Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) Policy

Statement of Purpose

This policy outlines the management of the APD credential including the application process and ongoing APD program requirements.

Background

The Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) Program is the national program for recognition of qualifications, ongoing training and practice standards for dietitians. The Dietetic Credentialing Council (DCC), an independent council of the DAA Board, provides governance of the APD Program. DAA National Office manages implementation of the APD Program.

The Constitution and By-laws make provision for the credential ‘Accredited Practising Dietitian’. The program is a mechanism for the promotion of quality dietetic service and practice and to support dietitians in maintaining the required knowledge and skills.

Participants in the APD Program must meet eligibility criteria and adhere to ongoing requirements in order to continue to use the APD title and its associated benefits. APDs are committed to the DAA Code of Professional Conduct and Statement of Ethical Practice.

Eligibility criteria for the APD credential

To be eligible for the APD credential the applicant must:

- Hold a DAA recognised dietetics qualification being:
  - A DAA accredited/approved Graduate Diploma or Master degree in dietetics; or
  - A DAA accredited/approved undergraduate degree majoring in nutrition and dietetics; or
  - Mutual recognition of dietetics qualifications from New Zealand; or
Successful completion of the Dietetics Skills Recognition (DSR) examination administered by the Dietitians Association of Australia.

Agree to meet the continuing professional development (CPD), dietetic practice and other requirements of the APD program.

Agree to abide by the DAA Code of Professional Conduct and Statement of Ethical Practice.

Applying for the APD credential

Application process for those who have graduated from a DAA approved dietetics degree or successfully completed the DSR examination within the past three years:

- Applicants must complete an APD Application Form and send to National Office with payment for a DAA membership category that allows APD membership or APD Program only, for processing.
- National Office will check eligibility for APD status and once confirmed, grant Provisional APD status.
- The Provisional APD is then required to adhere to the requirements of the Provisional APD Program.

Application process for those who do not meet the above criteria:

Depending on the applicant’s recency of dietetic qualifications and practice, there are a number of pathways to join the APD Program. These pathways include the Resumption of Accredited Practice (RoAP) program, Delayed Entry and Alternate Process.

- Applicants need to complete an initial application and pay a non-refundable application fee.
- The Credentialing and Professional Services Unit (CaPS) will review the applications and determine eligibility to join the APD Program, the pathway by which the applicant can join, and the requirements of the APD upon entering the APD Program.
- Applicants may be required to complete additional payments and paperwork before being granted entry into the APD Program. Attachment 1 demonstrates the different pathways to the APD program, the eligibility criteria for each and the requirements once in the APD program.
- Experienced and suitably qualified dietitians (dietitians who have completed more than 4500 hours of dietetic work over the preceding five years) who are granted entry to the APD Program via Alternate Process will be granted Full APD Status and be required to adhere to the requirements of the APD Program. Dietitians who have spent all their time practising overseas but qualified in Australia are only eligible for alternate process to full APD if they have completed the requirements for the provisional program and transitioned to full APD. Applicants who did not complete the provisional program prior to exiting the program and pursued overseas practice, are eligible for application via delayed entry to become a provisional APD.
- Applicants who are granted entry via Delayed Entry (dietitians who have demonstrated minimum 150 hours per year of dietetic practice over preceding three years) will be granted Provisional APD status and will be required to commence the requirements of the Provisional APD program.
- Dietitians who enter the APD Program via the RoAP program (dietitians who have no dietetic practice for more than 3 but less than 5 years) will enter as a Provisional APD and have a RoAP Plan. The RoAP program is for a two-year period. Participants in the program will be required to enter into a mentoring relationship with a full APD and may have additional CPD and/or dietetic
practice requirements as part of their RoAP plan. These requirements are determined on an individual basis (refer to RoAP Policy).

- Dietitians wishing to enter the APD Program after not practicing for more than five years will be required to complete the DSR examination and then enter the RoAP program as a Provisional APD.

**Provisional APD requirements**

Once granted entry into the Provisional program, the Provisional APD is expected to commence the program requirements straight away. The Requirements of the Provisional APD Program are:

- Completion of a minimum 52 week mentoring partnership with a Full APD. The specific requirements of the mentoring partnership are below.
- The program must be completed within two years. Failure to do so will result in suspension from the APD program and APD status being revoked for a period of 12 months.
- The program cannot be deferred.

To be considered for full APD status the Provisional APD must have:

- Been in the Provisional Program for at least 52 weeks.
- Completed all of the required CPD.
- Documented each of the 12 face-to-face monthly mentoring meetings on APD Online.
- Completed an ‘End of Mentoring Report’ online (at the conclusion of the mentoring period) reporting on their Mentoring Plan outcomes.
- Completed any required dietetic practice requirement (for those in a Resumption of Accredited Practice program – see RoAP Policy).
- Declared that all of these requirements have been met.

**Mentoring**

To be eligible for Full APD status, a dietitian granted Provisional APD status must undertake an active mentoring partnership. Specific conditions apply to such partnership:

- The mentee and mentor must formally register their mentoring partnership within six months of the mentee joining the APD program and within four weeks of commencing a mentoring partnership. Failure to register a partnership within six months will result in suspension from the Provisional Program until a partnership is registered.
- The mentor must be a current APD and have “Full” Status and remain so for the period of the partnership.
- The active partnership period should be for a minimum of 52 weeks.
- Communication between mentee and mentor must be at least monthly during the 52 weeks.
  - Each monthly meeting (minimum of 12 sessions) must be one hour in length and must be in person or via internet based computer technology where the participants can see each other e.g. Skype/ Facetime/ Google Hangout.
  - The 12 mandatory monthly, one hour face-to-face sessions must be logged in APD online as evidence of the meetings.
Additional regular contact between the mentee and mentor is encouraged between the monthly meetings. This communication can be held by email or other media and can be flexible in timing.

Arranging meetings is the mentee’s responsibility.

- End of Mentoring Report must be completed and submitted at the conclusion of the mentoring partnership.

Maintaining the APD credential

To maintain the APD credential, APDs are required each year to:

- Provide records of their CPD goals, CPD activities and learning outcomes for the previous year. All APDs must complete the minimum requirement of 30 hours of CPD annually. A minimum of 10 hours of CPD must relate to professional competence in the APDs current area of practice.
- Complete the APD declaration in their membership renewal package or APD membership form for non-members.
- Declare they have meet the minimum requirements of dietetic practice, APDs must annually declare they have undertaken 1000 hours of Dietetic Practice in the preceding 5 years. This declaration applies once five years has elapsed since the APD graduated from their accredited dietetics program or completed the DSR examination. For thresholds for mandatory declarations of dietetic practice, please refer to the relevant policy.
- Maintain DAA membership or pay the prescribed fee for the APD program without DAA membership.

Definition of Dietetic Practice

The Definition of dietetic practice is:

“Dietetic Practice includes using professional knowledge in both clinical and non-clinical relationships with patients or clients, communities and populations and can be working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, communication, program development and implementation, regulatory or policy development, food service, food security, food supply, sustainability and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession and/or using professional skills.”

APDs who cannot declare they have met the dietetic practice requirement will have their APD status withdrawn until such time as they apply for the Resumption of Accredited Practice (RoAP) Program. The dietitian is eligible to join the RoAP program within 12 months of having APD status revoked. Once more than 12 months passes the dietitian is required to sit the Dietetic Skills Recognition examinations before joining the RoAP program.

APDs who do not meet the CPD requirements for the previous calendar year by the end of the APD year, will be required to make up the missed CPD within three months. Failure to complete this will result in a 12-month suspension from the APD program.

Applications for exemptions for the CPD requirement need to be made in writing to the Executive Manager of Credentialing and Professional Services (EM-CaPS). A strong justification and evidence to support the application can be provided by the APD in the case of extenuating circumstances.
Extenuating circumstances may relate to personal circumstances and/or professional hardship. If the case is approved by the EM-CaPS, the APD will have a deferment backdated. This will result in a reduction in the annual CPD requirement. The CPD requirement will only be waived completely in extreme circumstances.

Auditing the APD program

All participants in the APD program are subject to auditing of CPD (goals, activities and outcomes) and recency of practice. Audits are undertaken annually and are conducted on a 5% random sample of all APDs (both provisional and full). The audit Process is outlined in the APD Audit Policy.

Breaks from the APD program

There is provision for members who are unable to maintain the requirements of the APD program to apply for deferment of APD membership.

- Deferment of APD status can be done at any time and for up to 3 years without incurring any additional requirements to re-join the Program as a Full APD.
- At the commencement of the deferment period, members must complete and return a Deferment Application form.
- CPD Learning Goals, Logs and Learning Outcomes must be submitted for the period leading up to the date of commencement of intended deferment in order for deferment to be accepted. Each learning goal must have at least one activity allocated to it.
- Any APD who applies for deferment from 1 October in any calendar year will be required to provide evidence of at least 50% (15 hours) of CPD requirements for that year.
- Provisional APDs cannot defer from the Provisional Program.
- During the deferment the dietitian must not use the qualification ‘Accredited Practising Dietitian’.
- If an APD has had over 3 years of continuous lapsed/deferred APD status, re-joining the program must be done within a Resumption of Accredited Practice (RoAP) as a Provisional APD – see Resumption of Accredited Practice Policy

Advanced and Fellow Credentials

APDs with suitable experience and qualifications are eligible to apply for the Advanced APD and Fellow Credentials. For information on these credentials see the Advanced APD Policy and Fellow of DAA Policy.

Use of the APD credential and logo

The APD logo may be used by individual APD members of DAA, or by group dietetic practices on their business letterhead/ cards/materials/website, as long as only APDs use the business materials with the APD logo. APDs must follow the Brand Guidelines, which provides all the pertinent specifications needed to maintain the integrity of the APD brand.

Attachments

1- Flowchart Entry to APD Program
**APD Entry Assessment Flowchart – Provisional Program**

**Graduated from an Australian accredited dietetics degree OR passed the recognition of dietetics qualification exams**

**Less than 3 years ago**
- **Dietitians** who have graduated from an accredited dietetic degree within the previous 3 years
- **Overseas trained dietitians** who have passed the recognition of dietetics qualification exams

  - Can enter the Provisional APD program without any additional requirements beyond
    - Mentoring
    - Standard CPD hours

**More than 3 years ago**
- **Dietitians** who have been part of the APD Program as a Full APD within the last 3 years but have taken a break – can reinstate as Full APD

  - Can they demonstrate 150 hours per year of dietetic practice for preceding 3 years?
    - Yes
      - Resumption of Accredited Practice
        - Practice Requirement
        - Additional CPD
        - Mentoring
    - No
      - Professional Examination in Dietetics

**Has not been part of the APD program within the last 3 years**

**Over 12 months ago**
- **Dietitians** who graduated more than 3 years ago and have worked as a dietitian within the last 3 years

  - Resumption of Accredited Practice Provisional Practice Requirement: 150 hours’ dietetic practice annually
    - Additional CPD: based on years out of practice
    - Completion: Mentoring, CPD requirements and evidence of practice (where applicable)

**Under 12 months ago**
- **Dietitians** who graduated more than 3 years ago and have not been working as a dietitian during the past 5 years

  - If APD status revoked due to no recency of practice
    - Over 12 months ago
      - Professional Examination in Dietetics
    - Under 12 months ago
      - Resumption of Accredited Practice
        - Practice Requirement
        - Additional CPD
        - Mentoring

**Join as a Full APD**
- **Experienced dietitians** with Australian dietetic qualifications who have worked more than 4500 hours as a dietitian over the past 5 years.

**Eligible for APD program as a full APD**
- **Dietitians** from New Zealand who have joined DAA via the mutual recognition process.

**Apply for ‘Alternate Process’**.
- If application is successful, entry is granted to the program as a full APD.

**Over 12 months ago**
- **Dietitians** who graduated more than 3 years ago and have not been working as a dietitian during the past 5 years

  - Resumption of Accredited Practice
    - Practice Requirement
    - Additional CPD (with plan)
    - Mentoring

**Under 12 months ago**
- **Dietitians** who graduated more than 3 years ago and have not been working as a dietitian for 3 years but no longer than 5 years

  - Mentoring
  - Standard CPD hours

- **Professional Examination in Dietetics**