

What is a dietitian?

Dietitians are health professionals who improve the health of individuals, groups and communities by applying the science of human nutrition. Dietitians use their skills and knowledge to modify diets to treat medical conditions, and to advise other health professionals about the role of diet in health care, as well as educate the general public about eating for health.

What does a dietitian do?

Dietitians may perform the following tasks:

- counsel and educate clients on appropriate diets, menu planning and preparation of food to treat an illness or disease and/or to enhance and maintain optimum health
- plan, evaluate and conduct nutrition intervention/education programs for vulnerable groups to promote appropriate dietary practice in the community
- plan appropriate diets and menus to meet the needs of individuals whose medical condition can be treated or controlled by diet therapy
- advise the food industry on product development and marketing strategies, and provide food and nutrition information to staff and the public
- develop resource materials for health professionals, the community, schools and the food industry
- participate in preventative health programs in industrial health centres, including monitoring canteens and providing nutrition education and counselling
- conduct and evaluate dietary studies and other food and nutrition-related research
- develop and administer food and nutrition policies for government, industry, health institutions and other organisations
- act as consultants to provide food service assessments, nutrition education, training and counselling, and research support to hospitals, nursing homes and other institutions

Is this you?

- interested in health and wellbeing
- someone who enjoys food and food preparation
- interest in science
- good communication skills
- able to work as part of a team.

'Diet can have a huge impact on a person's health, particularly during recovery from an illness, so dietitians play a very important part in the health care team. There are so many different opportunities for dietitians. I particularly enjoy working with children and building relationships with their families.'

Catherine O'Neil, Dietitian



- consult with medical practitioners and other health professionals to manage the dietary and nutrition needs of clients/patients
- work in multi-disciplinary clinics with children and families with medical conditions eg. cystic fibrosis to improve health outcomes of these clients.

Where can dietitians work in Queensland Health?

Dietitians employed by Queensland Health work in multi-disciplinary teams in hospital and community based settings, contributing to the promotion of health and the prevention and treatment of illness by optimising the nutrition of communities and individuals.

Dietitians work with patients in a broad range of clinical areas including:

- allergy
- cardiovascular
- diabetes
- gastroenterology
- head and neck
- nutritional Risk
- paediatrics
- neurology
- oncology.

How do you become a dietitian?

To become a dietitian you have to complete a four-year undergraduate degree in nutrition and dietetics. Prerequisite subjects, or assumed knowledge, in English, mathematics B and chemistry are normally required. Alternatively, you could complete a relevant bachelor degree followed by a postgraduate qualification in nutrition and dietetics.

The various universities have different prerequisites and some have flexible entry requirements. Contact the universities you are interested in for more information as requirements may change.

Degree and Postgraduate courses

Queensland University of Technology – Kelvin Grove Campus:

- Bachelor of Health Science (Nutrition and Dietetics), four years full time.

Griffith University – Gold Coast Campus:

- Master of Nutrition and Dietetics, 1.5 years full time (prerequisite courses apply).

University of the Sunshine Coast:

- Bachelor of Nutrition and Dietetics, four years full time.

Registration

Graduates of DAA-accredited courses may be eligible for membership of the Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA). Individuals wishing to practise as a dietitian in Queensland are required to be eligible for full membership with the DAA. Graduates are eligible for employment with Queensland Health once they are registered.

What scholarships are available?

There are a variety of scholarships and financial assistance available. Check out the respective tertiary institutes' website for details. Also available is the Queensland Health Rural Scholarships Scheme.

Interested in other allied health careers?

Visit the Queensland Health Work For Us website www.health.qld.gov.au/workforus for more careers in health fact sheets – Allied health series:

- Occupational therapist
- Radiographer
- Physiotherapist
- Psychologist
- Pharmacist
- Social worker
- Speech pathologist
- Podiatrist.

Where can I find out more info?

Dietitians Association of Australia (National Office)

Phone: (02) 6282 9555
 Fax: (02) 6282 9888
 Email: nationaloffice@daa.asn.au
 Website: www.daa.asn.au

Nutrition Australia (QLD)

Phone: (07) 3257 4393
 Fax: (07) 3257 4616
 Email: qld@nutritionaustralia.org
 Website: www.nutritionaustralia.org

Queensland University of Technology School of Public Health

Phone: (07) 3138 5879
 Email: publichealth.enquiries@qut.edu.au
 Website: www.hlth.qut.edu.au/ph

Griffith University School of Public Health

Phone: (07) 3382 1021
 Website: www.griffith.edu.au/school/pbh

University of the Sunshine Coast Faculty of Science, Health and Education

Phone: (07) 5430 2869
 Email: SHEinfo@usc.edu.au
 Website: www.usc.edu.au/University/AcademicFaculties/Science

The QTAC website has a list of universities and tertiary institutions with links to universities and courses offered. Go to www.qtac.edu.au and select Institutions.

To find out more about the exciting career opportunities Queensland Health can offer you go to www.health.qld.gov.au/workforus

Do great things every day