house practitioner of acupuncture, moxibustion and anma massage) at a company
- Work at a care facility (nursing homes, etc.) conducting motor function training
- Perform home-visits as a traditional Japanese physiotherapist (Work for a company offering home visit services)
- Open your own Acupuncture, Moxibustion and Massage Clinic



Eligibility for Admission

- 1) You have a visual impairment that falls under one of the following three categories.
 - A Your best-corrected visual acuity in both eyes is roughly less than 0.3 (6/18 in the UK)
 - B You have a severe visual impairment not related to visual acuity e.g. tunnel vision, night blindness
 - C There is a possibility that your eyesight will greatly decline in future.
- 2) There is no age limit.
- 3) The Healthcare and Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy Course is targeted towards those that have graduated junior high school.

Students on this course will aim to become licensed practitioners of anma massage, and at the same time obtain their high school degree. Training takes three years.
- 4) The Post-Graduate Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy Course is targeted towards those who have graduated high school.

Students on this course will aim to become licensed practitioners of anma massage, acupuncture and moxibustion. Training takes three years.
- 5) The admission selection exam is held once a year, in March (in two stages)

The content of the examinations for the Healthcare and TJP Course, and the Post-Graduate TJP Course is different.

Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy Activities

Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy Classes

The teaching materials used are adjusted to suit the students' visual capabilities to make the classes as comprehensible as possible.



Anma massage practical



Presentation on
Clinical Healthcare Experience



Acupuncture Practical



Study Tour



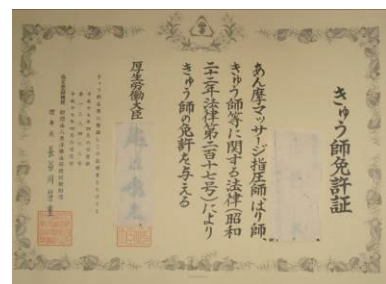
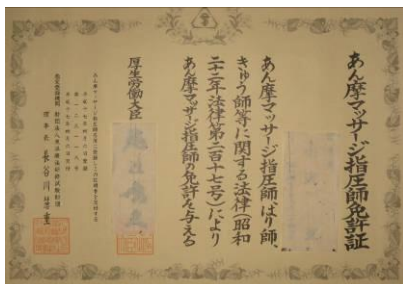
Clinical Healthcare Practical



Community Volunteer Work



Anma practitioner, acupuncturist, and moxibustion practitioner licenses respectively
(Issued by the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare)



Worried about losing your sight? Want to develop new skills and become nationally qualified so that you can spread your wings out into society? We will support you.

FAQ

Q.1 What sort of qualifications can I acquire?

A. Upon graduating from the Healthcare and Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy Course, you may take a nationally-recognised exam to become an anma practitioner. Upon graduating the Post-Graduate Traditional Japanese Physiotherapy Course, you may take exams to become additionally licensed as an acupuncturist and moxibustion practitioner.

Q.2 Are all the students blind at the School for the Blind?

A. The percentage of students that are completely blind is small (only 10% of the entire student body) and the majority of the students have weak sight. The school's admission standards only allow students with a best-corrected visual acuity, i.e. with glasses, of less than 0.3, or those with an impairment to their visual field or visual function. The school also admits those who have been diagnosed with future loss of vision or visual function.

Q.3 What age ranges do the students fall into?

A. Currently, most of our students are adults in their 20s and 30s, but their fellow students include people of all ages, from 18 to 50 years old.

Q.4 How much do tuition fees cost?

A. The school does not charge admission fees, nor tuition fees. However, students are expected to cover the cost of the supplies that they will use in their daily classes including lab coats, acupuncture needles, and rubbing alcohol. Furthermore, the Japanese government offers a grant to cover a portion of fees necessary to attend the school (e.g. food expenses, travel fees, textbooks) based on the financial status of the student's household.

Q.5 Is it difficult for people who live far away to attend the school?

A. The school has a dormitory located on-campus to make it easier for people who live farther away to attend.

Q.6 What potential careers are there for graduates?

A. Graduates can open their own clinic, work at a hospital or clinic, or work as a motor function training instructor at a rehabilitation center or nursing home. Some graduates also go on to further their education at university.

For education counselling or admission inquiries:



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Check out our school's educational activities from our website!