



Ag Rialáil Gairmithe Sláinte
agus Cúraim Shóisialaigh

Regulating Health +
Social Care Professionals

Dietitians Registration Board

Criteria and Standards of Proficiency for Education and Training Programmes

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Contents Page

Background.....	4
About this document.....	5
Supporting CORU documentation.....	5
Guiding principles.....	6
Criteria for the approval and monitoring of education and training programmes.....	7
1 Qualifications for entry to the Register	8
2 Admission onto a programme	9
3 Programme management and resources	10
4 Learning resources and student support mechanisms	11
5 Policy and procedures for quality assurance	12
6 Curriculum design and development	13
7 The assessment strategy	14
8 Practice placements	15
Standards of proficiency	17
Domain 1 Professional autonomy and accountability	18
Domain 2 Interpersonal and professional relationships	21
Domain 3 Effective communication	22
Domain 4 Personal and professional development	24
Domain 5 Provision of quality services	25
Domain 6 Knowledge, understanding and skills	28
Glossary of terms.....	32

Background

The Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005(as amended) (HSCP Act, 2005) provides for the establishment of a Dietitians Registration Board, whose functions include establishing and maintaining a Dietitians Register.

Registration will allow a person to use the title Dietitian. Statutory registration is fundamental to the delivery of quality and accountability in the provision of dietetics and will ensure that members of the public are guided, protected and informed, so that they can be confident that dietitian providing services are properly regulated and qualified for the job.

This system of statutory regulation is designed to ensure professional conduct and the maintenance of high standards of professional education and training among dietitians, regardless of whether they work in the public or private sector or are self-employed.

The object of the Dietitians Registration Board is to protect the public by fostering high standards of professional conduct and professional education, training and competence among dietitians registrants (HSCP Act, 2005: Section 27(1)). To this end the Act makes provision for:

1. the approval of education and training programmes (HSCP Act, 2005: Section 48)
2. the monitoring of continuing suitability of education and training programmes (HSCP Act, 2005: Section 49)

The Dietitians Registration Board sets out the requirements for approval of dietetic programmes (HSCP Act, 2005: Section 48). An approved programme means that the programme has satisfied the Dietitians Registration Board criteria for approval and that students who successfully complete the programme meet the Standards of Proficiency for the profession and as a result are eligible to apply to join the Register.

Higher education institutions (HEI) in the Republic of Ireland that offer programmes leading to qualifications recognised for the purpose of registration of Dietitians will be eligible to apply to the Dietitians Registration Board for approval of these programmes. Approved programmes are subject to monitoring on an on-going basis.

Full details about the approval and monitoring of programmes can be found in the document Approval and Monitoring Process.

About this document

This document sets out the criteria for the approval of programmes and the standards of proficiency required of graduates for the safe and effective practice of the profession. These are the criteria and standards of proficiency against which a programme will be assessed. The Registration Board is responsible for conducting approval visits to education providers to ensure that their programmes meet the criteria and standards of proficiency. If a programme meets the required standards it will be granted approval and will then be subject to on-going monitoring and review.

Section 2 sets out the criteria for the approval of a programme under 8 headings. Each criterion is accompanied by a number of indicators which are used to evaluate if the criterion is being met by the provider.

Section 3 sets out the standards of proficiency for the profession. The standards explain the key obligations and are accompanied by specific indicators which are used in the evaluation process.

The approval and monitoring process is detailed in a separate CORU document.

Supporting CORU documentation

The following documents are to be read in conjunction with each other:

- Criteria and Standards of Proficiency for Education and Training Programmes – Guidance for Education Providers
- Approval and Monitoring Process
- Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for the profession.

These documents can be downloaded from www.coru.ie.

Guiding Principles

- a) The principles which underpin the work of the Dietitians Registration Board in relation to the approval and subsequent monitoring of programmes include:
- b) The interests of the public need to be safeguarded by fostering high standards of professional education, training and competence in the dietetic profession.
- c) Providers of programmes have primary responsibility for the quality of their programmes and its assurance.
- d) Institutional autonomy should be respected.
- e) Use should be made, wherever possible, of the outcomes of institutions' own internal and external quality assurance processes.
- f) Transparency and the use of external expertise in the approval and monitoring of programmes are important.
- g) The criteria and standards of proficiency should be developed in consultation with stakeholders.
- h) Processes should be fit for purpose and not place an unnecessary burden on institutions.
- i) The principle underpinning the approval process is based on self-evaluation by providers.
- j) Processes should not stifle diversity and innovation.

Criteria for approval of education and training programmes

The role of the Dietitians Registration Board in relation to the approval of programmes is distinct from the academic accreditation which programmes already undergo within their institution. Academic accreditation is based on the suitability of a programme for the award of a qualification. Professional accreditation/approval is a judgement as to whether a programme prepares the graduate for entry into that profession. The latter is distinguished by the existence of criteria that are specific to that profession, these having been defined in consultation with members of that profession and other relevant parties.

The criteria for approval of education and training programmes for the purpose of registration of Dietitians are set out in this document under eight headings. They will be explained in more detail in the following pages. In addition to the eight criteria, a number of indicators are provided to identify for the provider the evidence that will be required to show that the programme meets the criteria for approval.

The eight headings are:

- 1 Qualifications for entry to the Dietitians register
- 2 Admission onto a programme
- 3 Programme management and resources
- 4 Learning resources and student support mechanisms
- 5 Policy and procedures for quality assurance
- 6 Curriculum design and development
- 7 The assessment process
- 8 Practice placements

The document **Criteria and Standards of Proficiency for the Approval of Education and Training Programmes – Guidance for Education Providers**, is available to support providers when preparing for their first approval visit and subsequent monitoring of programmes.

1. Level of qualifications for entry to the register

Criterion:

This criterion is concerned with the minimum academic qualifications that applicants will be required to hold in order to apply to register with the Registration Board.

The threshold entry route (BSc Hons in Human Nutrition and Dietetics) to the register will be determined by the Dietitians Registration Board and will be the following:

NFQ Level 8, honours Bachelor of Science degree in Human Nutrition and Dietetics

2. Admission onto a programme

Criterion:

There should be explicit information regarding the requirements for admission onto a programme, setting out minimum entry requirements, application procedures and selection procedures.

Indicators:

- a) Clear and comprehensive information for prospective students about the programme and procedures for admission to the programme, including direct applications, is available as web-based materials and in hard copy.
- b) The mechanism for student admissions to the programme ensures that the stated entry requirements are met.
- c) Clarity in relation to entry requirements including Garda vetting, vaccinations, health and safety and occupational health requirements.
- d) Procedures for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), if applicable.
- e) Institutional policy on equal opportunities in relation to applicants and students.
- f) Information documenting the collection, analysis and use of relevant information on admissions to the programme.

3. Programme management and resources

Criterion:

Programmes should be well organised, have clear management and operational structures, adequate and appropriate staffing and the physical and monetary resources to support the teaching and learning activities, research activity, professional development, etc.

Indicators:

- a) Confirmation of the long term security of the programme within an institution.
- b) Commitment to adequate financial support for the programme for the five-year approval period.
- c) The named person with direct responsibility for the programme has an appropriate dietetic qualification and experience.
- d) The organisational and staffing structure supporting the management of the programme is explicit.
- e) Structures are in place to facilitate the participation of staff and students in relevant deliberation and decision making processes.
- f) The staff involved with teaching the students have appropriate qualifications, full knowledge and understanding of the subject they are teaching and the skills and experience to transmit their knowledge effectively to students in a range of teaching contexts and can access feedback on their own performance.
- g) The dietetic members of the core programme team and the practice education team are required to be registered on the Dietitians register. Education providers will be required to provide details for the core programme team and the practice education team. This indicator will take effect following the close of the transitional period*.
- h) A mechanism for staff development, including practice educators that prepare staff to deliver the educational programme is declared.
- i) Appropriate and adequate resources/facilities to meet the teaching and learning needs of the students are available.
- j) The process of monitoring student attendance is declared, together with the implications of non-attendance of the academic programme and practice placement.

**The transitional period runs for two years from the date of opening of the register. The transitional period is necessary to give existing practitioners sufficient opportunity to apply for registration and satisfy the registration board that they meet the requirements.*

4. Learning resources and student support mechanisms

Criterion:

Resources available for the support of student learning are adequate and appropriate for the programme.

Indicators:

- a) Adequate and appropriate learning resources are available and accessible to students.
- b) Adequate and appropriate practice placement resources are available to meet the requirements of students to achieve these standards of proficiency.
- c) Support mechanisms are provided for students, designed with their needs in mind, and responsive to feedback from those who use the student services.
- d) A formal complaints procedure is in place for students.
- e) Institutions routinely monitor and review the effectiveness of the support services available to students and implement necessary improvements.

5. Policy procedures for quality assurance

Criterion:

Providers should explicitly commit themselves to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality assurance and quality improvement. The strategy, policy and procedures should have formal status within the institution and be publicly available and they should include a role for students and other stakeholders.

Indicators:

- a) The existence and availability of reviews of the programme, for example, internal quality assurance reports, external quality audits, academic review by accrediting bodies, professional body reviews, external examiners' reports, student feedback and reviews by former students and employers.
- b) An appropriate policy on the provider's internal quality assurance system.
- c) Grievance and appeals procedures are in place for students.

6. Curriculum design and development

Criterion:

Curriculum design should reflect current evidence-informed and research based educational theory and dietetics practice. The curriculum model chosen should be dynamic and flexible to allow for changes in the dietetics profession, health and social care delivery and the development of evidence based/informed practice.

Indicators:

- a) The curriculum is designed to meet the standards of proficiency (as outlined in Section 3) agreed by the Dietitians Registration Board.
- b) Curriculum design and development is guided by professional knowledge of the subject that is evidence based.
- c) The curriculum development team must include dietetic personnel in education and in practice of the profession and representation from dietetic employers across the spectrum. The team should consult with relevant stakeholders such as other health and social care professionals, employers, service users, researchers and policy makers and the professional body.
- d) The curriculum utilises a range of teaching and learning strategies to assist in the development of knowledgeable, competent, reflective practitioners who are willing to accept personal and professional accountability for evidenced informed practice, and who are equipped with life-long skills for problem solving and self-directed learning.
- e) The curriculum design reflects a variety of methods of teaching and learning and provides a balance between lectures, tutorials, workshops, small group interactions, demonstrations, practical work and self-directed learning.
- f) The curriculum design reflects evidence of inter-professional education and inter-disciplinary co-operation designed to lead to improved collaborative, practice between health and social care professionals to achieve better outcomes for service users and other health workers.
- g) The curriculum is designed to describe in detail the key aspects of the knowledge, skills, competencies and professional attributes in order to ensure that new graduates are able to satisfy the standards of proficiency (as outlined in Section 3).
- h) The module descriptors/course outlines the aims, learning outcomes, syllabus content, student contact hours, student effort/self-directed learning hours and the assessment strategies.
- i) The curriculum articulates how the student is enabled to achieve the expected learning outcomes of the programme.

7. The assessment strategy

Criterion:

Assessment of learning is a continuous process and demonstrates a balanced and integrated distribution throughout the programme. Students should be assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently.

Indicators:

- a) The assessment strategy and design ensures that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the intended learning outcomes of the programme and the standards of proficiency set out for the dietetic profession.
- b) Assessment techniques are appropriate for their purpose, whether diagnostic, formative or summative.
- c) Assessment techniques have clear and published criteria for marking.
- d) Assessments of students are undertaken by people who understand the role of assessment in the progression of students towards the achievement of the standards of proficiency.
- e) Core assessments do not rely on the judgements of single examiners.
- f) There are policies covering student absence, illness and other mitigating circumstances.
- g) Examinations and assessments are conducted securely in accordance with the institution's stated procedures.
- h) Assessments are subject to administrative verification checks to ensure the accuracy of the procedures.
- i) Students are fully informed about the assessment strategy being used for their programme, what examinations or other assessment methods they will be subject to, what will be expected of them, and the criteria that will be applied to the assessment of their performance.
- j) Information is provided on the procedures for obtaining results, viewing scripts, getting feedback from lecturers, making an appeal and supplementary examinations.

8. Practice placement

Criterion:

Practice placement learning is mandatory and an essential part of any dietetic educational programme leading to registration as a dietitian. It facilitates the integration of theory with practice in graded developmental stages throughout the programmes.

Practice placement learning enables the student to acquire the standards of proficiency for the dietetic profession and become safe, competent practitioners willing to accept personal and professional accountability for their work. Learning initially developed within the academic component of the dietetic profession must be integrated into practice through the experience and supervision offered by structured placements within dietetic settings. A partnership approach between the education provider and the dietetics practice placement is essential. Practice placement education is an integral component of professional education and training programmes.

Indicators:

- a) The number of placement hours chosen must be appropriate to the design of the curriculum and ensure that the students learning experience enables them to meet the Standards of Proficiency. Students must undertake not less than 1,000 hours of practice placements.
- b) The site of the practice placement should reflect the breadth and diversity and working environments of graduate dietitians but must include some time in acute hospital and in primary care dietetics placements, public health and/or health promotion and food service institutions.
- c) The number, duration and range of practice placements should be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the standards of proficiency. At least one placement should be of sufficient length to enable continuity of learning and demonstrate consistency of performance and case load management in a clinical setting. This placement should usually be not less than 400 hours and should be completed within the final year of the programme.
- d) The selection of practice placements provided by the education provider in conjunction with service agencies reflects the scope of the settings, including any statutory settings, in which the profession normally operates.
- e) The education provider will have a set of criteria for the selection of placements to ensure quality learning environments for students. The educator will work in partnership with the practice placement provider and will make a formal agreement that clearly sets out the responsibilities of both parties on an annual basis.
- f) On-going reviews of practice placements will ensure that placements provide a safe and supportive environment, high quality professional practice and opportunities for the student to experience direct contact with service users. Students and the practice education team will have a role in this review process.

- g) Supervision will be provided to students by the practice education team.
- h) Students and the practice education team will be fully informed and prepared for the practice placements.
- i) While on placement, appropriate support and supervision should be maintained with the student by the practice education team.
- j) Programme providers must ensure that practice educators will have relevant practice experience and competence in the area which they are supervising.
- k) The core dietetics team and the dietetics practice education team are required to be registered on the Dietitians Register. Education providers will be required to provide details of the dietetics team and all other members of the core programme team and the practice education team. This indicator will take effect following the close of the transitional period.
- l) Support and training will be available to the practice education team to develop their practice education skills in relation to facilitating students on placement
- m) Student allocation to practice placements is based on the need to integrate theory and practice and to facilitate the progressive development of the standards of proficiency for the profession. The standards of proficiency are the knowledge, skills, competencies and professional qualities that are required of graduates from an approved programme for the safe and appropriate practice of the profession. They are the minimum standards for entry to the profession. The standards and proficiency learnt in this way should be transferable between situations, contexts and institutions.
- n) Pre-placement requirements must be in place including Garda vetting, vaccinations, health and safety and occupational health requirements.
- o) Policies and procedures are in place for the assessment of students on practice placements, including appeal mechanisms for failed placements.
- p) A code of conduct should be in place for students whilst on placement.

Standards of proficiency

This section sets out the standards of proficiency for the dietetic profession. These are the standards required of graduates for the safe and effective practice of dietetics. They are the minimum standards necessary to protect the public. The standards of proficiency have specific-indicators, which provide more detail for providers.

The standards of proficiency should not be interpreted by providers as being detailed programme specifications. They do not specify the courses of study a learner must take. Rather, they should be seen as a reference for the development of programmes and a framework for the elaboration of intended learning outcomes. A diverse range of potential programmes and programme learning outcomes may be compatible with these standards.

The standards of proficiency are grouped under six domains:

- Domain 1: Professional autonomy and accountability
- Domain 2: Interpersonal and professional relationships
- Domain 3: Effective communication
- Domain 4: Personal and professional development
- Domain 5: Provision of quality services
- Domain 6: Knowledge, understanding and skills.

Domain 1: Professional Autonomy and accountability

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

1. Practise within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession to the highest standard.

Specific Indicator

- a) Act in the best interest of service users at all times and within the boundaries of their profession.
- b) Respect and, so far as possible, uphold the rights, dignity and autonomy of every service user including their role in the diagnostic, therapeutic and social care process.
- c) Provide and articulate professional and ethical practice.
- d) Practise in accordance with current legislation applicable to the work of their profession.
- e) Contribute to the development of effective, ethical and equitable policy and practise, regarding issues addressed by the Dietetic profession.
- f) Understand the implications of duty of care for service users and professionals.
- g) Understand the principles of professional regulation and the provisions of the Dietitians Registration Board *Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics*.
- h) Manage themselves, their practise and that of others in accordance with the Dietitians Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics.

Standard of Proficiency

2. Practise in a non-discriminatory way.

Specific Indicator

- a) Acknowledge and respect the differences in beliefs and cultural practices of individuals or groups.
- b) Promote equality and respect, without prejudice, and practise in a culturally competent, non-discriminatory and inclusive manner.
- c) Assist in the promotion and implementation of policies and systems to protect the health, safety, welfare, equality and dignity of service users, staff and volunteers with particular reference to the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

Domain 1: Professional Autonomy and accountability

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

3. Understand the importance of and be able to maintain confidentiality.

Specific Indicator

- a) Respect the confidentiality of service users and use information only for the purpose for which it was given.
- b) Understand confidentiality within a team setting.
- c) Understand the limits of confidentiality particularly in relation to child protection, vulnerable adults and elder abuse.
- d) Be aware of data protection, freedom of information and other relevant legislation.
- e) Understand the potential conflict that can arise between confidentiality and whistle-blowing.

Standard of Proficiency

4. Understand the importance of and be able to obtain informed consent.

Specific Indicator

- a) Demonstrate competence in gaining informed consent to carry out assessments or provide treatment/interventions.
- b) Understand issues associated with informed consent with individuals who are not capable of giving informed consent.
- c) Maintain accurate records relating to consent.
- d) Respect the rights of the service user.

Standard of Proficiency

5. Be able to exercise a professional duty of care/service.

Specific Indicator

- a) Recognise personal responsibility for one's actions and be able to justify reasons for professional decisions made.
- b) Understand the need to maintain the highest standards of personal/professional conduct.

Domain 1: Professional Autonomy and accountability

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

6. Be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgment.

Specific Indicator

- a) Know the limits of their practice and know when to seek advice or refer to another professional.
- b) Recognise the need for consultation and/or supervision.
- c) Be able to assess a situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the situation.
- d) Be able to initiate appropriate resolution of problems and be able to exercise personal initiative.
- e) Recognise that they are personally responsible for and must be able to justify their decisions.

Standard of Proficiency

7. Recognise the need for effective self-management of workload and resources and be able to practice accordingly.

Specific Indicator

- a) Understand the demands that are placed on the professional practitioner in a given field and the skills required to practise effectively with the workload and available resources.
- b) Recognise the responsibility of the professional practitioner to take appropriate action where performance of self and/or others is compromised.

Standard of Proficiency

8. Understand the obligation to maintain fitness to practise.

Specific Indicator

- a) Understand the need to practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice.
- b) Understand the importance of maintaining their physical and mental health.
- c) Understand the importance of keeping skills and knowledge up to date over a lifetime of practise.

Domain 2: Interpersonal and professional relationships

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

1. Work, in partnership, with service users and their relatives/carers, and other professionals.

Specific Indicator

- a) Demonstrate capacity to build and sustain professional relationships as both an independent practitioner and collaboratively as a member of a team.
- b) Demonstrate capacity to engage service users and carers in assessment and treatment to meet their needs and goals.
- c) Recognise and understand the concepts of power and authority in relationships with service users.
- d) Be able to make appropriate referrals.

Standard of Proficiency

2. Contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of teams (multi-disciplinary, inter-professional, multi-service or inter-agency)

Specific Indicator

- a) Demonstrate professional collaboration, consultation and decision making in multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary, multi-service and inter-agency teams.
- b) Demonstrate an understanding that professional relationships with professional colleagues can impact on service delivery and therefore should be based on mutual respect and trust.
- c) Demonstrate ability to maintain standards of care in situations of personal incompatibility.

Domain 3: Effective communication

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

1. Demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating information, listening, giving advice, instruction and professional opinion.

Specific Indicator

- a) Understand how communication skills affect the interaction with service users and clients and how channels of communication should be modified to address and take account of factors such as gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community and socio-economic status.
- b) Understand the need to provide service users (or people acting on their behalf) with the information necessary in an appropriate format to enable them to make informed decisions.
- c) Be able to select, move between and use appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication, including listening skills, with service users and others.
- d) Demonstrate an appropriate use of information technology.
- e) Demonstrate the ability to produce clear, concise and objective written communication and reports.
- f) Understand the importance of and demonstrate effective communication with other colleagues (inter-disciplinary communication).
- g) Understand the importance of communicating to management any identified risk to service users and/or those involved in their care, in line with the policies and procedures in force in the workplace.
- h) Recognise the need to involve and know how to obtain an appropriate interpreter to assist clients/ service users with language difficulties.
- i) Be aware of the characteristics and consequences of verbal and non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by factors such as gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community and socio-economic status.

Domain 3: Effective communication

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

2. Understand the need for effective communication throughout the care of the service user

Specific Indicator

- a) Recognise the need to use interpersonal skills to facilitate the active participation of service users.
- b) Show effectiveness when communicating with service users and an ability to manage conflict and resistance.
- c) Demonstrate competence in presenting professional judgements and information in a variety of contexts.
- d) Use effective communication to build and maintain relationships.

Domain 4: Personal and professional development

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

1. Understand the role of reflective practice in relation to personal and professional development.

Specific Indicator

- a) Understand the importance of self-awareness and self-reflection.
- b) Be able to reflect critically on personal practice.
- c) Be aware of the need to ensure that personal life experiences and personal value systems do not impact inappropriately on one's decision making or actions.
- d) Understand the role, purpose and function of supervision and the importance of seeking supervision of practice.
- e) Actively avail of opportunities for feedback, mentoring and support from colleagues in order to continuously improve personal practice.
- f) Take responsibility for personal and professional development.
- g) Develop and critically review a personal development plan which takes account of personal and professional needs.
- h) Identify and avail of opportunities to promote professional development of self, colleagues and teams and the broader development of disciplines.
- i) Understand the role of performance management as part of on-going professional development and effective service delivery.
- j) Understand the role of continuing professional development and demonstrate commitment to life-long learning.
- k) Recognise the need to contribute to policy and development of the profession.

Domain 5: Provision for quality services

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

1. Be able to identify and assess service users needs.

Specific Indicator

- a) Be able to gather appropriate information.
- b) Select and use appropriate and specific assessment techniques: undertake and record a thorough, sensitive and detailed assessment, using appropriate techniques and equipment.
- c) Undertake or arrange investigations, as appropriate.
- d) Analyse and critically evaluate the information collected.

Standard of Proficiency

2. Formulate and deliver plans and strategies to meet identified needs of service users.

Specific Indicator

- a) Develop and implement appropriate plans, interventions and strategies, according to best available evidence, agreed national guidelines, protocols and pathways, where available.
- b) Identify needs and resources required to implement effective management/intervention of plans.
- c) Agree goals in partnership with service users where appropriate, based on individual needs.

Standard of Proficiency

3. Use research, reasoning and problem solving skills to determine appropriate action.

Specific Indicator

- a) Recognise the value of research in the systematic evaluation of practice and in developing evidence informed practice.
- b) Engage in evidence informed practice, evaluate practice systematically, and participate in audit/review procedures.
- c) Use a range of research and evaluative methodologies, including evidence based practice research.
- d) Demonstrate sound clinical/professional decision-making drawing on evidence, knowledge, experience, professional opinion and service user input.

- e) Recognise that they are personally responsible for and must be able to justify their decisions.
- f) Demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem solving.

Domain 5: Provision for quality services

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

- 4. Draw on appropriate knowledge and skills in order to make professional judgements.**

Specific Indicator

- Understand the need to adjust/adapt their practice as needed to take account of developments in knowledge and practice.
- Demonstrate a level of skill in the use of information technology appropriate the Dietetics profession.

Standard of Proficiency

- 5. Formulate specific and appropriate management plans including the setting of timescales.**

Specific Indicator

- Demonstrate an ability to formulate specific and appropriate advice tailored to individuals or groups.
- Understand the requirement to adapt practice to meet the needs of different groups distinguished by, for example, physical, psychological, environmental, cultural or socio-economic factors.

Standard of Proficiency

- 6. Conduct appropriate assessment/diagnostic or monitoring procedures, treatment, therapy or other actions safely and skillfully.**

Specific Indicator

- Understand the need to maintain the safety of both service users and those involved in their care.
- Empower service users to manage their well-being and recognise the need to provide advice to the patient/client/user on self-treatment with appropriate supports.

Domain 5: Provision for quality services

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

7. Implement best practice in record management.

Specific Indicator

- a) Maintain accurate, legible records and recognise the need to handle these records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines.
- b) Be aware and follow data protection requirements when maintaining records on service users.
- c) Understand the need to use accepted terminology in making records.

Standard of Proficiency

8. Critical evaluation of the impact of, or response to, the professional's actions.

Specific Indicator

Standard of Proficiency

9. Monitor and review the on-going effectiveness of planned activity and modify it accordingly.

Specific Indicator

- a) Gather information, including qualitative and quantitative data that help to evaluate the responses of service users to their interventions.
- b) Evaluate intervention plans using tools and recognised performance/outcome measures. Revise the plans as necessary, and where appropriate, in conjunction with the service user.
- c) Recognise the need to monitor and evaluate the quality of practice and the value of contributing to the generation of data for quality assurance and improvement of programmes, clinical audit and research.
- d) Recognise important factors and risk management measures, learn from adverse events and be able to disseminate learning.
- e) Make reasoned decisions to initiate, continue, modify or cease interventions/techniques/courses of action and record decisions and reasoning

Standard of Proficiency

10. Be able to evaluate, audit, and review practice.

Specific Indicator

- a) Understand the principles of quality assurance and quality improvement.
- b) Be aware of the role of audit and review in quality management, including the use of appropriate outcome measures.
- c) Monitor and evaluate performance by conducting regular audits and reviews in accordance with national guidelines/best practice and implement improvements based on the findings of these audits and reviews.
- d) Participate in quality assurance programmes where appropriate.
- e) Understand the value of reflective practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection including the evaluation of impact/response to the professional's actions.
- f) Recognise the value of case conferences and other methods of review.

Domain 6: Knowledge, understanding and skills

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

1. Know and understand the key concepts of the bodies of knowledge which are relevant to the profession.

Specific Indicator

- a) Demonstrate a critical understanding of relevant biological, behavioural, communications and social sciences; to include knowledge in the context of nutrition and dietetic practice, of:
- Human health and disease, disorder and dysfunction
 - Methods commonly used in scientific research, including the research process and critical evaluation of research papers
 - The evaluation of treatment/intervention efficacy
 - The basis for evidence-informed practice
 - Models of behavioural change, empowerment and health promotion
 - Appropriate educational and communication strategies
- b) Understand pre-clinical sciences in the context of nutrition and dietetic practice, including:
- Biochemistry
 - Genetics
 - Immunology
 - Microbiology
 - Pathophysiology
 - Pharmacology
 - Physiology
- c) Understand clinical sciences in the context of nutrition and dietetic practice, including:
- Clinical chemistry
 - Clinical haematology
 - Clinical immunology
 - Clinical microbiology
- d) Understand the following core elements of nutrition and dietetic practice, including:
- Research methodology
 - Nutritional sciences
 - Food and nutrition in the human life-cycle
 - Food consumption patterns
 - Nutritional analysis and interpretation of food intake records
 - Nutritional epidemiology
 - Public health nutrition
 - Clinical medicine, including the medical and surgical management of common medical and surgical disorders
 - Community dietetics
 - Clinical dietetics
 - Dietetic service management

Domain 6: Knowledge, understanding and skills

Graduates will:

- e) Understand food safety and food service in the context of nutrition and dietetic practice, including:
 - Food hygiene
 - Food science
 - Food skills
 - Factors influencing food choice
 - Menu planning
 - Food systems management

- f) Demonstrate professional collaboration in the context of nutrition and dietetic practice, to include, including:
 - The roles of other workers in the health services
 - Consultation and decision-making in multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary, multi-service and inter-agency teams

- g) Understand the theoretical basis of and the variety of approaches to assessment, diagnosis, intervention and monitoring in healthcare.

Domain 6: Knowledge, understanding and skills

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

- 2. Have knowledge of how professional principles are expressed and translated into action, and how to select or modify approaches to meet the needs of individuals, groups or communities**

Specific Indicator

- a) Be aware of national and international guidelines and standards of practice applicable to provision of high-quality nutrition and dietetic services.
- b) Appreciate the importance and application of evidence-based practice.
- c) Use appropriate assessment techniques to determine the nutrition and dietetic needs of service users, both individuals and groups.
- d) Be able to implement, evaluate and modify nutrition and dietetics interventions, using appropriate methods.
- e) Engage in effective group-work where appropriate, based on the needs of service users

Standard of Proficiency

- 3. Have the knowledge and skills required to maintain the safety of service users, staff and self.**

Specific Indicator

- a) Be aware of the applicable legislation (for example health and safety legislation, employment legislation) and relevant national guidelines.
- b) Work safely, including being able to select and implement appropriate hazard control and risk management, reduction or elimination techniques in a safe manner, in accordance with health and safety legislation, policy and regulation.
- c) Establish safe environments in which risk can be minimised for service users and staff.
- d) Understand, recognise and be able to manage risk associated with nutrition and dietetic interventions.
- e) Understand systems and the impact of their complexity on service user care.
- f) Understand the importance of communication with service users and staff in the context of health and safety.
- g) Undertake appropriate health and safety training.

Domain 6: Knowledge, understanding and skills

Graduates will:

Standard of Proficiency

4. Know and understand health services structures and functions.

Specific Indicator

- a) Structure and function of national health and social care services

Standard of Proficiency

5. Understand the role of nutrition and dietetics in the development and implementation of policy on health, food and nutrition.

Specific Indicator

- a) Have knowledge of national and international health legislation, policy and regulation
- b) Have knowledge of national and international food legislation, policy and regulation
- c) Structures and key stakeholders influencing legislation, policy and regulation
- d) Importance of advocacy on behalf of individuals and groups to positively influence the wider political, social and commercial environment relating to nutrition and health.

Glossary of Terms

Act	The Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005(as amended)
Appeal	An application for reconsideration of a decision regarding approval of a programme.
Approval	The status granted to a programme that meets the criteria set by the Registration Board for approval of education and training programmes.
Approval process	The process that leads to a decision as to whether a programme meets the criteria set for approval of education and training programmes.
Assessment Team	An assessment team, selected from the Panel of Assessors, to carry out the approval process for an education and training programme.
Award	An award which is conferred or granted by an awarding body and which records that a learner has acquired a standard of knowledge, skill or competence.
Biennial monitoring	A biennial process where a provider confirms that the approved programme continues to meet the criteria for approval.
Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics	This is a statement of the standards which registrants sign up to and agree to abide by in order to remain on the register.
Council	The Health and Social Care Professionals Council, established under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005 (as amended).
Criterion	A principle or standard that an education and training programme is judged by.
Curriculum	A structured plan to provide specific learning to support students' knowledge, skills, behaviours and associated learning experiences. The learning plan is generally organised as a sequence of modules. The curriculum includes the syllabus, teaching guides, an assessment plan and necessary learning resources.
Designated profession	A health or social care profession that is designated under Section 4(1) or Section 4(2) of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005.
Education Provider (Provider)	The institution that provides, organises and delivers an education and training programme.

Framework	The broad structure within which Registration Boards will operate in relation to the approval and monitoring of education and training programmes.
Food service institution	Food service institution refers to an environment where clients are nutritionally dependent.
Indicators	The means by which a provider shows how a programme satisfies the criteria for approval.
Mapping document	Template document to be completed by education provider.
Major change	A change to a programme of study that significantly alters the way the programme meets the criteria for approval of education and training programmes and therefore how the students will attain the standards of proficiency. Not all changes to a programme are major changes.
Monitoring	The process of ensuring the continuing suitability of approved education and training programmes.
National Framework of Qualifications	The single, nationally and internationally accepted entity, through which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other in a coherent way and which defines the relationship between all education and training awards.
Panel of Assessors	A panel appointed by a Registration Board comprising academics, practitioners, employers and service users.
Practice placement	A period of clinical or practical experience that forms part of an approved programme.
Practice educator	A person who is responsible for a student's education during the period of clinical or practical placement.
Practice education team	Persons who are responsible for a student's education during the period of clinical or practical placement. This includes the practice educator on site in the placement providers, including those dealing with practice placement education in dietetics.
Practice placement provider	The organisation that provides a period of clinical or practical experience for a student.
Profession specific proficiencies	Proficiencies added by a Registration Board related to a named profession.
Programme	The academic teaching, practice placements, assessment, qualification and other services provided by the education provider, which together forms the programme for approval purposes.

Quality assurance procedures	Formal procedures that are in place in an institution for the purpose of further improving and maintaining the quality of education and training provided by the institution.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Refers to recognition of learning that has taken place prior to entering a programme. Such prior learning may have been acquired through formal, non-formal or informal routes.
Register	A register established and maintained under Section 36 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005.
Registrant	In relation to a designated profession this means an individual whose name is currently on the register of members for that profession.
Registration Board	A board established under Section 26 of the Health and Social Care Professionals Act, 2005.
Self-study	The process whereby a provider of a programme examines and documents to a Registration Board how that programme meets the criteria for approval of programmes.
Service user	Anyone who uses or is affected by the services of registrants or students.
Standards of Proficiency	These are the standards required of graduates for the safe and effective practise of the professions regulated by the Council. They are the minimum standards necessary to protect the public.