

Evidence Guide for Accreditation of Dietetics Education Programs

Examples of evidence

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Dietitians Association of Australia
ABN 34 008 521 480

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Introduction

The *Evidence Guide for Accreditation of Dietetics Programs* (the Guide) is one of three documents relating to the accreditation of Australian dietetics education programs. The first is [the Accreditation Standards for Accreditation of Dietetics Education Programs](#) (the Standards) and the second is the [Processes for Accreditation of Dietetics Education Programs](#) (the Processes). This Guide is designed to provide support for Universities to demonstrate evidence of meeting the Standards in the process of accreditation. Universities may use their discretion to select alternate or additional pieces of evidence for submission as part of the accreditation process. The University Site Visit also forms part of evidence gathering for the accreditation review process.

It is intended that graduates of dietetics education programs develop and demonstrate competence and readiness to practice in the Australian context. The philosophy of the Standards has changed with the 2017 release from an input to an outcome-based approach; primarily focused on evidence of attainment of the learning objectives and outcomes of the degree program which include students' successful achievement competency against the [National Competency Standards](#).¹ When considering the evidence for submission in an Accreditation Application, emphasis should be on providing indicators of student outcomes rather than inputs. However, inputs may be necessary to demonstrate the proposed or demonstrated outcomes i.e. what was put in place to achieve the outcome. It is inevitable that in some cases the planned outcome will not have been achieved. In this case, the evidence provided should focus on the processes that have been implemented and how this will lead to achievement of the outcome in future. It is strongly encouraged that where possible Universities use documentation developed to demonstrate alignment with the [TEQSA Higher Education Standards and Australian Qualification Framework](#) used for external or internal review purposes.

It is acknowledged that language and terminology will differ between Universities, and this should not impact on the evidence provided. An attempt has been made to use generic language where possible. Universities are asked where possible to define terminology as part of their Accreditation Application to assist in clarity of the process.

Using the Evidence Guide

The Evidence Guide is intended for use in conjunction with the Indicative Curriculum (under development in 2017) by:

Universities to

- assist in compiling evidence to demonstrate meeting the Standards as part of an accreditation application;
- ascertain what outcome-focussed evidence looks like in the context of accreditation; and
- encourage Universities to further their emphasis on student outcomes achieved.

Review Teams to

- assist in assessing the evidence supplied by the University to demonstrate meeting the Standards;
- guide in seeking outcome-focussed evidence; and
- assist in gathering examples of outcome-based evidence which can add to the evidence framework.

Review of the document

The Evidence Guide will be updated on an annual basis, and full review completed in conjunction with review of the Standards and Processes. Universities will be provided opportunity to submit feedback on the Evidence Guide as part of the evaluation process for an accreditation review, but are also invited to submit feedback as desired via accreditation@daa.asn.au.

¹ Woods M. *Independent Review of Accreditation Systems within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for health professions*. Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council, 2017.

Standard 1: Governance

Standard	Examples of evidence
<p>1.1 Establishment of Program Advisory Committee (PAC) (or equivalent committee) to provide expert advisory opinion to the University.</p>	<p>1.1: Explanation (e.g. Governance chart) of how the PAC (or equivalent committee) sits within the overall governance of the program and how the PAC operates. For example, evidence to demonstrate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the PAC provides advice to University; • how this advice is considered; and • what changes have been made resulting from this advice and the outcomes of these on the program and students. <p>1.1.1 Terms of Reference of the PAC, and the outcomes that have been achieved by involving the various individuals on the PAC.</p> <p>1.1.2 Evidence of how the contributors to the PAC are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • able to provide the University with a view to practice and insight into any specific workplace issues, • are representative of different practice settings, and • appointed to the PAC via a transparent selection process, based on their expertise in a particular area of practice, including academic and curriculum planning experience. <p>1.1.3 Outcomes of these meetings and how this impacts on curricula and/or student outcomes.</p>
<p>1.2 Evidence of internal and external evaluation of the intended program outcomes.</p>	<p>Evidence of internal and external evaluation and how this information has been used to achieve or support intended program outcomes. For example, outcomes from</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subject and/or program experience questionnaires; • details of retention and attrition rates; • student evaluations of teaching and learning; • outcomes of quality improvement processes enacted to improve results; and • benchmarking of information against national averages.
<p>1.3 Mapping of entry routes to the program</p>	<p>Policies and procedures that show the decision-making for the various entry points in to the program, and outcomes of how this is a rigorous process. For example, most recent application of the policy and procedure for advanced standing/credit and/or for assessing pre-requisites for post-graduate programs.</p>

Standard 2: Staffing

Standard	Examples of evidence
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2.1 Discipline Lead	<p>Evidence of outcomes achieved by the Discipline Lead (or equivalent position) in relation to Standard 2.1a-e, i.e. what the DL has been able to achieve in their role/is planning to achieve and how is/will this impact on student outcomes. Evidence to support demonstrating this Standard may include the following for the current Discipline Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Performance Indicators of the Discipline Lead; and • Curriculum Vitae. <p>The University may also consider submitting evidence of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support provided to the Discipline Lead to achieve outcomes; • leadership and input to the broader school structure and outcomes of this; and • professional mentoring of staff.
2.2, 2.3 Sufficient staffing to deliver expert teaching and lead the core areas of dietetic practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of current staff and how this is working to achieve outcomes for students, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ full time equivalence; ○ APD status; and ○ teaching/research/administrative responsibility (including subject coordination) to ensure sufficient breadth to meet the requirements of the program. • Brief Curriculum Vitae (4-5 pages) for each staff member including qualifications, summary of area of expertise, previous relevant professional work experience. • Mapping of key skills and expertise of individual staff to the needs of the curriculum.
2.4 Staff member with significant research experience	<p>Evidence to demonstrate a strong research profile and the outcomes of this staff member on the development of research capacity within the area of nutrition and dietetics. Evidence may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum Vitae; • list of publications and grants; • research leadership/mentoring; and • information regarding Higher Degree Research completions/supervision.
2.5 Demonstration of knowledge and expertise in the teaching area	<p>Evidence of how staff involved in teaching the program assist in achieving learning outcomes for students. For example, detail and evaluation of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • depth and breadth of staff and evidence of expertise, both dietetics and education, experience linked to the curriculum; • where in the program guest lecturers are used; • processes for oversight of content to ensure that it is meeting the learning outcomes, including managing staff that are external to the N&D discipline; • process to ensure currency in content knowledge; • demonstration of CPD in relevant areas of expertise; • process to ensure expertise in teaching area e.g. peer review or other assessment; and • learning and teaching opportunities for staff.

Standard 3: Resources

Standard	Examples of evidence
3.1 Physical and electronic resources	<p>Evidence of how dietetics-specific resources are used in the curriculum to achieve student outcomes. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• description and use in the curriculum;• evidence of access to the resource;• explanation and evidence for how the resource is used to achieve student outcomes; and• evidence of integration of resources. <p>It is suggested that this section refer to subject outlines supplied as part of Standard 4.1.</p>

Standard 4: Curriculum

Standard	Examples of evidence
4.1 Teaching and learning that allows achievement of National Competency Standards ² (NCS).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program structure and details and rationale for any planned changes. • Mapping of the way in which the curriculum addresses each of the competencies outlined in the NCS, including where and how each competency is developed and assessed. Demonstration through the mapping document of how the curriculum and the specific assessment tasks scaffold learning from acquiring underlying knowledge through to integration of knowledge and skills in the demonstration of competence. • Evidence of student preparedness for professional placement. • Current subject outlines and assessment tasks where relevant.
4.2 and 4.3 Human Biosciences and Food and Nutrition Science content.	<p><i>Explanation</i></p> <p>The human bioscience and food and nutrition science content requirements described in Standard 4.3 are intended to specify learning that requires the student to acquire foundational knowledge prior to the integration and application of this knowledge in more advanced subject content e.g. foundational chemistry knowledge is acquired prior to the requirement to apply this knowledge to biochemistry content. This may be achieved through instructional design whereby this content is acquired and assessed in several subjects or via a course design in which the content is delivered and assessed in a discrete subject. This is consistent with prerequisite requirements for subject enrolment.</p> <p><i>Guide</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of content that meets the EFSTL described in Standard 4.3, how the content scaffolds and outcomes of students studying this content. This may be evidenced by the mapping provided in Standard 4.1.
4.4 Student compliance to 4.2 for Postgraduate programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that each enrolled Postgraduate student has completed the pre-requisite requirements outlined in 4.3 e.g. spreadsheet to show the undergraduate degree completed and individual subjects that meet requirements, as per the policy and procedures provided in 1.3.
4.5 Final assessment of competence.	<p><i>Explanation</i></p> <p>Competence can be demonstrated in a wide range of simulated and work-based experiences. Students should be provided a broad range of experience, including observational placements, prior to commencing their professional placement program.</p> <p>The NCS with Guide³ provides definitions for key terms in the performance criteria, and also provides examples of strategies to support the development of competence. Competency assessment may involve the student in providing examples of how they believe they have met competence.</p> <p><i>Guide</i></p> <p>Evidence of the process for assessing competency and the outcomes of this process. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the role of university staff and placement supervisors in the final assessment of competence; • evidence gathered to demonstrate of competency (self-assessment), for example via a Portfolio;

² Dietitians Association of Australia, National Competency Standards for Dietitians in Australia. 2015. (Available from <http://daa.asn.au/ncs/>)

³ Dietitians Association of Australia, National Competency Standards with Guide. 2015. (Available from <http://daa.asn.au/ncs/>)

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• any relevant University assessment policies and procedures for specific subjects and the impact of these on the outcomes for students; and• outline of criteria against which students are assessed in subject outlines (it is suggested that this section refer back to 4.1 for subject outlines). |
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Standard 5: Professional Placement Program

Standard	Examples of evidence
5.1 100 Placement days.	<p>Evidence that each student completes a minimum 100 placement days. This may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a placement schedule showing when in the curriculum each student completes their 100 days of placement; and • explanation of how the placement schedule provides students with readiness to practice in the contemporary Australian context.
5.2 Appropriate breadth and depth of experience on placement.	<p>Evidence that placement sites used as part of the program provide students with adequate opportunity to meet the NCS. This may be evidenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of each placement site, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ criteria by which the University assessed the site for appropriateness for placement; and ○ learning outcomes achieved at the site. • The way in which placement structure and competency assessment is linked to curriculum and individual subject outlines, including assessment of final competence (it is suggested that this refer back to the curriculum mapping in 4.1). • For project-based placements, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ criteria for projects and process for approval; and ○ description of projects completed/to be completed by students.⁴ <p><i>Examples of Appropriate Settings</i></p> <p>Settings that enable the development and demonstration of competence of students in Medical Nutrition Therapy as described in Standard 5.2a may include but is not limited to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acute care facilities, • ambulatory care settings such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ out-patient clinics, ○ day clinics, and ○ private practice. <p>Settings that enable the development and demonstration of competence of students in the delivery of food service systems as described in Standard 5.2b may include but is not limited to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acute care facilities, • residential aged-care facilities, • boarding schools, • military bases, • correctional facilities, and • other facilities with clients dependent on the food service provided. <p>Settings that enable the development and demonstration of competence of students in public health nutrition as described in 5.2c may include but is not limited to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public health units,

⁴ Review Teams will request full copies of student project reports to be made available at the University Site Visit stage.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health promotion centres, • schools, • non-government organisations, • community health centres, and • Aboriginal health units.
5.3 Appropriate Governance structure in place at placement sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of the documentation that is used to establish a formal agreement e.g. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ evidence that the site agrees to provide students an experience to meet the NCS in a safe environment. ○ number and timing of student attendance at each site; ○ insurance agreements. • Policies and procedures for managing placements and the outcomes of these on students' development of competence including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ placement manuals and how these are used; ○ processes for clinical education; ○ examples of where processes have been challenged and how this was managed; and ○ systems for managing placements sites that provide less than adequate experience for students.
5.4 All persons involved in placement must be adequately prepared.	<p>Details and evaluation of the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • process for ensuring preparedness of each person; and • policy and process for provision of training, workshops or orientation to assessing student competence.
5.5 Dietetic supervisors responsible for assessment have full APD status.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indication of current Full APD status and the process for monitoring this.
5.6 Engagement between University and placement sites.	<p>Details and outcomes of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication policy and process with placement sites; and • protocols for escalation of issues, and examples of where this has occurred.
5.7 Documented procedures for placement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of procedures and how these are communicated between the University and placement sites. For example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ placement manuals; ○ contact protocols; ○ management of roles and responsibilities; and ○ assessment and other procedures.
5.8 University responsibility for setting learning outcomes, and verifying final assessment of competence of individual students against the NCS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment plan that supports students' transition to practice. • Policy and procedures for managing instances where students do not meet placement requirements, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ criteria for failing to meet placement requirements, and ○ examples of remediation planning.
5.9 Non-domestic Placement Approval. ⁵	As per 5.10.

⁵ See Section 5 of the [Processes for Accreditation of Dietetics Education Programs](#) for the Non-Domestic Placement Sites Approval Process.

5.10 Equivalence of non-domestic placements to the Australian context.	<p>This relates to the Non-Domestic Placement Site (NDPS) Approval Process, which requires evidence to be submitted demonstrating equivalence a NDPS to Australian sites. Examples of evidence may include those listed under Standard 5.2, and details and impact on student outcomes of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policies and procedures where appropriate; • benchmarking activities; and • details of supervisor experience and APD status.
5.11 For students who complete approved non-domestic placements, the final 25% percent (or greater) of placement must occur in Australia in acute or ambulatory care setting.	As per 5.1.
5.12 Final assessment must occur in English and in Australia	As per 5.1.

Standard 6: International Students

Standard	Examples of evidence
6.1 and 6.2 Assessment of overseas qualifications via the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), and for English language proficiency.	Evidence of process and governance for assessment of international students for entry in to the program. For example <ul style="list-style-type: none">• governance structure showing who is involved in the decision making process;• evidence of how the process achieves equivalence for international to domestic students upon entry; and• IELTS requirement (or equivalent) for international student entry to the program and evidence for this cut-off.

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

APD: Accredited Practising Dietitian.

AQF: Australian Qualifications Framework.

Discipline Lead: The senior person responsible for providing leadership, and mentoring, but not necessarily managing, the other academics in the discipline.

IELTS: International English Language Testing System.

NCS: National Competency Standards.

NDPS: Non-Domestic Placement Site.

PAC: Program Advisory Committee.

Subject: A specific unit of study within a dietetics program (also known as “unit” or course”).

TEQSA: Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency.