



CHIR3610

PACE: Foundations of Clinical Practice

Session 2, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2026

Department of Chiropractic

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>General Assessment Information</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	4
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	6
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	6
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	7
<u>Inclusion and diversity</u>	9
<u>Professionalism</u>	9

Disclaimer

Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Christopher Burrell

christopher.burrell@mq.edu.au

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

CHIR3105 and HLTH3302

Corequisites

CHIR3106 and HLTH3303

Co-badged status

Unit description

This PACE unit introduces students to key foundations of chiropractic clinical practice, including practice management, clinical assessment (history-taking, diagnostic imaging), and differential diagnosis. It emphasises musculoskeletal evaluation and the identification of conditions beyond chiropractic care. Students will develop clinical problem-solving skills and engage in community-based learning at the Macquarie University Chiropractic Clinics, gaining experience in patient assessment, professional interactions, and clinic operations.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Apply understanding of the principles and purpose of the diagnostic process in a clinical context.

ULO2: Formulate a differential diagnosis, based on history, examination and investigation findings of musculoskeletal and non-musculoskeletal conditions that commonly present to chiropractors.

ULO3: Demonstrate proficiency in assessing radiographic images of the spine and extremities, including accurate identification of normal radiographic anatomy.

ULO4: Demonstrate clinical skills including history taking, the use of outcome measures

and the utilisation of radiographic software.

ULO5: Apply knowledge of the elements of chiropractic practice management to competently perform relevant practice management duties.

ULO6: Discuss the scope of chiropractic care and the role of referral to facilitate appropriate interprofessional patient care.

General Assessment Information

Grade descriptors and other information concerning grading are contained in the [Macquarie University Assessment Policy](#).

All final grades are determined by a grading committee, in accordance with the Macquarie University Assessment Policy, and are not the sole responsibility of the Unit Convenor.

Students will be awarded a final grade and a mark which must correspond to the grade descriptors specified in the [Assessment Procedure](#) (clause 127-8).

To pass this unit, you must demonstrate sufficient evidence of achievement of the learning outcomes, meet any ungraded requirements, and achieve a final mark of 50 or better.

Further details for each assessment task will be available on iLearn.

Late Submissions

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (OF THE TOTAL POSSIBLE MARK) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a grade of '0' will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical concern.

For example:

Number of days (hours) late	Total Possible Marks	Deduction	Raw mark	Final mark
1 day (1-24 hours)	100	5	75	70
2 days (24-48 hours)	100	10	75	65
3 days (48-72 hours)	100	15	75	60
7 days (144-168 hours)	100	35	75	40
>7 days (>168 hours)	100	-	75	0

For any late submissions of time-sensitive tasks, such as scheduled tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, and/or scheduled practical assessments

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
<u>Reflective writing</u>	40%	No	Week 11 (Fri 23 Oct)	Individual	No	Open
<u>Explanation of diagnosis to a patient</u>	20%	No	Week 08	Individual	No	Observed
<u>End-Session Exam</u>	40%	No	Exam period	Individual	No	Observed

Reflective writing

Assessment Type ¹: Reflection task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **Week 11 (Fri 23 Oct)**

Weighting: **40%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Open

You will write up a clinical case and write a reflective piece on how this unit has built your knowledge base on diagnosing conditions that require referral.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply understanding of the principles and purpose of the diagnostic process in a clinical context.
- Formulate a differential diagnosis, based on history, examination and investigation findings of musculoskeletal and non-musculoskeletal conditions that commonly present to chiropractors.
- Demonstrate proficiency in assessing radiographic images of the spine and extremities, including accurate identification of normal radiographic anatomy.
- Demonstrate clinical skills including history taking, the use of outcome measures and the utilisation of radiographic software.
- Discuss the scope of chiropractic care and the role of referral to facilitate appropriate interprofessional patient care.

Explanation of diagnosis to a patient

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 10 hours

Due: **Week 08**

Weighting: **20%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Observed

You will research and report on a condition that may masquerade as back pain when presenting to a chiropractor. Through roleplay as a chiropractor, you will explain the diagnosis of the condition to a 'patient'.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply understanding of the principles and purpose of the diagnostic process in a clinical context.
- Formulate a differential diagnosis, based on history, examination and investigation findings of musculoskeletal and non-musculoskeletal conditions that commonly present to chiropractors.
- Demonstrate clinical skills including history taking, the use of outcome measures and the utilisation of radiographic software.
- Apply knowledge of the elements of chiropractic practice management to competently perform relevant practice management duties.
- Discuss the scope of chiropractic care and the role of referral to facilitate appropriate interprofessional patient care.

End-Session Exam

Assessment Type ¹: Examination

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **Exam period**

Weighting: **40%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Observed

You will sit an end-of-session examination on all content delivered through the lectures, tutorials and workbooks in this unit.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply understanding of the principles and purpose of the diagnostic process in a clinical context.
- Formulate a differential diagnosis, based on history, examination and investigation findings of musculoskeletal and non-musculoskeletal conditions that commonly present

to chiropractors.

- Demonstrate proficiency in assessing radiographic images of the spine and extremities, including accurate identification of normal radiographic anatomy.
- Demonstrate clinical skills including history taking, the use of outcome measures and the utilisation of radiographic software.
- Apply knowledge of the elements of chiropractic practice management to competently perform relevant practice management duties.
- Discuss the scope of chiropractic care and the role of referral to facilitate appropriate interprofessional patient care.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- [Academic Success](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation.

³ An automatic short extension is available for some assessments. Apply through the [Service Connect Portal](#).

Delivery and Resources

As a student enrolled in this unit, you will engage in a range of online and face-to-face learning activities, including readings, online modules, online mentor sessions, tutorials and lectures. Details can be found on the iLearn site for this unit.

Recommended Readings

Articles and papers referred to in the lectures.

Technology Used

Active participation in the learning activities throughout the unit will require students to have access to a tablet, laptop or similar device. Students who do not own their own laptop computer may borrow one from the university library.

Unit Schedule

see iLearn for timing

Topics covered in this unit

What is clinical practice?

Reflection as a tool for learning

Clinical history taking

Clinical triage - low back pain (specific spinal pathology, radicular syndromes, non-specific low back pain)

Masquerading presentations - non-spinal musculoskeletal conditions that mimic spinal conditions (some may be managed by a chiropractor; more advanced conditions require referral)

Masquerading presentations - medical conditions that cause back pain (conditions out of the scope of chiropractic care and require a referral; some are emergency conditions)

Diagnostic process

Non-specific low back pain - challenges of diagnosis

Geriatric patients - challenges of diagnosis

Paediatric patients - challenges of diagnosis

Diagnosis and management of headaches in adults

Diagnosis of radicular pain

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Ask a Study Coach](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)

- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Inclusion and diversity

Social inclusion at Macquarie University is about giving everyone who has the potential to benefit from higher education the opportunity to study at university, participate in campus life and flourish in their chosen field. The University has made significant moves to promote an equitable, diverse and exciting campus community for the benefit of staff and students. It is your responsibility to contribute towards the development of an inclusive culture and practice in the areas of learning and teaching, research, and service orientation and delivery. As a member of the Macquarie University community, you must not discriminate against or harass others based on their sex, gender, race, marital status, carers' responsibilities, disability, sexual orientation, age, political conviction or religious belief. All staff and students are expected to display appropriate behaviour that is conducive to a healthy learning environment for everyone.

Professionalism

In the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences, professionalism is a key capability embedded in all our courses.

As part of developing professionalism, students are expected to attend all small group interactive sessions, including clinical, practical, laboratory, work-integrated learning (e.g., PACE placements), and team-based learning activities. Some learning activities are recorded (e.g., face-to-face lectures), however, you are encouraged to avoid relying upon such material as they do not recreate the whole learning experience and technical issues can and do occur. As an adult learner, we respect your decision to choose how you engage with your learning, but we would remind you that the learning opportunities we create for you have been done so to enable your success, and that by not engaging you may impact your ability to successfully complete this unit. We equally expect that you show respect for the academic staff who have worked hard to develop meaningful activities and prioritise your learning by communicating with them in advance if you are unable to attend a small group interactive session.

Another dimension of professionalism is having respect for your peers. It is the right of every student to learn in an environment that is free of disruption and distraction. Please arrive to all learning activities on time, and if you are unavoidably detained, please join the activity as quietly as possible to minimise disruption. Phones and other electronic devices that produce noise and

other distractions must be turned off prior to entering class. Where your own device (e.g., laptop) is being used for class-related activities, you are asked to close down all other applications to avoid distraction to you and others. Please treat your fellow students with the utmost respect. If you are uncomfortable participating in any specific activity, please let the relevant academic know.

Unit information based on version 2026.02 of the [Handbook](#)