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Your Ref:  
Our Ref: foi 2009/71

Date: 18/01/2010

Mr John Hawcock

[request-24490-4df28a7c@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-24490-4df28a7c@whatdotheyknow.com)

Dear Mr Hawcock,

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information**

Regarding your request for information received by the University on the 11/12/2009.

**The Request**

You have requested the following information from the University of Westminster:

I would like to see copies of the research papers or other documents that support the following claims made for the qigong tuina diploma course offered by the School of Life Sciences:

1. When combined with qi gong (the study of qi or vital energy) these techniques give a deep and effective means of diagnosing and understanding illness on many levels.

And

2. Case taking, diagnostic skills and treatment techniques are enhanced by the practice of qigong, which gives the practitioner the ability to understand both their own and the patients qi.

### **The Response**

The University of Westminster can confirm that it holds information related to your request.

To fully understand the statements made regarding the *Qi Gong Tuina* Diploma on the University website, the University would suggest that you need some cultural and historical understanding of Chinese medicine and the place of qi, qi gong and tuina within it.

- Qi is understood to be an important concept of Chinese thinking and as such forms the basis of their medical practice.

It is defined as:

‘the vital energizing field and its focal manifestations’  
(Ames, R.T. and Hall, D.L., (2003) *A Philosophical Translation Dao De Jing*. New York: Ballantine Books. p63).

‘qi 氣

the basic element that constitutes the cosmos and, through its movements, changes and transformations, produces everything in the world, including the human body and life activities. In the field of medicine, qi refers both to the refined nutritive substance that flows within the human body as well as to its functional activities.’

(World Health Organization (2007) *WHO International Standard Terminologies on Traditional Medicine in the Western Pacific Region*. [online] WHO.

<[http://www.wpro.who.int/publications/PUB\\_9789290612487.htm](http://www.wpro.who.int/publications/PUB_9789290612487.htm)>

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Chinese medicine has a documented history of more than 2,000 years and has a well developed system of diagnosis and treatment which needs to be understood in context:

- ‘most technical terms used in TRM come from ancient Chinese medical literature. Consequently, translation of these terms into any other language without Han characters is extremely challenging, as the

original meanings of Han characters and the unique nuances of concepts in TRM must be incorporated.’  
(World Health Organization (2007) *WHO International Standard Terminologies on Traditional Medicine in the Western Pacific Region*. [online] WHO.

<[http://www.wpro.who.int/publications/PUB\\_9789290612487.htm](http://www.wpro.who.int/publications/PUB_9789290612487.htm)>

p. 2)

- Traditional Chinese diagnostics 中醫診斷學  
the branch of traditional Chinese medicine dealing with the procedure and practice of examining patients, determining diseases and differentiating syndromes/ identifying patterns of signs and symptoms of diseases, also called traditional Chinese medical diagnostics.  
(World Health Organization (2007) *WHO International Standard Terminologies on Traditional Medicine in the Western Pacific Region*. [online] WHO.  
<[http://www.wpro.who.int/publications/PUB\\_9789290612487.htm](http://www.wpro.who.int/publications/PUB_9789290612487.htm)> p. 9)

- *Qi gong* is understood to be physical and mental exercises used to understand, move and enhance qi.

It is defined as:

‘an art of self training both body and mind ...an art and skill to train qi’  
(Zhang.,EQ (ed) (1988) *Chinese Qigong*. Shanghai: Publishing House of the Shanghai College of Traditional Chinese Medicine. pp2-4).

- *Tuina* is a style of Chinese therapeutic massage. It involves hands on techniques to diagnose (palpation) and treat.

It is defined as:

‘In *tuina*, manipulations are used to stimulate points or other parts of the body surface to correct physiological imbalance in the body and achieve curative effects.’

(Xu.,XC (2002) *Chinese Tuina Massage*. Boston: YMAA Publication Centre. p1)

‘Chinese massage is commonly called Qigong massage, because it is based on affecting the energetic (qi) system, as well as the circulatory systems of blood and lymph’

(Yang.,JM (1992) *Chinese Qigong Massage*. Boston: YMAA Publications. p5)

It should be noted that *qi gong* is a relatively modern term introduced by the Chinese government in the 1950s as part of their programme to modernise and standardise concepts and terminology. Prior to this there were several different terms to describe the practice of meditation, movement and stretches; these included *dao yin*, *nei gong*, *tai ji* and *wu shu*.

The practice of *qi gong* is used to understand and enhance *qi* and as such its practice in: 'Case taking, diagnostic skills and treatment techniques' and as a 'deep and effective means of diagnosing and understanding illness on many levels.' can be understood as being similar to the practice of for example: core stability exercises by physiotherapists as a means of understanding, diagnosing and treating patients with back pain; auscultation skills by doctors and physiotherapists as a means of understanding, diagnosing and treating the cardiopulmonary system.

An aspect of *qi gong* involves what is generally translated as meditation; the process of stilling the mind and body to allow increased awareness and time for reflection.

For a useful introduction to the concept of 'mindfulness' in medical practice see: Johns, C (2002) *Guided Reflection Advancing Practice*. Oxford: Blackwell Science.

The World Health Organisation classifies *qi gong* as a 'Traditional Medicine/Complementary and Alternative Medicine procedure based therapy' and states that: 'In view of the benefits and risks of TM/CAM therapies, efforts to ensure proper use of TM/CAM need to involve a wide range of stakeholders including consumers, governments, health authorities, NGOs, professional and consumer organizations, and TM/CAM researchers.'

(World Health Organisation: Guidelines on Developing Consumer Information on Proper Use of Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicine. 2004 <http://apps.who.int/medicinedocs/en/d/Js5525e/3.html>)

It would seem that teaching a high standard of *qi gong* in conjunction with other Chinese medicine courses at a university meets this requirement.

The University feels that the references listed below represent papers and other documents that should be helpful in giving you a fuller understanding of the description of the Qi Gong Tuina Course and the statements made by the University on its website.

The University believes that these references are reasonably accessible to you from library sources. (Freedom of Information Act 2000 S21 Information accessible to applicant by other means is thus engaged and the University is not obliged to supply you with copies).

Suggested reading:

For the historical and cultural context of *qi*, *qi gong* and Chinese medicine particularly in relation to western approaches to health and medicine:

Kuriyama, S., (1999). *The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine*. New York: Zone Books.

Unschuld, P., (2009). *What is Medicine? Western and Eastern Approaches to Healing*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Unschuld, P., (1998). *Chinese Medicine*. Brookline: Paradigm Publications.

Zhang, Y. H. and Rose, K., (2001). *A Brief History of Qi*. London: Churchill Livingstone.

For the practice of Chinese medicine, diagnosis and treatment :

Farquhar, J., (1994). *Knowing Practice*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Hsu, E., (1999). *The Transmission of Chinese Medicine*. UK: Cambridge University Press.

For the Chinese concept of stilling the mind in relation to understanding and working with *qi*:

Eisenberg, D., (1995). *Encounters With Qi: Exploring Chinese Medicine*. New York: Norton and Co.

Ames, R.T. and Lau, D.C., (trans) (1998). *Yuan Dao Tracing the Dao to Its Source*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Ames, R.T. and Hall, D.L., (2003). *A Philosophical Translation Dao De Jing*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Ishida, H. (1989). *Body and Mind: The Chinese Perspective*. In Kohn.,L (ed) *Taoist Meditation and Longevity Techniques*. University of Michigan: Centre for Chinese Studies.

For the practice of *tuina* in conjunction with *qi gong*:

Pritchard.,S (2009) *Chinese Massage Manual*. UK: Sarah Pritchard

Yang.,JM (1992) *Chinese Qigong Massage*. Boston: YMAA Publications.

Xu.,XC (2002) *Chinese Tuina Massage*. Boston: YMAA Publication Centre.

We hope this information may be of use to you.

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may ask the University to conduct a review of its decision.

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Please do so in writing (including by fax, letter or email) or in some other recorded form (e.g. audio or video tape), describe the original request, explain your grounds for dissatisfaction, and include an address for correspondence.

Details of the University of Westminster's internal complaints process can be viewed on our website at the link below:

<http://www.wmin.ac.uk/page-8275>

If after contacting the University of Westminster you are not happy with the outcome, you also have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner.

Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate the case until the internal review process has been completed.

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**By Telephone:** 01625 545 700

**Web:** [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm Bacon  
University Records Manager