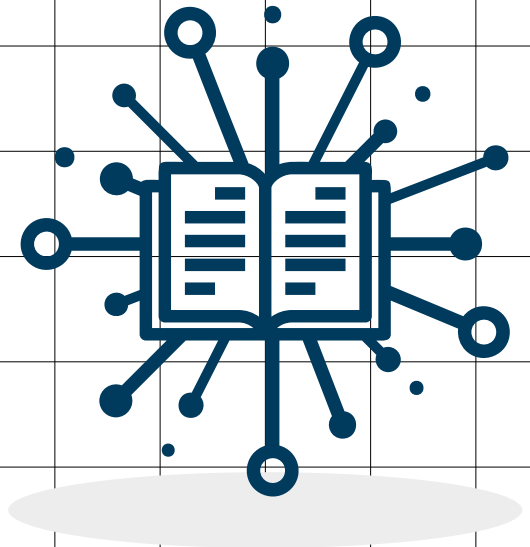


GCC Student Resources

Student Information

FAQS



Congratulations on commencing your chiropractic studies

As one of a small group of students from GCC-approved chiropractic education programmes, you are about to embark on an exciting career path, within a regulated profession.

Currently, there are about 4,000 chiropractors working in the UK. It is a small but growing profession and a valuable part of our nation's health and social care provision.

The General Chiropractic Council (GCC) has created this information guide for students to help you understand the profession that you will be joining in the next few years.

Designed around some of the most frequently asked questions, this guide provides answers and signposting to help you gain a greater understanding of this regulated profession.

Finally, we recommend that you visit the websites of the chiropractic professional associations and the Royal College of Chiropractors, all of which provide valuable resources.

1. What is the General Chiropractic Council (GCC)?

The General Chiropractic Council (GCC) is one of ten healthcare regulators in the UK. Created by the Chiropractors Act in 1994, its purpose is to ensure the health and safety of the public are protected when being treated by a chiropractor. It undertakes this role by:

- 1 maintaining the GCC Register of Chiropractors in the UK, Isle of Man and Gibraltar. It is a legal requirement for anyone calling themselves a chiropractor to be registered with the GCC
- 2 setting and monitoring the education standards of all chiropractic courses in the UK (such as the one you are studying)
- 3 conducting the Test of Competence for all international chiropractors or those who have non-UK qualifications and wish to join the GCC Register of Chiropractors
- 4 ensuring all chiropractors on the GCC Register of Chiropractors (called registrants) continue to update their skills and knowledge through Continuing Professional Development
- 5 investigating and acting when a chiropractor does not meet our standards

The GCC operates almost identically to all other healthcare regulators, except we also have a statutory duty to develop the profession.

Ten UK Healthcare Regulators

1. **General Medical Council:** Doctors
2. **General Pharmaceutical Council:** Pharmacists
3. **Social Work England:** Social Workers
4. **General Optical Council:** Opticians and Optometrists
5. **General Dental Council:** Dentists, Dental Nurses and Dental Hygienists
6. **Nursing and Midwifery Council:** Nurses and Midwives
7. **Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland:** Pharmacists
8. **General Osteopathic Council:** Osteopaths
9. **Health and Care Professions Council:** 15 professions, including Chiropodists, Occupational Therapists, and Physiotherapists.
10. **General Chiropractic Council:** Chiropractors

2. Is the GCC a membership organisation?

No

The GCC is not a membership organisation. Our primary responsibility is to protect the health and safety of the public when being treated by a chiropractor.

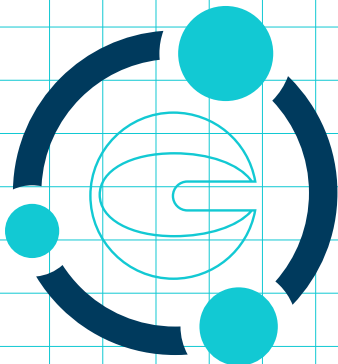
Membership associations support their members and help promote the profession. The level of activities varies depending on the sector, type of organisation, number of members and founding charters.

The chiropractic profession has several associations: (in alphabetical order):

- **British Chiropractic Association** - www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk
- **McTimoney Chiropractic Association** - www.mca-chiropractic.org
- **Scottish Chiropractic Association** - www.sca-chiropractic.org
- **United Chiropractic Association** - www.unitedchiropractic.org

In addition, the **Royal College of Chiropractors** (www.rcc-uk.org) is a professional membership body which promotes and supports high standards of education, practice and research, enabling chiropractors to provide and be recognised for delivering high-quality care for patients. All the professional associations, and the RCC, have reduced membership fees for student members.

The Royal College also operates a **Post Registration Training programme** (commonly known as PRT) for recently qualified chiropractors. This programme helps to ensure a smooth transition from the undergraduate setting to independent professional practice in the clinical setting.



3. Do I have to register with the GCC when I graduate?

Yes

If you wish to call yourself a chiropractor and practise in the UK, you must be on the GCC Register of Chiropractors. This registration is a legal requirement under the Chiropractors Act 1994.

As you join the GCC Register of Chiropractors, you are a registrant of the GCC and not a member.

For more information, read our [GCC Graduate Guide](#).

4. What is the GCC Code?

The [GCC Code](#) outlines the standards of conduct, performance and ethics expected of chiropractors in the UK. After graduation, you must agree and abide by the Code to join and remain on the GCC Register of Chiropractors.

Containing a series of Principles, each with its own set of Standards, the Code:

- 1 ensures chiropractors uphold the highest standards of care and conduct
- 2 clarifies the quality and care that patients should reasonably expect from a chiropractor

We advise all students to read the Code and associated guidance to understand what is expected of them in the future.

5. What contact do students have with the GCC?

While studying chiropractic, your primary relationship will be with your education provider (university/college). However, the GCC has recognised and approved your chiropractic degree programme and will maintain regular contact with the provider through its annual course monitoring process (Quality Assurance). However, our team will hope to meet many of you during the course of your studies.

6. What are the Education Standards and Quality Assurance procedures?

The GCC sets the Education Standards of chiropractic education.

The Education Standards protect patients and the public and ensure that chiropractic care provided is of the highest quality.

These standards ensure that when you graduate from your chiropractic degree programme you meet the required standard of proficiency, set out in the Code, for the competent and safe practice of chiropractic. You will then be eligible to apply to join the GCC Register of Chiropractors.

The GCC also assures the quality of undergraduate chiropractic education and training through regular visits and inspections of all its education providers.

7. What is student professionalism?

Student professionalism within chiropractic is:

- 1 the way you adhere and respond to the required education standards during training, including when faced with different issues
- 2 being able to demonstrate appropriate behaviour and attitudes towards patients and colleagues, whether this is students or educators
- 3 developing the ability to seek support and guidance for your learning and development
- 4 developing the ability to reflect on the feedback you receive and to respond positively when you are made aware of any issues and offered advice and support

The GCC recognises that your knowledge and understanding of professionalism will change as you progress through your course. The situations that you experience will help this process, contribute to and develop your professionalism and fitness to practise as a chiropractor.

8. What is student fitness to practise?

Student fitness to practise is about being able to meet the requirements of your education and training programme, demonstrating that you are eligible to join the GCC Register of Chiropractors.

These requirements are demonstrating sufficient knowledge, skills and competence, behaving professionally and being in good health. They come together in how we think about fitness to practise as shown in the diagram below.



As a student of chiropractic, you are expected to behave in a professional way. If:

- your behaviour falls below an agreed level of conduct, or
- there are ongoing issues with your clinical and academic work, or
- there are concerns about the impact of your health on your ability to achieve the necessary standards,

then your education provider will consider if this amounts to a concern about your fitness to practise. If your education provider makes this decision, they will not do so lightly and will follow set procedures for considering this further.

9. Can I undertake further practical study outside of my educational programme?

Once you have graduated, you will be responsible for your own learning and development, and for working within the limits of your knowledge and skills. However, while you are a student, your learning remains the responsibility of your educational establishment (each college has their own Fitness to Practise process, liability insurance, and rules of student conduct).

While we do not want to dampen your enthusiasm to learn, network and explore the profession of chiropractic, your education and development must always be balanced with the need to keep patients safe. You need to be aware of the risks of injuring yourself or another person if you attempt a technique that is beyond your competence or has not been taught as part of your educational programme.

If you are considering attending a practical or technical event outside of your education programme, you should seek advice from the education provider as to its suitability and appropriateness.

10. What should I do if I get into trouble with the police?

If you get into trouble with the police, you must inform your education provider and explain clearly what happened, when and why. They will be able to provide you with further guidance regarding criminal convictions and cautions and how they may affect your position at the university or college and future acceptance onto the GCC Register of Chiropractors.

If you fail to declare certain criminal convictions, even those which are spent, the GCC may view this as dishonest and incompatible with professional behaviour and being on the GCC Register of Chiropractors.

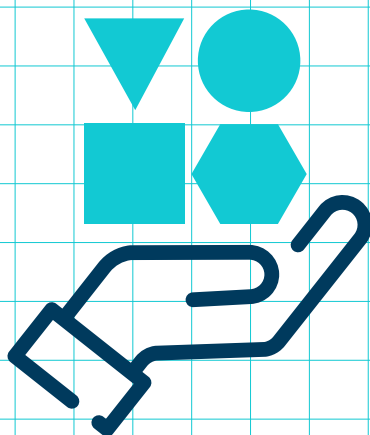
11. What can I post on my social media accounts

Social media and messaging have become an integral, and at times valuable, part of our society. However, as a student of a regulated profession, you have added responsibilities. Postings or messages must be compatible with public expectations of professional behaviour.

As chiropractic students, you must:

- 1 take care with the information and images you and others share online
- 2 always respect patient confidentiality
- 3 not cause offence to anyone, including patients, colleagues or members of the general public
- 4 not post or share any content which may cause people to lose their trust in chiropractic professionals

All chiropractors must meet the requirements set out in The Code when communicating via social media and online messaging.



12. What is Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and is it important?

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are at the core of providing affirming, equitable healthcare, ensuring all patients receive fair treatment and opportunity. As primary healthcare providers, you will have a critical role in reducing inequalities, particularly health inequalities, and enhancing inclusion and cohesion within our communities.

Equality: At its core, equality means fairness: ensuring that individuals, or groups of individuals, are not treated less favourably because of their protected characteristics. Equality relates to the legal obligations in which organisations must not unlawfully discriminate.

Diversity: Diversity is about recognising differences. It's acknowledging the benefits of having a range of perspectives in an organisation's operations and decision-making and taking steps to aid that diversity.

Inclusion: Inclusion is where people's differences are valued and used to thrive in that organisation. An inclusive organisation is one in which everyone feels that they belong without conforming. Their contributions matter and they can perform to their full potential, no matter their characteristics, background, identity, or circumstances.

The GCC has created an [EDI toolkit](#) to help students and registrants better understand EDI and its value in helping all patients.



13. What resources can the GCC provide

The GCC website is a rich source of guidance, policies and toolkits to help students and chiropractors. A useful starting point is the GCC **Registrant Resource Centre**. The Code and associated guidance will help your development as a student and registered chiropractor.

Guidance and toolkits available

Advertising

Confidentiality

Conflicts of Interest

Consent

Diagnostic Imaging

Duty of Candour

Female Genital Mutilation

First Aid

Maintaining Sexual Boundaries

Mental Health

Reflective Practice

Social Media and Messaging

Vertebral Subluxation Complex

Website



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