



General
Chiropractic
Council

Registration Annual Report 2020



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Report on the 2020 registration year

This report provides an overview of registration activity in the General Chiropractic Council between 1 January to 31 December 2020.

The Register

The Register of Chiropractors opened in 1999 with over 5,144 chiropractors registering since then.

At 31 December 2020, there were **3,343** chiropractors on the GCC Register: **3,093** paying the practising fee; **249** the reduced (non-practising) fee.

Table 1 – Summary of registration activity in 2020

Entrants on the Register

Total number of entrants to the Register	200
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of which

First time applications	165
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Restorations to the Register	35
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Removals from the Register

Total number of removals	162
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of which, those were removed for

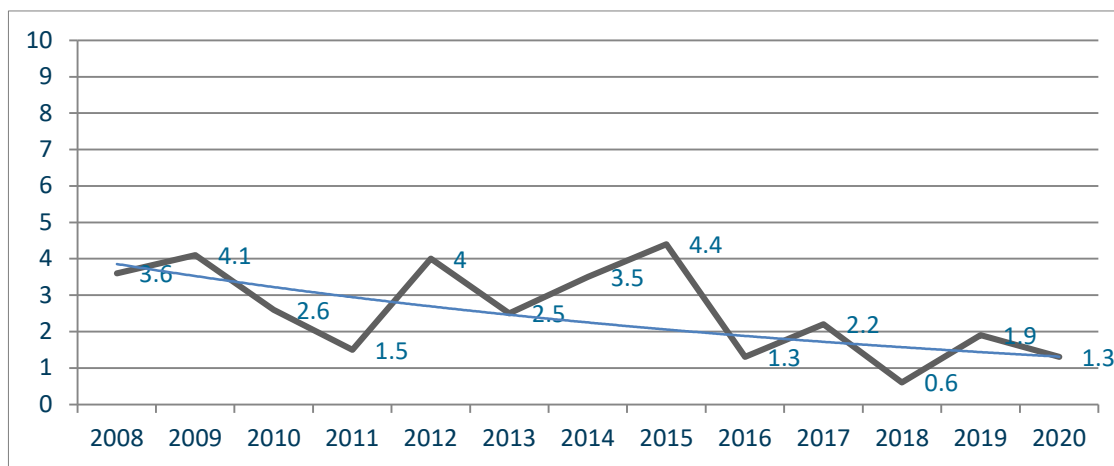
Non-compliance with CPD	76
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Not retaining on the Register	67
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Voluntary removal	18
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Deceased	1
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Chart 1 - Percentage year on year growth in registrant numbers since 2008



The Register increased by only 44 registrants. The small increase is partly due to the unique conditions during the year, including the impact of the pandemic and the UK exiting the EU. Although the EU transition period meant little changed until after 31 December 2020.

The rate of growth in the profession over the past few years is slowing, with some workforce implications. However, new programmes of chiropractic education have started in the last few years with more planned and current programmes expanding. As students graduate we can expect to see an increase in the growth rate of the Register. Tables 12 and 13 provide further information on projections.

Profile of registrants on the Register

As part of the initial registration process, applicants are asked to complete information about their characteristics, and is completed by around two-thirds of applicants. In terms of the completeness of information held, ethnicity and diversity data is held on approximately 76% of registrants.

We hold comprehensive data on gender but data for other protected characteristics are less complete. We are working on this so that we can better understand the profile of our registrants, and to enable analysis and learning. Indeed one of the benefits of an on-line register is that our registrants can update their own data.

The Register has an even balance by gender, with women making up 50.4% of the Register population and men 49.6%. this trend has continued since 2017.

Table 2 - Register population by age range

Age range	Percentage
16-24	2%
25-34	24%
25-44	29%
45-54	24%
55-64	10%
65+	11%

Around two-thirds of registrants are between 25 and 54, and one-fifth over 55.

Ethnicity

Applicants and registrants are asked to choose an option that best represents their ethnic group.

Table 3 – Register population by ethnic group

Ethnicity	Percentage
Arab	0.1
Asian – Bangladeshi	< 0.1%
Asian - Indian	1.9
Asian – Pakistani	0.3
Asian - Other	0.7
Black – African	0.2
Black – Caribbean	0.2
Black – Other	0.2
Chinese	0.9
Other Chinese	0.3
Mixed Ethnicity – Asian and White	0.5
Mixed Ethnicity – Black African & White	0.1
Mixed Ethnicity – Black Caribbean & White	0.2
Mixed – Other	0.6
White	62.4
White – Irish	0.7
Other Ethnic background	0.2
Prefer not to say	6
No data	23

Disability

Applicants and registrants are asked to tell us whether or not they identify as disabled.

Table 4 – percentage of the register population identifying as disabled

Identify as disabled	Percentage
Yes	0.7
No	72
Prefer not to say	0.9
No data	26.4

Religion/ beliefs

Applicants are asked to choose an option that best represents their religion or beliefs

Table 5 – percentage of register population by religion/ belief

Religion/ belief	Percentage
Buddhist	0.9%
Christian	18.5
Hindu	0.5
Jewish	0.3
Muslim	0.6
Sikh	0.5
None	17
Other	2.3
Prefer not to say	2.4
No data	57

Sexual orientation

Applicants and registrants are asked to choose an option that best represents their sexual orientation.

Table 6 – percentage of register population by sexual orientation

Sexual orientation	Percentage
Bisexual	0.3
Heterosexual	42.9
Gay man	0.8
Gay woman	0.7
Prefer not to say	1.7
No data	53.6

Gender identity

Applicants and registrants are asked to tell us whether their gender identity is the same as the gender they were assigned at birth. Due to small numbers we are not publishing this information.

New registrants during 2020

An overview of new registrants

165 chiropractors joined the Register in 2020, five more than in 2019.

Table 7 - Number of new registrants by month since 2013

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2020	22	14	8	2	1	3	38	34	11	8	18	6
2019	14	12	7	8	4	6	36	33	16	9	9	6
2018	10	11	9	3	3	5	25	44	13	4	14	7
2017	13	8	8	6	4	3	47	47	31	4	13	11
2016	7	11	8	6	2	5	46	33	17	7	23	1
2015	20	18	6	9	5	4	34	30	24	7	23	7
2014	19	11	4	12	4	4	36	42	21	5	13	8
2013	20	11	4	7	6	4	32	39	19	6	5	3

Table 8 - 2020 new registrants by registration route

Registration route	Total new registrants
UK approved course	146
International route	14
EU General Directive	5
Total	165

Applications from UK approved courses and those via the EU General directive were comparable to previous years, however, fewer applications by the international route were received (that is, where applicants must take a Test of Competence). This is possibly due to implications of the pandemic.

Routes to registration

The route an applicant takes to registration depends primarily on their chiropractic qualification. Nationality is also taken into consideration where European law applies. There are four routes to registration:

1. Holding a chiropractic qualification recognised by the GCC after successful completion of an approved chiropractic programme
2. Holding an unrecognised chiropractic qualification and passing the GCC's Test of Competence
3. Via EU General Directive 2005/36/EC and applying to establish in the UK
4. Via EU General Directive 2005/36/EC and applying to work in the UK on a temporary and occasional basis.

Applicants holding UK recognised qualifications

Table 9 - the number of graduates from approved courses registered before 1 March 2021

Educational institution	Month course completed	Number of graduates	Number registered	% of those graduates registering
McTimoney College of Chiropractic	October/ December 2019 ¹	39	36	92%
AECC University College	June/ July 2020	130	57	44%
University of South Wales (WIOC)	June/ July 2020	57	38	67%
Total	-	226	131	58%

Table 10 - Percentage of graduates from educational institutions registering since 2016

Educational institution	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
McTimoney College of Chiropractic	91%	88%	93%	78%	92%
AECC University College	36%	63%	51%	43%	44%
University of South Wales (WIOC)	68%	68%	79%	69%	67%

The number of graduates registering in 2020 is comparable to previous years and concerns the pandemic would impact on registration figures have not materialised. For the most part, practices have remained open during the pandemic, although not all have done so.

Applicants holding relevant international chiropractic qualifications (International)

Applicants with chiropractic qualifications achieved from outside the UK must pass the GCC Test of Competence to be eligible for registration. The Test ensures applicants without a recognised qualification meet the same standards as those who do.

This section relates to those who have passed the Test of Competence and subsequently registered.

¹ Graduates from the McTimoney College of Chiropractic 2019 cohorts are included as they first register during the 2020 registration year.

Table 11 - New International applicants registered during 2020 (by educational institution)

Educational institution	Country	Number of registrants
Bahcesehir University	Turkey	1
Durban University of Technology	South Africa	2
Life University	USA	1
Macquarie University	Australia	1
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology	Australia	2
South California College of Chiropractic	USA	1
University of Johannesburg	South Africa	6
Total	-	14

There were fewer new registrants via the international route and the arrangements for the Test of Competence itself were initially disrupted due to restrictions relating to the pandemic. Over half of applicants graduated from South African chiropractic programmes and the first application from a graduate of a Turkish chiropractic programme was received.

Applicants applying under European Union (EU) General Directive 2005/36/EC

The GCC registered five applicants through the EU General Directive in 2020, matching that of 2019, all from Insitut Franco-Européen de Chiropraxie (IFEC) in France.

The United Kingdom’s withdrawal from the EU means that this route to registration closed on 31 December 2020 although the GCC is permitted to review applications received before then under the requirements set out in the directive as part of the transitional period. In December 2020, six applications were received through this route. Given the registration process includes a review of the applicants’ chiropractic education and skills, registration was not granted in 2020 but if applicable registration can take place in 2021.

People from the EU are now able to apply for registration with the GCC following the international registration route and therefore must pass the Test of Competence.

Temporary and occasional registration

The GCC did not receive or grant registration to any applicants for temporary and occasional registration during 2020.

Trends in initial registration

This section indicates the potential number of graduates who may apply for GCC registration over the next five years. The focus is on graduates from the UK colleges offering approved courses, and making up the largest proportion of new registrants each year.

The attrition rate of students is not included as the numbers dropping out of programmes are small and is also consistent with past trends.

Table 12 - Potential graduates with recognised qualifications for the next five years

Educational institution	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
AECC University College	130	156	175	191	191
University of South Wales	86	80	125	110	110
McTimoney College of Chiropractic	44	49	36	52	60
London South Bank University	0	14	18	30	40
Teesside University	0	0	0	13	30
Total	260	299	354	396	431

Table 13 - Projected registration figures for the next five years

Route	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
UK graduates ²	156	180	212	238	259
International Qualified ³	19	19	19	19	19
EU Directive ⁴	6	0	0	0	0
Total	181	199	231	257	278

There will be a gradual increase in graduate numbers over the next five years, leading to an increase in applications for registration.

As discussed above, the UK's exit from the EU means the route to registration via the EU General Directive will no longer be available with the impact of this being uncertain. For example: whether those who would have applied via the EU route will in future apply through the international route; and whether graduates from UK institutions who are EU nationals will apply for GCC registration, it previously being a requirement in order to practise in their home country.

² These figures have been calculated based on a registration rate of 60% for UK graduates, which is the average percentage of UK graduates registering over the past five years.

³ These figures have been calculated based on average number of registrants over the past five years.

⁴ Registration numbers through the EU General Directive are shown as zero from 2022 onwards as this route to registration will no longer apply.

Retention

Summary

By the end of 2020, 249 registrants paid the reduced fee, providing assurance they do not intend to practise in the UK in 2021.

It was speculated that due to the pandemic more registrants would apply for registration on a reduced fee bases as they were not intending to practise. However, while the figure is higher than previous years it is not significantly higher and also likely that a number of those registrants will apply to transfer to practising registration as 2021 progresses and restrictions resulting from the pandemic are removed.

'Removals' from the Register

Registration depends on compliance with all registration requirements and failure to comply may lead to removal from the Register. Reason for removal from the Register include:

- Failure to remain fit to practise (erasure from the Register)
- Failure to retain on the Register (lapse)
- Failure to complete annual Continual Professional Development (CPD) requirements (CPD non-compliance)
- Voluntary removal

Table 14 - Removal from the Register, by reason, annually

	Struck off	Lapse	Voluntary	Deceased	CPD non compliance	Total
2020	0	67	18	1	76	162
2019	0	107	13	2	0	122
2018	1	71	28	4	47	151
2017	1	83	14	4	55	157
2016	1	80	21	4	39	145
2015	1	44	21	2	25	81
2014	3	39	21	2	42	107

There were 40 more removals from the Register compared to 2019, although not significantly higher than in 2017 or 2018. It is likely that some registrants took the decision to retire sooner than envisaged due to the uncertainty as a result of the pandemic. This may become apparent in the next few years as fewer removals may be seen.

Table 15 shows the number of registrants lapsing their registration (not paying their retention fee) is comparable to previous years.

Removals relating to non-compliance in relation to CPD rose sharply. A mechanism exists providing for waiver in relation to CPD requirements for registrants with exceptional circumstances. As such, it is likely that (as with retirement) registrants took the decision to stop practising as a consequence of the pandemic. It is notable that of the 76 registrants removed for CPD non-compliance in 2020, 19 have re-joined the Register.

Reasons for no longer remaining on the Register

Most registrants do not always provide their reasons for leaving the Register, and these figures are therefore collated from applications for voluntary removal, email correspondence and last known addresses. The main reasons are:

- Relocation overseas
- No longer practising as a chiropractor
- Retired
- Sabbatical
- Re-training, for example as a GP
- Full time caring responsibilities
- Maternity/child-care

Other registrations work

2020 was a busy year for registrations, highlights include:

Inclusion of First Aid questions in the CPD summary

For the 2019/ 20 CPD year only, two additional questions were included with in the CPD summary to ensure registrants were continuing to keep their first aid skills and competencies up to date.

The GCC subsequently asked the Royal College of Chiropractors to explore the extent to which chiropractors feel they have appropriate skills and competencies in first aid, what plans are in place to address and maintain their competencies, what first aid activity had been undertaken during the 2019/20 CPD year and whether the first aid guidance and CPD requirements introduced by the GCC influenced chiropractors' first aid training.

Thematic analysis of the responses to the questions revealed that 92% of registrants expressed or clearly implied competence to administer first aid. Over 98% indicated they were currently first aid certified/recently trained or had clear plans in place to undertake training. There was evidence to suggest that much of registrants' former first aid training had been focused on health and safety considerations in the workplace, former professional roles and social activities rather than being specific to their particular needs. However, 40% of the first-aid-related CPD activity undertaken by the quarter of chiropractors who specifically reported undertaking this during the 2019/20 CPD year had been tailored to their needs as chiropractic clinicians. The COVID-19 pandemic had limited registrants' access to hands-on first aid training during 2020 and much of the refresher training undertaken or planned was only available online.

A small number of registrants failed to adequately address the issues and they will be resubmitting their responses in March 2021.

Online applications and digital developments

Digital development work was completed allowing UK graduates to apply online for the first time. Other development work included allowing registrants to manage their practice addresses online as well as applying for a waiver of CPD should they need to. Some registrants experienced some problems during the year but we have learnt from this and worked to address issues and concerns.

We also recognise that registrants have had to adapt to a new way of working and benefiting from being able to do many things online that previously they had to rely on the GCC to do for them such as changing contact details and setting up direct debits.

More development work is planned in 2021 to simplify other registration processes.

Test of Competence

Due to the pandemic the Test of Competence (TOC) was moved from face-to-face to virtual interviews conducted through videoconferencing.

To support this move the paperwork was streamlined and candidates are no longer required to

to map their education to the GCC's Education Standards. To ensure all principles of the GCC Code of Practice are covered by the test the remaining paperwork has been reviewed.

A further recruitment drive has taken place to increase the number of Test of Competence Assessors/ Chairs to ensure no issues occur as the first cohort of assessors/ chairs reach the end of their terms in October 2022.

Further details are provided annually in the TOC External Examiner's report, published in April 2021.