



Association
for **Nutrition**

Regulating Professionals – Raising Standards – Improving Health



Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025

December 2019

The Association for Nutrition will reach its 10th birthday in 2020. Over the last decade we have achieved much. We have a robust system of regulation. Our register is growing and our accreditation is valued by Universities in the UK and internationally. We are also ambitious. We want to increase the benefit to the public from the application of nutrition science by well trained, competent and regulated nutritionists. We want to increase awareness about the value the nutrition profession brings and its vital role in contributing to improved health and wellbeing. And we want to ensure public confidence in our register through robust, transparent and fair regulatory systems.

Our strategic plan sets out our vision for 2025, the outcomes we believe are important in achieving that vision and our areas of activity to achieve those outcomes.

Our Vision:

Everyone is empowered to improve health and wellbeing through nutrition grounded in science.

Why is this our vision?

Our role as a regulator is to protect the public; our vision expresses why this is important to us. We believe that lives are improved by good nutrition, and that people are empowered when they have access to knowledge, advice, support and services grounded in robust science to inform their nutritional choices for health, wellbeing and sports performance. We believe that nutrition science has a vital role to play in improving the quality of the food and feed systems, agriculture, industry and public policy to provide a sustainable nutritional environment that supports good health and wellbeing.

We are concerned that we live in an environment filled with confusing and contradictory information about nutrition, much of which is not underpinned by robust science. We are concerned that scientific findings are often not well understood and that this can lead to interpretations that do not support improved health. We are concerned about the impact of environmental change on local and global food systems, and believe that nutritionists have a role in supporting sustainable solutions to these challenges. We believe that the public, policy makers and the food and feed industry are best served if they can easily identify nutritionists who are qualified to provide services, advice and support, and who are accountable to a regulator which sets standards for their education, training, conduct, practice and continuing professional development (CPD). By regulating nutritionists we ensure the profession is trained in the appropriate use of nutrition science, able to understand and interpret scientific findings and apply these to their practice within a robust ethical framework. Through access to this profession we believe everyone will be

empowered to improve health and wellbeing, for themselves and their families, for their animals and livestock, for their customers and consumers, and at population level.

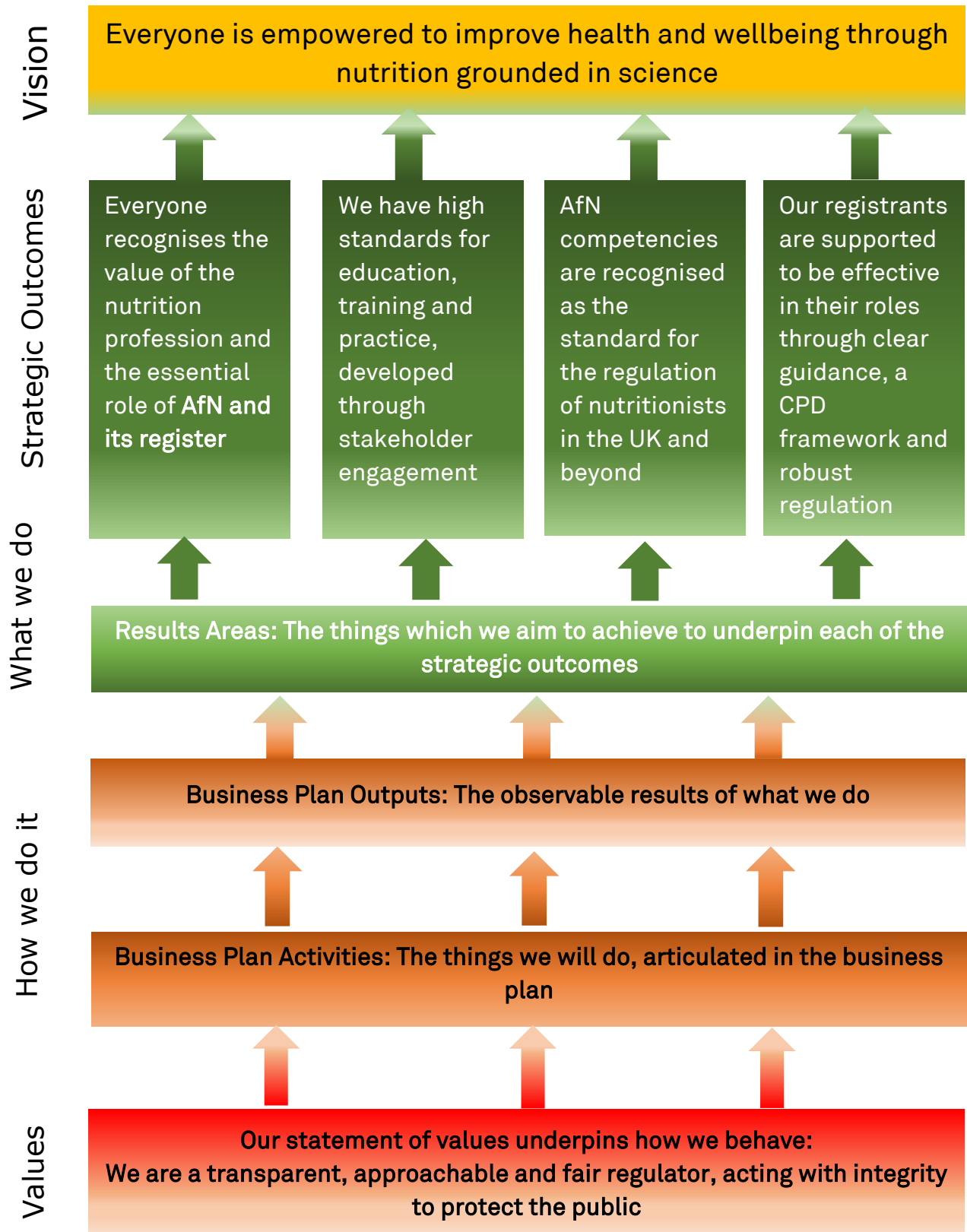
Our Values

We are a transparent, approachable and fair regulator, acting with integrity to protect the public.

Our values underpin all that we do. They influence the way we undertake our work and interact with our stakeholders. They reflect the way we behave as an organisation and as individuals representing the AfN.

Achieving our vision

The following pages set out the strategic outcomes which we believe will be central to us realising our vision. For each strategic outcome we have identified key results areas, which will be underpinned by our business plan, enabling us to monitor our progress and adjust our activities to remain on track. The links between our business plan, strategic outcomes and our vision are depicted on the diagram on the next page.



Strategic Outcomes:

Our strategic outcomes will help us to achieve our vision. They represent the things we are seeking to achieve so that everyone is empowered to improve health and wellbeing through nutrition grounded in science.

1. Everyone recognises the value of the nutrition profession and the essential role of AfN and its register.

Achieving our vision depends, in part, on everyone recognising that nutrition is a science and that AfN registered nutritionists, who are trained to interpret and apply this science, play a vital role in the improvement of health and wellbeing. We need those operating in the food and feed systems to recognise the importance of nutrition science informing food and feed production, and to understand how utilising registered nutritionists within their business will help them to meet their nutritional, ethical and legal responsibilities. We need policy makers at all levels to understand the importance of using robust science to underpin their policies and to make use of registered nutritionists in the formulation, review and evaluation of nutrition related policies. We are concerned that, whilst there is an abundance of information, advice and services available to the public, much of this is not grounded in robust science or is based on a misapplication of research findings. We want everyone to be aware of the AfN and its register, and to know how to access appropriately qualified nutritionists through the register.

Results areas

To achieve this strategic outcome we will

- Work with partner organisations to increase the profile of nutrition science
- Identify and seek to influence policy makers at local and national level, within nutrition and in partnership with related professions
- Develop and publish guidelines and position statements regarding the appropriate application of nutrition science in relevant settings, including the role of registered nutritionists in informing nutritional policy and practice in health, social care and education settings
- Raise the profile of AfN within the food and feed industries
- Support our registrants to raise the profile of the profession
- Campaign to raise public awareness of our register and the expertise of our registrants
- Use public and media engagement opportunities to raise awareness of AfN and our register

2. We have high standards for education, training and practice, developed through stakeholder engagement

We must have high standards for the education, training and practice of nutrition underpinned by procedures and processes which are proportionate, fair and easily understood. We will involve stakeholders in the development, review and revision of these standards because we believe this will increase public confidence and ensure that we are training and supporting nutritionists to deliver expertise which is valued and promotes health and wellbeing.

Results areas

To achieve this strategic outcome we will:

- Provide leadership in setting standards for the education and training of nutritionists
- In consultation with stakeholders we will review our existing standards, procedures and processes to ensure they are proportionate, fair, transparent and effective.
- In consultation with stakeholders we will produce and review standards, guidance and professional codes which
 - o support our registrants to advance and maintain their competence as nutritionists
 - o provide clear information for employers, policy makers, healthcare professionals and the public
- We will work with stakeholders to identify and shape new areas for the development of standards for training in nutrition competencies.

3. AfN standards are recognised as the benchmark for the regulation of nutritionists in the UK and beyond

Our competencies set out the things which a competent nutritionist must know and be able to do. They require that nutritionists understand and are able to appropriately interpret and apply scientific findings, as well as understanding how to do this within an ethical framework which protects the public. They are focused on the effective application of nutrition science. It is important that these competencies are widely recognised as the standard for the regulation of nutritionists so that everyone can be empowered to improve health and wellbeing through nutrition grounded in science. Our standards were developed in the UK context but have international applicability, something we know through our accreditation of programmes outside the UK and work with partner organisations in other countries.

Results areas

To achieve this strategic outcome we will

- Continue to pursue recognition of our register at the highest levels, including our petition for a Royal Charter
- Work with partner organisations to develop standards for nutritionists which embed our competencies within international standards
- Work with partner organisations within the UK to increase understanding amongst other professions about the competencies of nutritionists and the knowledge and skills they bring to the workforce
- Continue to accredit programmes which meet our standards and to further extend this accreditation globally

4. Our registrants are supported to be effective in their roles through clear guidance, a CPD framework and robust regulation

Ensuring that our registrants maintain and develop their professional competence is a vital part of our regulatory role. This includes the development of a framework and monitoring of CPD, but it also includes supporting our registrants to achieve those CPD requirements.

Results areas

To achieve this strategic outcome we will

- Approve CPD courses and events so that our registrants can easily identify appropriate CPD opportunities
- Work with training providers to promote the supply of CPD provision which meets the needs of our registrants
- Provide, or make registrants aware of, opportunities to discuss and debate relevant issues and developments in order to inform their practice and understanding
- Highlight relevant issues and signpost registrants to opportunities through our newsletter and other publications
- Monitor the CPD activity of our registrants through annual returns
- Maintain a robust Fitness to Practice scheme which enables public confidence in our regulated professionals

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