

# Registered Nutritionists, Dietitians, Associate Nutritionists and Nutritional Therapists

## A Comparative Summary

1. Overview of Professional Roles			
Registered Nutritionist (RNutr)	Dietitian (RD)	Registered Associate Nutritionist (ANutr)	Nutritional Therapist
<p>Registered Nutritionists provide scientific evidence-based information and guidance about the impacts of food and nutrition on the health and wellbeing of humans (at an individual or population level) or animals.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>Registered Nutritionists meet competency requirements for registration in one of six specialist areas: Nutrition Science, Public Health, Food, Sports &amp; Exercise, Animal Nutrition and healthcare-medical<sup>1</sup></p> <p>The title 'nutritionist' is not protected by statute. 'Registered Nutritionists (RNutr)' are governed by the Association for Nutrition (AfN) the voluntary regulator for Registered Nutritionists.</p>	<p>A dietitian uses the science of nutrition to devise eating plans for patients to treat medical conditions. They promote good health by helping to facilitate a positive change in food choice.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>The title 'dietitian' is protected by statute. Only individuals registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) may describe themselves as a dietitian (or dietician).</p>	<p>Registered Associate Nutritionists (ANutr) have the knowledge and understanding of the five competency requirements for Registration and as graduates are working towards Registered Nutritionist (RNutr) status. This typically takes 3+yrs once practical experience has been obtained.</p> <p>The title 'nutritionist' is not protected by statute. 'Registered Associate Nutritionists (ANutr)' are governed by the Association for Nutrition (AfN) the voluntary regulator for registered Nutritionists (RNutr and ANutr).</p>	<p>The Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC) describes nutritional therapists as those who 'use a wide range of tools to assess and identify potential nutritional imbalances and understand how these may contribute to an individual's symptoms and health concerns.'<sup>3</sup></p> <p>The title 'Nutritional Therapist' is not protected by law.</p>
2. Education and Training			
Registered Nutritionist (RNutr)	Dietitian (RD)	Registered Associate Nutritionist (ANutr)	Nutritional Therapist
<p>Three or four year undergraduate honours-degree in nutrition science <i>or</i> one year postgraduate programme accredited by AfN.</p> <p>+ Three plus years practice experience demonstrating (by portfolio) practical application of core competencies in nutrition in one of six nutrition specialisms: Nutrition Science, Public Health, Food, Sports &amp; Exercise, Animal Nutrition and healthcare-medical.</p> <p>+ Declaration of identity &amp; character</p>	<p>Three or four year undergraduate dietetic degree <i>or</i> a postgraduate programme accredited by the HCPC.</p> <p>+ Declaration of identity &amp; character<sup>4</sup>.</p> <p>Many dietitians also gain additional qualifications in specialist areas, such as public health, sport, research and teaching.</p>	<p>Three or four year undergraduate honours-degree in nutrition science <i>or</i> one year postgraduate programme accredited by AfN <i>or</i> demonstration (by portfolio) of knowledge and understanding of five core competencies in nutrition</p> <p>+ Declaration of identity &amp; character</p>	<p>A course meeting the National Occupational Standards for Nutritional Therapy (equivalent to level 5 diploma in England and Wales on UK Qualification Framework<sup>5</sup>).</p>

### 3. Scope of Practice

Registered Nutritionist (RNutr)	Dietitian (RD)	Registered Associate Nutritionist (ANutr)	Nutritional Therapist
<p>Registered Nutritionists work across both human and animal nutrition at an individual and population level and their work is often international in scope.<sup>6</sup> Many Registered Nutritionists work at a senior level in public health and nutrition science within the health service, academia and in the commercial sectors (food retail, service and manufacturing)<sup>7</sup></p> <p>Registered Nutritionists can provide nutrition advice directly to individuals and groups.<sup>8</sup> Some Registered Nutritionists work in government or charities in health improvement and advocacy,<sup>9</sup> in agricultural and animal feeds, in equine science, in the media and in elite sports and exercise.<sup>10</sup></p> <p>Occasionally Registered Nutritionists hold dual registration in another professional discipline, for example, Registered Nutritionists who work in clinical settings are also registered with the HCPC and/or with the General Medical Council.</p>	<p>Most graduates get their first job in a position such as a Band 5 Dietitian or Health Promotion Officer working within the National Health Service (NHS).<sup>11</sup></p> <p>The spectrum of environments in which dietitians practise includes the NHS, private practice, industry, education, research, sport, media, NGOs and national and local government.</p> <p>Most people will see a Registered Dietitian within the NHS after being referred by an NHS GP, doctor, health visitor or other medical staff.</p>	<p>Most Registered Associate Nutritionists work in public health and nutrition science within the health service, academia and in the commercial sectors (food retail, service and manufacturing).<sup>7</sup></p> <p>A Registered Associate Nutritionist will not normally engage in wholly independent practice, but will be supervised, working within a team and/or with relevant professional oversight and/or mentoring.</p>	<p>Nutritional therapists work mainly in a therapeutic setting with individual clients.<sup>12</sup></p> <p>CNHC describe nutritional therapists as “practitioners who use a wide range of tools to assess and identify potential nutritional imbalances and understand how these may contribute to an individual’s symptoms and health concerns. This approach allows them to work with individuals to address nutritional balance and help support the body towards maintaining health. Nutritional therapy is recognised as a complementary medicine. It is relevant both for individuals looking to enhance their health and wellbeing and for those with chronic conditions wishing to work with or ‘consult’ a nutritional therapist in collaboration with other suitably qualified healthcare professionals”<sup>3</sup>.</p>

4. Registration Body/Bodies			
Registered Nutritionist (RNutr)	Dietitian (RD)	Registered Associate Nutritionist (ANutr)	Nutritional Therapist
<p><b>Association for Nutrition (AfN)</b> <a href="http://www.associationfornutrition.org">www.associationfornutrition.org</a></p> <p>AfN is a registered charity &amp; the voluntary regulator for registered nutritionists. It holds the UK Voluntary Register of Nutritionists, (<b>UKVRN</b>). Its purpose is to protect and benefit the public by defining and advancing standards of evidence-based practice across the field of nutrition and at all levels within the workforce.</p> <p>Registered Nutritionists use the post-nominal letters RNutr and provide evidence-based information and guidance in nutrition in one of five specialist areas: Nutrition Science, Public Health, Food, Sports &amp; Exercise and Animal Nutrition.</p>	<p><b>Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)</b> <a href="http://www.hcpc-uk.org">www.hcpc-uk.org</a></p> <p>HCPC is the statutory regulator for 16 health care professions, including dietitians. The HCPC maintains a register of dietitians who meet standards for training, professional skills, behaviour and health.</p> <p>The titles 'dietitian' and 'dietician' are both protected by statute, (the Health Professions Order 2010) and use the post-nominal letters RD.</p>	<p><b>Association for Nutrition (AfN)</b> <a href="http://www.associationfornutrition.org">www.associationfornutrition.org</a></p> <p>AfN is a registered charity &amp; the voluntary regulator for registered nutritionists. It holds the UK Voluntary Register of Nutritionists, (<b>UKVRN</b>). Its purpose is to protect and benefit the public by defining and advancing standards of evidence-based practice across the field of nutrition and at all levels within the workforce.</p> <p>Registered Associate Nutritionists (generally recent graduates from AfN accredited undergraduate or postgraduate degree courses) use the post-nominal letters ANutr and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the core competencies in nutrition.</p>	<p>There are three regulatory bodies in this discipline which individuals can choose to register with. Registrants with all three regulatory bodies use the occupational title of Nutritional Therapist.</p> <p><b>Federation of Holistic Therapists (FHT)<sup>13</sup></b> <a href="http://www.fht.org.uk">www.fht.org.uk</a></p> <p>The FHT is a UK voluntary regulator arm of the largest professional association for complementary healthcare therapists in the UK and Ireland. The FHT Register has been approved as an Accredited Register by the PSA. Therapies registered include: Alexander Technique, Aromatherapy, Body Massage, Bowen Technique, Cranio-sacral Therapy, Homeopathy, Hypnotherapy, Kinesiology, Microsystems Acupuncture, Naturopathy, Nutritional Therapy, Reflexology, Reiki, Shiatsu, Sports Massage, Yoga therapy.</p> <p><b>Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC)</b> <a href="http://www.cnhc.org.uk">www.cnhc.org.uk</a></p> <p>The CNHC is a UK voluntary regulator for complementary therapists, set up with government support to protect the public. CNHC Register has been approved as an Accredited Register by the PSA. Therapies registered include: Alexander Technique teaching, Aromatherapy, Bowen Therapy, Craniosacral Therapy, Hypnotherapy, Massage Therapy, Naturopathy, Nutritional Therapy, Reflexology, Reiki, Shiatsu, Sports Therapy, Yoga Therapy.</p> <p><b>General Regulatory Council for Complementary Therapies (GRCCT)<sup>14</sup></b> <a href="http://www.grcct.org">www.grcct.org</a></p> <p>The GRCCT is a UK voluntary regulator for complementary and alternative medicine practitioners, set up by the Aromatherapy, Massage, Reflexology and Reiki therapies. This has since expanded to include a number of other therapies.</p> <p>Therapies registered include: Aromatherapy, Colon Hydrotherapy, Crystal Healing, Tapping, Hijama, Nutritional Therapy, Reflexology, Reiki, Shiatsu.</p>

## 5. Professional Membership Body/Bodies

Registered Nutritionist (RNutr)	Dietitian (RD)	Registered Associate Nutritionist (ANutr)	Nutritional Therapist
<p><b>Nutrition Society (NS<sup>15</sup>)</b> <a href="http://www.nutritionssociety.org">www.nutritionssociety.org</a></p> <p>The Nutrition Society is the largest learned society for nutrition in Europe. Its scientific journals and conferences are highly regarded by the scientific community.</p> <p>The Nutrition Society is a registered charity, established in 1941 to advance the scientific study of nutrition and its application to the maintenance of human and animal health.</p> <p>Membership of the Nutrition Society is open to those with an interest in the science of human or animal nutrition.</p>	<p><b>British Dietetic Association (BDA<sup>16</sup>)</b> <a href="http://www.bda.uk.com">www.bda.uk.com</a></p> <p>The British Dietetic Association (BDA) is a registered trade union &amp; company limited by guarantee.</p> <p>It is the professional association and trade union for dietitians.</p> <p>It is a membership-based organisation which aims to inform, protect, represent, and support its members.</p>	<p><b>Nutrition Society (NS)</b> <a href="http://www.nutritionssociety.org">www.nutritionssociety.org</a></p> <p>The Nutrition Society is the largest learned society for nutrition in Europe. Its scientific journals and conferences are highly regarded by the scientific community.</p> <p>The Nutrition Society is a registered charity, established in 1941 to advance the scientific study of nutrition and its application to the maintenance of human and animal health.</p> <p>Membership of the Nutrition Society is open to those with an interest in the science of human or animal nutrition.</p>	<p><b>Federation of Nutrition Therapy Practitioners (FNTP<sup>17</sup>)</b> <a href="http://www.fntp.org">www.fntp.org</a></p> <p>FNTP is a membership-based organisation for nutritional therapists and nutritional therapy students.</p> <p>Only recognises the General Regulatory Council for Complementary Therapies (GRCT) as regulatory body for Nutritional Therapists in UK.</p> <p><b>British Association for Applied Nutrition &amp; Nutritional Therapy (BANT<sup>18</sup>)</b> (previously the British Association for Nutritional Therapists) <a href="http://www.bant.org.uk">www.bant.org.uk</a></p> <p>BANT is a company limited by guarantee and one of the professional associations for nutrition therapists.</p> <p>Full membership is restricted to nutritional therapists registered with the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC).</p>

### References:

- <http://www.associationfornutrition.org/Default.aspx?tabid=143> accessed 23/2/2018
- <http://www.hpc-uk.org/aboutregistration/professions/> accessed 23/2/2018
- <https://www.cnhc.org.uk/who-we-register> accessed 23/2/2018
- <http://www.hpc-uk.org/apply/uk/forms/> accessed 23/2/2018
- [Registration with the CNHC for Nutritional Therapists \(Version 12: 05 January 2016\)](#) accessed 23/2/2018
- AfN database indicates 11.8% of AfN Registrants live and/or work overseas. (23/1/2018).
- AfN Registrant survey 2016; 22% employed in Health Service; 35% in academia, 15% in commercial sector.
- AfN database indicates 42% of registrants take direct enquiries from the public (23/1/2018).
- AfN Registrant survey 2016; 10% employed in central/ local government.
- <http://www.associationfornutrition.org/Portals/0/Public/Study/In%20the%20know.pdf> accessed 23/2/2018
- [https://www.bda.uk.com/professional/dietetic\\_workforce\\_in\\_the\\_uk](https://www.bda.uk.com/professional/dietetic_workforce_in_the_uk) accessed 23/2/2018
- <https://www.fht.org.uk/therapies/nutritional-therapy> accessed 23/2/2018
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