

UK Voluntary Register of Nutritionists (UKVRN)

Guidance notes for applications for Registered Nutritionist (RNutr) via Portfolio

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Introduction

This guide explains how to apply to join the UKVRN as a **Registered Nutritionist (RNutr)** in a specialist area of competence **via Portfolio**.

If you are already on the UKVRN as an Associate Nutritionist (ANutr) and wish to transfer category, please read 'Guidance notes for transfer from Associate (ANutr) to Registered (RNutr)'.

How to Apply

To apply for **Registered Nutritionist** in a specialist area of competence **via Portfolio** you will normally have graduated from a BSc or MSc programme in nutrition science (either in the UK or overseas) or equivalent and will typically have at least three years peer-recognised work experience in nutrition at graduate level post-qualifying from your degree.

You will need to demonstrate your experience in evidence based nutrition and that you meet competence and eligibility requirements for registration as a Registered Nutritionist (RNutr) in your chosen specialist area of competence, with a portfolio of evidence. We will also require details of two referees who must be able to attest to your professional knowledge in evidence based nutrition and your competence for registration as a Registered Nutritionist (RNutr) in your chosen specialist area.

Please ensure that you

- Read 'Competency Requirements for Registered Nutritionist' in full and select the specialist area of competence you wish to apply for
- Read this document in full
- Complete 'Application for Registered Nutritionist (RNutr) – via Portfolio'
- Complete and submit all items in the section 'What do I need to send?'

Choosing the right Specialist Category

1.1 All Registered Nutritionists (RNutr) choose to demonstrate they meet one or more of the following specialist areas of competence:

- a. Animal
- b. Food
- c. Nutrition Science
- d. Public Health
- e. Sports & Exercise
- f. Healthcare - Medical

1.2 The first step is to establish which of these areas you most readily identify yourself as falling within (i.e. which best covers the *majority* of your professional work). Read the definitions provided in the 'Competency Requirements for Registered Nutritionist'.

1.3 If, after reading the definitions, you remain unsure which specialism to apply for, please use the detailed specialty examples of relevant areas of knowledge, skills and application required which are listed against core competencies 1-4 to help you reach a decision.

1.4 If you consider that you are able to meet two specialist areas equally, you will need to show that you are able to meet the competency requirements in both areas. The additional paperwork that you will need to send is stated in section 5.1 of this document 'What do I need to send'.

General information for completing the application form

2.1 Preparing your application can seem daunting, but having applied for a job you should already be familiar with how to demonstrate that your skills and experience meet certain required criteria. If you have made a sensible effort at completing the application, the assessor is unlikely to reject it outright. If anything in your application is unclear, the assessor will ask the AfN registration Office to obtain more information.

2.2 Once you have gathered your evidence, we estimate that it will be less than a day to prepare your Competency Mapping Form and write your Supporting Statement. If you are taking longer than this seek advice from the Registration Office.

How is my application assessed?

3.1 After preliminary checks by our Registration Office, applications are assessed by an assessor. In accordance with AfN 'Registration Rules for the Competence, Eligibility and Procedures for UKVRN Registration', it may be necessary to send your application to a second assessor, and in some circumstances to a third assessor. You will be kept informed at each stage.

3.2 Our assessors are experienced Registered Nutritionists across all specialist areas of competence. They assess applications as part of their commitment to raising standards within the profession. All assessors are trained and have access to guidance documents to assist their decision making.

How long will it take to assess my application?

4.1 Applications take between one and three months to assess. The exact timeframe will depend on the clarity of the application you make, the speed with which your references are received and whether more than one assessment is required.

What do I need to send?

5.1 Applicants need to send the following with their application:

- **A certified copy of identification** - photo page of passport or driving licence signed by an independent professional (e.g. notary, doctor, lawyer, police officer, teacher, line manager) stating "I certify this is a true copy" together with their name, job title, signature and date. – **This is not necessary if you are already registered as an Associate with AfN (ANutr).**
- Payment of the application fee

and **TWO COPIES** of the following documents:

- Completed 'Application for Registered Nutritionist (RNutr) via Portfolio'
- Supporting Statement
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)

- Completed Competency Mapping Forms – Part A and Part B
- **Certified copies of your degree transcript, or of your degree certificate(s)** with an outline syllabus. Photocopies can be certified by an independent professional (e.g. notary, doctor, lawyer, police officer, teacher, line manager) or authorised administrator at your university or college, and should include the statement “I certify this is a true copy” together with their name, job title, signature and date. It must not be countersigned by a relative or close personal friend.
- Portfolio of evidence (no more than 50 pages)
- A Statement of Comparability from UK NARIC (only applicable if qualification is from overseas).
- If you are applying for the specialism of (Healthcare – Medical) you are also required to send a copy of your GMC registration, current licence to practice and certificate of good standing.

5.2 In addition to the above, applicants for two specialisms need to send:

- A Supporting Statement which covers both specialisms, or two Supporting Statements
- A Competency Mapping Form Part B for **each** specialism

How do I pay?

6.1 The relevant fee can be found on the application form and fee information is also available on our website. The initial application fee is comprised of an administration charge covering the costs of the assessment and the first year’s registration fee.

6.2 The administration charge is non-refundable. In the event that your application is not successful, the first year’s registration fee will be refunded to you. Please note that debit and credit card payments can only be refunded to the card used for the original payment.

6.3 Methods of payment:

- Credit or debit card by completing details within the application form. Please note that we do not accept Diners or American Express. If you prefer to make card payment over the phone, tick the ‘Phone payment’ box and we will contact you to arrange.
- Cheque, payable to ‘Association for Nutrition’
- BACS transfer to the below account. Please reference with your full name.
Account Holder - Association for Nutrition, Bank - Natwest, Branch - Strand
Account number - 32197144, Sort code – 60 40 05

Qualifications

7.1 Please provide details of all qualifications relevant to registration, with NARIC statements if not obtained in the UK.

What is Fitness to Practice?

8.1 As part of the application, you are asked to make declarations regarding Fitness to Practice. More information can be found on the AfN website in our [Fitness to Practice Rules](#).

Completing the Competency Mapping Forms (Part A and Part B)

9.1 The competency mapping forms have been designed as a tool to assist you with identifying how you have gained the experience, building on your knowledge and understanding, to meet the core competencies for registration in your specialist area. They can also help you to structure your application. It is important to demonstrate your experience more than your knowledge when applying to be a Registered Nutritionist.

9.2 The competency mapping forms can be thought of as a 'person specification' that you might see in a job description. You will cover all the core competency areas in your professional daily life but may simply never have thought about your activities and skills in the terms described by the examples listed.

9.3 Approach the form systematically, the way you would apply for a job, thinking of each competency as a bullet point in a person or role specification. Try not to overanalyse each competency; they are not there to trick you!

9.4 A minimum of one example of the source of knowledge must be provided for each of the sub-competencies on Mapping Form A. On Mapping Form B, a minimum of one example of practical experience must be provided for each of the Core Competencies 1-4. (Science, Food Chain, Social/Behaviour, Health and Wellbeing), although you may find it helpful to demonstrate to the assessor your consistent and independent application of evidence-based practice by providing at least 2 or 3 examples.

9.5 All sub-competencies listed under Core Competency 5 (PC1-13) must be addressed (this can be done through a combination of evidence examples and the Supporting Statement). Individuals applying for the specialism of (Healthcare – Medical) must also address sub-competencies PC14-PC16.

9.6 Make it obvious to the assessor which pieces of evidence relate to which competency by clearly labelling your evidence and filling in the evidence column on the Competency Mapping forms.

Do I need to be an expert in everything?

10.1 No. You must be able to evidence your knowledge and understanding of all the ANutr sub-competencies as this is the baseline standard for registration on the UKVRN. You will then demonstrate your practical experience covering all five core competencies. However, you do not need to be an in-depth expert in all of the listed example areas. The exception is Core Competency 5 – Professional Conduct – where all areas listed must be fully evidenced.

10.2 Your application will be assessed as a whole and the assessors will come to a balanced conclusion about your knowledge, understanding and professional experience. In your application it is important to demonstrate that you are aware of the limits of your own knowledge and of your strengths and weaknesses rather than attempting to prove you are an expert in everything.

10.3 You may want to draw on knowledge and/or skills gained on your university course(s) and it is acceptable to reference your university modules and transcript even if this was completed some time ago. However, it is important to show how you have developed as a professional since graduation. For this reason, you must also include examples of your continuing professional development, and how you apply them in your current or previous role(s) in order to put your knowledge of the competencies into practice.

Writing the Supporting Statement

11.1 The Supporting Statement is your covering letter and a vital part of the application. It introduces you to the assessor and allows you to showcase your experience and ‘make your case’ for registration. As in a covering letter for a job it should summarise your skills and experience and explain why you feel you meet the core competencies.

11.2 To keep the assessment process fair, assessors only judge your application on what has been clearly presented or explained to them. Do not assume that the assessor knows you or can interpret your experience, knowledge or understanding.

11.3 There is no set length for the Supporting Statement. It would typically be approximately three pages of A4 long.

11.4 Your statement will be made stronger if you keep in mind the principles of reflective practice when describing examples of your experience. Reflective practice is thinking about the things you have done, what you have learned, what you might change or do differently in future. An example is the STAR technique:

Situation - provide a brief outline of the situation or setting

Task - outline what you did

Action - outline how you did it, and

Result - describe the outcomes

This is something you are likely to have used in interviews and job applications, even if you were not aware of it. Reflective practice can be useful for your CPD and professional life in general. Aim to use this approach in your statement for each piece of evidence, linking them to the relevant core competencies.

How to demonstrate competency – what counts as evidence?

12.1 Effective evidence should demonstrate that work is clearly your own, or, if collaborative work, your input should be clear. The evidence should show how your knowledge has been applied in practice.

12.2 It may not be possible to find documentary evidence for everything (for example if your work is of a confidential nature, or the document in question does not clearly demonstrate your input). In these cases you may find it useful to use the statement to expand on what is missing or unclear and why, or to use other forms of indirect evidence such as a testimonial from a client or colleague.

12.3 Assembling the evidence is likely to be the most time-consuming part of the application process. You may have kept a record of CPD and useful documents. However, even if not, you should be able to find appropriate evidence. While it is important to present the best evidence you can, if an assessor needs to know more they will ask you for more information or evidence; although this will extend the time period for processing your assessment and application.

12.4 If you consider any of your evidence to be unclear, use the Supporting Statement to place it in context or give additional details.

Examples of acceptable types of evidence

13.1 Nutrition is an extremely varied profession and registrants have a wide range of backgrounds. For this reason it is difficult to provide specific examples of evidence that can be provided by individuals to show how their level of professional experience, knowledge and skills and experience meets each of the required core competencies.

13.2 The following is an indication but not an exhaustive list, of suitable evidence that can be used to support an application for registration.

- Current job description
- Copy of work appraisal and objectives
- Scientific papers in peer-reviewed journals (abstract only required)
- Internal reports or copies of reports in public domain
- Technical reports provided
- Product development reports
- Lecture or presentation notes or slides
- Lesson plans or lecture outlines
- Educational material or training aids prepared, produced, developed or delivered
- Marketing materials produced
- Copy of research bid/grant application
- Summary of client reports (personal details redacted)
- Published list of editorial board membership for relevant journal
- Front cover and contents page(s) of authored/edited book
- Published webpages (hard copy or links) with evidence of authorship, input or contribution (e.g. email submissions, testimonials etc)
- Certificate of attendance at relevant conference, with conference programme or content details, relevant conference papers
- Input into consultation documents
- Involvement with research process (i.e. copy of final report)
- Strategy or policy development reports (including evidence base)
- Advice documents on the delivery of nutrition or dietary policy issues
- Participation in policy development groups
- Involvement with programme committees, contribution to government, scientific committee, ad hoc groups or other working and guidance development groups (reports or minutes containing name and/or contribution)
- Conduct and analysis of research (publication or/report)
- Membership of advisory bodies
- Commissioning of research
- Reports to NGOs or other stakeholders
- Organising and contributing to stakeholder events
- Responding to media enquiries
- Testimonials

Important points about evidence

14.1 It must be clear that the evidence relates to **YOUR** knowledge and skills.

14.2 You can use one piece of evidence to support more than one competency sub point, if appropriate.

14.3 You should state whether lectures and presentations are ones you have attended or given. If attended, proof of attendance will be required.

14.4 Often abstracts and/or title pages and contents are sufficient. Do not send entire or large documents. **Remember your portfolio should be no more than 50 pages long.**

14.5 The Application Form, Mapping Forms and Supporting Statement are **not** included within the portfolio page limit.

How to present your evidence

15.1 It is important to present your evidence correctly so that your application can be properly assessed. Poorly presented evidence can weaken or delay your application, and make it harder for assessors to come to a decision. Avoid handwriting documents where possible.

15.2 Evidence must be given for each of the required core competencies of the specialist list you are applying for.

How to submit your evidence

16.1 Applications must be submitted in a foolscap wallet (image on website).

16.2 You must number or label your evidence and link it to the Competency Mapping Forms and Supporting Statement.

16.3 Aim to present your evidence in the order it appears on the Core Competency list.

16.4 Put your name or initials on every document.

16.5 Use dividers and a table of contents to make it easy to locate evidence in your portfolio.

16.6 **Do not** send any documents larger than A4 in size.

16.7 **Do not** use separate punched pockets.

16.8 Each copy of your portfolio of evidence should be **no more than 50 pages**

16.9 You must submit two identical copies of your portfolio and application **in separate folders.**

Applications should be sent to

Registration Office, Association for Nutrition, 28 Portland Place, London W1B 1LY

For more information

Please contact registration@associationfornutrition.org or telephone 020 3795 8823