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New Zealand College of Chinese Medicine

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PASTORAL CARE CODE OF PRACTICE

ANNUAL ATTESTATION

2024

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Summary

## Attestation

This document is prepared in response to the guidelines issued for self-review of The Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021, which makes sure that tertiary and international learners enrolled with New Zealand education providers are safe and supported. The New Zealand College of Chinese Medicine is an approved signatory provider.

In attesting to the New Zealand College of Chinese Medicine's Self-Review of the Tertiary Code of Practice, we underscore our commitment to implementing responsive and adaptive support practices that promote learner engagement and participation. The college is committed to taking all reasonable measures to safeguard the wellbeing of both domestic and international students, aiming to deliver positive and impactful experiences that facilitate individual educational achievements. We are convinced that by fostering a safe and nurturing environment centred on holistic health and personal wellbeing—cornerstone elements of the college's programmes—we establish a supportive educational framework essential for the academic success of all our learners.

Regular feedback from learners and stakeholders validate the efforts the College makes to meet these requirements. The College conducts regular audits, attestations, and self-reviews to ensure compliance with the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

1. **Attestation:** The reviews of each Code Outcome 1-12 for tertiary providers identify any gaps in pastoral care practices from earlier self-reviews or from this one, and we provide update on further improvements to be made in that area.
2. **Self-Review:** This provides a comprehensive assessment of the College's compliance, using data from student evaluations, internal documents, and previous reports. The full Self-Review is available as required in late 2024.
3. **Critical Incidents Report 2024:** This section reports serious incidents that occurred at the College over the past year.
4. **Gap identification and analysis:** Previous audits verify the College's compliance with specific aspects of the Code of Conduct, as required by NZQA, the governing body. The 2025-2026 gaps analysis will detail self-assessment to safeguard students' holistic wellbeing, building on and streamlining processes, and embedding relevant activities.

## Preamble

This summary report presents the findings and recommendations from the New Zealand College of Chinese Medicine (NZCCM or 'the College') self-review of the Tertiary Code of Practice for Attestation, conducted in 2024. Central to this self-review is the commitment to a whole-of-provider approach to learner wellbeing and safety, recognising that a holistic framework is essential for fostering a supportive educational environment.

## Strategic Approaches to Learner Wellbeing and Safety

In preparation for compliance attestation on 1 November 2024, the College has undertaken self-review practices and by incorporating strategic approaches in the Annual Plan for evaluating learner wellbeing and safety. Despite being a relatively small organisation with approximately 230 learners, staff are acquainted with students by name. In their daily responsibilities, all staff members remain genuinely committed to addressing and supporting the wellbeing of students, ensuring that they can confidently respond to or report any concerns that may arise.

The College has undertaken self-assessment exercises in relation to the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021 since the last self-review in 2023 and during 2024 as part of our ongoing implementation of the Code. What aligns with guidance provided by the Code, are policies and processes implemented by the College that lay the foundations to respond organisationally to the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021, Outcomes 1- 12 for tertiary providers. The report highlights how the College strengthens standards that are aimed at enhancing wellbeing and safety practices

across the institution. Key features of self-assessment include evaluations from students and staff, as well as actions reported by the Programme Management Committee addressing academic and pastoral care concerns.

The New Zealand College of Chinese Medicine recognises and is committed to promoting Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a founding document that is therefore fundamental to education, social and health policy and systems in Aotearoa New Zealand. The College recognises that formal education about cultural safety and competence is a requirement for teaching staff and graduates' association membership or registration to practise. Links between education policy and the leadership teams' commitment to fostering a respectful and safe working environment that upholds the rights and dignity of the indigenous people of this land is supported by the first College QMS policy 1.0 Te Tiriti o Waitangi / The Treaty of Waitangi Policy.

As a tertiary education institution, NZCCM is dedicated to implementing the founding principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi for all employees, students, management, and governance committees. The Advisory Board, chaired by an esteemed leader in Māori affairs, comprises a Māori Advisor, a representative from the Massage Aotearoa New Zealand Association, as well as graduate and student representatives and practicing clinicians. Additionally, in review we emphasise the importance of comprehensive training and support for staff, to empower them to better serve, support and protect our learners. Following the assessment of compliance, the self-review outlines key initiatives the college has undertaken to enhance protections for learners, particularly for those with diverse individual needs.

### **Assessment of Compliance**

Ongoing self-assessment is aimed at evaluating the College's adherence to the implementation of the Code. The report provides a thorough reflection on each of Code' Outcomes 1-12, highlighting compliance as active response to occurrences, and subsequent enhanced processes designed to improve wellbeing and safety practices within our institution. The full evaluative reports on each of Outcomes may be referred to as a part of this self-review for Attestation.

This report highlights improvements in complaint mechanisms and dispute resolution processes, aiming for an effective support system college wide. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all learners, fostering an environment that enables them to fully engage and succeed in their educational journeys.

### **Code Outcomes 1 -12 for Tertiary Providers and Examples**

#### **OUTCOME 1: A learner wellbeing and safety system**

Our self-review highlights the review of our responsive learner wellbeing and safety system that effectively addresses the diverse needs of our student population. The New Zealand College of Chinese medicine is a small PTE, and students are known to academic and administration staff by name. The Student Clinic Handbook states the following:

*The College has a long-term history for asking relevant questions to support learners feeling actively listened to. These reports are made available at professional development days, and the learners are reported back to as regards the outcomes. These regular student evaluations, therefore, provide the College with insights into the physical and mental health of our student body.*

**Example:** We have dedicated resources, including affordable access to supervised student clinics for acupuncture, herbal medicine and massage clinics.

The clinics are run by registered and experienced professionals who provide appropriate support and guidance. A clinic handbook contains relevant policies and guidelines to guide students to safely practice under supervision. Our approach emphasises the importance of creating a holistic culture of care, where every learner feels enabled, valued and supported to practice and experience the disciplines they are studying. No clinical treatments are

provided when the student clinician is unable to perform the functions required in the clinic due to their mental or physical condition.

## **OUTCOME 2: Learner voice.**

As regards college-wide, learner voice mechanisms: communication, feedback, complaints, and disputes resolution, we have developed robust mechanisms for amplifying learner voices within the College. This includes clear communication channels where learners can express their opinions, concerns, and suggestions. There are several systems in place that ensure the students are heard as individuals and as a group.

NZCCM has a strong tradition of offering students a comprehensive induction programme, featuring an in-depth session on the student complaint process and available support services. The academic calendar, news updates, Student and Clinic Handbooks, academic and library resources, campus reception help desk and prospectuses, clinic resources, and staff-specific resources are also explained, and available on Moodle for the entire College. As regards organisational structures that support a whole-of-provider approach to learner wellbeing and safety (Outcomes 1 and 2), these integrated communication systems include proactive measures such as regular check-ins with students and clinics that focus on mental health, resilience, and coping strategies.

The College takes a comprehensive view to hearing students individually, or in groups and then ensuring that feedback is provided to change or update procedures. Additionally, on Moodle, students can anonymously share their feedback on any aspect of their college experience through a feature called Student Voice, available at any time. Via this site, alternative comments are gathered.

### **Example 1:** Regular meetings consolidate the College communication network

Regular meetings are held with student representatives. The Student Services Advisor and the Operations Manager make notes and share them first with the student representatives and the feedback is provided to the Senior Management Team, who offer prompt responses to student concerns. The feedback is also shared with all staff at college professional development days.

### **Example 2:** Developing a simple complaints process flow chart

Throughout Orientation and in the Student Handbook, students are informed about the procedures for individual and group grievances and appeals, along with information on accessing personal support services. Early in 2024 and in consultation with NZQA, the NZCCM Student Handbook was revised to clarify the Concerns and Complaints procedures, and a simple Flow Chart was developed for all students at the College. Our complaints and disputes resolution processes are transparent and accessible, ensuring that students can seek assistance without fear of repercussions. In addition, resources such as dedicated helplines, online forms, and in-person are listed in the Student Handbook to support and facilitate timely and effective responses.

### **Example 3:** Regular feedback sessions with Heads of Faculty and Programme Leaders.

Reports and actions from the weekly staff meetings with Heads of Faculty (and monthly for smaller programmes, Programme Leaders, is triangulated with Tutor and peer observations and student evaluations semester-by-semester including additional clinical supervisor evaluation and from block course intensive surveys are conducted to gauge learner satisfaction and to inform improvements, thereby fostering an inclusive environment where every student feels empowered to contribute.

### **Example 4:** Student Voice on Moodle

The College has introduced the Student Voice feature on Moodle, allowing students to anonymously express any concerns or issues related to the College or their experience. Administrative staff regularly review and compile this feedback, reporting it to management for appropriate responses and actions.

### **OUTCOME 3: Safe, inclusive, supportive, and accessible physical and digital learning environments.**

Our comprehensive wellbeing and safety practices focus on creating safe, inclusive, and accessible learning environments—both physical and digital. As part of its annual strategic plan to develop and design educational qualifications curricula, the New Zealand College of Chinese Medicine evaluated its physical and digital facilities to ensure they meet educational learner standards and accessibility guidelines. College digital platforms (Moodle and Zoom) are designed to be user-friendly and accessible, promoting positive online interactions. Staff contact details are available on Moodle, and students are able to communicate with Tutors within allocated working hours.

The Student and Clinic Handbooks are updated each Semester. The Academic Staff Handbook is currently undergoing a comprehensive review, and more details about how to spot and respond to learner safety and wellbeing information will be included.

Accessibility is a core principle in our facility design, making sure that all students can navigate and utilise the space comfortably. We have disability parking and lifts, and classrooms may be easily accessed or through the flexible provision of Zoom learning. We continually seek feedback to enhance these practices, demonstrating College' commitment to fostering a safe and positive learning environment.

Training for staff on inclusivity and safety practices is ongoing, ensuring they are equipped to support all learners effectively. For example, during this year's professional development day (July 2024), the Student Services Advisor and Academic Quality Manager co-presented about how pastoral care, and the Code of Practice is reflected by timely assessment processes and feedback activities.

**Example:** As a model of inclusive and supportive learning environments, NZCCM facilitates visits to local marae for "Health Hui," where students provide onsite acupuncture and Tuina services. Recently, massage students have also begun completing Work Integrated Learning hours at a marae. These initiatives help students realize their qualification goals while benefiting many patients. This involvement enhances their understanding and creates a platform for Tutors to share their clinical and cultural practices in authentic settings.

#### **GAP 1 IDENTIFIED**

The College is aware that through the biennial QMS review (policies and procedures), commendations to simplify instructional guidelines and processes will further effect clarity and consistency of information. While much of this will be about the successful integration of strategic planning with implementation of procedures, the opportunity is also there to enhance communication and feedback systems for the students.

### **OUTCOME 4: Learners are safe and well.**

All students and staff are required to comply with the Workplace Health & Safety at Work Act 2015.

The College requires the students to disclose any health issues which may affect the performance during study through the interview and enrolment process. The College has a leave of absence policy and students are required to apply for leave of absence and inform the clinic if they have any health issue or are unwell. As regards mental health and wellness, the College has a 'Student Health and Wellbeing Strategy' with the following goals:

- To always promote the personal well-being and good mental health of all students at the College
- To ensure that student holistic well-being and mental health are embedded in institutional decision making.
- To provide an environment that enhances a positive safe and inclusive learning experience for diverse learners.
- To ensure that the students work closely with the learning community for all College programmes through active community engagement initiatives.

- To empower students to engage with different cultures and reflect on their own for continuous personal and professional growth.

Our response systems are designed to provide timely interventions, including referrals to mental health services and academic support, ensuring that every learner has access to the resources they need to thrive, including their culturally responsive needs. The purview of wellbeing in safety and cultural contexts is essential for fostering an equitable learning environment that respects and honours the backgrounds and experiences of all learners.

Early identification of learners needing additional support is facilitated through proactive communication, one-on-one consultations, and peer support programmes. Learner safety and well-being are ensured through the Student Services Advisor's open-door policy and the Student Handbook, which outlines a comprehensive range of counselling services, particularly focused on mental health and well-being. Fortnightly reporting at Management Team meetings summarises attendance, focusses each cohort, and examines possible risks to achievement, retention and /or mental wellbeing.

The student representation meetings include the Student Services Advisor as Chair and the Operations Manager who in these separate roles can accurately identify emerging concerns about learners' wellbeing and safety or behaviour and take all reasonable steps to connect learners quickly to appropriate social, medical, and mental health services.

Embedded in the New Zealand College of Chinese Medicine programmes are education and practice standards for cultural safety and cultural competency where health and wellness are approached from individual, family, whānau and community perspectives. The college leverages relationality among peers, inter-professional colleagues, and health professionals as valuable bi- and intercultural contexts that shape learners as emerging professionals in Aotearoa New Zealand. Health and wellness in these contexts are not regarding the absence of disease but involve mental, social and spiritual wellbeing within an already diverse educational environment.

**Example 1:** We monitor attendance and engagement in both academic and extracurricular activities as indicators of overall wellbeing, motivation and engagement. In addition, the College uses WeChat and WhatsApp for learner group support and communication.

**Example 2:** The college has policies in place to provide additional support to students identified 'at risk'. These students may be flagged "at risk" due to low or irregular attendance, repeated requests for extensions, or assessment failures. An Individual Learning Agreement (ILA) may be signed following discussions between the Programme Leader and the student and approved by Programme Management Committee. The ILA will outline clear study progress goals and specify any additional support provided to the student.

#### **OUTCOME 5: A positive, supportive and inclusive environment in student accommodation.**

The College attends to additional wellbeing and safety practices in student accommodation through the established connections with reputable homestay agents, and our continual self-review. Our focus is on creating a positive and supportive environment for all learners, which is essential for their academic and personal development. We work closely with reputable agents to ensure that our accommodation providers uphold high standards of safety and support.

It is important to recognize the valuable roles college staff play in student accommodation. While they are trained to offer support, their primary focus is on connecting students to the appropriate resources and services, ensuring that learners have access to the help they need.

#### **OUTCOME 6: Accommodation and administrative practices and contracts.**

We have established transparent, reasonable, and responsive accommodation and administrative practices that prioritise the wellbeing and safety needs of learners if they are in a homestay arrangement. Our administrative

processes for homestay contracts are designed to be straightforward and efficient, allowing for timely responses to requests and issues related to accommodation.

#### **OUTCOME 7: Student accommodation facilities and services.**

Student accommodation facilities and services are maintained to Code of Practice standards and sufficiently support student residents' wellbeing, safety, and educational success. We foster a supportive and responsive approach for living environments that aids students in adapting to New Zealand life, personal wellbeing, and pursuing their academic goals. A reputable homestay contractor ensures all Code requirements are met and the College audits that this occurs.

#### **OUTCOME 8: Responding to the distinct wellbeing and safety needs of international tertiary learners.**

Our self-review emphasises the importance of addressing the unique wellbeing and safety needs of international learners. As many of the learners on the TCM programmes are older adults, we provide age-appropriate support tailored to the specific challenges these learners may face. By ensuring that appropriate interventions and support services are readily available, and by actively responding to these needs, we enhance the overall experience and integration of international learners within our college community. This support includes fostering cross-cultural awareness among staff and learners, which helps create an inclusive environment.

#### **OUTCOME 9: Prospective international tertiary learners are well-informed.**

We ensure that prospective international learners receive clear, accessible, and accurate information to facilitate their decision-making process to study at the College. This includes providing sufficient details in both print and electronic formats, such as website prospectuses.

We monitor agent activities to guarantee the integrity of the information shared. Our bilingual staff for TCM are available to assist learners with English as their second language, and comprehensive information is included in the Student Handbook. This encompasses details on dispute resolution, pathways for further study, living costs, and transport options in Tāmaki Makaurau, ensuring that students are well-prepared for their journey, even before arriving in Aotearoa New Zealand.

#### **OUTCOME 10: Offer, enrolment, contracts, insurance, and visa.**

The process for the offer of place, enrolment, insurance, and visa is designed to be straightforward and supportive. We conduct initial interviews via Zoom or in person to establish rapport and address any questions prospective students may have. This personalised approach helps to clarify the enrolment process and ensures that students are adequately informed about their insurance and visa requirements. By providing this level of support, we aim to create a seamless transition for international learners as they begin their studies at our college.

#### **OUTCOME 11: International learners receive appropriate orientations, information, and advice.**

All NZCCM students receive a comprehensive orientation on the first date of their Semester, which provides accurate and draft timetables, and other essential information for navigating their academic success and wellbeing. These orientations cover learner obligations, conduct, and rights, ensuring students understand their responsibilities and entitlements. We recognise the diversity of our learners, and on that day and in further communication offer tailored support that addresses various backgrounds and needs. Importantly, we maintain a policy of not enrolling students under the age of 18, ensuring that all learners are appropriately supported within their age group.

Our Student Handbook includes vital information on health and safety, as well as policies related to termination of enrolment, such as resits, withdrawals, and suspensions, along with independent learning agreements. Additionally, key policies are located on Moodle, ensuring that all information is easily accessible. Communication



through mobile phones and our website further enhances the support provided. To facilitate easy access to resources, we provide names and contact details for support staff, in the Student Handbook.

**Example: Identifying academic needs of international students**

Upon identifying three international students at risk in their first year of the Bachelor in Health Science (Acupuncture) programme, the NZCEL Tutor notified the Academic Quality Manager and the Programme Leader. This led to two students agreeing to an Individual Learning Plan for ongoing weekly support in Academic English. The third student opted not to pursue this agreement. All three students have since integrated well and are successfully achieving their assessments.

**OUTCOME 12: Safety and appropriate supervision of international tertiary learners**

The college prioritises the safety and well-being of our international tertiary students by providing appropriate supervision for their time at college, being sensitive to their specific needs for communication and wellbeing in integration with the New Zealand community. This includes clear communication protocols, and regular check-ins and support services are in place through the Student Services Advisor and faculty support to ensure that students feel secure and supported in their learning environments.

**Critical Incidents Report 2024**

The NZCCM Operations Manager keeps a regularly updated critical incident and complaints report. Incidents and complaints are reported and documented at fortnightly Senior Management Team meetings (see Table 1: Complaints Data Analysis). By recording them and reporting these back annually provides management, learners, other stakeholders, and the code administrator with clear perspectives for evaluation and updating processes.

	Received	Investigated	Resolved	Withdrawn	On-going
<b>Total</b>	2	2	0	0	2
<b>Complaints/Programme Area</b>	Master (CM) - 2				
<b>Gender</b>	Female - 1 Male - 1				
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Chinese - 2				

Table 1: Complaints Data Analysis

The data provided could not be further disaggregated due to privacy concerns.

**No critical incidents were reported in 2024.** Educational and clinical compliance, including health and safety, are monitored regularly and reported formally every fortnightly at CMT meetings.

## Summary of Improvements and Action Plan

The College continues to be alert and responsive to the potential for improvement in policy procedure and implementations (see Table 2). Gaps identified in 2023 were mostly resolved. Gaps that are identified in the 2024 self-review will be implemented as improvements prior to the next self-review.

This gaps analysis aims to create a robust framework that not only identifies existing gaps in student support but also implements targeted activities, such as wellness days and mental health awareness campaigns, to promote a culture of care and resilience within the school community.

2023 Previous Gaps	2023 – 2024 Resolution	Measure of success for 2024 - 2025
Learner wellbeing and safety Need to consolidate the Strategic Goals and Plans into one policy document to provide an overview and summary for future review.	Consolidated College Annual Plan with Health and Wellness Strategic goals.  Policy documents produced and / or revised.	QMS is currently being reviewed and revised (end date February 2025). Policies about student wellbeing may be consolidated from 6-7 documents to 2-3. Staff Handbook is being revised accordingly.
Increase frequency of community events with Māori communities. Continued inputs with staff and students to ensure inclusiveness is maintained at current high levels.	This has been addressed by increasing the number of marae-based and local cultural events, which foster deeper connections to the community and enhance students' understanding of diverse cultural practices. Additionally, cultural competency sessions have been integrated into all programmes, with Tutors engaging in discussions that emphasise the importance of inclusivity in the learning environment.	Staff and learners are confident and actively engaged in cultural competency, fostering an inclusive environment that promotes mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration across diverse backgrounds.
Review emergency procedures	Emergency policies and procedures are clearly outlined and efficiently detailed in the Clinic handbooks.	With several new staff on board, SMT identified the need to provide additional training about emergency procedures
Arranging and providing seminar inputs from Asian Community Services to add to students' knowledge regarding mental wellbeing and health services	The college involves recent graduates and alumni to share in lunchtime seminars on request term by term.	The successful integration of seminar inputs from Chinese cultural and health partners, along with recent graduates and alumni sharing their experiences during lunchtime seminars, enhances students' understanding of mental wellbeing and health services, fostering a supportive and informed college community.
2024 Newly Identified Gaps	Initiative	Potential Successful Outcome
The biannual QMS review highlights the need to simplify instructional guidelines and	In the upcoming year, the Handbooks will be revised and simplified with Flow charts to improve how we communicate	The regular updates to the Student and Clinic Handbooks, along with the ongoing review of the Academic Staff Handbook, will

processes for greater clarity and consistency.	processes and feedback systems for students.	enhance the ability to identify and respond to learner safety and wellbeing concerns, ultimately fostering a more supportive educational environment.
The College enhanced its response systems during the COVID pandemic through enhancing the implementation of the Individual Learning Agreement (ILA). These systems facilitated timely interventions for students at risk of not completing the practical components of their qualifications. As a result, all students from that period have successfully completed their qualifications.	We look to further support services to aid students who have mental health needs. We may train our teaching staff on identifying students with mental health issues.	By broadening our understanding of well-being in mental health, safety, and cultural contexts, we strive to create an equitable learning environment that honours and respects the diverse backgrounds and experiences of all learners. This approach not only reduces risk but also enhances holistic well-being, ensuring that every student feels valued and supported.

Table 2: Summary of Improvements and Action Plan

### Summary

The self-review of the Tertiary Code of Practice for Attestation highlights the New Zealand College of Chinese Medicine's commitment to maintaining high standards in educational quality, academic integrity and pastoral care. The college successfully navigated challenges through 2023-2024 by enhancing communication strategies, implementing feedback mechanisms, and fostering collaboration among staff to understand more about the learning journey for our students who are already studying a holistic programme.

This period of self-review located areas for ongoing improvement, ensuring the college's adaptability to future-focused requirements including promoting an integrated sense of belonging in a whānau-centred tertiary environment, establishing secure and successful reciprocal relationships with local iwi, teaching socio-emotional skills to prevent exclusion, and nurturing college-wide academic success and expectations.

Conducting a gaps analysis in 2025-2026, beginning with a comprehensive survey of stakeholders, presents a valuable opportunity for NZCCM to further enhance its Student Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This approach will enable us to systematically integrate wellbeing into our organisational goals and strengthen our wellbeing team. By continuing to incorporate user-friendly technologies into the curriculum, we aim to advance student learning approaches, further boost staff motivation and connection, and ensure our programmes remain relevant to professional and industry needs.