



COUNCIL FOR THE PROFESSIONS  
COMPLEMENTARY TO MEDICINE

Benchmarking document

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Chiropractic

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**The Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine is issuing this Benchmarking Document for Chiropractic in the performance of its functions as defined by Article 27 of the Health Care Professions Act, Chapter 464 of the Laws of Malta and in terms of Article 28 Health Care Professions Act, Chapter 464 of the Laws of Malta and Subsidiary Legislation 454.16 Professions Complimentary to Medicine (Licence to Practice) Regulations.**

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## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Description and Scope of Practice .....	2
Occupational Description.....	2
Scope of Practice.....	3
Level of Qualification .....	5
Language Proficiency .....	5
Minimum Curriculum Requirements .....	6
Practice and Training .....	7
ANNEXE A .....	9
Language Proficiency Requirements by The Council for The Professions Complementary to Medicine .....	9

## **Introduction**

This document outlines Malta's Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine (CPCM) standards of proficiency for chiropractors. Via this document the CPCM is setting the minimum registration requirements for chiropractors in Malta. These standards are the threshold standards considered necessary to protect members of the public and via which qualified chiropractors are able to apply for registration in the chiropract register kept by the CPCM.

This benchmarking document has been adopted by the CPCM to evaluate and assess applications to be registered as chiropractors and practise within the jurisdiction of Malta. They also serve as guidance to the CPCM on how to address substantive differences from these standards.

## **Description and Scope of Practice**

### **Occupational Description**

Chiropractic is a primary health care profession that focuses on disorders of the musculoskeletal system and how this affect the nervous system and general health.

Its fundamental principles are based on structure and its functions.

Chiropractic care is used most often to treat neuromusculoskeletal complaints, including:

- Neck pain;
- Lower back pain;
- Joints pain;
- Arms and legs pain; and
- Headaches (cervicogenic).

## Scope of Practice

A chiropractic practitioner graduated from a fully accredited “first professional degree” granting institutions commonly holds the title of Doctor of Chiropractic, DC. The DC degree is also listed as a First Professional Degree. The title Master’s in chiropractic, MChiro or MC, is also widely known internationally.

Academic Post-Doctoral graduate degrees are obtained in various institutions worldwide; these range from community recognized certifications such Certified Chiropractic Rehabilitation Doctor (CCRD) and International Chiropractic Sport Science Diplomate (ICCSA) to nationally recognized Board certifications such as Diplomate of the American Chiropractic Board of Radiology (DACBR), and the Diplomate of the American Academy of Chiropractic Orthopaedics (DABCO).

Doctors of chiropractic, like all physicians, have the obligation to:

- Act honestly;
- Respect patient’s confidentiality;
- Favour easy communication when informing the patient of their condition, management plan and prognosis; and
- Adhere to personal and professional ethics.

## Good Clinical Practice

1. arranging advice, investigations or treatment where necessary;
2. referring to another healthcare professional when this is in the best interests of the patient;
3. act within the limits of their competency;
4. with regard to the fact that the welfare of the patient is paramount;
5. keeping with evidence-based care;
6. encourage patients to care for themselves, advising patient's own appropriate self-help measures;
7. act in accordance with legislation to ensure fair access to assessment and care. They shall not discriminate on the grounds of colour, race, age, disability, ethnic origin, lifestyle choices, gender, sexuality, marital status, socio-economic status, religion or beliefs; and
8. ensure communication with patients throughout the clinical encounter and should ensure that privacy is provided to facilitate this process.

## **Level of Qualification**

The CPCM considers applications from applicants who have successfully completed a BSc degree in chiropractic with a total of 180 ECTS credits at an MQF/EQF (Malta/European Qualification Framework) level of 6 or higher at an Institution recognised by the Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC) within the National Commission for Further and Higher Education in Malta (NCFHE).

The CPCM understands that a number of programmes may be at, or above, the standard outlined, and that there may be some exceptions, so applications will be taken on a case by case basis to verify that the standard requirements as outlined by this document are met.

Courses delivered online are not accepted.

### **The applicant needs to:**

- Provide a detailed transcript of Theoretical and Practical Training and Studies in hours associated with the chiropractic qualification and in relation with the syllabus performed by the accredited institution. This has to be endorsed in the original format by the Institution's Head/Registrar of the University/College.
- Provide the course description, including study unit details.

## **Language Proficiency**

The CPCM requires those applicants who wish to enter the Chiropractic register, to provide proof of language proficiency as defined in Annex A.

## **Evaluation of Application**

On evaluation of the application the Council may choose to do one of the following:

- Grant registration;
- Ask for further clarification when required;
- Ask for the applicant to attend an interview;
- Reject the application if the qualification is not adequate and in line with this benchmark; and
- Be asked to carry out a period of supervised practice or undergo an aptitude test.

## **Minimum Curriculum Requirements**

This standard ensures that the curriculum meets the standards for professional knowledge, skills and attitudes as expected by CPCM and therefore the applicant would be considered fit to practise in Malta.

The CPCM is aware that standards are continuously being updated over time. This document refers to the minimum general subject areas (but not restricted to) that the course needs to offer for the applicant to be successfully considered as a registered chiropractor. The course programme successfully completed will reflect the skills and knowledge base that ensure that an applicant, once registered, is able to work as an independent and autonomous practitioner.

The applicant must be registered with the national regulatory body in the country of origin (if the profession is regulated in that country) and should have practiced the profession of chiropractic for a minimum of 6 months in the past 1 year.

The chiropractic academic curriculum includes an average of more than 4,300 hours of class and laboratory attendance including more than 1,000 hours of clinical experience. The core modules expected to be covered in the course of studies are:

- Basic medical sciences, including anatomy with human dissection;
- Physiology;
- Biochemistry;
- Differential diagnosis;
- Radiology; and
- Therapeutic techniques.

### **Practice and Training**

Applicants seeking registration will be required to submit documentary evidence of the supervised/mentored training in the form of either a student portfolio or a logbook duly signed by the supervisor. These will include the practical sessions undertaken showing the key defined learning objectives. The clinical supervised training is expected to be of a minimum of 1,000 hours.

For those carrying out the training after graduation, the mentioned practice must be carried out under the direct supervision of a CPCM registered and licensed chiropractor with a minimum of 5 years work experience and the logbook duly signed. Hours of practice included as part of Research Projects will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Other CPCM documents to be considered in conjunction with this Benchmarking Document:

1. Codes of Professional and Ethical Conduct

<https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/regcounc/cpcm/Documents/Codes%20of%20Professional%20and%20Ethical%20Conduct%20-%20March%202019.pdf>

2. Code of Practice (Chiropractic)

<http://www.maltachiropracticassociation.org/about-chiropractic/what-is-chiropractic/scope-of-practice/>

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This document has been prepared by the CPCM Chiropractic Subcommittee – March 2020

## ANNEXE A

### **Language Proficiency Requirements by The Council for The Professions Complementary to Medicine**

The Council for the Professions Complementary to Medicine requires applicants to meet the Council's level of Proficiency in the English or the Maltese Language.

All professionals seeking registration are requested to present either one of the following:

1. A Maltese language certificate; **OR**
  - (i) An Ordinary Level MATSEC certificate (MQF level 3); OR  
<https://myexams.gov.mt/matsec-examinations/>
  - (ii) An Advanced/Intermediate Level MATSEC certificate (MQF level 4); OR  
<https://myexams.gov.mt/matsec-examinations/>
  - (iii) A Medical Maltese Proficiency Certificate.  
<https://www.um.edu.mt/arts/malti/korsijiet/medicalmaltesecourse>
2. The applicant can provide evidence that his/her professional qualification(s) (on the basis of which he/she is applying for registration) was/were acquired through the medium of English or Maltese and that practice placements in that/those qualification(s) were undertaken and supervised through the medium of English or Maltese; **OR**

3. The applicant can provide evidence that s/he has **lived in and practised** his/her profession through the medium of English or Maltese in a country that has English or Maltese recognised as the official language of that country for a period of **not less than 2 years in the past five-year period; OR**
4. Any other proof of English or Maltese language Proficiency.

Additionally, should the applicant choose to opt for other forms of proving language proficiency, the applicant can opt for either one of the following Secure English Language Tests.

Should the applicant opt for this, the below is the list of Examining Boards recognized by the Council and the minimum required standards accepted by the Council in terms of the table below (or equivalent);

<b>Examining Board</b>	<b>TOEFL Internet-Based (iBT)</b>	<b>IELTS (Academic)</b>	<b>Cambridge</b>	<b>Occupational English Test (OET)</b>
<b>Required Level</b>	95	6.5	Advanced Certificate	B
<b>Remarks</b>	A writing score of at least 24 is required.	Required with a minimum of 6.0 in all elements.	A pass at a grade C or better is required.	A grade B or better is required in all components.

Any other Secure English Language Tests which are equivalent to those mentioned in the table above will also be considered.