

'Do you strike a pose or make a difference'

Peta Credlin

Dateline: Melbourne (25 May 2026)

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Narrative: Concern is expressed over the flippant language used to describe the discipline of Chiropractic as used by the inaugural head of a new program of Chiropractic education in Australia.

The program launched at Victoria University in 2026 with an initial cohort of 8 students for the year. This contrasts to the usual intake of the prior program, at RMIT University, of some 60 to 80 commencing students annually.

Appreciation is given to the Australian Chiropractic College, originally founded in Adelaide, for this year opening a handsome campus in the prime Melbourne legal district which is attracting strong interest from emerging Chiropractors.

Indexing Terms: Chiropractic; education; social media; Australia.

Introduction

Taking full responsibility for competently teaching future Chiropractic professionals is a serious, high-impact commitment, especially given the discipline's ongoing evolution, evidence base debates, and the imperative to produce safe, competent, ethical practitioners who can thrive in the 21st Century modern healthcare environment in any country. I am not sure the inaugural head of the Chiropractic program at Victoria University, Melbourne Australia, understands this.

... there is nothing sadder than a Baby Boomer trying to appear trendy on social media for aspirational millennials about to invest \$150,000 in their future as a Chiropractor ...'

Victoria University and Chiropractic

Kenneth J Young's body of scholarship (1, 2) shows he adds little that is helpful to the discipline, rather he parrots the manifesto of Walker's 'New Chiropractic' (3) which failed to land at the University of Lancashire (UCLan). (4) That program was announced mid 2019 (5) and Young became the Lead (designate) for Chiropractic at UCLan 6 months later, in December 2019. The University terminated the implementation of the program about a year later, February 2021. Young's substantive appointment was as a Senior Research Fellow in Musculoskeletal Health, and his appointment to VU was announced in January 2025. It must be



said that there is nothing censorious about leading a failed implementation, these things happen in higher education and there are always lessons to be learned.

It did not help that the number of students in Chiropractic programs in the UK were documented in June 2024 (6) as falling by 75 students (5%) to just 1,583 for approved programmes across all the years, an average of 316 students per program over 5 programs. It also did not help that UCLan opened a medical program in 2015, (7) a known source of political resistance for Chiropractic education.

Of course, UCLan cited the ongoing pandemic situation and associated financial restraints as the reasons for dropping the Chiropractic program. Young remained optimistic, saying *'The possibility of taking it up again in future years has not been ruled out and, as the course was approved last September, we have a viable curriculum that could be implemented with minimal effort, should conditions prove more favourable at another time'*. (4) He 'transferred over' to the research team to keep working on the projects he initiated since the deferral of the course and then departed the UK to return to Australia.

Given the forgoing it is to be expected that his implementation of a program of Chiropractic education at Victoria University in Melbourne Australia is drawing more than the usual interest from the profession. Judgement is delayed in the absence of a publicly available curriculum. It is unfair to deduce what is being taught from some abbreviated course outlines. I could not locate a statement of the philosophical stance the program will take, nor a statement of the program's Educational Philosophy. There is, however, a reliance on the dated trope of *'evidence based practice'*. All that the University's News Centre provided the Journal is a press release and a couple of images. one of which we reproduce here. (Figure 1)

Fig.1: Supplied. Young (back row, left) with VU's initial cohort of Chiropractic students.



We are left with vacuous on-line words suggesting the program will be evidence-based, Walker's mantra for his New Chiropractic, and the untested hope that students will absorb the essence and bonhomie of Chiropractic in just 4 weeks a semester. This reflects VU's novel idea that 'block teaching', where one course is delivered in full over one 4-week block in a semester, will actually

produce graduates with a strong professional identity, as opposed to merely ticking boxes of academic attainment. We note that VU's review (8) after 5 years of implementation shows '*Increases in student success measures*' and '*equity group students in first year units reported higher pass rates, closing the gap to non-equity group student*', both valuable educational outcomes. We also note a number of other scholarly papers which are favourable to the concept for its improvements in student performance and retention.

What is not known of course is whether periodic engagement in a discipline will be effective as opposed to immersion over a full semester. I suspect there may be challenges here given that in their first year at VU, Chiropractic students receive only 4 calendar weeks per semester of 'Chiropractic' to instil professional behaviours and an understanding of the philosophical positions within the discipline. I am uncomfortable with this experiment.

In terms of the contemporary understanding of philosophical positions in Chiropractic, (9) Young is clearly one of the minority post-realists yet he beat out at least one other highly competent applicant, a conventional realist. The Journal questions whether Walker was a member of the VU selection committee for the position to which Young was the successful applicant. I ask on the basis that Walker was Young's supervisor for his PhD, a matter which in the real world of ethics and professional behaviour outside the shelter of Australian universities would have demanded Walker recuse himself from selecting his protégé for appointment to the position. I would like to believe he did.

Regardless, whatever has happened has happened. It is not helped by Young's inane attempts on social media to be seen as a trendy Gen Z communicator; it is sad to see a Baby Boomer making a fool of himself in this manner. It could be argued by formal notification to AHPRA that public videos of this nature bring the profession into disrepute. It is a matter of record that Australian Chiropractors have been reprimanded for less egregious positions on social media.

I noted earlier that UCLan terminated the implementation of its Chiropractic program in February 2021, very soon after announcing it and appointing Young as foundation head. It would not surprise me for VU to do the same and also rid itself of [these embarrassing, puerile clips](#). They really must be taken down immediately.

After all, 8 students in the initial cohort is not financially sustainable. Vice-Chancellor Shoemaker seems to know little about Chiropractic and thus can not be presumed to have any duty of care to the discipline. He will be driven by the numbers, and the numbers tell me as an academic with experience in these matters, that the VU program has also failed to land. Just how costly a failure it becomes depends on when the University bites the bullet and kills it.

Conclusion

Peta Credlin, Australian political commentator, is acknowledged for her quote used as the title of this piece. It seems to me that the Walker-driven 'New Chiropractic' program being introduced by Ken Young at Victoria University Melbourne is simply striking a pose. It is a pose of the 'evidence-based movement' discredited in 2006 by Holmes et al (10) and largely rejected by medicine. (11, 12) The real issue to be addressed is the 'Evidence-Practice Gap'. (13)

In stark contrast, the 'chiropracticness' (14) of the open evening at the Melbourne Campus (Figure 2) of the Australian Chiropractic College in May 2026, which I attended at my own expense (meaning I was not a paid guest and thus have no obligations to discharge), was joyous and wonderful. In his welcoming address the President of ACC, Dr Pat Sim, spoke to the purpose of being a Chiropractor. The contrast with Ken Young not knowing why he'd 'crack' a neck was stark and revealing. Figure 3 shows a class of ACC students settling into their new campus.

Young seems to lack a reasonable sense of professional identity. He may well be adored within Chiropractic Australia, but this minority group of dissidents has no substantive meaning in Australia's bigger picture.

For me, a program of Chiropractic education must achieve two things:

- a graduate who is a compassionate, well-informed doctor who applies best available evidence to provide optimal care with intent for the patient at that time, and
- a graduate with a strong professional identity as a Chiropractor. The published, indexed evidence (15-18) is that a strong professional identity is the hallmark of a strong profession globally.

There is no doubt in my mind that my recommendation to emerging Chiropractors is to attend the Australian Chiropractic College, either the Melbourne or the Adelaide campus. At the very least you will learn how to adjust the cervical spine, with intent.

As a final note of dismay for the future of Chiropractic in Australasia, it has been announced (19, 20) that Young has been appointed to the Chiropractic Board of Australia. It is at this point that one gives up all hope of people being appointed on merit instead of through an old mate's network.

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Fig.2: Supplied. Australian Chiropractic College, Melbourne.



Fig.3: Supplied. Students settling in at the Australian Chiropractic College, Melbourne.



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