



## Our Education Strategy November 2019 - 2021

The Education Strategy is grounded in the University College Strategic Plan 2016-2021. It sets out the educational enhancement aims that will ensure the University College succeeds in creating an exceptional educational experience for students enrolled on our courses.

### Our Mission, Vision and Strategic Aims

#### Our Mission

*'A healthier society through education, research and clinical care'*

#### Our Vision

*'To be a leading higher education institution in the university sector specialising in chiropractic and other healthcare disciplines, nationally and internationally recognised for quality and excellence'*

#### Our institutional traits

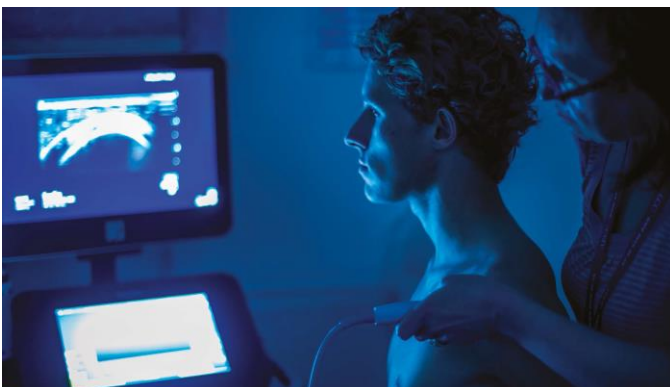
AECC University College is a caring, inclusive and innovative higher education institution. Our specific institutional traits, which we aim to embed in everything we do, include being:

- Pioneering
- Collaborative
- Influential
- Confident
- Intelligent
- Authoritative
- Inspiring
- Challenging
- Caring
- Employable

#### Our Strategic Aims (from the Strategic Plan–2016 – 2021)

- *Strengthen our reputation and profile through effective engagement with our communities in the HE sector and wider world*
- *Deliver a diverse portfolio of quality education and clinical training programmes reflecting our distinctive place in the HE sector*
- *Deliver an outstanding student experience throughout the student lifecycle*
- *Underpin our teaching and clinical training with focused research and scholarship activity.*

#### Background to our education strategy



Our focus is on education and knowledge-creation in healthcare and the social sciences, with strong emphasis on vocational qualifications and employability, and our students will be equipped to make a positive contribution to society upon graduation. Our courses will meet the needs of relevant stakeholders in a changing and challenging professional and higher education environment, and take into account all relevant external regulation, policies and guidance. Having studied at AECC University College is, and will remain, a badge of

excellence and provides assurance to stakeholders that the graduate has received a high quality education and meets applicable professional standards.

We have a strong sense of community, in which staff and students work together with a common purpose and understanding. We want staff and students to be proud of the University College and to take a shared responsibility for its development, recognising the importance of sustainability, responsible citizenship, engagement in the wider life of the institution, and student and staff wellbeing.



We are committed to being an institution where students and staff from all backgrounds can flourish. We recognise the importance of equality of opportunity and promoting diversity, in accordance with our Dignity Diversity and Equality Policy. We are committed to a working and learning environment that is free from physical, verbal and non-verbal harassment and bullying of individuals on any grounds, and where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, within a positive and satisfying learning and working environment.

We seek to ensure that all students admitted to our courses have the opportunity to fulfil their educational potential, by taking an inclusive approach to course design, learning and teaching, enhancing accessibility and making additional reasonable adjustments for students with protected characteristics where this is required, mindful however that such adjustments must not compromise academic or professional standards as expressed through the learning outcomes.

### Our Learning and Teaching ethos

We take a student-centred approach, with students at the heart of all we do. We aim to deliver the highest quality learning experience for all our students, channelling their motivation and skills to engage fully with their course and make the most of all the resources we provide, within a nurturing and collegial environment. Our course design and our assessment practices challenge our students and thus empower them to achieve their full potential

Our approach to learning and teaching enables students to take increasing responsibility for their own learning as they progress through their studies. The aim is that they develop as self-motivated and independent lifelong learners, equipped with the skills, knowledge and experience required to succeed and develop in their chosen field. We regard the adoption of self-directed learning and critically-reflective attitudes and skills as an essential part of academic, professional and personal development and facilitate this through the use of experiential learning, and guided discovery approaches to learning, at all levels.



All our health professions focused courses emphasise the use of evidence-informed practice and the scientific method (basing practice on well-reasoned arguments supported by empirical and experiential evidence); as such a central thread of our teaching includes instruction on the ability to search, understand, and critically evaluate research literature and apply the outcomes of research to professional practice. In these courses we develop and foster ethical and values-based practice to ensure that all students

understand their responsibilities to their clients, patients, their communities and to their professions, in line with relevant professional standards. Students will learn directly from patients, clients, clinicians, experts and the public. Our aim is to produce graduates who are comfortable and committed to these attitudes, approaches, and intellectual positions in their approach to professional practice.

We recognise the value in students from different disciplines and subjects coming together to learn with and from each other, and promote a multi-disciplinary approach to learning. Our assessment processes, including feedback on assessment, aim to be transparent and fair, to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their attainment of learning outcomes, and to receive effective feedback that encourages critical self-reflection and provides guidance on how to improve.



We are committed to developing and implementing new approaches to technology-enhanced learning, to build a digitally confident learning community, equipping students effectively for their future careers. As we grow and develop our estate, we are creating innovative flexible, and accessible learning environments designed to maximise student learning.

## Enhancing education and the student experience

### We aim to:

#### Deliver excellence in teaching, learning and professional practice to enable students to achieve their personal and professional goals

- A. deliver high quality courses that are academically and professionally rigorous, equipping students for their future roles in employment, and for life-long learning
- B. ensure all applicable courses reflect and respond to the requirements for accreditation of relevant professional bodies
- C. use approaches to teaching, learning and assessment that are professionally relevant, enable students to develop as independent critical thinkers and reflective learners, and enable sustained progress and achievement
- D. recruit and retain well-qualified and highly skilled staff who are committed to enhancing the learning and teaching experience, and ensure their skills are developed, fostered and recognised
- E. strategically invest in providing physical and virtual facilities and resources of high quality, that are appropriate for the specialist nature of our courses and enhance the student experience.

#### Enhance the use of technology-enhanced learning across all courses

- F. adopt innovative approaches to the embedding of technology-enhanced learning across all aspects of teaching and learning, in line with best practice
- G. equip all academic staff and students to make best use of digital learning resources through the provision and take-up of appropriate training and supporting resources

#### Embed engagement, accessibility and inclusion

- H. offer a high-quality student experience that supports all our students to achieve their academic, personal and professional potential
- I. through active engagement and targeted support, including a focus on physical and mental health needs, enable students from underrepresented groups to achieve their educational and professional goals

#### Build our community and partnerships

- J. engage with students as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience across all aspects of University College life

- K. work alongside partners and our community for the benefit of all parties; and encourage our staff and students to make a positive difference in our communities
- L. promote and support student and staff wellbeing as a fundamental element of our life as a learning community
- M. ensure the administrative smooth running of all courses, based on a shared understanding and effective implementation of clear regulations, policies and procedures, and the availability of accurate and consistent advice and information.

#### **Embed Research informed education and practice**

- N. ensure that all courses and professional practice are research-informed
- O. engage in pedagogic research to ensure the University College adopts and implements contemporary approaches to learning and teaching
- P. provide opportunities for students to engage in knowledge creation

#### **Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation**

There is an Implementation Plan which sets out specific ways in which we will aim to deliver this strategy.

The Vice-Principal will be responsible for the process of monitoring implementation of this strategy, in consultation with relevant academic and professional services staff, and the Student Union. Staff at all levels in the institution will play their part to ensure the plan's success. Learning and Teaching sub-committee will discuss the strategy and implementation plan at least annually. Academic Development and Quality Committee will review the strategy annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness, and recommend this to Academic Board for approval.