



# General Chiropractic Council

Student Engagement Strategy 2020



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## *About the General Chiropractic Council*

The General Chiropractic Council (GCC) regulates chiropractors in the UK to ensure the safety of patients undergoing chiropractic treatment.

The GCC is an independent statutory body established by Parliament to regulate the chiropractic profession. We protect the health and safety of the public by ensuring high standards of practice in the chiropractic profession.

The title of 'chiropractor' is protected by law and it is a criminal offence for anyone to describe themselves as a chiropractor without being registered with the GCC. We check that all chiropractors are properly qualified and are fit to practise.

- We maintain a UK-wide register of qualified chiropractors.
- We set the standards of education for individuals training to become chiropractors.
- We set the standards of chiropractic practice and professional conduct for individuals working as chiropractors.
- We investigate complaints against chiropractors, and take action against where necessary.

The GCC has the authority to remove a chiropractor from the register if they are found to be unfit to practise.

## *The GCC Structure*

The GCC is led by a Council that is responsible for ensuring that the GCC carries out its core functions. The Council is made up of seven chiropractors and seven non-chiropractors.



## *The GCC Education Committee*

The role of the Education Committee is to guarantee high standards of chiropractic education and training for chiropractic students.

The Committee ensures that these standards are maintained and regularly reviewed, thus playing a key role in ensuring the statutory duties of the General Chiropractic Council (GCC), *to set the standards of education for individuals training to become chiropractors*, are met.

The Education Committee is also tasked with reviewing and agreeing recommendations made by Education Visitor partners. Education Visitors undertake thorough and robust evaluations of ongoing and newly proposed chiropractic degree programmes, which can include an education visit an institution. Once the Education Committee is satisfied that chiropractic degree programmes meet the required Education Standards, a recommendation is made to the GCC Council for recognition, followed by final approval from the Privy Council.

The Education Committee is ambitious for a much more active GCC role with students on recognised chiropractic degree programmes.

## *1. Introduction to the GCC Strategy for engagement with students.*

This Strategy is further to the overall General Chiropractic Council (GCC) three year strategy to 'Develop and agree on a strategy for student engagement by November 2019'.

It represents the GCC's commitment to engage more regularly and more effectively with students enrolled on GCC recognised chiropractic education programmes.

The GCC's website provides information for those considering chiropractic as a career, to raise awareness of how to become a chiropractor, where to study and the career opportunities available in chiropractic. We will work with education institutions to support them with attracting a diverse and broad range of students.

In addition to supporting UK students, we want to engage with the World Congress of Chiropractic Students, an international forum representing the global student chiropractic population, to actively supply information to students looking to come and work in the UK after graduation.

## *2. Why is student and wider stakeholder engagement important?*

Effective stakeholder engagement is about building sustainable relationships with people who are affected by what we do, and who have a contribution to make to our work. It relies on a commitment to engage, listen, respond and communicate openly and honestly. Through working with students and wider stakeholders, we hope to achieve improved mutual understanding.

We have an important role to play in promoting professionalism. Currently, we know that the perception of us is primarily as a body that deals with complaints through the Fitness to Practise processes.

Through dialogue with students and wider stakeholders we will understand more clearly their experiences and challenges.

This strategy sets out how we intend to engage more effectively with the chiropractic student community, provide support where we can, involve, seek feedback and keep students up to date with our work.

### *3. Who is the Strategy of relevance to?*

The Strategy will be of relevance and interest to:

- Chiropractic students (on GCC recognised chiropractic programmes of study);
- Education institutions (delivering GCC recognised chiropractic programmes);
- Prospective providers of chiropractic education;
- GCC Education Committee members, Council and staff;
- GCC Education Visitors.

### *4. What are the aims of the Strategy?*

Our aims are to:

- put in place ways in which we can gather the views of students;
- listen to the student chiropractic community;
- support students by providing relevant, timely information;
- communicate with the student chiropractic community;
- ensure chiropractic students are more aware of our work;
- involve chiropractic students in as many aspects of our work as possible;
- be more visible to current and future students

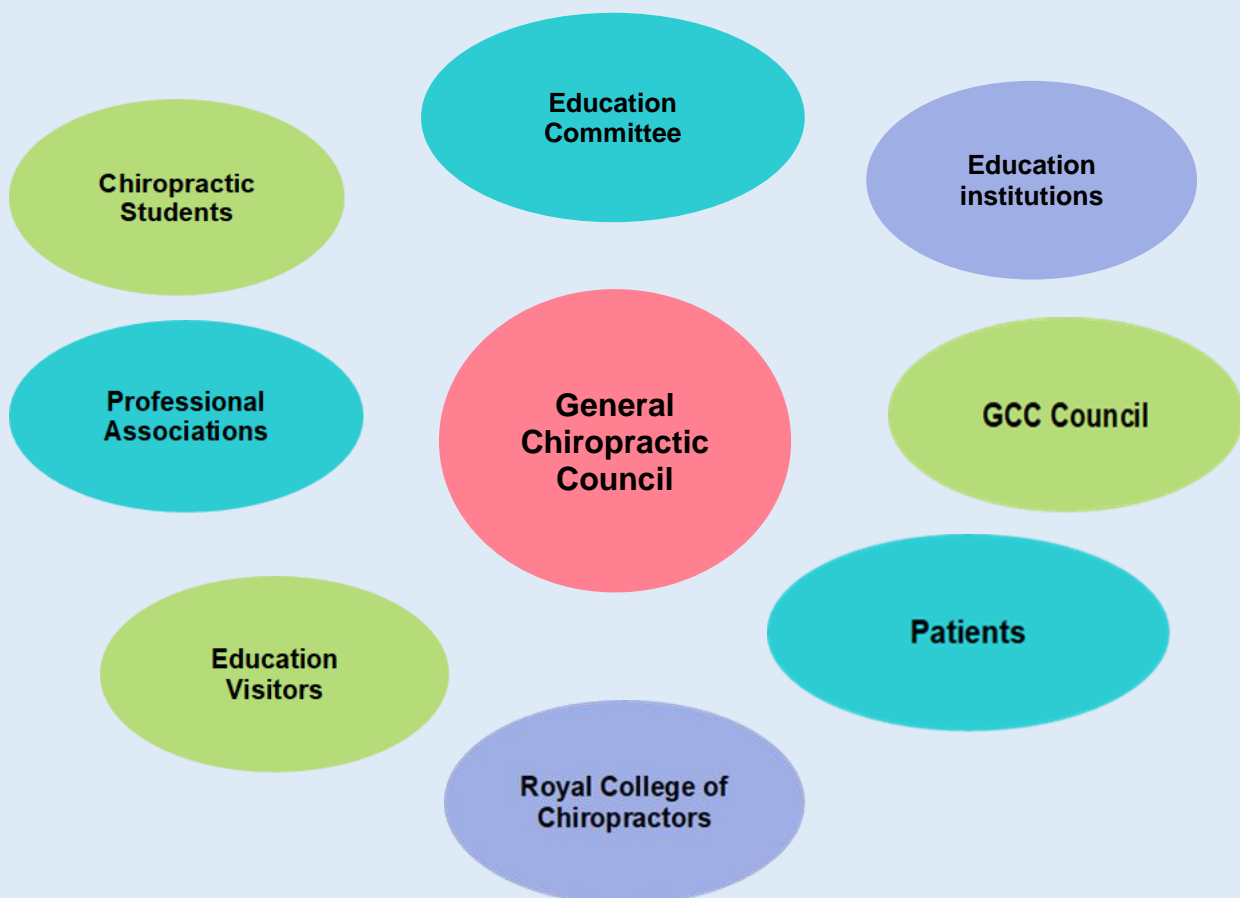


## 5. *What are the objectives for engagement?*

We have identified broad strategic objectives for engagement:

- processes and mechanisms for engagement are appropriate and effective;
- relationship with students is enhanced through engagement;
- stakeholders have a closer, on-going relationship with the GCC, feel involved and feel that their contribution is considered and valued;
- that students understand what it means to be a regulated healthcare professional.

## 6. *Who are our stakeholders for this Strategy?*



### *Chiropractic students*

Chiropractic students and future students are the key consumers of this strategy. The GCC will listen to students and hear about the support they need from the GCC to assist with their student journey towards registration and practice.

### *Education Institutions*

The GCC currently recognises chiropractic education programmes at four institutions in the UK. As the front line of student chiropractic education, they are key partners in student engagement.

### *GCC Education Committee*

The GCC Education Committee comprises of chiropractors and lay educationalists. After careful scrutiny the Committee provide an approval and monitoring function for new and on-going chiropractic programmes. The Committee carefully considers feedback mechanisms available to students and their responses. The Committee is chaired by a lay member of Council.

### *GCC Education Visitors*

At the request of the Education Committee, Visitors undertake full analysis of education programme submissions; visit education institutions to discuss prospective/ongoing programmes, review facilities, gain an understanding of student support services and hear directly from students about their experiences. Visitors provide recommendations to the Education Committee for approval of chiropractic programmes. Education Visitors provide invaluable student feedback to the GCC Education Committee.

### *GCC Council*

Some members of the GCC Council also sit on the Education Committee. At each meeting Council receives a report from the Education Committee Chair. Council has also welcomed the attendance of students at Council meetings.

### *GCC staff team*

The GCC has a small staff team. Student engagement reaches across the whole organisation. While it will be the responsibility of the education team to lead the student engagement work, this will be in partnership with the wider GCC staff team and includes the Chief Executive and Registrar, Directors, Registration and Fitness to Practise teams.

### *Royal College of Chiropractors*

The GCC regularly liaises and works with the Royal College of Chiropractors, who can offer valuable support to new graduates during their first year of practice, via the Post Registration Training (PRT) programme.

### *Professional Associations*

The GCC attend professional association conferences which provide opportunities for more informal student conversations.

### *Patients*

As consumers of student chiropractic in student clinics and during placements, the GCC receives feedback via patient reference groups and during education visits.

## *7. Student Engagement - Principles into Practice*

We acknowledge the importance of keeping students informed and for us to listen.

By communicating effectively, we hope students will become more familiar with the roles and responsibilities of GCC. We too will obtain a better understanding of issues and concerns of students.

To date, we have identified two broad approaches for engagement. Common is “conversation” - taking different forms depending on the circumstances.

- One to one conversations

We believe that it would be of benefit to identify designated GCC student representatives who can establish links with their wider student year groups and feed back to the GCC.

- Organised conversations

Organised conversations would take a number of different forms depending on the context. These conversations might take a place at a set time during the year, or at a specific event, or through workshops.

## *8. What the GCC has done so far and what can we do more of?*

There has been some engagement with the student community over a number of years which we can build on and there is a base level of core activities that can be repeated annually with each new cohort of students, and which can be modified and updated as necessary. This includes:

- annual registration, retention and CPD awareness sessions with final year students;
- GCC representation at graduation ceremonies;
- student feedback at GCC education visitor events.

Since May 2019, we have met with students and education institutions to hear suggestions for the Strategy. Several themes have emerged:

- enhancing the GCC staff and partner visibility to the chiropractic student community throughout their course, for example at first year induction, oath ceremonies and graduation;
- more information about the roles and responsibilities of the GCC;
- student professionalism and GCC expectations;
- support for graduates in their first year of practice;
- regular engagement, in a range of forms;
- workshops led by the GCC, for example CPD, Registration, Fitness to Practise;
- promoting opportunities for students to attend GCC Council (open meetings); Education Committee (for specific student related items); Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) hearings;
- GCC to consider novel ways of engaging students;
- GCC to take part in education institution participation days and international events
- phased engagement with students depending on year of study, particularly in the first year;
- simplified information on registration requirements, including timeframes; payment methods and key dates;
- more information about the benefits of being in a regulated profession;
- contact with students from the other chiropractic institutions;
- GCC student newsletter.

We have already acted on some of the emerging themes and students have:

- provided comment on the recent CPD consultation;
- engaged and contributed to the website content;
- attended sessions on the registration process;
- attended an Education Committee meeting and given views on student engagement and their experiences of student life;
- observed an open session of the GCC Council.

The GCC team has also:

- given induction talks to newly enrolled chiropractic students;
- attended chiropractic association conferences and spoken to students about the role of the GCC and what they would like to have from the GCC to support their student journey;
- promoted and encouraged students to read the GCC monthly newsletter.

## *9. Engagement indicators and measurement for success.*

We will work with students from all of the current education institutions offering recognised chiropractic programmes, with the aim of improving student levels of awareness of the work of the regulator. This will be supported by direct, and increased engagement by the GCC Executive, Education Committee and Education Visitors and the provision of timely and relevant information.

We will aim to:

- liaise with education institution representatives and students prior to planning engagement activities to ensure that activities are relevant and timely;
- seek feedback from students following all engagement activities to gauge levels of satisfaction and ideas for future activity;
- learn through feedback what impact (if any) engagement has had on student views of the regulator and the reasons for arriving at that view;
- engage with every student at least once during the course of their studies.

## *10. Programme of Student Engagement*

During 2019 the GCC expanded its planned programme of student engagement which included receiving feedback from students in years one and two of their studies at a planned education visit; attendance at professional association conferences and student graduation ceremonies.

During 2020, we continue to build on the programme of activity which commenced in 2019. We will work with students and institutions to produce a plan of activity which will provide timely, relevant information and opportunities to deliver an enhanced programme of student engagement. The plan will be based on the suggestions and ideas received to date but also want the plan to be 'living' in nature and will continue to look for opportunities for student contribution/involvement. We will also be pleased to hear any further ideas and suggestions for student engagement from the chiropractic student community and stakeholders at [education@gcc-uk.org](mailto:education@gcc-uk.org)