National Competency Standards for Entry Level Dietitians in Australia

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Unit 1 Underlying Knowledge

Demonstrates knowledge sufficient to ensure safe practice

Elements	Performance criteria
1.1 Applies current knowledge of the theory of human nutrition and dietetics and related practice to a level which supports safe practice	**Performance criteria have not been defined for the Elements in Unit 1 as it is a knowledge based competency**
1.2 Describes personal, social, cultural, psychological, environmental, economic and political factors influencing food and food use, food habits, diet and lifestyle	
1.3 Demonstrates knowledge of foods and food preparation methods used in the practice community	
1.4 Relates knowledge of food science to nutrition and dietetics	
1.5 Describes and compares food service systems	
1.6 Describes food systems, food use, and food and nutrition policy	
1.7 Applies the basic principles of education theory as it applies to nutrition and dietetic practice	
1.8 Demonstrates or employs effective communication and counselling strategies as they apply to nutrition and dietetic practice	
1.9 Relates theories of organisation, management and marketing to nutrition and dietetic practice	
1.10 Describes and compares theories of health promotion, program planning, and management and public health	
1.11 Conducts or uses nutrition research methodology, research principles and evidence-based practice including qualitative and quantitative research methods	
1.12 Applies the National Physical Activity Guidelines in practice	
1.13 Applies principles of learning theory	
1.14 Applies clinical reasoning theory	

Unit 2 Nutrition Communication

Demonstrates effective and appropriate skills in listening and communicating information, advice, education and professional opinion to individuals, groups and communities

Elements	Performance criteria
2.1 Translates technical nutrition information into practical advice on food and eating	2.1.1 Uses food composition data, food regulations and codes of practice, nutrient reference tools and food guides to identify food options, which meet nutrition needs 2.1.2 Develops and uses specific tools to assist food choices and preparation 2.1.3 Interprets nutritional information and communicates it using socially and culturally appropriate language 2.1.4 Explains the relationship between dietary intake and development and management of disease
2.2 Identifies and develops education resource material	2.2.1 Sources appropriate existing material to support the development of education resources 2.2.2 Develops education material that is evidence-based, culturally sensitive, and pitched at the appropriate literacy level, to meet the needs of the target group 2.2.3 Develops engaging nutrition education material using a mode that meets the needs of the target group
2.3. Communicates with individuals, groups, organisations and communities from various cultural socio-economic, organisational and professional backgrounds to enable them to take actions to improve nutrition and health outcomes applying the principles of learning theory	2.3.1 Uses appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication 2.3.2 Listens and provides feedback that encourages participation and engagement 2.3.3 Communicates in a way which respects customs of other cultures, using socially and culturally appropriate strategies 2.3.4 Uses an interpreter appropriately to communicate nutrition and health information 2.3.5 Presents an accurate, clear and logical message that is targeted to the audience when speaking publicly
2.4 Develops and delivers education sessions for small groups	2.4.1 Develops, implements and evaluates nutrition education plans for a variety of target groups 2.4.2 Provides appropriate rationale for educational approach based on evidence 2.4.3 Uses a variety of presentation techniques 2.4.4 Displays innovation implementing nutrition education plans 2.4.5 Displays group facilitation skills

Unit 3 Collection, analysis and assessment of nutrition/health data

Collects, organises and assesses data relating to the health and nutritional status of individuals, groups and populations

Elements	Performance criteria
3.1 Collects food intake and food systems data	3.1.1 Uses dietary methodology to collect retrospective, current and prospective food and nutrient intakes for individuals which identify nutrient and food intake patterns as required by the situation 3.1.2 Identifies appropriate dietary methodology to collect retrospective, current and prospective food and nutrient intakes for groups and populations which identify nutrient and food intake patterns as required by the situation
3.2 Collects health and medical, social, cultural, psychological, economic, personal and environmental data	3.2.1 Identifies and records health and medical, social, cultural, psychological, physical activity, economic, personal and environmental data, which are necessary to plan nutritional management 3.2.2 Uses a variety of sources to obtain health and medical, social, cultural, psychological, economic, personal and environmental data, taking into account ethical issues
3.3 Provides assessment of food intake data	3.3.1 Selects a suitable method and level of detail for assessing intake of foods and nutrients identified by referral, the client, previous history or epidemiological data 3.3.2 Is able to estimate nutrient intake for individuals using food composition tables and/or databases and compare with Nutrient Reference Values (NRVs) or estimated requirements 3.3.3 Is able to interpret nutrient intake for groups and populations using food composition tables and/or databases and compare with Nutrient Reference Values (NRVs) or estimated requirements 3.3.4 Uses food guidance systems to contribute to the assessment of the client's dietary intake
3.4 Provides assessment of nutritional status	3.4.1 Selects suitable methods for assessment of anthropometry and body composition 3.4.2 Is able to interpret anthropometric and body composition and nutritional assessment data using appropriate reference ranges 3.4.3 Recognises clinical signs of malnutrition
3.5 Assesses and assigns priorities to all data	3.5.1 Accurately interprets dietary, health, medical, anthropometric, and body composition data against standards relevant to the nutritional issues 3.5.2 Makes judgements about potential impact of health and medical, social, cultural, psychological, economic, personal and environmental factors on nutrition 3.5.3 Integrates assessment data in order to assign priorities for nutrition and resource planning
3.6 Draws justifiable conclusions from all data	3.6.1 Defines nutrition problems/diagnoses as a prelude to planning management 3.6.2 Documents the collection, analysis and assessment process as a basis for planning

Unit 4: Individual Case Management

Manages client-centred nutrition care for individuals

Elements	Performance criteria
4.1 Undertakes screening and assessment to identify and prioritise those at nutritional risk	4.1.1 Demonstrates awareness of the range of validated nutrition screening and assessment tools available, including strengths and limitations 4.1.2 Identifies and uses appropriate validated tools in nutrition screening and assessment 4.1.3 Includes appropriate follow-up timeline
4.2 Determines nutritional status using assessment data	4.2.1 Interprets available documentation to identify problems 4.2.2 Assesses anthropometric and other body composition data 4.2.3 Assesses clinical, biochemical and other biomedical parameters 4.2.4 Assesses dietary intake, food habits, mental health and well-being issues, physical activity and lifestyle habits
4.3 Makes appropriate nutrition diagnoses	4.3.1 Organises, interprets and prioritises data to undertake nutritional diagnoses 4.3.2 Refers to all available evidence to inform clinical judgement 4.3.3 Formulates and prioritises nutrition diagnoses
4.4 Prepares plan for achieving management goals in collaboration with client or carer and other members of health care team	4.4.1 Determines realistic goals for nutritional management in collaboration with client and other members of health care team 4.4.2 Identifies nutrition outcome measures and performance indicators 4.4.3 Develops dietary prescriptions and formulates meal plans and feeding regimens consistent with nutrition goals 4.4.4 Communicates food service and supply needs of individual clients to appropriate persons 4.4.5 Considers discharge planning and/or referral to other services

Elements	Performance criteria
4.5 Uses client-centred counselling skills to facilitate nutrition and lifestyle change and supports clients to self manage	4.5.1 Considers an environment conducive to effective counselling 4.5.2 Assists client to clarify issues, identify the barriers to resolution of the problem, and identify appropriate goals and strategies 4.5.3 Negotiates client oriented goals and strategies 4.5.4 Provides information and/or referral if necessary, and responds to client concerns 4.5.5 Evaluates process and outcomes of counselling with client and/or others including family members and carers
4.6 Implements nutrition care plan in collaboration with client or carer and other members of health care team	4.6.1 Selects the most suitable strategy in terms of feasibility and client outcome 4.6.2 Implements nutrition plan and a system for monitoring and review with client and other health care team members 4.6.3 Promotes physical activity guidelines in care plan with client and other health care team members 4.6.4 Participates in multi-disciplinary team activities (such as case conferencing) to achieve nutrition goals
4.7 Monitors progress of the individual's condition and care and adapts plan as necessary	4.7.1 Implements the evaluation strategies identified in the nutritional care plan 4.7.2 Gathers data throughout the care process so that an individual's progress can be monitored against performance indicators 4.7.3 Determines a timeline for follow-up of clients as necessary
4.8 Documents and communicates all steps of the process	4.8.1 Maintains clear and concise records, in accordance with the organisation's policy and legal requirements, of all facets of the nutrition care process 4.8.2 Formulates unambiguous instructions for other personnel involved in the delivery of nutrition care 4.8.3 Communicates the nutrition care plan to other members of the healthcare team as appropriate, including referring practitioners 4.8.4 Maintains statistics and other reports required of the organisation

Unit 5: Community & Public Health Nutrition and Advocacy for Food Supply

Plans, implements and evaluates nutrition programs* with groups, communities or populations as part of a team
(*Program refers to programs, projects or pilots)

Elements	Performance criteria
5.1 Conducts a needs assessment	5.1.1 Uses qualitative and/or quantitative methods to collect and analyse data to identify and inform program development and nutrition issues 5.1.2 Identifies individual, socio-economic, cultural and environmental determinants, including equity and social justice issues 5.1.3 Identifies, consults and engages key stakeholders and partners 5.1.4 Reviews relevant literature 5.1.5 Assesses and critically reviews priorities for action and strategy development based on assessment of data and available capacity 5.1.6 Clearly articulates and justifies conclusions and recommendations for action
5.2 Assesses opportunities to improve nutrition and food supply in a community or population group	5.2.1 Applies existing standards to identify opportunities to improve an aspect of the food supply 5.2.2 Applies food legislation and regulations to evaluate an aspect of the food supply 5.2.3 Assesses the nutrition implications of changes to the food supply on individuals, groups and populations including the impact on vulnerable groups 5.2.4 Identifies socio-cultural and environmental determinants of the food supply, relevant to the nutrition issue 5.2.5 Assesses and assigns priorities for action based on assessment of data and available capacity 5.2.6 Clearly articulates and justifies conclusions and recommendations for action
5.3 Plans nutrition programs with the population group	5.3.1 Identifies and contributes to the development of community and organisational capacity for program management and implementation 5.3.2 Develops program plans, that are relevant to the target group, which consider the social determinants of health 5.3.3 Develops program plans that incorporate goals, objectives and strategies relevant to identified determinants and needs assessment findings 5.3.4 Develops program plans that incorporate process, impact, outcome evaluation 5.3.5 Develops program plans that incorporate a communication strategy 5.3.6 Uses appropriate behaviour change, health promotion, social marketing, communication, community development and public health policy frameworks in the planning of nutrition programs 5.3.7 Demonstrates consideration of resource implications for community/public health programs 5.3.8 Considers the sustainability of the program

Plans, implements and evaluates nutrition programs* with groups, communities or populations as part of a team
(*Program refers to programs, projects or pilots)

Elements	Performance criteria
5.4 Develops plans to provide safe and nutritious food	5.4.1 Identifies goals for addressing nutrition issues in collaboration with stakeholders, where possible 5.4.2 Proposes modifications to improve nutrition and food standards including a practical time-frame 5.4.3 Identifies benefits, costs and potential savings, both economic and health related 5.4.4 Demonstrates consideration of sustainability issues, environmental and economic 5.4.5 Identifies risks and develops a basic risk management plan for a safe and nutritious food supply
5.5 Implements nutrition programs with the population group	5.5.1 Contributes to the implementation of a nutrition program 5.5.2 Modifies the implementation plan to accommodate changes
5.6 Makes recommendations on food and nutrition policy	5.6.1 Develops recommendations to improve food and nutrition policy in an aspect of the food supply 5.6.2 Advocates to improve nutritional quality or safety or food accessibility in an aspect of the food supply
5.7 Evaluates nutrition programs with the population group	5.7.1 Contributes to process, impact and outcome evaluation plans to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of a nutrition program 5.7.2 Critically reflects and makes recommendations about the nutrition program based on evaluation data
5.8 Documents and disseminates all steps of the process	5.8.1 Maintains clear and concise records of all program components 5.8.2 Considers confidentiality of information and records 5.8.3 Communicates outcomes of nutrition programs to relevant internal and external stakeholders 5.8.4 Provides handovers to relevant personnel as required in relation to program

Unit 6: Food Service Management

Manages components of a food service to provide safe and nutritious food

Elements	Performance criteria
6.1 Assesses opportunities to improve nutrition and food standards within a food service institution* (* Food service institution refers to an environment where clients are nutritionally dependent)	6.1.1 Uses qualitative and/or quantitative methods to collect and analyse data to identify food service and/or nutrition issues 6.1.2 Applies existing standards to evaluate available nutrients and nutritional adequacy and recommends strategies to improve nutrition in general and in therapeutic menus 6.1.3 Assesses the nutrition implications of food service systems on individuals and groups 6.1.4 Applies food legislation and regulations to develop and evaluate food service systems to maintain food safety 6.1.5 Identifies, consults and engages stakeholders and partners, where possible 6.1.6 Assesses, and assigns priorities for action based on assessment of data and available capacity 6.1.7 Clearly articulates and justifies conclusions and recommendations for action
6.2 Develops plans to provide safe and nutritious foods in a food service institution	6.2.1 Identifies goals for addressing food service issues in collaboration with stakeholders, where possible 6.2.2 Proposes modifications to improve food service including a practical time-frame 6.2.3 Identifies benefits, costs and potential savings, both economic and health related 6.2.4 Demonstrates consideration of sustainability issues, environmental and economic 6.2.5 Identifies risks and develops a basic risk management plan
6.3 Implements activities to support delivery of quality nutrition and food standards within a food service	6.3.1 Ensures nutrition information provided about food, recipe or menu is accurate 6.3.2 Prepares meal plans for individuals and groups, which meet nutritional, personal, cultural, sociological, psychological, socioeconomic needs and specific health needs, taking into account the ordering, preparation, service, availability and distribution of food 6.3.3 Applies these meal plans for groups in an institutional, commercial or community foodservice setting 6.3.4 Provides advice on appropriate ingredients and alternatives to achieve nutritional goals for general, diverse or therapeutic diets 6.3.5 Formulates, modifies or standardises recipes for general, diverse or therapeutic diets that are relevant to the production and distribution system within a food service 6.3.6 Recognises and supports the role of food service personnel in the delivery of nutrition care 6.3.7 Provides accurate and clear information to food service personnel and other health carers to allow implementation of plans
6.4 Evaluates and disseminates results of activities	6.4.1 Evaluates outcomes using standard benchmarks and procedures, where appropriate 6.4.2 Critically reflects on evaluation data in the context of plans, goals and implementation activities, where possible 6.4.3 Reports outcomes of activities to internal and external stakeholders, where possible, where appropriate 6.4.4 Communicates to effect practice change if required

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Unit 7: Research and Evaluation

Integrates research and evaluation principles into practice

Elements	Performance criteria
7.1 Adopts a questioning and critical approach in all aspects of practice	7.1.1 Formulates a clear understanding of the nature of a practice problem 7.1.2 Applies an evidence-based approach to practice 7.1.3 Identifies and selects appropriate research methods to investigate and resolve practice problems 7.1.4 Applies valid and relevant conclusions and recommendations to practice
7.2 Evaluates practice on an ongoing basis	7.2.1 Monitors and reviews the ongoing effectiveness of practice and modifies it accordingly
7.3 Applies the research process using appropriate research methods, ethical processes and procedures and statistical analysis	7.3.1 Critically reviews the literature 7.3.2 Utilises ethical procedures in the research process 7.3.3 Identifies and selects appropriate research methods to investigate and resolve practice problems 7.3.4 Collects and interprets information, including qualitative and quantitative data 7.3.5 Documents outcomes of research using the research process
7.4 Applies evaluation findings into practice	7.4.1 Applies evidence and judgement to food and nutrition issues 7.4.2 Disseminates outcomes of research in professional and scientific fora

Unit 8: Management and Organisation

Applies management principles in the provision of nutrition services, programs and products

Elements	Performance criteria
8.1 Applies organisational skills in the practice of nutrition and dietetics	8.1.1 Manages workload and resources to complete tasks within required timeframes 8.1.2 Applies the principles of personnel management, using principles of human resource management and industrial relations 8.1.3 Allocates resources (time, personnel, other) according to established priorities 8.1.4 Performs and manages administration tasks effectively (e.g. makes appointments, responds to referrals, maintains records and statistics)
8.2 Applies management principles in the practice of nutrition and dietetics	8.2.1 Applies the strategic or organisational planning process to the nutrition and dietetics service 8.2.2 Develops a case to justify program, service, product, or procedure 8.2.3 Understands and performs simple budgeting and cost control measures
8.3 Applies quality management principles to all aspects of professional practice	8.3.1 Identifies opportunities for service improvement 8.3.2 Develops recommendations for the review of systems or policies or procedures 8.3.3 Prepares and implements achievable quality activities, consistent with policy and procedures 8.3.4 Evaluates, documents and communicates outcomes of quality activities

Unit 9: *Professionalism, advocacy, innovation and leadership*

Demonstrates a professional, ethical and entrepreneurial approach advocating for excellence in nutrition and dietetics

Elements	Performance criteria
9.1 Demonstrates safe practice	9.1.1 Exercises professional duty of care in accordance with the DAA Code of Professional Conduct and the organisation's guidelines or protocols 9.1.2 Refers clients/patients/issues to appropriate professional when beyond own level or area of competence
9.2 Develops and maintains a credible professional role by commitment to excellence of practice	9.2.1 Complies with legislation and regulations which define ethical behaviour, including maintaining confidentiality 9.2.2 Accepts responsibility for and manages, implements and evaluates personal professional development 9.2.3 Demonstrates consistent, reflective practice in collaboration with peers and mentors 9.2.4 Promotes a high standard of nutrition care, while respecting the goals and roles of other professionals
9.3 Demonstrates professional leadership to promote the contribution of nutrition and dietetics to health and prevention of disease	9.3.1 Advocates for the role of nutrition and dietetics 9.3.2 Uses negotiation and conflict resolution skills to promote best practice 9.3.3 Identifies opportunities to collaborate with other professionals/organisations to improve nutrition outcomes 9.3.4 Demonstrates willingness to share information and act as a resource person to, and advocate for, colleagues, community and other agencies
9.4 Creates solutions which match and solve problems	9.4.1 Discusses and explores ideas with colleagues/others on an ongoing basis 9.4.2 Seeks external ideas 9.4.3 Demonstrates initiative by proactively developing solutions to problems
9.5 Advocates on behalf of individuals, groups and the profession to positively influence the wider political, social and commercial environment, about factors which affect eating behaviour and nutritional standards	9.5.1 Recognises the role of interdepartmental, interagency (government, non-government and professional) and industry co-operation to reduce barriers to healthy eating habits 9.5.2 Develops cooperative relationships with stakeholders in the food system to positively influence nutrition outcomes
9.6 Demonstrates cultural competency	9.6.1 Understands what is meant by cultural awareness with respect to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities and is aware of the skills required for communicating in a culturally respectful way 9.6.2 Has a working knowledge of the nutrition issues and diet related diseases impacting on the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people from CALD communities 9.6.3 Has an awareness of the current policy and implementation frameworks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD communities
9.7 Develops sustainable collaborative relationships and networks	9.7.1 Contributes effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team 9.7.2 Builds relationships with stakeholders 9.7.3 Acknowledges the different ways that different people may contribute to building or enhancing a team