

**EUROPEAN COUNCIL ON CHIROPRACTIC EDUCATION  
QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE**

**EVALUATION TEAM REPORT**

**TÍTULO SUPERIOR EN QUIROPRÁCTICA  
MÁSTER PROPIO EN QUIROPRÁCTICA**

**MADRID COLLEGE OF CHIROPRACTIC  
REAL CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO MARIA CRISTINA (RCU)  
SPAIN**

**23-25 OCTOBER 2023**

## **1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Madrid College of Chiropractic (MCC) is one of three departments in the Real Centro Universitario Maria Cristina (RCU) in El Escorial, Spain, run by the Augustinian Order. It was first founded in 2005, changed its name to MCC in 2012 and granted full accreditation by the ECCE in 2012 having previously held Candidate for Accreditation status.
- 1.2 The chiropractic programme consists of a first certification of four years leading to Título Superior en Quiropráctica followed by a one year integrated masters leading to Máster Propio en Quiropráctica.
- 1.3 MCC submitted its Self-Study Report (SSR) for reaccreditation with the ECCE in July 2023. The QAAC reviewed the documents at its meeting on 23 July 2023 and on this basis decided that an evaluation visit could and should proceed.
- 1.4 A three-day evaluation visit took place between 23 – 25 October 2023. The site visit provided further documentary and oral evidence in addition to the previously submitted documents. MCC was given feedback at the end of the visit and informed verbally of the commendations and recommendations regarding its provision of chiropractic education and training.
- 1.5 This document is the evaluation report (henceforth referred to as the Report) written by the evaluation team based on evidence provided by MCC both before and during the on-site visit. The Report was sent in draft format to MCC for factual verification on (10 November 2023) and the final Report was submitted to QAAC on (16 November 2023)
- 1.6 The chair of the QAAC evaluation team invited MCC to send representatives to the QAAC meeting on (24 November 2023) where the Report was discussed and a decision made on the reaccreditation of MCC, Real Centro Universitario.
- 1.7 Members of the Evaluation Team extend their thanks to the Real Centro Universitario and to Madrid College of Chiropractic, their teaching staff, students and support staff for the courtesy and hospitality shown to them during the evaluation visit and for facilitating an open and transparent event.
- 1.8 This Report addresses the compliance of MCC, Real Centro Universitario Maria Cristina with each of the ECCE Standards in the provision of chiropractic education and training. The outcomes of the Report are as follows:

### **1.9 Commendations:**

- Students are appreciative of the quality and high professional standing of the teaching staff.
- The diversity of professions within the teaching team providing expert teaching during the course.
- We commend the establishment of the first student union of this programme. This is enhancing the student experience, and there are plans to expand activities.
- The integration of interdisciplinary healthcare professionals within the clinic prepares students for professional practice.
- Despite the drastic changes within the college the last 2 years, the new programme management has delivered changes that will benefit the programme on a long-term basis.

### **1.10 Recommendations**

- We recommend that the college should develop relationships with other ECCE accredited institutions to implement external moderation to enhance the quality assurance of the programme.

- We recommend that the University ensures that highly skilled academic staff are recruited and retained with appropriate remuneration.
- The College should look for opportunities to use the latest technology within teaching.
- We recommend that MCC further develop relationships with the local health professional sector, in particular medical doctors and medical centres nearby.
- We recommend the College develops a long-term strategic plan, to sustain the livelihood of the programme.
- We recommend widening the involvement of external stakeholders including patient groups and strengthening professional ties with other European scholarly institutions and the ECU.
- We recommend that staff support and development is formalised with engagement from the University to help teaching staff with their professional development.
- The college should increase the number of full-time staff to spread the workload among the current staff.
- We recommended that treatment and teaching equipment is regularly maintained.  
We recommend raising local awareness of the College and Chiropractic in general with a promotional programme in surrounding villages and within the region.

#### **1.11 Concerns:**

**None**

## 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Between 2005 and 2008 Real Centro Universitario Maria Cristina, El Escorial, Spain sought to establish a first award chiropractic programme. The drive came from the Spanish Chiropractic Association (AEQ). RCU developed a programme and obtained the support of the Augustinian Order's province for the necessary building modifications to enable a chiropractic course to be taught. The first students entered the programme in 2007. In 2008 the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee (QAAC) considered the SSR submitted by RCU for Candidate (for Accredited Status). The QAAC of the ECCE unanimously agreed to grant RCU Candidate (for Accredited Status) for a period of five years.
- 2.2 In April 2015 RCU applied for and was granted full accredited status for a period of three years.
- 2.3 In 2018 RCU applied for and was granted full accredited status for a further period of five years.
- 2.4 QAAC received a request for reaccreditation in June 2023. QAAC agreed that an Evaluation Team be sent to RCU to verify the submitted SSR and report back.
- 2.5 The Evaluation Team nominated by the ECCE Executive are as follows:

Dr. Grahame Pope (Chair)	University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK
Tharsan Sellathurai (Secretary)	Chiropractor, Private Practice, The Hague, The Netherlands
Esmarie Agenbag	Chiropractor, Private Practice, South Africa
Guillaume Pablo	Chiropractor, Private Practice, Galicia, Spain

- 2.6 All members of the team were disclosed to the College prior to the visit and no objection to any member was received. All members of the Team signed confidentiality and conflict of interest statements before the on-site visit. No conflict of interest by any members was declared. The members of the team received the SSR two months prior to the visit and were allocated specific sections of the report as their areas of responsibility.
- 2.7 The on-site visit was scheduled between 22 and 25 October 2023 (inclusive) and a draft timetable was sent to The College in October 2023, and the final schedule agreed with The College on 20 October 2023. A copy of the schedule is appended to this Report (Appendix 1).
- 2.8 The purpose of the Evaluation Visit was to assess the compliance of the institution with the ECCE Standards in Chiropractic Education and Training (hereafter referred to as the ECCE Standards, or Standards). An examination was made of the SSR and its supporting documents, interviews and oral evidence and other documentary evidence consulted during the on-site visit.
- 2.9 An Evaluation Report produced by the Team was submitted to the College for the correction of factual errors, and thereafter to the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee (QAAC) for a decision on the full accreditation of The College. The Report was compiled on an on-going basis during the visit, and the final day 25 October was set aside to complete the draft report and feedback orally to the institution.
- 2.10 The Report includes an Executive Summary, a description of The College and the findings of the Team regarding compliance of The College with the ECCE Standards. The Report ends with the Conclusions of the Team and any Commendations, Recommendations and/or Concerns the Team wishes to draw to the attention of the QAAC. The Evaluation Report was based on the ENQA Guidelines for external reviews of quality assurance agencies in the European Higher Education Area ([www.enqa.eu](http://www.enqa.eu)).

- 2.11 The draft report was finalised by the Chair and Secretary of the team and sent to team members for comments. The final draft report was sent to The College for factual verification on 10 November 2023. The response was received from RCU on 15 November 2023. The Chair and Secretary finalised the report and this was submitted to the Chair QAAC on 16 November 2023. The Chair of the Evaluation Team presented the Report to QAAC members on 24 November 2023 in London.
- 2.12 Members of the Team were very well hosted by The College, afforded every courtesy and had full access to documentation and to staff and students. Members of the Team and the ECCE extend their thanks and appreciation to The College.

### 3 RCU Maria Cristina, Madrid College of Chiropractic

- 3.1 RCU Maria Cristina has been accredited by the ECCE since 2012. It is a private University Centre managed by the Augustinian Order.
- 3.2 Chiropractic is one of three departments in the University; Law, Business Studies and Chiropractic. In 2014 the department retitled itself Madrid College of Chiropractic (MCC). Where this report refers to MCC it will state 'The College' and where it refers to the University it will state 'RCU'.
- 3.3 Real Centro Universitario's department', Madrid College of Chiropractic (MCC) is applying for reaccreditation of its Titulo Superior en Quiropractica and Master Propio en Quiropractica.
- 3.4 The colour coded system outlined below was used by the evaluation team to indicate the level of compliance with each standard:

Fully compliant/no risk  
(On track and good.)

Green

Substantially compliant/low risk.  
(Broadly on track with some areas which need to be addressed.)

Light Green

Partially compliant/medium risk.  
(Some significant areas which could be detrimental if not addressed.)

Yellow

Does not comply/high risk.  
(Serious concerns in this area; high risk in organisation's overall performance.)

Red

## 4 ECCE STANDARDS COMPLIANCE

### 4.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

#### 4.1.1 Statement of Aims and Objectives

**The institution/programme must define the overall aims and objectives of the first qualification chiropractic programme and make them known to its stakeholders. The statements must describe the aims and objectives resulting in a chiropractor that is competent and safe to enter practice as a primary contact practitioner in the current healthcare environment, with the appropriate foundation for postgraduate education and training, and a commitment to, and capacity for, life-long learning.**

##### 4.1.1a Description

The aims and objectives of the programme are centred about three pillars: teaching and learning, research and service. The aims and objectives in current use include the World Health Organisation's definition of chiropractic and is centred on promoting chiropractic education producing healthcare professionals that understand the complexity of today's world and are able to apply their knowledge to this reality. Since 2015, there is the Graduate Education Programme (GEP) operated under the auspices of the Spanish Chiropractic Association (AEQ) that aims to ensure that the learning process does not stop upon graduation but is rather a lifelong process. There is some engagement with a range of stakeholders to ensure that the aims and objectives remain current and appropriate to the profession.

##### 4.1.1b Analysis

The aims and objectives of the programme enables The College to produce competent and safe chiropractors upon graduation. There are high class teaching and clinical facilities, high quality of staff with a range of expertise to enable the College to meet this need. Comparing to the previous visits the quality and diversity of teaching staff has improved. There are positive signs of the promotion of life-long learning through the GEP and other continuing education initiatives.

##### 4.1.1c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 1.1



#### 4.1.2 Participation in formulation of aims and objectives

**The overall aims and objectives of the chiropractic programme must be defined by its principal stakeholders.**

##### 4.1.2a Description

The principal aims and objectives of the current chiropractic programme were developed by the administration of The College, with the primary stakeholders being the chiropractic community in Spain represented by the (AEQ), the Community of the Augustinian Order and originally, with the help of a team of educators from the Anglo European College of Chiropractic (AECC). Graduating students over a five-year timespan have given feedback on some of the original aims and objectives and as a consequence some these were revised in 2017. In addition, chiropractors in the community offer their feedback on the competencies required for professional practice. It should be noted that currently the chiropractic profession is not officially regulated and recognized by the Ministry of

Education and Sciences in Spain.

#### 4.1.2b Analysis

There was good evidence that the aims and objectives of The College chiropractic programme have been defined by the principal stakeholders. A healthy relationship between the MCC and its stakeholders have been clouded comparing the previous visit. It has been noticed during this visit that since the change of management has aimed to increase the contact and relationships with the stakeholders of the chiropractic programme. The current legal status of the chiropractic profession does not improve the situation for the management to include a wider range of stakeholders.

#### 4.1.2c Conclusion

The College substantially complies with Standard 1.2



#### 4.1.3 Academic autonomy

**The institution/programme must have sufficient autonomy to design and develop the curriculum.**

##### 4.1.3a Description

RCU Maria Cristina is a private University Centre managed by the Augustinian Order. Strategic decisions for RCU are made by the Patronate, the administrative committee of the Augustinian Order headed by the Rector. The College is one of three departments in RCU. Academic issues are overseen by the Directive Council composed of the heads of the three departments which reports to the Patronate. Within the College there are three standing committees comprising the Quality Assurance Committee, the Curriculum Committee and the Research Ethics Committee; collectively with the senior staff team they have autonomy to design and develop the curriculum. They report on the programme's progress and give advice to the Directive Council, currently responsible for academic autonomy of the programme.

##### 4.1.3b Analysis

The College are fully autonomous in the design of their own curricula which is validated by the RCU. The degrees issued by The College: 'Titulo Superior en Quiropractica' and 'Master Propio en Quiropractica' are not regulated by the state and there remains no sign that they will be in the near future. The College is exploring the possibility of regaining recognition and thus regulation from other bodies within Europe. However, this does not affect the autonomy of The College who exercise full control in designing and developing their own curricula.

##### 4.1.3c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 1.3.



#### 4.1.4 Educational outcome

**The institution/programme must define the competencies (exit outcomes) that students will exhibit on graduation in relation to their subsequent training and future roles in the profession and the wider healthcare system.**

##### 4.1.4a Description

The College has a clearly articulated set of modules descriptors and other programme documentation which identify the learning outcomes and set out their model of the interrelationship between knowledge, ability, skills and competency. There is a clear educational approach to specifying educational outcomes. Twenty-three general competencies and twenty-one specific competencies are set out and are available online to prospective students. Competencies are assessed in a final examination prior to graduation.

##### 4.1.4b Analysis

The forty-four competencies representing the educational outcomes of the programmes are well thought out and thorough. Students showed a clear understanding of what they are expected to achieve and the skills they are expected to attain.

##### 4.1.4 c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 1.4.



## 4.2 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

### 4.2.1 Curriculum model and educational methods

**The institution/programme must define a curriculum model and educational (teaching and learning) methods consistent with the objectives of the curriculum. The curriculum and educational methods must ensure the students have responsibility for their learning, and prepare them for lifelong, self-directed learning throughout professional life.**

#### 4.2.1a Description

The College adopts a 4+1 year curriculum delivery as determined by government requirement. Over the five-year programme the curriculum is delivered in a spiral progressive format, rather than a linear format. This has its advantages and its weaknesses, but that is not to say it could not work and even work well and could be extended into life-long learning. The College has demonstrated that the curriculum gives students responsibility for their own learning and prepares them for lifelong learning.

#### 4.2.1b Analysis

Students appreciate the benefits of the spiral based model. This works effectively and students appreciate the reinforcement which this educational method gives to the learning outcomes. Furthermore, the spiral progressive format lends itself directly to lifelong learning as the student is continually returning to reinforce areas of learning while simultaneously deepening their knowledge.



It also enables the student to take more responsibility for their learning and to become more autonomous and self-directed learners.

#### 4.2.1c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 2.1



#### 4.2.2 The Scientific Method

**The institution/programme must teach the scientific method, other forms of research inquiry and evidence-based practice, including analytical and critical thinking. The curriculum must include elements for training students in scientific thinking and research methods.**

##### 4.2.2a Description

There is evidence that The College adheres closely to an evidence-based practice paradigm. The College introduces students to research from the beginning of their programme and incorporates this through all five teaching years. An annual Research Week show cases a range of poster presentations with a prize for the best poster. All students are encouraged to participate in the Research Week, either by showcasing their own presentations or as observers. Students from other chiropractic institutions are also invited to participate in the poster competition which enables students to become acquainted with the research being conducted in other areas and inspires students in the earlier years of the programme to prepare effectively for the time when they conduct their own research.

##### 4.2.2b Analysis

The scientific method in relation to research is present in all years and students are required to provide scientific references for all their work. Also, it has been observed that the current students are stimulated by the experienced teaching staff to have a mindset that is in line with the Scientific method. In order to continue progress in the long term, the College will need to recruit and retain highly skilled academic staff with appropriate levels of financial remuneration.

##### 4.2.2c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 2.2



#### 4.2.3 Biomedical Sciences

**The institution/programme must identify and include in the curriculum those contributions of the basic biomedical sciences that enable a knowledge and understanding of the basic sciences applicable to the practice of chiropractic.**

##### 4.2.3a Description

Biomedical sciences are taught in a spiral format to allow the integration of biochemistry, anatomy, neuroanatomy, physiology, histopathology, molecular biology, pharmacology and toxicology from years 1 through to 4 along with a course in clinical problem solving.

#### 4.2.3b Analysis

It is evident that biomedical sciences are being taught within the curriculum to ensure an understanding of basic science. Students are presented with cases and problems, appropriate to their level of knowledge, within the clinical problem-solving courses which amalgamate all biomedical sciences and help bridge the gap between biomedical sciences and clinical sciences. The students reported that they are appreciative of the high quality and high professional standing of the teaching staff.

#### 4.2.3c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 2.3



#### 4.2.4 Behavioural and Social Sciences, Ethics and Jurisprudence

**The institution/programme must identify and include in the curriculum those contributions of the behavioural sciences, social sciences, ethics, scope of practice and legal requirements that enable effective communication, clinical decision-making and ethical practice.**

#### 4.2.4a Description

Behavioural and social sciences are included in the curriculum. Effective communication (oral and written communication) is taught in the transferrable skills course in year one of the chiropractic programme and used in a clinical setting with a patient by means a "clinical interview". Applied psychology is introduced in year two, providing the theoretical underpinnings to understanding human response to pain, disability, and chronicity. This course connects to a neuro-orthopaedics course dealing with behavioural therapy of pain and rehabilitation. Ethical practice, jurisprudence and areas of professional management are covered in the clinical year.

#### 4.2.4b Analysis

Relevant topics in the areas of behavioural and social sciences as well as ethics and jurisprudence are well addressed. The AEQ, (the national regulatory body), is used to providing information for graduating students on the legal and professional aspects of practicing chiropractic in Spain through a teacher member of the AEQ council and both AEQ and MCC are looking to continue the transmission of the information with current staff.

#### 4.2.4c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 2.4



#### 4.2.5 Clinical Sciences and Skills

**The institution/programme must identify and include in the curriculum those contributions of the clinical sciences that ensure students have acquired sufficient clinical knowledge and skills to apply to chiropractic practice in a primary contact setting.**

##### 4.2.5a Description

Clinical science is taught through courses in semiology and propaedeutic science in years 1 to 4 with a progressive transition from basic science to clinical science. At each level students begin to piece together the knowledge obtained from anatomy, physiology, histology and pathology to gain a better clinical picture and learn how to assess patients. Chiropractic methods and techniques address the most common adjustive and manipulative techniques and procedures used by the chiropractic professionals. Students start by learning the assessment methods from a chiropractic perspective where biomechanics of the spine and other articulations are assessed. Students then go on to learn the manual high-velocity-low-amplitude techniques along with low force, instrument assisted and myofascial techniques.

##### 4.2.5b Analysis

It is clear that students are taught at an excellent level which ensures they have the necessary knowledge to enter the clinic and then onto professional practice. The quality of the resources within the clinic allows the students to refine their skills ready for professional practice.

##### 4.2.5c Conclusion

The College fully complies with standard 2.5



#### 4.2.6 Chiropractic

**The institution/programme must foster the ability to participate in the scientific development of chiropractic.**

##### 4.2.6a Description

History of chiropractic and philosophy of chiropractic are taught in the first two years of the programme, leading to the development of a sense of identity, as well as the development of reflective judgement. Students participate in the scientific development of chiropractic avoiding dogmatic approaches to professional practice gaining confidence and critical judgment skills to enable them to practice in an ethical and professional way. Terminology used in the clinic avoids confusing terms for those outside the profession. Documentation in the clinic has also improved. Differential diagnosis and the use of validating articles in forming a working diagnosis reinforces an ethical and evidence-based approach.

##### 4.2.6b Analysis

The team finds that the curriculum includes the relevant aspects of chiropractic history and philosophy. The critical appraisal of scientific evidence and exposure to the scientific method starting in year 1 allows the students to acquire the necessary knowledge and enthusiasm to participate in the scientific development of chiropractic. The students are aware that keeping up to date with the evolving knowledge of chiropractic and of other healthcare fields is important to their professional development.

#### 4.2.6c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 2.6.



#### 4.2.7 Clinical Training

**The institution/programme must identify and include a period of supervised clinical training to ensure the clinical knowledge and skills, communication skills and ethical appreciation accrued by the student can be applied in practice, and so enable the student to assume appropriate clinical responsibility upon graduation.**

**Every student must have early patient contact leading to participation in patient care.**

#### 4.2.7a Description

Since the last evaluation the RCU-MCC had to put on hold its collaboration with sports associations, community groups and institutions, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They also lost the of the Head of Studies. The tutor system now in place allows a monthly meeting with the master year students. These meetings review their progression in clinic and audit difficult cases. The students get written feedback for the first 200 treatments based on 6 competencies from the clinic tutor (supervisor). This evaluation is used as a progression tool. During the transition between cohorts, the new cohort must follow the patients for 3-4 treatments. This process improves the hand-over and guarantees more consistency in the treatment.

The students have early patient contact leading to participation in patient care. During their clinical year, The College expects students to see 40 new patients and carry out 400 follow up treatments over this time. The College uses a digital patient file in the clinic to help students to structure their anamnesis, physical examination, and management of the patient. The students must assume appropriate clinical responsibility, keep the patient file up to date, complement with scientific references (evidence-based practice) contributing to patient safety. Clinical training ends with an exit examination (OSCE) demonstrating their physical examination and patient management competencies.

#### 4.2.7b Analysis

A clinic observation programme is in place providing an early opportunity for students to observe clinical procedures. There is close supervision of the students in the clinic, including a formative written feedback mechanism to monitor the progression. The system allows interns to becoming used to collaborating with healthcare professionals in an interdisciplinary setting. Students are learning a wide variety of active interventions to enhance the care provided. At times there is a lack of footfall through the clinic which can impacting on students achieving their patients numbers. The offer of free spinal screenings in the community might create awareness of the chiropractic clinic and lead to an increase in footfall.

#### 4.2.7c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 2.7.



#### 4.2.8 Curriculum Structure, Composition and Duration

**The institution/programme must describe the content, duration and sequencing of courses that guide both staff and students on the learning outcomes expected at each stage of the programme, and the level of integration between the basic sciences and clinical sciences.**

##### 4.2.8a Description

The College has developed a five-year (4 plus 1) programme comprising two integrated programmes: the first, a 4 year programme, leading to the first certification in chiropractic and the second being a one-year Master of Chiropractic. Though the Spanish government does not at present regulate chiropractic education, this format follows the guidelines of the Spanish educational system. The curriculum is based on the concept of a spiral curriculum revisiting and developing material earlier in the programme. . A positive feature of the chiropractic programme is the organisation of the courses facilitate the understanding of the multi-level organization of a pathological process.

##### 4.2.8b Analysis

There have been no major changes in the overall structure and composition of the programme. There is good a balance between direct contact time and self-directed learning time. All courses have explicit learning outcomes. The proportion of self-directed learning rises as the student progresses through the programme and there is a good balance between clinical and basic sciences. The spiral based teaching model is unified through problem-based learning. The relationship between programme material and future chiropractic practice is well demonstrated.

##### 4.2.8c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 2.8



#### 4.2.9 Programme management

**A curriculum committee (or equivalent (s)) must be given the resources, responsibility, authority and capacity to plan, implement and review the curriculum to achieve the aims and objectives of the chiropractic programme.**

##### 4.2.9a Description

The programme is entirely managed by The College on behalf of RCU. The curriculum is reviewed by three separate groups. At the first level the curriculum delivery is reviewed by the Academic Council which is composed of the faculty staff and student representatives who consider student feedback and recommend steps for improvement. The Quality Assurance Committee reviews student and other course data twice per year and reviews the curriculum in the light of its findings. The senior staff team have the final say in changes to the curriculum. At the time of the last report The College planned that the processes of curriculum review would be given formal status with the establishment of a Curriculum Committee, but this approach was never fully implemented. There is a limited role for some stakeholders to influence the curriculum.

##### 4.2.9b Analysis

Many of The College's processes are informal and need to be made formal. This includes also a long-term strategic plan to maintain stability within the programme. The new programme management is doing an excellent job within the current situation at the College. Furthermore, Annual programme monitoring occurs in a formal way comparing the previous visit, which considers student feedback and student data but which would be better captured formally in an annual monitoring report for each programme. The development of a team action plan arising out of the annual monitoring report would further help to formalize programme management and place it on a better footing. Two external examiners were appointed for this year only which is a good and necessary step forward but this needs to be made more permanent with a longer appointment period. Furthermore, there is a need to show that the external examiner reports feed into the programme quality processes and are acted upon in an auditable way. It is recommended to recruit an external examiner who is also familiar with the ECCE guidelines, preferably who is experienced in working with other European institutions.

#### 4.2.9c Conclusion

The College substantially complies with Standard 2.9



#### 4.2.10 Linkage with subsequent stages of education and training, chiropractic practice and the health care system

**Operational linkage must be assured between the first qualification programme and the subsequent stage of training or practice that the student will enter after graduation. The curriculum must reflect the environment in which graduates will be expected to work and be responsive to feedback from graduates, the profession and the community.**

##### 4.2.10a Description

The clinical training portion of the curriculum is designed in a manner that prepares the students for practice after graduation. In the first certification programme, members of the national association (AEQ) share their experience on how they practise, the challenges in getting started and the current professional standing within the healthcare in Spain.

##### 4.2.10b Analysis

Linkage to subsequent stages of chiropractic education and training is given as appropriately in a health care system where there is no legal basis for the chiropractic profession. The AEQ CPD activities available for fourth and fifth year students are used to foster collaboration with The College. The Graduate Education Programme offered by AEQ has been implemented in 2016. Graduates intending to practice in Spain have to undergo the 1-year programme before becoming a full member. AEQ membership is not mandatory. An official formal feedback mechanism from graduates and the profession has still to be put in place. Furthermore, it is noticed that the AEQ has excellent relationship with students during the different stages of education.

##### 4.2.10c Conclusion

The College fully complies with standard 2.10.



### 4.3 ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS

#### 4.3.1 Assessment methods

**The chiropractic institution/programme must define and document the methods used for assessment, including the criteria for progression and appeals procedures. Assessment methods must be regularly evaluated, and new assessment methods developed as appropriate.**

##### 4.3.1a Description

The College uses a variety of assessment methods during the programme including written examinations, oral presentations poster presentations, participation in classroom activities, and object-structured competency examinations. Examination regulations are included in the student handbook which specifies provision for students with special needs and also the appeal process. The rules for progression and appeal are understood by the students. Mitigating circumstances are also considered. Since the last evaluation, the programme appointed two external examiners for five years. The Quality Assurance Committee appointed a faculty member to act as an internal verifier and sessions of moderation were implemented, where faculty members would gather to verify examinations and assessment protocols for subjects in which they were not involved.

##### 4.3.1b Analysis

Since the previous evaluation, the programme has tried to implement a Quality Assurance system, however following the re-staffing of the programme, there is still work to be done to improve the Quality Assurance process. Currently, there is an internal moderation process to ensure accuracy and level of appropriateness. Assessments are not checked by the external examiner before being issued to students and the marking of assignments and examinations should be internally and externally checked. The team recommends that MCC consider implementing external moderation from other ECCE accredited institutions, within the quality assurance of the programme.

##### 4.3.1c Conclusion

The College substantially complies with Standard 3.1



#### 4.3.2 Relation between assessment and learning

**The assessment principles, methods and practices must be appropriate to the learning outcomes and the educational aims and objectives, and promote appropriate learning practices.**

##### 4.3.2a Description

Assessment is structured around the learning outcomes, which is supplied to the students at the beginning of each module. The unit descriptor provides a detailed summary of the assessment requirements for each unit. In addressing the lack of pedagogical knowledge, the RCU is providing staff with a continuing teacher training programme, which includes pedagogical sessions yearly. Furthermore, the MCC has access to a qualified teaching consulting when they face pedagogical issues.

##### 4.3.2b Analysis

The assessment principles, methods, and practices are appropriate to the learning outcomes and the structure of assessments facilitates higher-level learning. Staff members exhibit broad knowledge of the content they are teaching, and students find this beneficial and commend this, but there is still limited pedagogical knowledge which could be improved. The MCC is planning on providing staff with further knowledge and education on this matter.

#### 4.3.2c Conclusion

The College substantially complies with Standard 3.2



### 4.4 STUDENTS

#### 4.4.1 Admission policies and selection

**The institution/programme must have a clearly defined admission policy that is consistently applied, and that includes a clear statement on the rationale and process of selection of students.**

##### 4.4.1a Description

The admission policies of the chiropractic programme are clear and correspond with those laid down by the Ministry of Science and Education in Spain. They apply to students from EU and Non-EU countries, as well as those transferring from other chiropractic courses with previous credits, and those with previous degree-level qualifications. Provision is made to accommodate students with any form of disability. All applicants sit an entrance examination which includes a psychometric test and language proficiency. These outcomes feed into a formal interview with a psychologist. Information on the programme is provided both in printed and electronic formats.

##### 4.4.1b Analysis

A rigorous admissions system is in place at The College operated by the centre. The Spanish HE system for applications is followed, which provides the College the opportunity to have a thorough selection process, which is fair and consistent. These systems have been in place for several years and are working well. The use of psychological tests is beneficial in identifying students who are at risk. Additional help is given on admission to those students who enter the programme whose first language is not Spanish.

##### 4.4.1c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 4.1.



#### 4.4.2 Student intake

**The size of student intake must be defined and related to the capacity of the chiropractic institution/programme to provide adequate resources at all stages of the programme.**

##### 4.4.2a Description

The programme can recruit up to 30 students per annum including up to 5 applicants with advanced-



status entry and/or students from outside of Spain. Advanced status entry can be achieved if a candidate already has a degree in health science including students transferred from other accredited chiropractic programmes fulfilling the requirements to study at a Spanish university. Students from non-accredited institutions must enter the course in year 1. Many of the students are referred from the AEQ.

#### 4.4.2b Analysis

The cohorts are low compared to the capacity of 30 per cohort. A challenge for the institution is to convince potential students to pay for a non-regulated education. The sudden change in events, with the resignation of the Head of Chiropractic studies and the Programme Coordinator in 2022/2023 had led to a decrease in the number of students enrolled in the programme. They are working hard to achieve the current target number per cohort, by improved marketing and creating awareness of the programme in the community.

#### 4.4.2c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 4.2.



#### 4.4.3 Student support and counselling

**The institution/programme must offer appropriate student support, including induction of new students, counselling in terms of student progress and other academic matters, and personal and social needs of students.**

#### 4.4.3a Description

The new programme director has implemented a monthly “Ask Me Anything Meeting” (AMA) and operates an open-door policy to encourage students to provide feedback. Each class is assigned a tutor from the faculty staff to whom they can go with any problems or concerns. The tutor seeks resolution for the student and may report matters to the Executive or Academic Council. There is also a licensed psychologist available. If the student requires professional assistance, a referral is offered. As the RCU is a religious based university, the Augustinian Order also provides pastoral care on request.

#### 4.4.3b Analysis

The AMA meetings have been a great success and are appreciated by students. The teaching and administrative staff are committed to the students and are prepared to take the time to assist them wherever necessary. They are willing to stay behind after classes to support the students with any additional questions they have. Students report that the staff are very approachable, and they feel they can speak to them freely regarding their problems. No students reported the need for the psychologist but were aware of the referral route. Students in the final year praised the support of the clinic supervisors with the assistance of the workload in the final year.

#### 4.4.3c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 4.3.



#### 4.4.4 Student representation

**The institution/programme must support student representation and appropriate participation in the design, management and evaluation of the curriculum, and in other matters relevant to students.**

##### 4.4.4a Description

The MCC has started its first official student union, commencing at beginning of this academic year, and this functions alongside the Course Representatives. A student representative for the entire Programme and a treasurer work together to submit a budget request to fund student-run activities, events, clubs etc.

##### 4.4.4b Analysis

Every class has a representative who communicate directly with the faculty and course director on behalf of the class. Even though the institution is small, the students have formed a student body, that will be directed towards hosting seminars, social events and creating a platform for students to stand together. The school is considering re-opening its WCCS Chapter to allow for worldwide collaboration with chiropractic students.

##### 4.4.4c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 4.4.



#### 4.5 ACADEMIC and CLINICAL FACULTY (STAFF)

##### 4.5.1 Faculty (Staff) recruitment

**The institution/programme must have a faculty recruitment policy which outlines the type, responsibilities and balance of faculty required to deliver the curriculum adequately, including the balance between chiropractic and non-chiropractic faculty, and between full-time and part-time faculty.**

##### 4.5.1a Description

Recruitment of all staff is handled centrally by the Administration Department. There are robust polices in place that govern the necessary academic qualifications and professional requirements of teaching staff. There is a small full-time faculty of qualified chiropractors and other experienced healthcare professionals who deliver the curriculum. Much use is made of a large number of part-time staff for delivery of the non-clinical aspects of the programme and overseeing the clinical training (chiropractic, physical therapy, orthopaedics, radiology and neuroscience). Many of these tutors hold full-time positions at either Universidad Complutense de Madrid or Universidad Alcada de Henares with several possessing PhDs and Doctor of Medicine degrees.

##### 4.5.1b Analysis

The number of full-time faculty staff has increased in recent years. With relatively low levels of student recruitment the teaching staff numbers are sufficient to deliver the programme successfully. The team commends the programme management to have a diversity of experts within the staff. There is presently a good staff-student ratio. There is a heavy reliance on part-time staff working elsewhere to facilitate the programme. Most of these appear to be well integrated into the chiropractic programme and encouragingly have recently started to initiate research links with The College. Although there is sufficient teaching staff for present circumstances, the team recommends the College consider employing more full-time staff to better balance the current workload.

#### 4.5.1c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 5.1.



#### 4.5.2 Faculty Promotion and Development

**The institution must have a faculty policy that addresses processes for development and appraisal of academic staff, and ensures recognition of meritorious academic activities with appropriate emphasis on teaching and research.**

##### 4.5.2a Description

There is no formal appraisal system in place at RCU in any of the three faculties due to the provision being validated by Universidad Complutense de Madrid. However, The College has developed its own model to cover their own faculty appraisals. Recently the institution has started special development classes for current staff which is financially backed by the RCU.

##### 4.5.2b Analysis

Much progress has been made under this competency since the last accreditation visit in 2018. Due to the changes in teaching staff and programme management this had been neglected in the past. The current management has started new staff development classes, where teaching staff will gain knowledge on pedagogy and research skills. However the team was not able to see or to measure the outcomes of these classes.

##### 4.5.2c Conclusion

The College substantially complies with Standard 5.2.



#### 4.6 EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

##### 4.6.1 Physical facilities

**The institution/programme must have sufficient physical facilities for the faculty, staff and the student population to ensure that the curriculum can be delivered adequately, and library facilities available to faculty, staff and students that include access to computer-based reference systems, support staff and a reference collection adequate to meet teaching and research needs.**

#### 4.6.1a Description

The College uses a suite of teaching rooms for theoretical and practical skills teaching, situated in one building and adjacent to staff offices. The Clinic Facility is in an adjacent building, and comprises a waiting area/reception, treatment rooms (all with “ensuite” toilet/changing area), rehabilitation area, study/supervision areas. Whilst the teaching spaces and clinic at RCU are situated on the first floor, all are accessible by lifts or ramped access. At RCU students also have access to other facilities such as the library. All facilities are in proximity with the exception of the anatomy laboratories located off campus at the UCM in Madrid, and the chemistry and physiology laboratories located in the Monastery of El Escorial. The College is generally well equipped, although some of the treatment benches are needing some repair and regular maintenance. All classrooms have AV equipment and Wi-Fi access. All Offices also have Wi-Fi access. The two spacious techniques rooms contain a range of tables for practice purposes. The RCU library houses relevant texts and journals, in both hard format and electronic, and access to an appropriate range of bibliographic data bases for the chiropractic programme with library staff very supportive of the programme, students and staff.

#### 4.6.1b Analysis:

The buildings as well as rooms visited on site provide an appropriate academic environment for students and staff and are all equipped to ensure an adequate delivery of the curriculum. The physical facilities conform to local health and safety standards.

#### 4.6.1c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 6.1.



#### 4.6.2 Clinical training resources

**The institution/programme must ensure adequate clinical experience and the necessary resources, including sufficient patients with an appropriate case-mix, and sufficient clinical training facilities including sufficient equipment and treatment rooms.**

#### 4.6.2a Description

The College has three separate units for clinical training consisting of: a student clinic for year 4, a primary outpatient clinic and a chiropractic outreach (offsite) unit. The outpatient clinic has 13 new treatment rooms. There is one wide room for the physiotherapy unit.

#### 4.6.2b Analysis

It is recognized that having a clinic director who obtains the physiotherapy and chiropractic degree helps the students to increase their ability to co-manage certain patients better. Also, to improve the clinic efficiency, the institute invested in a new patient software programme that adheres to the current Spanish legislations. Students are exposed to sufficient modern clinical facilities.

#### 4.6.2c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 6.2.



#### 4.6.3 Information Technology

**The institution/programme must have sufficient IT facilities for faculty, staff and students to ensure the curriculum can be delivered adequately, and that IT is effectively used in the curriculum. Students must be able to use IT for self-learning, accessing information and managing patients.**

##### 4.6.3a Description

The use of information technology and e-learning resources are embedded within the delivery of the programme. The course is supported by through the Moodle online learning platform, and students are able to access module/course information, teaching notes etc. allowing enhanced self-directed study. Offices, teaching areas and the clinic appear well served with PC's and students using their own devices are well supported by the onsite IT staff. There is a Wi-Fi connection available throughout the campus. All online resources can be accessed on and off site.

##### 4.6.3b Analysis

Students and staff report that IT resources are more than sufficient for the delivery of the curriculum, and that IT support was readily available. Journal access meets their needs, and the library staff are very supportive. Students have access to a number of online bibliographic databases, and there are a range of online self-study tutorials should they require help out of office hours. The software programme used within the student clinic is satisfactory, and students find it straightforward to use. This is likely to be replaced in the near future. Staff and students were aware and compliant with good GDPR practice.

##### 4.6.3c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 6.3



#### 4.6.4 Educational expertise

**The institution must ensure the appropriate use of educational expertise in the design and development of the chiropractic curriculum and instructional (teaching and learning) and assessment methods.**

##### 4.6.4a Description

Although staff exhibit strong professional chiropractic experience, they have limited pedagogical knowledge. This means that educational principles are not as clearly understood or embedded in the programme as they need to be. Staff from other universities teaching on the programme have higher degrees and wider pedagogical training and enrich the College with their expertise and best practice which they can transfer from other higher education institutions.

##### 4.3.2b Analysis

Pedagogical improvements have been considered but this there is much to be done. Members of the core staff lack strong pedagogical experience and there is limited understanding of standard education procedures and quality processes. Also, within the university there are limited resources to

increase the educational expertise of the staff. It is recommended to develop staff support centres within the university to help the institution staff with their professional development.

#### 4.6.4c Conclusion:

The College substantially complies with Standard 6.4.



#### 4.6.5 Administrative and technical staff and management

**The administrative and technical staff of the institution/programme must be appropriate to support the implementation of the institution's undergraduate programme and other activities, and to ensure good management and deployment of its resources. The management must include a programme of quality assurance, and the management itself should submit itself to regular review.**

#### 4.6.5a Description

The RCU is overseen by the Augustinian Order which provides strong educational values, financial security, and supports the academic and clinical facilities. Many of the academic structures at RCU are common for the three faculties (Business Administration, Chiropractic and Law). The Rector, a priest in the Augustinian Order, leads the Directive Council along with the Directors of these three faculties. An Executive Team administrates The College and comprises: Director/Principal, Course Coordinator, Coordinator for Clinical Training and CQU Coordinator. The Director/Principal is responsible for all aspects of academic management, the Course Coordinator takes care of the organization of the academic programme, the Coordinator from Clinical Training oversees the clinical training and CQU Coordinator oversees all operations in the clinical training programme. The College has its own Academic Council to oversee all subcommittees including quality assurance together with the Quality Assurance Committee and is presided over by the Director/Principal. The Office of International and Professional Relations is connected to the RCU, organizing exchanges and internships. Further duties such as the finance officer, administrator, secretary/registrar, librarian, IT office and maintenance are provided by RCU.

#### 4.6.5b Analysis

A robust system of administration and management exists within the RCU. The College is allowed to operate freely and design and implement its own chiropractic programme under the Patronate of the Augustinian Order. Within The College the overarching Academic Council ensures the operation and management of the chiropractic programme. The actions of the Council are auditable. There are good support services (including admissions and placements, library, and IT) in the RCU that fulfil all other aspects of the provision. The RCU new secretary/registrar has good contact with both students and the administrative staff of MCC and also candidates/future students of the chiropractic programme.

#### 4.6.5c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 6.5



#### 4.7 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHING AND RESEARCH.

**The chiropractic institution/programme must facilitate the relationship between teaching and research, and must describe the research facilities to support this relationship as well as the research priorities at the institution/programme.**

##### 4.7.1a Description

Research is a central pillar of the chiropractic programme. Research is embedded in the provision across all years, and this culminates in the student research project in year 5. Since 2014, The College has operated an annual Research Week where students present their work via a poster to their peers. Guest speakers and external agencies are also involved in the Research Week. Students can also participate in short term research projects at other universities via various international exchange schemes. Many staff are engaged with research at The College or at other academic institutions in Spain and elsewhere. This covers both basic biomedical research as well as chiropractic and medical disciplines. There is an operational Ethics Committee that looks at all student projects. Staff research projects are submitted for ethical review to outside agencies.

##### 4.7.1b Analysis

The spiral curriculum helps to increase research culture in the student body by incorporating an understanding of research into the programme from an early stage. There are also other encouraging developments such as the student Research Week, the establishment of new research laboratory facilities and an operational Ethics Committee. The college is looking to rebuild/restart contacts with research partners and universities.

##### 4.7.1c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 7.1



#### 4.8 PROGRAMME EVALUATION

##### 4.8.1 Mechanisms for programme evaluation

**The institution/programme must establish a mechanism for programme evaluation that monitors the curriculum, quality of teaching, student progress and student outcomes, and ensures that concerns are identified and addressed.**

##### 4.8.1a Description

The College has established the Quality Assurance Committee and external evaluators have been appointed for 5 years, after which it will be renewed. Furthermore, the clinical team meets regularly to provide feedback for the clinic and clinical training. The committee receives feedback from students at the end of each unit together with any external examiner reports at the end of the academic year.

##### 4.8.1b Analysis

The quality assurance process is still in its early stages and needs formalization. The external examiner system is not fully embedded at this point. The team suggest that external examiner reports should receive a formal written response from the team. The small scale of the institution

often results in the use of informal mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, but these should be formalised and all decision-making bodies should be minuted and auditable.

#### 4.8.1c Conclusion

The College substantially complies with Standard 8.1



#### 4.8.2 Staff and student feedback

**Both faculty and student feedback must be systematically sought, analysed and responded to so as to develop and improve the curriculum.**

##### 4.8.2a Description

The programme is evaluated via a questionnaire that is sent out to the students via the online e-learning platform, Moodle. This occurs at the end of each unit. Staff feedback is more informal and takes place in the team meetings of the Academic Council. Capturing feedback is improving but is not fully auditable in all cases.

##### 4.8.2b Analysis

The student's complete questionnaires for each module/faculty member and the students seem satisfied with this method of feedback and report instances where their feedback has been adhered to and changes have been made within the chiropractic programme.

#### 4.8.2c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 8.2.



#### 4.8.3 Student cohort performance

**Student cohort performance must be analysed in relation to the curriculum and the aims and objectives of the programme.**

##### 4.8.3a Description

Student performance is monitored both individually and by cohort. Two evaluation meetings take place each year where the staff team discuss each student's performance and progress and consider the performance of the cohort. This process enables the team to provide academic support and appropriate pastoral care on an individual student basis, but also to identify any trends in the marks awarded and consider the possible reasons for them. There is also an opportunity to compare cohorts. The staff team are also considering post-graduation destinations. External examiners reports are received and feed into the quality system.

##### 4.8.3b Analysis

The College has responded well to the feedback received following the last accreditation visit and much of the change appears to have taken place in the last academic year. The review of data to allow consideration of individual and cohort performance is running well and was positively received



by students. There was evidence of positive outcomes of the process presented to the review team in both individual and cohort outcomes.

#### 4.8.3c Conclusion

The College fully complies with Standard 8.3



#### 4.8.4 Involvement of stakeholders

**Programme evaluation must involve the governance and administration of the institution, the faculty, staff and the students, and the outcomes communicated to a range of stakeholders.**

##### 4.8.4a Description

The College is a department of the RCU and the chiropractic programme is fully integrated into RCU and its associated governance structures. The evaluation of the programme includes academic staff. This is principally via staff meetings and the Quality Assurance Committee. The student body has representation in the committees and in the Academic Council of The College. A student delegate is elected by the student body and attends the meetings of the Academic Council. Given the small cohort of students their needs are well met by the informal and semi-formal procedures.

##### 4.8.4b Analysis:

There is a student representative who acts as an appointed delegate in the Academic Council. Feedback from the stakeholders is through a quality questionnaire and direct interaction from those attending the meetings. In the past, the MCC Included patients as stakeholders but the MCC has lost those stakeholders. The participation of the AEQ is quite weak in the MCC programme development, but AEQ remains a useful resource when called upon. The new director is looking to increase the range of stakeholders, including patients, with better contact and involvement from AEQ, and new stakeholders from other European institutions and the ECU. This process has been started under the new programme management.

##### 4.8.4c Conclusion

The College substantially complies with Standard 8.4.



### 4.9 GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

#### 4.9.1 Governance

**Governance and committee structures and functions of the chiropractic institution/programme must be defined, including their relationships within the university (as appropriate).**

##### 4.9.1a Description

Governance arrangements between the College and the University remain substantially as they were

at the time of the last accreditation visit. The RCU is a private higher education institution under overall management by the Augustinian Order (Madrid Province). RCU is affiliated with the state university, Universidad Complutense de Madrid who accredit both the Business Administration and Law departments. The chiropractic programme is not accredited by this body, but rather by RCU itself which it has the autonomy to do. The Augustinian Province appoints the Rector who chairs the Patronate, the governing body of the RCU, and the Executive Council. The Executive Council includes the Director/Principal of the chiropractic programme at The College and meets once a month to approve budgets and other administrative issues of the institution. The chiropractic department at RCU was created in 2007 and renamed the Madrid College of Chiropractic (MCC) in 2014. The College has its own executive team charged with the day-to-day operation and management of the chiropractic programme. The Academic Council (comprised of by all faculty members together with a representative from the RCU administration and a student delegate) reports to the executive team. All major decisions on the chiropractic programme are taken by the Senior Staff Team. A Quality Assurance Committee, an Internal Ethics Committee, and a Curriculum Committee all report to the Academic Council.

#### *4.9.1b Analysis*

The governance of the RCU is unique within the higher education setting as it involves governance by the Augustinian Order. RCU (and The College within this organisation) is allowed to operate on a day-to-day basis with minimal imposition by The Order. The Rector heads up the institution and is very supportive of the chiropractic programme. Use of external stakeholders such as the local community, patients, students and representatives of staff are not included in the governance structure, but this appears to be the norm in Spain. The three operational sub-committees (Curriculum Committee, Ethics Committee and Quality Assurance Committee) operate within The College. There are some challenges for the College between themselves and the RCU regarding the budget, but the Governance arrangements appear to be working well.

#### *4.9.1c Conclusion*

The College substantially complies with Standard 9.1.



#### **4.9.2 Academic leadership**

**The responsibilities of the academic head of the first qualification chiropractic programme, and of the academic management structures, must be clearly stated.**

#### *4.9.2a Description*

The academic management structure of the chiropractic programme at RCU is clearly defined. Academic leadership is provided by the Principal/Director of Chiropractic Studies who was appointed 11 months ago, and is responsible to RCU as a full member of the Consejo de Dirección (Board of Governors of RCU). The Principal/Director is supported by the Clinical Training Coordinator and the Clinical Unit Coordinator and the Course Coordinator and Practicum Course Leader who form the senior staff team. The Academic Council consists of the entire faculty and all the student representatives and meets twice per semester to discuss the running of the programme and to recommend actions to the senior staff team.

#### *4.9.2b Analysis*

Academic leadership is clear within the College. The Head has instigated positive changes to the internal leadership team and it is evident from the wider staff team and students that this is a very positive environment, with clear and strong leadership. The leadership team and wider teaching team are still undergoing changes, but the responsibilities of the Head and the leadership team are clear.

#### 4.9.2c Conclusion

The College fully complies with the Standard 9.2. 

#### 4.9.3 Educational budget and resource allocation

**The institution/programme must have a clear line of responsibility and authority for the curriculum and its resourcing, including remuneration of teaching staff, in order to achieve the overall aims and objectives of the chiropractic programme.**


##### 4.9.3a Description

The financial relationship between the College and RCU remain unchanged since the last accreditation visit. The income to operate the RCU continues to be obtained from the Treasurer of The Provincial Council. Requests as sent to this body are made monthly via the Rector. The Rector then allocates the appropriate resource to The College. Requests for additional resources must be approved by the Office of the Rector, but there is departmental freedom and any exceptional needs are considered. The appropriate level of remuneration of staff is an area of contention between the College and the RCU, but the Head is working to ensure that remuneration is appropriate to ensure recruitment and retention of staff is supported.

##### 4.9.3b Analysis

There is a clear line of financial responsibility and authority throughout RCU/The College. There are sufficient funds to maintain the RCU at its present size or plan increases in discussions with the Head of College. There is no sign of any perceived financial insecurity which could place students at risk from completing the programme, although some greater clarity in budgeting arrangements and autonomy of the Head of College in budgeting and spending arrangements would be beneficial.

##### 4.9.3c Conclusion

The College substantially complies with Standard 9.3. 

#### 4.9.4 Interaction with professional sector

**The institution/programme must have a constructive interaction with the chiropractic and chiropractic-related (health-related) sectors of society and government.**

##### 4.9.4a Description

The strongest professional relationship is with the Spanish Chiropractic Association (AEQ). The AEQ holds a general assembly once a year. The College presents its report and takes questions from the

attendees and receives feedback. The College is also a member of the World Federation of Chiropractic and participates in the events promoted by this organization. The RCU is a full member of the International Federation of the Catholic Universities (FIUC/IFCU) and this increases the institutional relations. The Office of Labour and International Relations (International Office) of the RCU offers students the opportunity to participate in the externship programme and to work under the supervision of a professional in the field. The Chiro-Global Exchange Programme enables students to go to international institutions with which the RCU with whom The College has formal agreements. With the services provided by the CQU students can gain from interaction with the physiotherapist health professionals. The teaching staff includes medical doctors, a cardiologist and radiologist, and dentists.

#### *4.9.4b Analysis*

The lack of state recognition of chiropractic education and of the profession is a limiting factor in fostering interaction between the healthcare community and local and national government but there is evidence that this relationship is improving. Since the last visit partnerships with research foundations (e.g. UQTR, Jimenez Diaz Research Foundation Hospital), universities, and organizations have reduced. The new director is looking to rebuild those partnership and create new ones. Through the PGE programme of the AEQ, there is a greater contact between the students, the recent graduates and the field chiropractor. There are campus visits to audit classes and give presentations to the students especially in year 5. The increase of health care professionals in the teaching staff is having a favorable impact on the relations between chiropractic students and chiropractic-related health care sector.

#### *4.9.4c Conclusion*

The College substantially complies with Standard 9.4.



### 4.10 CONTINUOUS RENEWAL AND IMPROVEMENT

**The chiropractic institution/programme must have procedures for regular reviewing and updating of its structure and functions to rectify deficiencies and meet changing needs. (See 8.1 of standards)**

#### *4.10.1a Description*

There are signs of continual enhancement of the provision, and deliberate steps are being taken to enhance the programme. Staff are committed to improving their programmes and are finding opportunities to advance their units year on year. Students recognise the efforts made by staff to ensure that the course and its learning opportunities are contemporary.

#### *4.10.1b Analysis*

Staff are committed to improving their units and driving the programme forward. The curriculum committee help to formalise the range of improvements to ensure that the curriculum is coherent. This is further enhanced through the work of the Quality Committee working to ensure that quality is maintained across the whole programme. The Head is mindful of the ongoing need to ensure that the programme reflects advances in health technology, and chiropractic practice, and is seeking to establish and reinvigorate a network of various stakeholders. The team recommend that these approaches are formalised into a strategic plan.

#### 4.10.1c *Conclusion*

The College fully complies with the Standard 10.



#### 4.10.1 **Summary**

Since previous visit in 2018, there are some substantial changes noticed during the visit. We commend the academic leadership for delivering an outstanding chiropractic programme to students, despite big changes within the institute in the last 2 years. There is an increased feeling of stability and security regarding the chiropractic programme. As The College looks to the future, we recommend the leadership seeks opportunities to develop and consolidate their gains making best use of the latest technology within teaching to improve the student experience further.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1 COMMENDATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCERNS

For the purposes of this report the Evaluation Team adopted the following definitions from the Standards:

- Commendations (formerly Strengths) – Areas that meet or exceed the *Standards* and are worthy of specific recognition.
- Recommendations (formerly Weaknesses) – Areas requiring specific attention and action by an institution.
- Concerns – Areas of substantial weakness/concern as to jeopardise the accreditation of an institution that require specific attention and action by the institution *as a matter of urgency*.

### 5.2 Commendations:

- Students are appreciative of the quality and high professional standing of the teaching staff.
- The diversity of professions within the teaching team providing expert teaching during the course.
- We commend the establishment of the first student union of this programme. This is enhancing the student experience, and there are plans to expand activities.
- The integration of interdisciplinary healthcare professionals within the clinic prepares students for professional practice.
- Despite the drastic changes within the college the last 2 years, the new programme management has delivered changes that will benefit the programme on a long-term basis.

### 5.3 Recommendations

- We recommend that the college should develop relationships with other ECCE accredited institutions to implement external moderation to enhance the quality assurance of the programme.
- We recommend that the University ensures that highly skilled academic staff are recruited and retained with appropriate remuneration.
- The College should look for opportunities to use the latest technology within teaching.
- We recommend that MCC further develop relationships with the local health professional sector, in particular medical doctors and medical centres nearby.
- We recommend the College develops a long-term strategic plan, to sustain the livelihood of the programme.
- We recommend widening the involvement of external stakeholders including patient groups and strengthening professional ties with other European scholarly institutions and the ECU.
- We recommend that staff support and development is formalised with engagement from the University to help teaching staff with their professional development.
- The college should increase the number of full-time staff to spread the workload among the current staff.
- We recommended that treatment and teaching equipment is regularly maintained. We recommend raising local awareness of the College and Chiropractic in general with a promotional programme in surrounding villages and within the region.

**5.4 Concerns:**

**None**

# Appendix 1

## Draft Timetable RCU October 2023

<b>SUNDAY 22 October</b>			
Evening (Time to be confirmed)	Preliminary team meeting in hotel	All	

<b>MONDAY 23 October</b>	Meeting with	Personnel	Team Members	
09.00	Arrival			
09.00-10.15	Preliminary meeting with RCU Executive	Dean, Director and Course Coordinator	All	
10.15	Rector, Vice Rector, Director Chiropractic programme	All – Courtesy welcome		
10.30-11.30	Tour of campus facilities to include teaching facilities, research facilities and library		All	
11.30-11.45	Private meeting			
11.45-13.30	Meeting with Teaching Faculty	FT & PT teaching faculty to cover all areas of basic science teaching	All	
13.30-14.30	Lunch with Teaching Staff		All	
14.30-15.30	Quality Assurance	Key personnel	All	
15.30-16.30	Learning resources	Librarian/computing experts	All	
16.30-17.00	Private Meeting of Panel		All	
17.00-17.30	Admissions	Key personnel	All	
17.30-18.30	Subsequent stages and links to professional association	AEQ representative	All	
18.30-19.30	Private Meeting	None	All	

<b>TUESDAY 24 October</b>	Meeting with	Personnel	Team members	
9.00-10.00	Research	Research active staff	All	
10.00-10.30	Finance and Budget	Financial officer(s)	All	



10.30-12.30	Visit to clinic and meeting with Clinic Faculty (chiropractic)	FT & PT Teaching faculty to cover all areas of clinical science teaching including a module leader(s), Full-time, Part-time	All	
12.30-13.30	Assessment and progression	Senior programme management including Director	All	
13.30-14.30	Lunch with students		All	
14.30-15.30	Meeting with students from all years	Up to 4 students from each year (apart from clinic year students) The years will be divided into smaller groups	All	
15.30-16.45	Meeting with clinic year students	6-8 students	All	
16.45-17.45	Programme Management	Senior programme management including Director	All	
17.45-18.30	Private Meeting	None	All	
<b>WEDNESDAY 25 October</b>	Meeting with	Personnel	Team members	
9.00-11.30	Private meeting of Panel and report writing		All	
11.30-12.00	Report back to senior staff	Senior management	All	
12.30	Lunch and/or Depart for airport		All	