



This review method
is ESG-compliant

Educational Oversight Review

The Scotland College of
Chiropractic Charitable Trust

May 2025

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About this review

This is a report of an Educational Oversight Review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at **The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust**.

EOR consists of a number of components. The Full component is a review of a provider's arrangements for maintaining the academic standards and quality of the courses it offers against the 12 Sector-Agreed Principles contained within the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2024) (the UK Quality Code). A Full component review will assess a provider against the core requirements of the Home Office in relation to educational oversight and the UK Quality Code as a common UK framework. Further information about the Full component of EOR can be found in the [Educational Oversight Review Guidance for Providers](#).

The review took place from **20-22 May 2025** and was conducted by a team of three reviewers, as follows:

- Dr Nick Dickson (Reviewer)
- Dr Mark Langley (Reviewer)
- Dr Zachary Davis (Student reviewer)

The QAA Officer for this review was Mr Alan Weale.

In Educational Oversight Review (Full component), the QAA review team:

- determines an outcome against each of the Sector-Agreed Principles outlined in the UK Quality Code
- identifies features of good practice
- makes recommendations
- identifies areas of enhancement activity
- determines an overall judgement as to whether the provider is fully aligned with the Sector-Agreed Principles of the UK Quality Code.

The QAA website gives more information [about QAA](#) and its mission. A dedicated section explains the method for [Educational Oversight Review](#) and has links to other informative documents. QAA reviews are evidence-based processes. Review judgements result from the documents review teams see, and the meetings they hold, and draw upon their experience as peer reviewers and student reviewers.

The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) provide the framework for internal and external quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area. QAA's review methods are [compliant with these standards](#), as are the [reports we publish](#). More information is available on our [website](#).

This review was conducted in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

Executive summary

The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust (SCC) is a single-subject institution offering a single degree programme: an Integrated Master of Chiropractic (MChiro). This is a four-year, full-time programme (Level 4 to Level 7: 480 credits), validated by Buckinghamshire New University (BNU). SCC accepted its first cohort of students in September 2023 and now has a student body of 25 across the first and second years.

SCC's mission is to educate, empower and inspire great people to excel as chiropractors. The ethos of SCC is enshrined in the values set out in their Strategic Plan. The four themes around which this Plan is built articulate the strategic aims and priorities: providing a world-class chiropractic education; growing research capability in support of learning, teaching and evidence-based practice; developing strategic relationships with external stakeholders; and championing an inclusive culture in the promotion of health and wellbeing.

At the time of the review SCC had 25 students, 15 Year 1 and 10 Year 2 students. The Senior Management Team comprises: The Principal, Director of Business Development and Director of Quality Assurance. A Programme Leader provides support for seven Module Leaders across Levels 4 and 5 who are employed on 0.1 or 0.2 full-time equivalent contracts. Four of these seven Module Leaders have substantive appointments in other HEIs. The MChiro programme is supported by a full-time Undergraduate Programme Administrator and pastoral support is provided by a team of five personal tutors who are all General Chiropractic Council (GCC) registered chiropractors.

Key challenges faced by SCC include attracting and retaining staff, recruiting students, financial growth and stability, and meeting the Education Standards set by the regulatory body.

In reaching conclusions about the extent to which **The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust** meets the Sector-Agreed Principles, the QAA review team followed the evidence-based review procedure as outlined in the guidance for Educational Oversight Review (July 2024). **The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust** provided the review team with a self-evaluation and supporting evidence. During the review visit, which took place from the **20-22 May 2025**, the review team held a total of **nine** meetings with the senior management team, academic staff, professional support staff, students, board of trustees' members and external stakeholders. The team also viewed SCC premises and facilities.

In summary, the team found three examples of good practice and identified two recommendations for improvement.

Conclusions

The QAA review team reached the following conclusions about the higher education provision at **The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust**.

The QAA review team determines that **The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust**:

- **is fully aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principles of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice**:

- The way SCC has strategically mapped the roll-out of its quality processes to support the needs of all stakeholders as the programme completes its first full cycle provides a strong framework for ensuring the maintenance of academic standards and assurance of the quality of the learning experience. **(Sector-Agreed Principle 5)**
- The high level of engagement with clinical placement providers, who are future employers of SCC graduates is holistic, effective and provides an exemplary educational experience to further the chiropractic profession. **(Sector-Agreed Principle 8)**
- The wide range of funded extra-curricular opportunities provided for students from the onset of their degree to engage with the wider chiropractic community and other stakeholders is designed to prepare them to be active members of the chiropractic professional community and beyond. **(Sector-Agreed Principle 10)**

Recommendations

For recommendations that relate to areas for development and enhancement that do not impact on the Sector-Agreed Principle being met, the QAA review team makes the following recommendations:

- SCC should develop a resourcing strategy to ensure it can guarantee its resources align with future strategic and programme developments. **(Sector-Agreed Principle 3)**
- SCC should explore with current and potential clinical placement providers the possibilities of working together in a more formal partnership to facilitate mentorship, networking and advisory capabilities. **(Sector-Agreed Principle 8)**

Explanation of the findings – Sector-Agreed Principles

Principle 1: Taking a strategic approach to managing quality and standards

Providers demonstrate they have a strategic approach to securing academic standards and assuring and enhancing quality that is embedded across the organisation.

Findings

1 The strategic intention of SCC is to expand to provide chiropractic education in the community and across Scotland; a charitable trust supports this initiative. SCC has a strategic plan which details the approach to supporting learning and teaching in the subject area of chiropractic practice, and this is supported by quality assurance mechanisms. The quality guide demonstrates SCC's approach to assuring and enhancing quality, and this is clearly embedded across the institution.

2 The MChiro degree is validated by Buckinghamshire New University (BNU), with SCC being required to adhere to BNU's regulations. Due diligence was conducted in 2020 but the COVID pandemic restrictions interrupted proceedings and the programme was eventually validated in 2022 and recruited its first cohort of students in 2023. The validation arrangement with BNU is robust and provides SCC with the regulations needed to secure academic standards and quality. A revalidation of the partnership and programme was required in 2024 to accommodate significant changes to GCC regulatory standards and the success of this revalidation affirms this security.

3 SCC provides a significant amount of data on students to BNU for their Student Records Systems. However, SCC's small scale has necessarily meant that some systems to assure and enhance quality are informal, for example data is currently collated on spreadsheets rather than through a specific student management system. However, the processes in place are effective given the strategic plan and the clear financially supportive environment provided by the Trust. These mechanisms, combined with the validation of the programme by BNU, enables the security of academic standards and quality to be maintained.

4 SCC acknowledges that its governance structure is embryonic, but nonetheless, it is effective for an institution of this size. Overall responsibility for the strategic plan of SCC lies with the Board of Trustees, which comprises a suitable mix of practitioners and lay members. Underlying the Board is a senior management team who have operational responsibility for maintaining quality and standards within the College, alongside a Programme Committee which meets semesterly and has student representation. Decisions can be clearly followed throughout the governance process and deliberations are informed by all key stakeholders. For example, preparations for the revalidation of the programme show that there was extensive consultation with existing students and with a wide range of the chiropractic professional community

5 There is a very deliberative approach to governance and how it operates, including plans for an academic board after year four has completed, to avoid overlap with existing committees. In addition, there are plans for external facing parts of SCC (recruitment, research, etc.) to be built into a stakeholder advisory group, aligning with SCC's strategic plan.

6 There is a clear staffing structure to support academic standards and quality, and this is appropriate for an institution of this size at this stage of its development, a view acknowledged by the recent revalidation by BNU. SCC's approach to quality and standards is fully embedded across the entire institution, and both managers and teaching staff were able to demonstrate how key decisions regarding quality were made and fed back on. This is further evidenced by meeting minutes of the Programme Committee and Board of Trustees.

7 Overall, the review team concluded that SCC takes a strategic approach to the management of quality and standards. This conclusion is based on the existence of a transparent and comprehensive strategic plan that prioritises the management of quality and standards. This strategic intent is visible operationally through the existence of an effective staffing structure that supports the assurance of quality and standards. The Board of Trustees and the Principal provide strong strategic leadership. The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust therefore **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Principle 2: Engaging students as partners

Providers take deliberate steps to engage students as active partners in assuring and enhancing the quality of the student learning experience. Engagement happens individually and collectively to influence all levels of study and decision making. Enhancements identified through student engagement activities are implemented, where appropriate, and communicated to staff and students.

Findings

8 Student representatives are selected by the students, with two representatives for each cohort Training for student representatives is provided by the Director of Quality Assurance and Director of Business Development and the student representatives informed the review team that the SMT are supportive in their roles.

9 Student representatives are members of the Programme Committee The review team saw this committee as an example of an engaged student voice, as evidenced by the minutes of each semester's meetings Student representatives have worked very positively within this committee structure with a dedicated section of the meeting provided for student matters As a result of the Programme Committee and student feedback, adjustments to the semester timetable were made to provide an extra revision week Other examples of action taken as a result of student feedback included making slides available ahead of lectures.

10 SCC is developing plans to appoint a student member to the Board of Trustees at the point of the first cohort graduating. The College recognises the importance and benefits of having student representation present at all levels of the institution As SCC expands and additional committees are introduced, such as the Patient and Carers Group and Academic Board, plans are in place to ensure student representation is also embedded in these committees.

11 Students informed the review team that they have opportunities, though formal and informal methods, to provide feedback to SCC on their experience In meetings with students and staff it was clear to the review team that a strong partnership exists between the two groups The review team heard from both staff and students that students are invested in the enhancement of the learning and teaching experience at SCC Students are aware, as the first cohorts enrolled at the college, that they have an important role in shaping the culture and student experience within the College, and engage with SCC on developing this SCC has provided funds to support social opportunities for students, for example pub quizzes and sports outings, in order to build a strong sense of community, which is received well by students.

12 Student feedback is built into the quality assurance cycle, with evidence considered from student surveys, meetings with student representatives, and programme committee meetings SCC runs an end of semester survey to collate student feedback. Alongside this, student surveys are also carried out by SCC's validating partner, BNU The review team also learnt about student forums, which the SMT conduct four weeks after induction and four weeks before the examination period. The staff find these useful meetings for gathering student feedback at key points during the semester, allowing enhancement of the student experience. The review team saw evidence of SCC closing the feedback loop by responding to key issues and themes identified from student surveys.

13 SCC provided information to students prior to the 2024 re-validation with BNU (see paragraph 2) to inform them of changes to the programme, for example changes in assessment type, as a result of the re-validation process and provided an opportunity for students to provide feedback on these changes, evidencing the strong working relationship between SCC and its students.

14 Overall, the review team concluded that there are clear opportunities available to students through student representation, programme committee meetings and student feedback surveys, to provide for individual and collective feedback to the college. Students who met with the review team indicated they had sufficient formal and informal mechanisms to engage with SCC and that their feedback is valued by members of staff, building a robust working partnership. The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust therefore **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Principle 3: Resourcing delivery of a high-quality learning experience

Providers plan, secure and maintain resources relating to learning, technology, facilities and staffing to enable the delivery and enhancement of an accessible, innovative and high-quality learning experience for students that aligns with the provider's strategy and the composition of the student body.

Findings

15 As a new provider, since September 2023 SCC has deployed a three-phase facilities and resources plan. This has developed the physical campus, virtual environments and recruited staff to deliver and manage the programme. Phase two is about to launch an addition to the original space, and phase three will add a clinic that will open to the local community and provide on-site opportunities for students to develop their clinical practice. Collectively, these resources enable SCC to support student professional development. The facilities and resources are excellent and undoubtedly enhance teaching and learning. They also support and enhance the wellbeing of students and staff and promote inclusivity. For example, teaching texts fully represent all skin tones, and the virtual learning environment supports inclusive approaches to the curriculum. The next phase is for SCC to develop its outreach by placing students and graduates in the community.

16 Students feel well-prepared for their studies and future careers because of the accessibility of learning materials, including books and digital resources. The library facilities are compact but impressive, and students are very satisfied with the combination of on campus materials and access to the BNU virtual learning environment (VLE). Students use this to submit work, receive assessments and view course materials. Students also have access to in-depth knowledge of the science and research currently available within the profession through an online chiropractic platform. They also highlight specific resources that cater to individual learning styles, such as anatomy software that helps them to visualise human anatomy.

17 Although SCC's approach to resourcing is successful, it does not have a formal resourcing strategy. It has relied, understandably, on initial plans to install the campus and recruit staff. It has monitored short and mid-term targets through Senior Management Team meetings. Through the current process of annual surveys, SCC monitors and evaluates the effectiveness and impact of learning environments and the resources on a systematic basis, evident in the excellent facilities. Theme four of SCC's strategy centres on inclusion and sustainability which, given the holistic view associated with the chiropractic SCC has adopted, is wholly appropriate. Senior managers are clear that the design and maintenance of learning resources is intended to do this, so the facilities are testament to this approach. Currently the Principal manages resource demands from students and course teams and, with two members of the Board of Trustees, agrees to, and authorises, any investments required. Presently this approach is effective, and students confirm they are very happy with the breadth of resources. However, while phase two has clearly been executed well, and phase three promises to do the same, these are all still part of the process of 'starting up' the College. SCC plans to move towards an annual operational plan, where it can identify and track resourcing needs, but SCC does not currently have a formal strategy to ensure it sustains this high-quality approach. The team **recommends** that SCC should develop a resourcing strategy to ensure that moving forward it can update its resources in line with its strategic and programme developments.

18 The strategic plan identifies developing people. SCC uses its annual staff appraisal process to identify potential training requirements. Given SCC offers a single programme, the staffing plans are focused and concise. The Staffing Narrative provides a clear overview

of current staffing and charts requirements for the forthcoming twelve months in a considered manner. SCC recognises the 'relatively small pool of experienced academic and research-focused practicing chiropractors in the UK from which to recruit,' so has engaged external expertise to help design the programme and modules. SCC aims to build staff recruitment steadily over the next academic year, acknowledging this is not easy. However, the care taken to appoint its Principal, who balances leadership and clinical skills, exemplifies the benefits of this approach. The Staffing Narrative demonstrates how SCC ensures the relevance of staff to the workplace and the wider academic discipline, indicating a thorough and conscientious approach to staff recruitment.

19 To support the requirements of its professional body, the General Chiropractic Council (GCC), SCC completed the GCC template for its accreditation process. The exacting detail indicates how carefully SCC has worked to meet the GCC's Education Standards. For example, for Education Standard 34, SCC demonstrates how it provides appropriately qualified and registered chiropractors in teaching and management roles. SCC has recruited educators who possess, or who are working towards, an appropriate teaching qualification, or possess relevant and recent teaching experience. This includes demonstrating educator competence in enabling students to learn effectively and in assessing student achievement. This demonstrates the application of appropriate selection criteria and induction procedures when appointing staff.

20 To meet one of the GCC criteria, SCC submitted its template for staff induction discussions. This lists the key documents and forms an agenda for face-to-face meetings led by the Principal for human resource matters, and the Director of Quality Assurance for assessment matters. Additional support provided by the Principal, Programme Leader, and Undergraduate Programme Administrator explore the VLE, while the Director of Business Development provides the campus induction. This approach is comprehensive and ensures new staff meet all the key people and understand key processes. These processes include assessment and moderation, and how the programme marries with the GCC requirements. SCC is also preparing a Staff Handbook in which it aims to map out clearer timelines for the induction process. Speaking about their induction, staff were clear that the process prepared them well.

21 Staff qualifications and SCC's Staffing Narrative indicate that 80% of teaching staff have a doctorate, while 20% are qualified at either undergraduate or masters level. The majority of staff are therefore qualified to deliver up to masters level and beyond. A tracking document indicates which staff have teaching qualifications and in two instances fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. This document monitors staff training needs, for instance, three staff members will begin their development activities in 2025-26 and one in 2026-27.' As meeting notes demonstrate staffing is an agenda item on the Senior Management Agenda and overseen by the Director of Quality Assurance, outcomes are then reported to the Board of Trustees. This, and the tracking of staff professional development, demonstrates SCC's active support for staff updating of their skills and knowledge.

22 SCC allocates funds for staff development to support and enhance the delivery of a high-quality and innovative student learning and research experience. The Staff Professional Development Policy centres on an initial assessment of staff needs when they join SCC and thereafter through the annual staff appraisal process. Guidelines for this process are clear and comprehensive, and an online request form allows staff to submit training requests. Staff are made aware of development opportunities through their annual appraisal and other internal communications. The system is clear and fair.

23 The semesterly staff feedback process encourages staff to self-evaluate their training needs. In January 2025, SCC sent out its first staff survey asking staff to comment about the support they have received, its sufficiency, and ideas for improvements. Results indicate a thorough and considered process of review, and SCC's response indicates that the feedback was acted upon and used to inform future planning. SCC's approach to staff development

enables it to focus on its needs as a provider, while allowing staff the opportunity to see their personal development as a part of that process. Staff confirm that they feel fully supported by the College. As chiropractors they must also complete ongoing professional development, so there is a synergy between those requirements and the support SCC offers. The connectivity of the two forms of professional development clearly informs the ability of staff to deliver a high-quality learning experience.

24 Overall, the review team concluded that SCC has effectively resourced the delivery of a high-quality learning experience in a sustainable way that is wholly appropriate to the nature of its single subject area. The teaching team has been carefully selected and developed, ensuring that the programme provides tailored guidance and learning opportunities for students. The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust therefore **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Principle 4: Using data to inform and evaluate quality

Providers collect, analyse and utilise qualitative and quantitative data at provider, departmental, programme and module levels. These analyses inform decision-making with the aim of enhancing practices and processes relating to teaching, learning and the wider student experience.

Findings

25 SCC accepts its approach to collecting, analysing and utilising data is in its infancy, given the small cohort size and with only one full year of programme delivery complete. However, its quality manual details the processes of data collection, covering the full student journey from admission to graduation.

26 The senior team of SCC are very clear about how to use data and have a clear framework embedded to collate and monitor it from admissions through assessments, (including specific student needs), and this appears effective. SCC are clear about the potential need for new systems to manage data in the future when student numbers grow and have included scoping for student management systems in the next phase of expansion.

27 The validating university, BNU, requires a data-informed response via its self-evaluation and improvement planning template. Data required of SCC include module results, progression and retention, and will naturally in time include end of degree results. BNU actively monitor pass rates for modules and progression rates and were able to report that SCC were exceeding tolerances for the university at present. Data are monitored by the university in-year and at the end of the year.

28 SCC conducts student feedback surveys at the end of each semester, with results reported to the Programme Committee and Board of Trustees. Students were able to identify where their feedback had been acknowledged and issues addressed, including reducing the Easter break to allow for greater preparation time for exams. BNU also carries out student surveys which are emailed to students. Results of these surveys are reported back to SCC through its online system, allowing SCC to carry out its own analyses as required.

29 Within the College, the Programme Leader make effective use of data to enhance learning and teaching. Results from assessments are analysed to inform where performances may vary within cohorts and between modules, which might lead to additional support or enhancement activities being carried out in later delivery. SCC is keen to ensure that a comprehensive approach is taken in using student achievement data across all aspects of delivery which allows individual student progression to be tracked and maintained. SCC utilises data to identify at-risk students, using a variety of metrics including attendance, lateness, performance and engagement. These data feed into student support mechanisms within the College, involving module leaders, personal tutors and, where appropriate, senior management, and holistically to the Programme Committee.

30 Overall, the review team concluded that, although SCC is at an early stage of its development, it is using the data currently available to it to inform its decision making and management. Its arrangements for data collection and usage already account for the full student life cycle and will be further implemented as future cohorts of students are recruited. Data is collected from the full range of stakeholders. The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust therefore **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Principle 5: Monitoring, evaluating and enhancing provision

Providers regularly monitor and review their provision to secure academic standards and enhance quality. Deliberate steps are taken to engage and involve students, staff and external expertise in monitoring and evaluation activity. The outcomes and impact of these activities are considered at provider level to drive reflection and enhancement across the provider.

Findings

31 The job description for College's Director of Quality Assurance and the Quality Assurance Flowchart outline a committed approach to quality assurance. For a single programme that is still only two years into delivery, the format is clear and comprehensive. Moving forward, SCC aims to future-proof its systems whilst ensuring they are responsive and fit for purpose. SCC's Quality Guide relates the quality assurance process to the UK 2024 Quality Code for Higher Education and the requirements of the GCC. The guide is presently more a statement of aims than a handbook setting out clear processes, but it demonstrates clear alignment with the sector agreed principles. Senior managers fully expect to add to and develop these processes as SCC progresses but wishes to do so with the benefit of direct experience rather than invent an overly elaborate process. SCC's approach to developing its quality processes is mature and responsive.

32 BNU's quality process provides further support and assurance as SCC fully embeds its internal processes. The process with BNU has yet to run a full four-year cycle, but during the last two years BNU has revalidated the programme, evidenced by documents prepared for that process and student involvement in it. (See paragraph 2) This, and commentary provided by the University, indicates the University's continued support for the College. SCC aims to be self-sufficient, so intends to produce its own annual operational plan to run alongside the University's requirements of SCC as an academic partner.

33 Currently, BNU collates comprehensive and well-set-out information to support its annual monitoring processes SCC completes an annual Self-Evaluation and Improvement Plan (SIP) using data provided by the University and submits this to BNU. The University confirms satisfaction with the single report SCC has been able to submit so far but explains it would only discuss the report further with SCC if there were any issues raised. To date, BNU has been wholly satisfied with SCC's responses As it gathers more longitudinal data, SCC expects to establish a clearer set of milestones by which to measure subsequent years of delivery The scale of the College, and its short period of operation, mean that data is currently limited.

34 The Director of Quality Assurance led the annual review process and drafted SCC's response, drawing on external examiner reports The Programme Leader commented on the action plan, which the Programme Committee received and ratified, before it was finally signed off by the Board of Trustees. Moving forward, the plan is for the Director of Quality Assurance and the Programme Leader to jointly prepare the self-evaluation, indicating that as SCC develops, it aims to adjust its quality processes. BNU's oversight of this process ensures SCC meets the agreed principles for monitoring and evaluation and that those processes are applied systematically and operated consistently. These processes are appropriate to their operational context and are set to develop as SCC refines its internal processes.

35 The GCC will also require SCC to undertake annual monitoring once the programme has been accredited. Along with mapping to the revised GCC education standards SCC is subject to external peer review by the GCC, contextualised by reference to its standards, ensuring that professional and approval bodies feed into monitoring and review. Given the GCC requirements, SCC's monitoring and evaluation activities easily facilitate insights and

promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion. For example, SCC has provided for the GCC more information about how SCC supports potential applicants with learning needs. SCC's engagement with the process of annual monitoring is fit-for-purpose, given SCC's size and the oversight by BNU.

36 SCC's monitoring and evaluation activities engage with staff and students throughout. The semesterly student survey is presently SCC's best measure of student perceptions, and its template demonstrates that student feedback is gathered anonymously. SCC has achieved return rates of around 73%. BNU also asks students to complete a semesterly survey, data from which it shares with SCC in preparation for the SIP Module leaders also complete a module survey, which informs SCC's response to the student feedback, with the responses provided being unanimously positive. Programme Committee agendas feature a standing item on student and staff matters, ensuring that SCC formally discusses any survey outcomes. Student representation is involved in that process and SCC's planned committee system details how SCC intends to deepen its use of student representation as it develops its academic governance. Being a small institution, for issues raised through informal conversations with students, staff are required to send a follow up email outlining the discussion, thereby ensuring there is a paper trail SCC fully engages with staff and students throughout its monitoring activities.

37 Students state that SCC is committed to student engagement within all relevant policies and procedures, and it also provides regular feedback opportunities. These include student surveys, meetings with representatives, programme committee meetings, but also 'more casual' discussions to update on relevant information. Student Representatives of both year groups are always present in the semesterly Programme Committee Meetings, for which they have advanced sight of any completed surveys and feedback forms. Students conclude their voices are heard, and where possible, SCC acts on their feedback to enhance the student experience. Staff cite the early posting of lecture notes in a preferred format as one example of SCC responding to student feedback. SCC plans to add a Patient and Carer's group and a Clinical Practice Committee to support student learning once the programme requires these additions. The processes in place for gathering and responding to student feedback are thorough and SCC has already mapped out significant additions to that process in advance of future growth.

38 The Programme Leader is principally responsible for ensuring SCC responds to external examiner feedback on good practice and areas of improvement. For example, SCC revised its Semester 1 draft exam scripts following examiner feedback and has carried over that approach as best practice for Semester 2. This is articulated in SCC's response to the external examiner, using the BNU template. Agendas and minutes indicate that the Programme Committee received the external examiner report and responses, and the Senior Management Team oversees this process. In terms of the enhancement of quality, SCC relies on staff and student feedback, formal and informal. As detailed above, this ensures SCC maintains effective and open communication. These systems are embedding with each passing year and as noted above, SCC plans to add further committees with student representation included to develop its formal academic governance structures. The team considers the way SCC has strategically mapped the roll-out of its quality processes to support the needs of all stakeholders as the programme completes its first full cycle as **good practice**.

39 Overall, the review team concluded that SCC's systems for monitoring, evaluating, and enhancing its provision, and its plans to develop these as it completes its first programme cycle are rigorous. Supported by the oversight of its awarding university and the requirements of the GCC, the combination of internal processes, staff and student involvement, and external engagement, exemplifies SCC taking deliberate steps to reflect on its provision and implement changes to improve the student experience. The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust therefore **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Principle 6: Engaging in external review and accreditation

Providers engage with external reviews to give assurance about the effectiveness of their approach to managing quality and standards. External reviews offer insights about the comparability of providers' approaches and generate outcomes that providers can use to enhance their policies and practices. Reviews may be commissioned by providers, form part of a national quality framework or linked to professional recognition and actively include staff, students and peers. They can be undertaken by representative organisations, agencies or professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) with recognised sector expertise according to the provision being reviewed.

Findings

40 SCC works with external agencies to review and accredit its provision. SCC has its integrated Master's programme validated by BNU, evidenced by a formal approval as partner document and a memorandum of understanding. The subsequent programme validation was completed in March 2022, and revalidation was successfully achieved in December 2024 due to changes in regulatory standards for chiropractic. The programme undergoing successful validation and revalidation indicates the provider is working effectively with the external validating body.

41 SCC also engages with a professional body, the General Chiropractic Council (GCC). During the BNU validation and revalidation processes, SCC engaged with the GCC's requirements, which, in 2023, included a substantial revision to their Education Standards. BNU supports SCC in its determination to achieve GCC accreditation but notes that the required standards have been significantly increased between submissions., requiring a further accreditation attempt. The University stated academic staff resource was made available to SCC to offer additional support with issues surrounding interprofessional skills identified by the GCC as being lacking. (See also paragraph 47)

42 Overall, the review team concluded that because BNU has validated and revalidated the programme, this demonstrates SCC is engaging with external reviews to give assurance about the effectiveness of its approach to managing quality and standards. In addition, SCC is determined in its approach to achieving GCC accreditation with constant engagement with the professional body (including via BNU). The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust therefore **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Principle 7: Designing, developing, approving and modifying programmes

Providers design, develop, approve and modify programmes and modules to ensure the quality of provision and the academic standards of awards are consistent with the relevant Qualifications Framework. Providers ensure their provision and level of qualifications are comparable to those offered across the UK and, where applicable, The Framework of Qualifications for The European Higher Education Area.

Findings

43 The responsibility for programme design and development rests with the College, which is validated by BNU. BNU sets out guidance in relation to the validation and modification of the degree provision in the operations manual and memorandum of understanding. The programme has been validated, and then revalidated by BNU in the two years of its operation, which indicates the provider is working effectively with the validating body. In addition, as this is a validated programme, the degree awarding body has assured itself that the academic standards of the award are consistent with the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ). The programme is clearly mapped to the FHEQ. The external examiner affirms adherence to the standards required by the awarding body.

44 The programme is mapped to the revised GCC education standards and is subject to external peer review of the GCC, ensuring that the professional body feeds into development of the programme. The programme has been undergoing accreditation with the GCC, but this has been unsuccessful at present. SCC have stated they have made sure students have a fall-back position should GCC registration not occur ("Should the programme not be accredited by the time our first cohort graduates, our new graduates would be still able to practise in the UK under the term spinal or manipulative therapist and would be able to obtain insurance under that title.") and students reported they were fully informed of this approach and kept constantly updated. Students were able to clearly answer that a lack of GCC registration following completion of their degree programme at SCC would in no way hinder their future career opportunities, and further pointed towards the programme enabling them to gain valuable certification in specific chiropractic skills such as activator techniques. Practitioners reported they believed the quality of education offered by SCC meant that lack of GCC registration would not be a hindrance to graduates wanting to progress into the chiropractic career.

45 Overall, the review team concluded that SCC has mechanisms in place to ensure that the design, development, approval and modification of programmes and modules ensures the quality of provision and the academic standards of awards are consistent with the FHEQ. Further, BNU have validated and revalidated the programme, thus ensuring the provision and level of qualification is comparable to those offered across the UK. The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust therefore **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Principle 8: Operating partnerships with other organisations

Providers and their partners agree proportionate arrangements for effective governance to secure the academic standards and enhance the quality of programmes and modules that are delivered in partnership with others. Organisations involved in partnership arrangements agree and communicate the mutual and specific responsibilities in relation to delivering, monitoring, evaluating, assuring and enhancing the learning experience.

Findings

46 SCC is in partnership with BNU for the delivery of one four-year integrated master's programme, evidenced by a formal approval as partner document and a memorandum of understanding. Both parties signed this after completing a process of due diligence in April 2020. The subsequent programme validation, although interrupted by the COVID pandemic, completed in March 2022. SCC's agreement with BNU was signed prior to the start of the programme and it covers the lifecycle of the partnership, including details about closing the partnership.

47 BNU sets out its requirements for partners in its operation manual. Further to this, the final page of the programme handbook, approved by BNU, provides a very clear division of responsibilities between BNU and the College. SCC's Quality Guide features the same list of responsibilities, demonstrating that SCC's quality processes reflect its responsibilities. Both BNU and SCC are assured that students have information about the responsibilities of each partner and where to go for support throughout their studies.

48 BNU supports SCC to sustain its awareness of the cultural context within which it works through regular Keep in Touch events run by the University that cover aspects such as annual monitoring, self-evaluation of academic provision, the prevent policy, complaints, and mitigating circumstances. BNU also communicates with all its partners if matters require action around issues such as Office for Students' conditions or other policy developments. Staff also maintain their currency about higher education sector developments as part of their ongoing professional development which SCC tracks through its Professional Development Log and Faculty Teaching Qualifications spreadsheet and the annual appraisal process.

49 In respect of ongoing scrutiny, the BNU self-evaluation and improvement plan is the focal point of a process of regular monitoring, evaluation and review that both College and BNU use to assure quality and facilitate enhancement. It also ensures that SCC responds to any current themes within the higher education sector.

50 The single formal partnership with BNU minimises any risk associated with working in partnership with other organisations. The partnership is underpinned by the BNU Memorandum of Understanding and the supporting Operations Manual. BNU updates the manual annually, so it acts as a service level agreement for the forthcoming year. SCC's risk register indicates its plans for mitigating against any potential failure of the College, along with its Student Protection Plan. BNU and SCC have worked together to minimise any risk associated with working in partnership.

51 SCC also works with placement providers, but currently does not regard these as formal partners, but rather as key stakeholders. With placements only just coming into play this year, SCC will re-visit its approach to placement providers when it has had time to reflect. However, SCC audits and monitors its interaction with all placement providers. The placement providers do not conduct formal summative assessment, as stipulated in the Clinical Practice Portfolio, which sets out very precise instruction and guidance about placement activities and ensures that providers are supported as much as students. SCC

selects placement providers using an application form that asks detailed questions relating to matters such as malpractice insurance, agreement to a review of their processes, procedures and practice and agreement for students to work under active supervision, thus demonstrating a careful selection process. A subsequent placement agreement sets out the conditions for a provider to work with the College, underpinned by the information provided in SCC's placement handbook which providers receive before hosting a student. The content is comprehensive in the way it defines expectations and establishes clear ground rules. The review team heard that placement providers value this information

52 Clinical placement providers are very positive about their engagement with SCC and value the students' work highly. They speak passionately about the quality of the students and the value of a college based in Scotland to the chiropractic profession, and they recognise their interaction with SCC as an opportunity to 'give back' to the profession. Many do this without remuneration yet are hugely invested in SCC and its success. The placement providers are clearly willing to work more closely with SCC beyond the confines of their current placement agreement. The team therefore **recommends** that SCC explores with current and potential clinical placement providers the possibilities of working together in a more formal partnership to facilitate mentorship, networking, and advisory capabilities.

53 Finally, SCC engages with practice providers across Scotland, recognising a gap in the numbers of chiropractors across the country, with a strategic intent to contribute to the local community. Practice providers were extremely satisfied with their engagement with SCC and value the students' work highly. Both the students, the teaching staff, and the practice providers were able to demonstrate the engagement between SCC and the wider community, and it is clear that the education provided by SCC is highly valued both to current students and their future employers

54 Notwithstanding the recommendation in paragraph 52 above, which is made in the spirit of enhancing already robust arrangements, the high level of engagement with practice providers, who are future employers of SCC graduates is holistic, effective and provides an exemplary educational experience to further the chiropractic profession, is considered **good practice**.

55 Overall, the review team concluded that the clear partnership guidance provided by BNU ensures that SCC fulfils its contractual obligations as a university partner. While the current arrangements with placement providers are secure and supportive for both providers and students. Notwithstanding this, SCC could explore a deeper partnership-style relationship with them to facilitate a stronger sense of network. The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Principle 9: Recruiting, selecting and admitting students

Providers operate recruitment, selection and admissions processes that are transparent, fair and inclusive. Providers maintain and publish accurate, relevant and accessible information about their provision, enabling students to make informed choices about their studies and future aspirations.

Findings

56 SCC has responsibility for the recruitment, selection and admission of students to the MChiro programme. The processes involved in the recruitment, selection and admission of students are underpinned by SCC's Admissions Policy and Procedure which is available on SCC's website and is fair and transparent.

57 Information for prospective students is provided on SCC's website and through its prospectus, both of which contains clear information on the programme structure as well as information on fees and finance. Finance information is provided to prospective students through the website and application form, indicating SCC currently has designated status in Scotland, but not the rest of the UK, and makes transparent the implications this has for student funding. The website and application form also clearly note that SCC is currently unable to accept international students. Information is also provided on additional costs that students will face during each year of the programme, for example, costings for chiropractic equipment.

58 SCC operates a flexible admissions process in relation to entry requirements, taking into consideration contextual information provided as part of the application. SCC recognises this as a strategic policy for growing the institution through recruiting students with a wide range of backgrounds, which is evidenced and supported by their participation in the Scottish Wider Access Programme. All prospective students are interviewed by trained staff to ensure a robust selection process. SCC considers recognition of prior learning, enabling students entry to advanced years of the programme. At the time of the review, no students had been admitted to SCC through this pathway and therefore the team could not assess the robustness of this process. However, in meetings with staff it was clear to the review team that a detailed investigation of any prior learning would be undertaken before such considerations were made.

59 The application process requires students to provide evidence of their qualifications, a personal statement, and a letter of recommendation from a chiropractor and an academic or work reference. As students apply directly to SCC online, staff can build relationships with prospective students at an early stage, helping applicants during the initial decision-making process through information sessions and bespoke visits. Alongside this, students with neurodivergent and/or health issues are identified as early as the application stage, with specific questions in the application form. This enables Learning Support Plans to be put in place for incoming students to provide reasonable adjustments where appropriate. Students who met the review team spoke highly of the support they received throughout the application process, enabling them to make informed choices.

60 SCC website, application form, and prospectus all clearly note that SCC is in the process of obtaining accreditation from the GCC for the MChiro programme and that students enrolling on the programme risk not being entitled to register as a chiropractor in the UK should accreditation not be obtained by the time they graduate. Meeting with current students it was clear to the review team that they understood the implications of this and informed the review team that GCC accreditation was not a significant factor in their decision to study at the college. SCC is in regular contact with students about the GCC accreditation process.

61 Staff involved in the admission process are provided with training to ensure decisions are made fairly. Guidance is provided to staff which covers SCC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy as well as the Admissions Policy and Procedure. Each stage of the application process is clearly laid out to staff, mapping key decision points, to ensure a consistent and fair approach is applied throughout.

62 Overall, the review team concluded that there are clear, fair and robust policies and procedures in place for the recruitment, selection and admission of students to the college. Prospective students have access to detailed information on the programme, enabling them to make informed decisions. Prospective students are effectively supported throughout the application process, with students speaking highly of the application process. A flexible admissions policy is used by SCC taking into consideration contextual information provided during as part of the application process, which is supported by academic review and interviews with all prospective students. The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust therefore **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Principle 10: Supporting students to achieve their potential

Providers facilitate a framework of support for students that enables them to have a high-quality learning experience and achieve their potential as they progress in their studies. The support structure scaffolds the academic, personal and professional learning journey, enabling students to recognise and articulate their progress and achievements.

Findings

63 The small size of SCC allows staff to support students through an open-door policy, which students use regularly. Students can reach out to staff at all levels of the institution, including the Principal, for academic support. For staff that teach remotely, or are only on campus one day a week, virtual meeting software is used to facilitate conversations with students. SCC recognises the potential need for a staff member (or portion of a staff member's time) to be dedicated to student support as SCC grows over the next few years to ensure continued high-quality student outcomes.

64 Student attendance, engagement in class and assessment submissions are monitored by staff to help identify at-risk students, ensuring early intervention and signposting to appropriate recourses. The small number of students allows staff to get to know students well, helping in assessing students who may need support earlier. Staff who met with the review team recognised the need to formalise these processes as SCC expands. As students at the College have a range of educational backgrounds, academic staff adjust their teaching style to accommodate this, ensuring students are all familiar with the relevant key concepts; for example, as a result of student feedback, one lecturer made video recordings of chiropractic techniques available to students to help them practise outside of class. Students who met with the review team spoke highly of the support provided by the college.

65 Students have access to a range of resources to assist them in their learning experience. A library and bookable group study rooms are available on campus which are well used by students. As SCC grows, additional spaces are being made available to students, including more group study rooms, a kitchenette, and a social space. Through the VLE, students have access to academic skills resources, provided by SCC's validating partner, BNU. Students noted that materials and communication received through the VLE and through student emails is always clear and concise. The College is committed to providing digital resources for students, for example, access to the application Complete Anatomy, which students noted was extremely useful to help visualise human anatomy and catering to different learning styles. SCC has a collection of digital tablets which are used during classes to provide access to these digital resources, enhancing the students' learning experience.

66 Financial support is available to students through scholarships, funded by donations to SCC from the wider chiropractic community, to assist with tuition fees. TSCC provides other sources of funding to pay for external assessments of student's learning needs, which inform student support plans.

67 A detailed induction is provided to students at the start of their first year to familiarise them with programme structure, college policies and procedures, and available recourses, as outlined in the Student Support and Engagement Policy. The induction also provides students with an opportunity to meet the academic and support staff as well as network with fellow students. A shorter induction was provided to year two students which covered key changes to the programme which were made as part of the GCC accreditation process, as well as response to student feedback from the previous semester.

68 Learning Support Plans are put in place for students with neurodiversity, health

conditions or disabilities to support them through their learning journey by providing reasonable adjustments, such as additional exam time and lecture recordings. Students who may need a Learning Support Plan are identified as early as the application stage. In meetings with staff, it was clear to the review team that sufficient additional opportunities, for example, personal tutor feedback and class engagement, were available to staff to identify students who are struggling academically and would benefit from having a Learning Support Plan in place. The review team learnt that the College has provided funding for students to undertake external diagnostic assessments as part of developing their Learning Support Plans.

69 Each student is assigned a personal tutor, who provides personal academic and pastoral support. Personal tutors are practicing chiropractors, who have knowledge of the chiropractic profession and can assess students' academic progress. The role is voluntary, and a signed agreement is in place between the College and any personal tutors which outlines their job description and expectations. Personal tutors also have a responsibility to monitor the progress of students' Clinical Practice Portfolio, providing advice and guidance as required. In terms of pastoral support, personal tutors are expected to signpost to appropriate resources as well as provide guidance and advice to students. Personal tutors are expected to meet with students, as a minimum, twice in the first semester, and once in the second semester. The personal tutor system allows students to engage directly with practicing chiropractors and receive valuable real-world feedback on their academic and professional development. Students and personal tutors who met with the review team spoke favourably of the personal tutor system and its benefits.

70 Students are provided with significant opportunities to engage with the wider chiropractic community, broadening their skills and achievements. For example, SCC funds students to attend conferences, both nationally and internationally, to meet professionals in the chiropractic practice community, allowing students to obtain an insight into the practice beyond their formal degree. Alongside conferences, regular guest speakers from around the world are invited to SCC to present and engage with the student body, discussing for example, business development and chiropractic science and research, as well as providing opportunities for students to network. The opportunities presented by these activities are driven by SCC's ambition to develop future practitioners who will drive the chiropractic sector forward, a vision which is shared by the students who met with the review team. The review team considered the wide range of funded extra-curricular opportunities provided for students from the onset of their degree to engage with the wider chiropractic community and other stakeholders which prepares them to be active members of the chiropractic professional community and beyond to be **good practice**.

71 Overall, the review team concluded that they are effective mechanisms for supporting and enhancing all student's academic and professional development. Information is provided clearly to students on the support available to them, and updates are provided to students via email and the VLE. Learning Support Plans provide effective additional support for students with neurodiversity, health conditions or disabilities. Finally, significant opportunities to engage with the wider chiropractic community are readily available to students. Students who met with the review team spoke highly of the support offered to them throughout their learner journey. The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust therefore **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Principle 11: Teaching, learning and assessment

Providers facilitate a collaborative and inclusive approach that enables students to have a high-quality learning experience and to progress through their studies. All students are supported to develop and demonstrate academic and professional skills and competencies. Assessment employs a variety of methods, embodying the values of academic integrity, producing outcomes that are comparable across the UK and recognised globally.

Findings

72 The GCC's Education Standards predicate the teaching at the College. For the BNU validation process, SCC mapped its programme against these standards, enabling SCC to articulate its plans to embed a culture that values research and evidence throughout the design, delivery, and quality assurance of the programme. This is central to how SCC promotes a culture that integrates contemporary best clinical practice and research. Students are already engaging in research across the chiropractic sector and such engagement will only grow as the programme embeds. SCC has detailed plans to provide appropriately qualified and registered chiropractors in teaching and management roles. It has established a teaching and assessment strategy that employs a variety of valid and appropriate teaching, learning, and assessment methods in accord with GCC's required learning outcomes. SCC has also articulated its plans to provide learners with academic guidance, pastoral care and other support services. The way SCC meets those expectations, or intends to, underpins its Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy. This detailed document is in part strategic, but also maps that strategy to the GCC requirements, ensuring that the strategy underpins curriculum delivery while retaining consonance with the GCC Education Standards.

73 Critical to those standards is that while teaching staff should be research-informed, SCC must also ensure they have appropriate experience and competence in enabling students to learn effectively. Eighty percent of staff have a doctoral qualification and therefore a research focus to their personal practice. Further to this, SCC's research plan maps its intended development and integration of research activity across the first four years of SCC's operations. This plan was agreed with the New Zealand College of Chiropractic (NZCC), following a six-month secondment to SCC of an NZCC Research Fellow. SCC also supports students to attend conferences, and they invite guest speakers from around the world to visit the College, with costs being covered by donors. Although in its early stages, SCC's commitment to research and scholarship informing learning and assessment has been clearly embedded.

74 Teaching staff blend teaching, interactive and student-led teaching processes to accommodate different styles of learning and to ensure practice and theory are addressed in an integrated approach. The teaching staff understand that students need to develop their practical application to build the physical ability to carry out the work. They also recognise that students have diverse needs and work hard to understand these. This is central to SCC's determination to provide students with different options for undertaking assessments to promote accessibility and inclusion. Staff offer a variety of approaches to assessment to support positive learning. For example; practical skills assessment and OSCEs (including competency assessments and quantitative clinical requirements), written assignment (essay, critique of peer-reviewed paper, analysis of data set, case report, ethical case study, group project), reflective portfolio (including the Clinical Practice Portfolio), dissertation (including literature review, research proposal and ethics application) and oral presentations. The sense of a dialogue between staff and students about the form and direction of learning and teaching is very strong.

75 SCC has undertaken to introduce a second chiropractor into selected practical classes to ensure closer monitoring and correction of students. This means that students have greater access to feedback in class, supporting them to be more comfortable and confident in their practical work. Such bespoke support for individual students is a strength of the provision and students appreciate the ability to work with two tutors and receive two sets of feedback. Students value the nuance of different perspectives.

76 Students are overwhelmingly positive about the experience of studying at SCC and express their 'great satisfaction' with the quality of teaching and learning, describing all their lecturers as highly knowledgeable, engaging, and supportive. Being SCC's first students, the current cohort benefits from small cohort sizes that allow for a very personalised approach to learning. They note that as SCC grows, it aims to keep this approach. Staff work hard to create variety and inclusivity in assessment to enable equality of opportunity and are very clear about how they listen to and respond to students wherever possible. The students are very satisfied with the quality of teaching and the inclusive nature of assessment.

77 Module descriptors map GCC requirements to the learning outcomes required by BNU. They also indicate how the programme develops research skills and competencies progressively, therefore leading to the final master's year that is a key feature of an integrated master's programme. Module Schemes mirror much of the Module Descriptors' content but link this to assessment information and a scheme of work. Students have access to the Schemes and can access all programme documentation on the VLE is accessible and clear.

78 BNU's oversight of assessment throughout the revalidation process indicates that it has provided a framework to ensure SCC maintains a consistent approach to assessment. The assessment schemes demonstrate the progressive nature of the teaching on the programme. Assignment Briefs provide further information about assessment, giving clear instruction about what each task involves and how the work is graded using a detailed rubric system linked to modular learning outcomes. The collective impact of these documents ensures that students understand what they are taught, how they are taught, how their learning is measured and how it is assessed. Students consider the materials provided online as very supportive and informative. Feedback reports utilise the BNU format, agreed with the University, and students confirm that they receive feedback against each criterion with detailed text provided in a timely manner. Programme documentation demonstrates the alignment of teaching, learning and assessment, enabling students to demonstrate their achievements, reflect on and reinforce their prior learning, skills and knowledge to fulfil their potential.

79 Although in the early stage of delivery, clinical practice portfolios document the level of support SCC provides to students. It helps students to map the development of their clinical skills and articulate that progression through supervisory mentoring and personal reflection. This process is also critical to preparing students for transition into employment. Students and clinical placement providers both value the quality of the documentation supporting placements. The Clinical Practice Portfolios and the planned clinical practice opportunities represent a carefully planned way of preparing students for employment.

80 SCC's Academic Integrity Policy underpins the assessment process and is referenced in the Assignment Briefs. The policy reflects BNU requirements which in turn align with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's definitions and expectations. Staff signpost the policy during induction presentations and the policy is on SCC's VLE. Students confirm they can access information about academic integrity and the support the staff offer about things such as referencing. Students also receive guidance about academic integrity from BNU tutors during induction, indicating that as a partner, SCC offers ongoing advice and guidance about academic integrity, ensuring that students and staff understand what is expected of them.

81 With only two of the four years of the programme currently in operation, SCC has so

far only dealt with the transition into the programme and from the first to the second year of delivery, it cannot therefore comment on transition beyond those points. However, for new students, SCC ensures that seminar sessions mix groups so that those with differing educational backgrounds and experiences can work together, ensuring group cohesion. All students can request individual tutorials to discuss the transition to higher education, and they can submit drafts of written papers if they require support for written work. For the transition between first and second year, Module Leaders use regular group and individual tutorials to provide support to address the increased demands of the programme. With professional practice required by the GCC, staff manage the shift from students observing practitioners in the first three semesters to implementing previously assessed practical skills in real-world clinical situation sessions from semester 4 onwards. This is addressed through the delivery of essential skills as a part of the first five semesters of the programme. There is also more guidance and information in the Placement Handbook. Collectively these approaches indicate a responsible and considered approach to supporting students throughout their learning journey by supporting effective transition between academic levels, further study, and employment.

82 SCC articulates its arrangements for induction, personal tutoring and supporting students with neurodiversity in its Student Support and Engagement Policy. This details how SCC provides support from application throughout study and for a range of needs from neurodiversity to health and well-being. While the Director of Quality Assurance oversees the student support policy, the Programme Leader oversees the delivery of support. Students are clear that the level of support they receive is fit for purpose. They cite examples like being able to talk to staff to seek advice, through to SCC supporting students to acquire a statement about any learning needs.

83 Faculty qualifications are academically sound with 50% of staff holding a teaching qualification or HEA fellowship. SCC is keen to identify those staff who require support to gain a recognised teaching qualification so it can plan how it can help staff progress to that stage. Staff involved in facilitating learning are appropriately qualified and SCC has clear plans to support staff to enhance their teaching practice.

84 SCC observes the BNU Guidance on Artificial Intelligence (AI) indicating how BNU supports, guides, and updates staff and students on technological developments. The policy is available on SCC's VLE. Staff are clear that in terms of practice, students must have the knowledge in place to carry out the work. Where there is a danger of AI being used, largely in written or theoretical work, the staff will ask students to demonstrate knowledge practically, so the focus is on testing the application knowledge not just the ability to state knowledge. The College, with the support of BNU, has established an approach to AI and broadcast this information through induction, through continued practice, and on the VLE. The information is clearly communicated to staff and students.

85 Overall, the review team concluded that through the blend of research, professional practice, and sound academic tuition, students at SCC have access to a high-quality learning experience. That experience mirrors the holistic nature of the single programme subject matter, so is inclusive and clearly focused on professional outcomes. The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust therefore **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Principle 12: Operating concerns, complaints and appeals processes

Providers operate processes for complaints and appeals that are robust, fair, transparent and accessible, and clearly articulated to staff and students. Policies and processes for concerns, complaints and appeals are regularly reviewed and the outcomes are used to support the enhancement of provision and the student experience.

Findings

86 SCC has a student complaints policy and procedure which is made available in the programme handbook and on SCC's website and VLE. Attention is drawn to the policy during the year one induction to ensure it is transparent. The policy outlines the scope and definition of the complaints procedure, including highlighting the difference between a complaint and an appeal. The complaints procedure covers three stages, of which SCC is responsible for the first (early resolution) and second (formal complaints). SCC's validating partner, BNU, is responsible for third stage (review). The relevant sections of BNU's policies are signposted within SCC's own complaints policy, which is available to students through the VLE. The policy outlines clear and fair timelines for each stage of the complaints process.

87 SCC's academic appeals policy and procedure is also made available to students in the programme handbook and on SCC's website and VLE. The academic appeals process comprises of three stages, of which SCC has responsibility for the first (early resolution). The second (formal academic appeal) and third (review) stages are dealt with by SCC's validating partner, BNU. Signposting to the relevant BNU policies on academic appeals is provided to students, and these policies can be accessed through SCC's VLE.

88 SCC reports on academic appeals and student complaints on an annual basis to the Board of Trustees. However, at the point of this review, SCC had not received any formal academic appeals or student complaints and therefore the team was unable to assess the robustness of the two processes and opportunities for enhancements based on their outcomes. Students who met the review team recalled being made aware of these policies during their induction. Both the academic appeals and student complaints policies are reviewed on a biennial basis with the version changes and date of next review included as part of the policy documentation.

89 The College has a separate policy for prospective students who wish to file a complaint or appeal, which is outlined in the Colleges' admissions policy and procedures document.

90 Overall, the review team concluded that transparent policies and procedures are in place for student complaints and appeals. These policies are available to students through the programme handbook, SCC website and the VLE. At the time of the review, SCC had received no formal academic appeals or complaints, and therefore, the review team was unable to explore the effectiveness of the procedures in place; however, the policies and procedures as set out are likely to provide an effective framework for managing concerns, complaints, and appeals. The Scotland College of Chiropractic Charitable Trust therefore **is aligned** with the Sector-Agreed Principle.

Enhancement initiatives

Commentary on institutional approach to enhancement

91 As SCC is in an early stage of its development the opportunities for identifying instances of sustainable systemic enhancements are limited. Nevertheless, SCC clearly identifies its responsibility regarding enhancement in its Quality Guide. It states that “responsibility for ... continuously evaluating and enhancing the student experience is shared among academic and professional services staff, students and other stakeholders, working in partnership.”

92 In the two years since operating SCC has demonstrated that the voice of students has been integral to these initial stages of development. SCC’s small size has provided opportunities for staff to work extremely closely with learners in order to understand their experiences of teaching and learning, how this journey is developing for each individual, and the deliberate steps that can be taken to improve these experiences with the intention of ensuring that the learning experience is as positive, purposeful and supportive as possible.

93 The Board of Trustees has strategic oversight of enhancement activity, and the Senior Management Team have operational responsibility for the daily management, with the Director of Quality Assurance having direct responsibility. The Programme Committee is the primary committee with responsibility for quality assurance of the programme and, by extension, for identifying opportunities for enhancement. It does this through consideration of student feedback in the form of module and programme evaluations and through direct feedback provided by student representatives. A standing item on the Programme Committee’s agenda, is ‘Student Matters’ which is how earlier improvements and enhancements are discussed and reviewed. For example, student feedback in November 2024 was very positive about the changes suggested by the students at the May 2024 Programme Committee in relation to the shape of the Semester 2 academic calendar from 2024-25 onwards. Other stakeholders positively contribute to enhancing the programme including teaching staff and clinical placement providers. (See Sector-Agreed Principle 4)

94 Examples of enhancement so far introduced include the introduction of a second chiropractor into practical classes to provide closer monitoring and correction of students’ adjusting skills. Students have found this to be a helpful approach that enables them to understand practice from differing perspectives. The commitment to embracing research activity and developing a research culture from the early stages of institutional development is enhancing the student learning experience (see paragraphs 72 and 73). Student attendance at a range of chiropractic conferences of national and international standing have been facilitated and students have valued the connections and ideas that these events have opened up for them.

QAA2984 - R14843 - August 25

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