

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION (Integrated Masters)



1 Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2 Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3 Final Award	MDiet
4 Programme Title	Master of Dietetics
5 Programme Code	B401
6 Programme Accreditation	HCPC and BDA
7 QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Dietetics
8 FHEQ Level	7
9 Last updated	May 2023

10 Programme Aims

This programme aims to recruit high quality students who are committed to a career in nutrition and dietetics. The degree will comprise the curriculum specified by the British Dietetic Association for entry to the profession, but will also allow the students to acquire higher level knowledge and skills in research, and in strategically influencing dietetic practice and workforce developments.

The academic aims of the programme are as follows:

1. To produce graduates that possess an integrated core knowledge of biomedical, behavioural, population and clinical knowledge relevant to the understanding and management of problems and conditions encountered by dietitians.
2. To provide a programme of applied learning, enabling students to understand the relationship between nutrition, health and disease and apply this knowledge practically for the benefit of individuals, groups and communities.
3. To develop students ability to critically evaluate dietetic practice based on current evidence and participate in multi-disciplinary work
4. To develop high level competencies in clinical, professional and practical/technical skills relevant to the practice of dietetics in rapidly changing health care environment.
5. To produce graduates with strong communication, presentation and IT skills in order to work effectively within the varying demands of the work place.
6. To develop graduates with the necessary research skills to contribute to the evaluation and enhancement of nutrition and dietetics.
7. To produce graduates with leadership skills to contribute effectively to the delivery and development of dietetic services.

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes have been cross referenced to the benchmark statement for Dietetics.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should have gained and be able to demonstrate:

A1 A good knowledge and understanding of fundamental biomedical scientific subjects, including: biochemistry, physiology, pathophysiology, genetics, immunology and microbiology, and social sciences as they apply to dietetics.

A2 A good knowledge of nutrition science, food science technology and the role of nutrients in health and disease.

A3 A critical, integrated and applied knowledge and understanding of clinical medicine, disease processes and pharmacology with respect to dietetic and nutritional interventions.

A4 A good understanding of food and nutrition policies, and health promotion, as they apply to national and international contexts.

A5 Translation and integration of theoretical concepts into practical applications and education to moderate food and nutritional habits of individuals, groups and populations.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Throughout the programme, the choice of teaching and learning method is tailored to the student stage of development and prior experience. Specific learning experiences are differentiated according to the particular outcome to be achieved, i.e. the learning experience is set in the professional context best suited to achievement of the desired outcome.

Most students entering year 1 of the programme are in the transition phase from earlier educational experiences and benefit from a learning environment that has a clear structure. Less familiar teaching and learning methods are introduced in a progressive manner as students gain experience and confidence. Throughout the 4 years of the programme, the teaching and learning strategies encourage, and ultimately require, the student to adopt increasing self-reliance and independence in their study and learning.

The following teaching and learning methods are used to enable students to achieve outcomes related to knowledge and understanding:

- Large class plenary sessions (e.g. lectures) are used to explain complex concepts and to provide insight into the relationship between basic and clinical science and practice.
- Small group tutorials and seminars are used to provide opportunities for interaction, discussion and clarification in support of learning in selected areas.
- Small group clinical teaching is used for experiential learning in hospital and community care settings.
- Practical classes: to develop knowledge and understanding
- Directed self-study, supported by the provision of learning outcomes and direction in study guides and e-learning packages, to expand knowledge and understanding.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding is assessed by a variety of modalities suitable to the subject area and level of study. These include a combination of unseen written examinations (including essay questions, short answer and problem-solving), coursework (including essays, laboratory or case-study reports, in-course tests, research project work and dissertation, oral presentations and examinations). Formative assessment is embedded in modules to support student learning and development.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

B1 Demonstrate proficiency in clinical reasoning and formulating a nutrition and dietetic diagnosis.

B2 Adopt an inquisitive attitude and think critically.

B3 Synthesise a reasoned argument by integration of a range of diverse evidence-based information, recognising and applying relevant theories, paradigms, concepts or principles.

B4 Exhibit creativity/ resourcefulness by demonstrating self-reliance, initiative and pragmatism.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The following teaching and learning methods are used to enable students to achieve outcomes relating to appropriate skills of decision making, clinical reasoning and judgment:

- Problem- oriented opportunities: to develop problem-solving, numeracy, critical reasoning and clinical decision making skills through data handling and evidence-based activities.
- Practical classes: to develop skills in scientific and clinical methods
- Project work: working individually or in small groups to promote investigative and exploratory study
- Practice placements: the development of clinical reasoning skills is built upon through encountering service users on the wards, in out-patient clinics or in the community.

Assessment Strategy

Intellectual skills are assessed by a variety of modalities suitable to the level of study. These include a combination of unseen written examinations (including essay questions and problem-solving), coursework (including essays, case-studies, research project work and dissertation, oral examinations) and placements. Formative assessment is embedded in modules to support student learning and development.

Practical & Professional Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

C1 Draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to demonstrate effective application of the nutrition and dietetic care model and process legally, ethically, safely and within their scope of practice.

C2 Critically evaluate information, interpreting methodology and experimental data, and make reasoned conclusions and judgements about the strength of the evidence to inform and enhance practice.

C3 Develop hypotheses and design, execute and analyse data, and report findings while avoiding plagiarism.

C4 Use and manage information effectively and in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines

Teaching and Learning Methods

The following teaching and learning methods are used to enable students to achieve outcomes relating to practical and professional skills:

- Small group tutorials and seminars: provide opportunities for interaction, discussion and clarification in support of learning in selected areas.
- Experiential and observational visits
- Case presentations/discussions: opportunities to present and discuss cases in groups
- Practical learning exercises: provide opportunities to work through problems/practical exercises in groups and individually.
- Project work: involving working as an individual or in a team, defining and solving problems
- Video/role play/consultation skills training in the supportive environment (e.g. the Clinical Skills Laboratory).

Practice placements: to provide the opportunity for integration, consolidation and application of the knowledge, skills and attitudes accumulated from all the other course

components and as such provide teaching and learning experiences which enable students to achieve learning outcomes.

Assessment Strategy

Practical and professional skills are assessed through:
case-based scenarios

- Case-based scenarios
- Project reports and written assignments
- Experience and observational visits and placements
- Participation in quality improvement activities

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

D1 Maintain fitness to practise by undertaking personal and professional development for career-long learning, managing one's own health and maintaining high standards of personal and professional conduct.

D2 Use negotiating and influencing skills to build and sustain professional relationships, as both an independent practitioner and collaboratively as a member of a multi-professional team, recognising and respecting the views and opinions of others.

D3 Communicate clearly and effectively using a range of techniques and technologies in ways that are appropriate to the task and target audience.

D4 Apply theories of reflection including the provision and acceptance of constructive feedback in order to improve professional practice.

D5 Make effective use resources, including information systems, people and services.

D6 Demonstrate problem-solving skills and initiative and plan, organise and prioritise work effectively to meet deadlines.

D7 Demonstrate leadership and self-management skills by facilitating strategic improvement within a quality assured framework within their discipline.

D8 Recognise and apply a moral and ethical approach, valuing diversity.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Some key skills are formally taught in specific modules. All skills are also integrated into placements under the guidance of the placement tutor.

Assessment Strategy

The following modes/instruments are used to assess transferable/key skills within the programme:

- Case-based scenarios
- Project reports and written assignments
- Experience and observational visits and placements
- Participation in quality improvement activities
- Compliance with Learning Agreement
- Monitoring of behaviours and attitudes, including attendance

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

This programme is available as a four-year, full-time course that involves a mix of academic, and practice based learning. The practice learning opportunities will be integrated across Stages 1 and 2 as on-campus activities, simulation, or visits. In addition,

students will undertake a 1 week NHS based placement in Year 2. Further 12 week placements will be undertaken in each of Stage 3 and Stage 4.

Each year (Stage) consists of a taught component of 120 credits comprising taught modules with values of 10, 15, 20 or 30 credits, along with a 60 credit Masters research module. 10 credits are associated with 100 hours of study time (including time-tabled classes and private study time) also modules with practice learning opportunities will exceed these hours.

In terms of credits, every stage of the programme consists only of compulsory core modules. The practice-based learning opportunities/placements provide periods of practical/ clinical/ professional experience and the opportunity to develop students' work based skills.

All placements will be undertaken in line with the University's placement policy:

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh-workplacement-pol.pdf>

Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)

The combination of academic study and placement practice, embedded into each stage of the programme allows theory covered in the taught modules to be practised and attained during the placement. The programme also offers:

- State-of-the-art facilities for a wide range of practical activities and simulated learning
- Inter-professional learning opportunities with a range of professionals, which enhance the learning experience and preparation for working in multi-professional teams.
- Opportunity to gain workplace skills through the practice-based learning opportunities
- Opportunity to carry out an individual research project in a dynamic research environment
- Approval by the Health and Care Professions Council enables graduate to apply to become registered, and practise, as a dietitian
- Accreditation by the British Dietetic Association provides recognition that the course fully addresses the Curriculum Framework for the *Pre-Registration Education and Training of Dietitians* (British Dietetic Association 2020).

In addition, Newcastle University Dietetic graduates qualified at Masters level will be recognised as being equipped to provide evidenced based, quality services for both current and future practice, and prepared to strategically influence workforce developments.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

RB401_vFinal.pdf

13 Support for Student Learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

qsh_progspec_generic_info.docx

Whilst on placement students will also receive additional academic support and advice from their University Placement Tutor, as well as support in relation to their placement practice activities from their Work-based Supervisor (Placement Supervisor).

14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

[gsh_progspec_generic_info.docx](#)

Accreditation reports

Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approval has been granted.

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/approved-programmes/education-programmes/master-of-dietetics/?BackToSearchResultsLink=https%3a%2f%2fwww.hcpc-uk.org%2feducation%2fapproved-programmes%2fapproved-programmes-results%2f%3fProfessions%3d270450004%26ProviderQueryString%3dNewcastle%2bUniversity%26IntakeModes%3dOpen>

British Dietetic Association (BDA) accreditation has been granted.

15 Regulation of assessment

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

[gsh_progspec_generic_info.docx](#)

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/degrees/>

Degree Programme and University Regulations: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/>

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided.