

Overview of Chiropractic Education

May 2022

Chiropractic Programmes

1. Currently, there are five education providers in the UK offering chiropractic degrees. These are:
 - AECC University College
 - London South Bank University
 - McTimoney College of Chiropractic
 - Teesside University
 - University of South Wales (Welsh Institute of Chiropractic)
2. The providers offer a mixture of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees on a full time and part time basis. There are nine approved programmes that lead either to an integrated Masters in Chiropractic or a MSc Chiropractic. These undergraduate courses in the UK typically last four years full time or five years part time. The programmes provide an academic grounding in chiropractic education and practical clinical skills. There is also a Graduate Entry programme for students with a first degree in another subject that runs for a two year period.
3. In 2021 there were 1524 chiropractic students on approved programmes across all the years, and 155 students on foundation years.

Setting and Maintaining Standards

4. While the GCC does not have a role in the selection of individual students, we set education standards and learning outcomes for chiropractic education to ensure education and training of students is of a high quality.
5. We also run quality assurance processes to assess how effectively chiropractic programmes meet the standards we set.
6. As part of the GCC's approval and quality assurance of chiropractic education, a panel of education visitors is appointed by the Education Committee of the GCC. The education visitors analyse submissions made by institutions to provide a new chiropractic programme and carry out a visit to establish whether the application meets our education standards. Conditions of approval and recommendations are given to each new institution.
7. Education providers are then subject to an annual monitoring process to ensure that the programmes continue to meet the standards.
8. When providers submit their annual monitoring returns a thorough review is conducted and a face to face/virtual meeting is held with each provider to discuss the return and any key issues for further exploration. The provider receives a written report of the review findings and where applicable, recommendations and/or commendations.

Annual Monitoring Reviews

9. The annual monitoring returns from providers for 2019/20 reported that the dominant experience for both students and staff was change and disruption. The pandemic disrupted teaching and assessments and providers had to adapt to online delivery and assessments very quickly. Implementing new processes and procedures was initially challenging and many of the lessons learnt has shaped the future delivery of the programmes.
10. As the pandemic progressed into the 2020/21 reporting period, providers attempted to find a 'new normal', predominantly arriving at a hybrid model of delivery, with theory content continuing online, while clinical skills modules returned to in-person delivery where allowed.
11. All providers documented the huge amount of work undertaken to keep clinics open and safe for patients, students and staff and a range of innovative teaching, learning and assessment strategies developed to support and progress their students.
12. Out of this period of change and disruption, many of these new techniques will be retained going forward and can be regarded as a positive outcome of the pandemic.
13. One such area was the specific focus on communication between students and their patients especially in relation to public health. Students became proficient at conducting virtual telehealth consultations which will be retained by all providers going forward.
14. Providers also reported they were all on track or exceeding their target recruitment numbers for the September 2022 intake, demonstrating positive interest in chiropractic education in the UK.
15. Overall, the engagement and involvement of patients in the design, development and delivery of chiropractic courses reduced greatly as a result of the pandemic. While some providers moved this aspect online with some success, all realise the importance of rebuilding their patient bases and re-engaging with their patient groups as a matter of priority.
16. We are now seeking additional information from providers on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and approaches taken by each provider to promote EDI across all aspects of the programmes delivered.
17. Despite the challenges all providers faced, they were confident that the academic and technique abilities of students graduating in 2021 were at the same level as previous graduates and were safe and fit for practice.

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