



UK Voluntary Register of Nutritionists (UKVRN)

Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance



Contents

Introduction	1
UKVRN Standards of Ethics, Conduct & Performance	5
Prioritise Public Benefit	6
Practice Safely & Effectively	7
Work Within Own Limits	11
Communicate Appropriately	13
Be Honest & Trustworthy	15
Speak Up About Concerns	20
Respect & Maintain Confidentiality	22
Promote Professionalism	23
Glossary of Terms	25
Useful Links	28





Introduction

About us

We are the Association for Nutrition (AfN), an independent regulator for nutritionists set up to protect and benefit the public. We do this by making sure only those who meet and maintain our high standards for knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviour can join and remain on the UK Voluntary Register of Nutritionists (UKVRN). The individuals on our register are collectively referred to as 'registrants' and are made up of Registered Associate Nutritionists (ANutr) and Registered Nutritionists (RNutr).

This document

This document sets out our standards of ethics, conduct and performance, and lays out how we expect our registrants to behave.

Nutrition is an extensive profession with our Registrants working in many different roles, settings and locations. These Standards are designed to apply to all of our Registrants regardless of their field of activity, contract of employment or membership/ registration with any other professional organisation. It applies wherever in the world they live and work, and whether they work directly with members of the public or are bringing their professional expertise to other roles, such as education, leadership, industry or research.

This document applies across these different roles and settings and has been developed to ensure our registrants practise safely, effectively, appropriately and in the best interest of the public. The standards in this document must be met at all times, not just during working hours. This is because the attitudes, behaviour and information shared by registrants outside of work can also impact on the trust, confidence and knowledge that individuals and organisations have regarding nutrition and nutrition professionals.

We have tried to develop this document in line with the principles of the Plain English campaign through the use of terms that will be readily understood by everyone. However some terms have specific meanings and these are explained in the glossary at the end of this document. Each standards is explained, along with examples of how nutrition professionals comply with these. The examples may not however apply in all situations and our registrants should use their knowledge, skills and judgement within their setting.



Development of this document

All regulators routinely review their standards to ensure that they remain current, reflecting both the current environment and the public's expectations.

We review our Standards to ensure their relevance to UKVRN Registrants and the public, within the context of rapid change in policies and practices across nutrition.

This current version is an update on the previous versions of the UKVRN/AfN Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance and AfN Code of Ethics and Statement of Professional Conduct. It takes into account good practice guidance from the UK Government, the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) and Professional Associations Regulatory Network (PARN). It has also been reviewed and developed in line with similar standards and guidance created by UK statutory healthcare regulators, including the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC), General Medical Council (GMC), General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) and Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC).

The updating of the UKVRN Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance has been undertaken by a working group of the AfN Registration Committee. Stakeholders were surveyed and updates to good practice guidance reviewed. This has been followed by a consultation on the amended document ahead of finalisation and implementation.

This version of the UKVRN Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance will be reviewed no later than 2030, or earlier if required to address stakeholder feedback, fitness to practise issues or changes to best practice guidance issued by the Professional Standards Authority or UK Government.



This document can be used by our Registrants, applicants, employers, clients/service users, educators, colleagues and the public, to understand the standards expected of nutritionists, in conjunction with the AfN Standards for Independent and Freelance Practice.

Clients, employers, colleagues and the public

These standards will help you to understand how we expect our registrants to act in their professional activities and settings, whether you are their employer, a colleague, someone who uses their services or a member of the public.

If something ever goes wrong, you can be reassured that anyone can raise a concern through our fitness to practise process (detailed on the AfN website). We take your concerns seriously and we can take action when these identify a serious issue regarding a registrants knowledge, understanding, skills or behaviour.

When we receive a concern we will use the standards in this document and our core competency requirements for registration to help us determine whether the individual remains fit to practice or if we need to take action in order to protect the public from unsafe practice, misinformation or unprofessional behaviour.

Educators

As an educator you can use this document alongside the core competency requirements for registration as a tool to help prepare students and enable them to understand what is expected of them as nutrition professionals and how keeping to the standards will help them achieve this.



Registrants and applicants

As a registrant you must ensure you are familiar with the standards in this document and that you act in accordance with them. When you renew your registration each year, you will confirm that you will continue to meet these standards, in addition to maintaining the core competency requirements for registration.

If you are wishing to be registered, as part your application you will be required to sign a declaration confirming that you will keep to the standards once you are registered.

As a professional you are personally responsible and accountable for your actions, the way you behave and in meeting the standards in this document and any legal duties. You must use your knowledge, experience and judgement to make informed, reasonable choices related to your work and behaviour.

You must always be prepared to justify your decisions and actions if these are ever brought into question. If you can demonstrate that a decision and/or recommendation was made based on the consensus of sound, evidence-based judgement and is in the best interests of the public, it is unlikely that you will fail to meet the standards set out in this document.

If you are wishing to practice in an independent setting or freelance capacity, you must additionally uphold the AfN Standards for Independent and Freelance Practice.



UKVRN Standards of Ethics, Conduct & Performance



Our registrants contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of the public. A central aspect of registration is that all our registrants demonstrate professionalism and safe, effective practice.



Prioritise Public Benefit

Whether or not you are working directly with members of the public, you must put the interests of the public first in your activities. You must always think about the impact your decisions, actions and advice can have on the public.

Act in the best interests of the public

To achieve this, you must:

- use your knowledge and skills to promote the health and wellbeing of humans and, where appropriate, animals, in a safe, effective and professional manner.
- use your professional judgement to balance the interests of your client/organisation with the interests of the wider public.
- not, by act or omission, cause anything to be done which could endanger or adversely affect the health and safety of individuals, groups of clients, communities or the wider population. This includes the known actions of others for whom you hold direct employment, supervision or management responsibility of (including students).
- respect the rights of individuals and should not seek to exploit or abuse your relationship with either clients or colleagues.
- ensure everyone is treated equally and with respect to your actions and through the services you provide, regardless of gender, age, colour, race, disability, sexuality, lifestyle, culture, political or religious views, social or economic status.
- ensure when providing a service to an individual, group or organisation that the clients understand the implications of limited compliance with advice or treatment
- only provide a service if it is grounded in robust science, within your scope of practice and it is appropriate to do so.



Practice Safely & Effective

The public and the profession is benefitted most by nutritionists who provide safe and effective nutrition, which reflects the application of the nutritionist's knowledge, skills and evidence-based decision making, with these being kept up-to-date through continuing professional development (CPD).

Be objective, fair, balanced and proportionate in professional statements or recommendations made

To achieve this, you must:

- respect and reflect the balance of the scientific evidence which underpins your research, practice, advice, teaching and communications to others.
- acknowledge the ownership of data or research by accurately citing the source in research, practice, advice, teaching and communications to others.
- critically appraise the source and quality of data used to support statements made, taking into consideration factors such as sample size, selection bias, human/animal/in-vitro, population group/characteristics, study design, analysis method, confounding factors, compliance, retention, researcher or funder bias, intended audience, etc.
- ensure any statements you make or actions you undertake show objectivity in assessing evidence and do not mislead others as to the availability of evidence by omission, exaggeration or ignorance.
- maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries, particularly with those you provide support to.



Keep up to date with developments within field of work

To achieve this, you must:

- undertake CPD in order to remain fit to practice. If you are a Registered Associate Nutritionist (ANutr), you will begin to develop your portfolio by undertaking CPD (in addition to gaining professional practice experience) as part of your preparation for transfer to Registered Nutritionist (RNutr) status.
- undertake CPD both specifically related to your field of practice and to the wider nutrition field, so as to ensure you remain capable of meeting all the standards of competence.
- undertake a range of CPD activities, delivered in a variety of different forms:
 - * engagement in formal CPD events such as active attendance at conferences, workshops, webinars, lectures etc.
 - * participation in informal CPD activities such as reading relevant papers and journals, blogs, engagement with peers through an AfN regional network etc.
 - * activities can be free, funded or provided by an employer/volunteer organisation or self-financed, and can be undertaken either in person or remotely.
- present your CPD return (plus evidence and reflections) in a timely, complete and accessible manner if called upon during either a CPD audit or a fitness to practice investigation.
- ensure that any work which is new and/or at the cutting edge of nutrition is critically reviewed, based upon sound hypotheses and consistent with existing biological and medical knowledge. You must make it clear if you are giving advice or providing a service that is based on emerging research.



Hold appropriate Indemnity Provision

To achieve this, you must:

- ensure that you have appropriate professional indemnity provision in place for all of the activities you undertake in a work or volunteer capacity. If your employer/volunteer organisation holds indemnity cover for your practice, you must ensure it covers all the professional activities you undertake (for example your research, teaching, demonstrations, analysis, reports, media, advice etc.). If you undertake work or volunteering on a freelance basis you must have suitable insurance/ indemnity cover for the activities you undertake, unless you have sufficient personal financial means to pay any compensation claims that could be made against you.
- ensure the level and type of cover is sufficient for the activities you undertake and where you practice (location/country), and should cover all aspects of your practice and risks involved. If you provide face-to-face services, it is strongly recommended you are also covered for public liability in case an accident occurs on site. If you provide health advice to the public it is strongly recommend your policy includes medical malpractice cover.
- understand the terms of your insurance policy if you are working in a freelance capacity. It is advised that you fully discuss this with the insurance provider/broker ahead of purchasing or renewing a policy.
- be able to access legal advice regarding your insurance cover and have a premium that is sufficient to cover any compensation claims made against you.



Maintain accurate records including, where appropriate, evidence of having gained informed consent

To achieve this, you must:

- maintain accurate records for all activities you undertake in the course of your professional work, detailing information on services or advice provided, be that to the public, students, companies or colleagues.
- make records and notes as soon as possible to ensure they form an accurate account of the event/activity.
- ensure all records are clearly labelled, identifiable and dated. Any paper-based records should be easy to read.
- keep data, particularly that containing any personally identifiable data, securely and disposed of in a timely and appropriate manner.
- ensure you are, if required, registered with the ICO as a data controller. Advice for which can be sought from the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).
- ensure when providing a service direct to a client, that the client understands what service or advice is being offered and written consent is obtained/recorded.
- obtain explicit consent for holding an individual's details, making it clear what information is recorded, why it is needed, how it will be used, processed/stored, how to withdraw consent and information deleted.



Work Within Own Limits

Whatever sector you practice in and activities you undertake, you must ensure that these do not risk public safety or understanding. Your knowledge, skills and experiences will determine your scope of practice, and it is vital that you are aware of your own limitations and only undertake activities that are within the limits of your competence, obtaining further training or support where needed for other activities.

Work within your scope of practice

To achieve this, you must:

- know, understand and appreciate the limits of your skills and knowledge. Refraining from undertaking work that you are not trained or competent to provide.
- ensure you only agree to undertake delegated work that is appropriate to your knowledge/skill level and not delegate tasks to individuals who are not competent to undertake what is asked of them, unless close supervision is provided.
- either undertake CPD activities to fill your knowledge/skill gap before undertaking an activity in an area you are not competent in or refer on to a more suitably trained person until you are competent in this area.
- not undertake work which could cause harm or is not covered by your insurance provision.
- not claim or imply that you can diagnose medical conditions or lead on their management or treatment, unless you are also registered, licensed and insured to practice as a dietitian or medical practitioner.



- act under the clinical lead of a suitable medical practitioner or registered allied health professional when providing agreed dietary management or treatment services for those with diagnosed medical conditions.
- when working with a client, refer them promptly to a suitable professional if they request a second opinion and ask to be referred.
- behave responsibly by limiting or ceasing practice, as appropriate, if you are affected by a medical condition which could impair your performance and/or judgement.
- uphold the AfN Standards of Independent & Freelance practice, if practising in an independent setting or in a freelance capacity.



Communicate Appropriately

The public is benefitted when communication is effective and delivered appropriately for the audience. Communication extends beyond just providing information to asking questions and listening. Effective and appropriate communications is an exchange of information, incorporating body language, tone of voice, imagery and the words used.

Communicate effectively with clients, colleagues and the public

To achieve this, you must:

- communicate through all forms of communications media in a professionally responsible, polite, considerate and honest way (including verbal, written, graphic, face-to-face, social media and websites), ensuring communications are clear and delivered in an understandable manner – taking into account language, cultural and communication needs and overcoming barriers where possible.
- listen to clients, colleagues, employers and the public to take into account their knowledge, understanding, concerns and views, responding honestly to their questions.
- check from time to time that the information you have provided has been understood correctly to minimise misunderstandings or mistakes
- make every effort to co-operate with clients, colleagues and other Registrants. If this is not possible, this must be explained clearly and other options offered.
- be open to sharing your knowledge and expertise with fellow Registrants, students, colleagues and the public.
- share relevant information, where appropriate, with colleagues and relevant services for the benefit of the client/public/student and their care.



- respect the skills, expertise and contribution of colleagues and maintain effective communications with them.
- take care not to provide individualised or prescriptive advice on social media, as full assessment of the facts and confounding factors is unlikely to be possible.
- act professionally and lawfully in all interactions, including on social media and within networking, employment and academic settings. Be aware that this includes, but is not limited to, the posting, sharing and liking of false, discriminatory, bullying, misleading or inciteful messages or images.
- ensure communications do not claim an expertise or being an authoritative voice on topics you are not competent and adequately skilled in.
- be conscious of using inclusive, non-stigmatising language and actions, encouraging and supporting equality, diversity equity and inclusion (EDEI).
- take all possible actions to ensure you do not exploit an individual's or the public's trust or confidence in the profession or AfN, nor bring the profession or AfN into disrepute.
- not use language or actions that pressurise the public or individuals into using your services, exploit their vulnerabilities or instill fear of current or future ill-health.



Be Honest & Trustworthy

The public and employers expect UKVRN registrants to behave professionally. This is fundamental to maintaining trust and confidence in nutritionists and the nutrition profession. Any activities undertaken in the public domain reflect on the profession, this is not limited to the working day or to face-to-face interactions. To maintain confidence in the profession registrants must demonstrate appropriate professional behaviour at all times.

Maintain high standards of honesty and integrity

To achieve this, you must:

- apply the scientific principles that you learned through your education and continuing professional development, as set out within the core competency requirements for registration, to all of your practice and public activities (including social media posts, research and teaching).
- demonstrate objectivity, honesty and integrity in your work when acquiring, reporting, discussing, collating, disseminating or interpreting research findings.
- use objectivity and integrity, alongside an understanding of knowledge gaps and uncertainty, when using research in formulating nutrition advice and public/economic policy.
- demonstrate that these principles are a foundation, which inform your education, teaching, communications and professional practice.
- be polite, considerate and demonstrate compassion, kindness and empathy in your activities and communications.
- respect the principles of scientific debate, keeping comments to the evidence-base/its interpretation and not make unwarranted comments in regards to another individual's character, competence, ethics or integrity that could undermine the public's trust and respect for the profession.



- act with honesty and integrity in any financial dealings you have in a professional capacity, including with individuals and companies.
- maintain appropriate boundaries, keeping your relationship with service users professional.

Avoid misleading advertising

To achieve this, you must:

- accurately use your full professional title (Registered Nutritionist or Registered Associate Nutritionist) and make your registration number available upon request, to anyone who wishes to check your current registration status against the online Register.
- use only the post-nominal applicable to your current registration status (ANutr, RNutr or RNutr FAFN). Registered Nutritionists, where applicable, should identify their demonstrated/assessed area of specialist competence in brackets following the RNutr post-nominal letters e.g. RNutr (Animal). Only the specialism listed on your UKVRN record should be stated and Registered Associate Nutritionists must not indicate a specialism, as this has not been assessed e.g. ANutr (Public Health) is not acceptable.
- only use the registrant logo associated with your registration status (ANutr, RNutr or RNutr FAFN logo) or the unique logo awarded to any activities you have had quality assured (e.g. CPD Endorsed training). The AfN corporate logo or mark may not be used without explicit prior written consent of the AfN.
- not make claims which are false and for which there is no (or little) accurate, verifiable and good-quality evidence.
- only make claims about your skills, qualifications, knowledge, experience or services which can be proven.
- ensure that if you are involved in the promotion or advertising of products, campaigns or services that your scientific knowledge, professional skills and experience are used in an accurate and responsible manner and not influenced by direct or indirect financial reward (be that whether you are directly employed by an organisation, contracted to provide ad-hoc or influencer services or provided with free products, services or training).



- ensure that any commercial communications you are directly involved in, or are associated with, comply with both nutrition and health claims regulations and official advertising guidance. The relationship between yourself and the brand/product/campaign must be clear to the reader and must be marked as advertising if there is any editorial control by the brand/product/campaign.
- ensure that in any commercial communications you are included/affiliated with there are no health claims made or present (in writing, imagery or audio) within the same communication. The inclusion of a health claim is regarded as product endorsement, which must not be present in any commercial communications linked with a nutrition or health professional, due to perceived professional expertise providing added weight to the health claim and this potentially unduly influencing consumers.
- ensure that in any commercial communications you are included/affiliated with only authorised nutrition claims are made, if the conditions for making the claim are met. An authorised nutrition claim is allowed and is not regarded as product endorsement, as this is solely a statement of fact regarding the product content.
- ensure that when undertaking promotional activities or making a recommendation, you do not infer that alternative products, brands or services are not available, be that within communication activities (including social media and press), lectures/presentations, recipes or in-person advice.
- ensure any relationship you have with a brand/product/campaign is clear at the outset of any communications. This includes both direct financial relationships such as employment, paid partnership or commission, as well as indirect payment such as free samples, free training, future work promise. On social media this must be in the first line of vision and not hidden in more information or in a group of hashtags.
- not use your UKVRN registration status to promote causes not related to nutrition and health.



Comply with relevant legislation and guidelines

To achieve this, you must:

- be aware of and comply with relevant legislation and official guidelines that can impact on your working practice.
- This is not a definitive list, but relevant legislation/guidelines for your area of practice may include the latest versions of:

Data legislation and guidelines

Such as The Data Protection Act, General Data Protection Regulations ('GDPR'), Freedom of Information Act, Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations

Health and Safety legislation and guidelines

Such as The Health & Safety at Work Act, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Healthcare legislation and guidelines

Such as the Health and Social Care Act, The Care Act, Mental Capacity Act, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, NICE guidelines

Food provision and information legislation and guidelines

Such as Food Information for Consumers Regulations, Food and Allergy Labelling Regulations, Food, Animal Feed and Seeds Regulations, Nutrition (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations Codex Alimentarius

Advertising legislation or guidelines

Such as The Business Protection from Misleading Marketing Regulations, UK Code of Non-Broadcast Advertising and Direct & Promotional Marketing (CAP Code), UK Code of Broadcast Advertising (BCAP Code)

Employment or service provision legislation or guidelines

Such as The Public Services (Social Value) Act, Equality Act, Public Interest Disclosure Act, Human Rights Act, Sexual Offences Act, UK Bribery Act, Modern Slavery Act, Children Act

Research legislation or guidelines

Such as The Universal Ethical Code for Scientists, UKRI policy and guidelines on governance of good research conduct, UKRIO Code of Practice for Research



Undertake projects and research ethically

To achieve this, you must:

- ensure any research or projects you undertake or support avoid scientific misconduct, this includes ensuring there is no fraud, falsified data or plagiarism in the production of papers and evidence. All data and reports produced must be trustworthy.
- ensure all individuals participating in a project or research have been provided with sufficient information to provide informed consent to participate.
- be aware of sector specific guidance, such as that published by the General Medical Council and Medical Research Council for medical research.
- be aware of the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) Code of Practice for Research (or future equivalent) for best practice guidance for those undertaking research. This covers general guidance, leadership and supervision, training and mentoring, research design, collaborative working, conflicts of interest, research involving animals and humans, human materials, and personal data, health and safety, intellectual property, finance, collection and retention of data, monitoring and audit for review, publication and authorship and misconduct in research. It is a live document, so we recommend if you undertake research that you regularly visit the UKRIO website for the latest guidance – www.ukrio.org
- ensure projects and research is undertaken in a non-discriminatory manner, ensuring the principles of equality, diversity, equity and inclusion (EDEI) are fully considered, assessed and applied.



Speak Up About Concerns

The public and the profession are benefitted when nutrition professionals learn from activities and actions, with incidents of poor practise and behaviours challenged and addressed. Candour is about being open and transparent when something has gone wrong, and is fundamental to maintaining the public's trust in professionals and the profession.

Raise genuine concerns about competence, practise or behaviour

To achieve this, you must:

- uphold a 'duty of candour'; being honest when things go wrong. Providing an account of the incident as soon as possible, informing all of those involved, making both an open, honest apology and details on remedial activity where appropriate.
- be open and honest with colleagues, employer and relevant organisations during any investigations in relation to your or a colleagues' practice or behaviour.
- tell any employers you work for if you have your practice restricted or have had any other conditions imposed on your registration/practice by either the AfN or any other relevant organisation.
- inform AfN promptly and honestly of any disciplinary action you are or have been subject to by any regulatory/licensing organisation or employer, in the UK or internationally.
- tell both the AfN and any employer at the first opportunity if you receive a police caution, charge, conditional discharge or are found guilty of a criminal offence (other than a 'protected' caution or conviction).
- take action if you become aware of competence, conduct or health issues of another registrant, nutrition or health professional, which could affect their fitness to practise. Initially raising concerns directly with the individual and then escalating to their line manager if required.



- raise concerns with a colleague if you believe that they have, or are discriminating a client, colleague or population group.
- refer to the AfN, with supporting evidence, concerns regarding a UKVRN registrant's practice when you believe a breach of these standards has occurred, in line with the AfN fitness to practice procedures.
- support and encourage others to report their concerns and never prevent anyone from raising a concern.
- be aware of when you should refer on a concern to the police, social services, Advertising Standards Agency, Trading Standards or to another regulator.
- not allow a complaint or perceived complaint to negatively impact on the care or services that you provide to the individual or group.
- use any complaints or concerns raised constructively as a way to reflect, learn and improve your knowledge, understanding, skills and practice.



Respect & Maintain Confidentiality

The public and employers trust that a professional will maintain confidentiality and privacy in all settings, only sharing information with external parties for the purpose of client/public safety.

Maintain client confidentiality

To achieve this, you must:

- respect the confidentiality of your clients/employers and any information you hold about them.
- only disclose personal data with written consent from the client/research subject.
- ensure information is only used for the explicit purpose for which it has been given. You are expected to comply with both the spirit and the letter of the Data Protection Act/General Data Protection Regulation.
- seek advice from the Data Information Officer (or equivalent) at your workplace or the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) if you are unclear on data collection, processing, storage or deletion.



Promote Professionalism

You display commitment to the standards of practice and behaviour set out for UKVRN Registrants, upholding the reputation of the profession at all times. You are a role model for those wishing to join, or within, the sector. Through your demonstration of integrity and leadership, you will lead and inspire others to have trust and confidence in the profession.

Maintain high standards of conduct and behaviour

To achieve this, you must:

- maintain a professional approach and seek to avoid bringing the profession into disrepute or undermining public confidence in the nutrition profession. At all times Registrants are expected to work with integrity and probity.
- maintain ethical behaviour, protecting the integrity and reputation of nutrition professionals, nutrition science and the AfN in all activities undertaken as a nutrition professional, in the public domain and/or when identifiable as a member of the nutrition profession.
- act as a role model of professional, ethical behaviour. Supporting the vision and purpose of AfN.
- understand and be committed to achieving equality, diversity, equity and inclusion (EDEI); always treating people fairly, without discrimination, bullying or harassment.
- be aware of how your behaviour and that of your colleagues can affect and influence the behaviour of others.
- not express personal beliefs in an inappropriate or coercive manner, including through the omission or exaggeration of information.
- if working as a freelancer or employer, have a complaints policy which is made available to all clients at the outset or is clearly available on your website.



- if employed, be familiar with your employer's complaints procedures.
- respond to complaints made to you in a timely and appropriate manner
- immediately bring to the AfN's attention any of the following:
 - * convictions or cautions you receive.
 - * disciplinary proceedings by a regulatory or other professional body
 - * issues relating to your health and character, which may negatively affect your fitness to practice
- in the event of a matter being brought to the attention of the AfN, fully co-operate in any investigation, providing any information and undertaking any actions requested in a timely manner.
- openly and transparently declare any professional, personal or financial interests and manage these professionally.

Supervise and mentor colleagues or students responsibly

To achieve this, you must:

- provide appropriate support whenever you are responsible for the supervision of others, whether students or colleagues, ensuring instructions are given in a clear manner and have been understood.
- ensure pressure is not placed on any individual to undertake tasks which they do not feel competent to undertake.
- support others in a positive manner. Registered Nutritionists should encourage and support Registered Associate Nutritionists in their career development and their applications for transfer to Registered Nutritionist, providing guidance and mentoring to those who may not be fully ready to transfer. Registered Nutritionists should be open to peer mentoring fellow Registered Nutritionists, providing mutual support and benefit to both parties.
- agree at the outset what support you will provide to any colleague or student you are providing supervision or mentoring to, and uphold this agreement (e.g. frequency of meetings, format, records to be held and by whom).



Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
AfN	Association for Nutrition
AfN Standards for Independent and Freelance Practice	AfN professional standards that are an extension of the UKVRN Standards of Ethics Conduct and Performance upheld by all registrants, irrespective of their area of practice. These additional standards are specifically designed to ensure our registrants who are working independently of other nutritionists and/or in a freelance setting practise safely, effectively, appropriately and in the best interest of the public.
Appropriate indemnity/insurance provision	An insurance policy or contractual obligation which protects (provides a guarantee of compensation) against possible eventualities such as damages, illness, losses or other financial burdens due to registrants themselves or any other party.
Clients	Individuals, group of individuals or population groups (including animals and/or those who represent their interests) for whom the registrant holds responsibility because of their professional service or advice.
Communicating effectively	Conveying relevant information, at an appropriate time and in a way which suits the audience.
Communication media	Any channel, tool or means used to communicate messages or information, whether verbal, written, graphic, face-to-face, social media or via blogs or websites



Term	Definition
Consultation	A meeting or process of discussing something with an individual, group or business, in order to provide advice. This may include one-to-one consultations with nutrition clients, or business consultations with organisations, whether online, written, or face-to-face.
Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	The undertaking of activities to continually learn in order to develop, maintain and enhance knowledge and skills.
Contract	A legal document that states and explains a formal agreement between two different people or groups, that is intended to be enforceable by law.
Freelance nutritionist	A nutritionist who is self-employed and hired by different companies to provide services or complete agreed assignments. This may also be referred to as a 'self-employed nutritionist'.
Guidance	Additional detail on how to apply the standards daily/in practice.
High standards	In these standards, high standards refer to consistently fulfilling ethical principles to an excellent or outstanding quality.
Independent and freelance practice	Providing services in a paid or unpaid capacity, where the nutritional aspects are provided free from outside control. For example, you are employed within an organisation but work independently of any other nutrition professionals, are self-employed, or are independently providing advice in a voluntary capacity.



Term	Definition
Mentor - ANutr	An AfN ANutr mentor is a person with subject-specific knowledge, normally a Registered Nutritionist (RNutr), who is willing to act as a trusted adviser for a less experienced ANutr registrant (the mentee), and can support ANutrs in areas such as transfer portfolio production, professional development and careers.
Mentor - Peer to Peer	An AfN peer-mentor is a fellow Registered Nutritionist (RNutr), with subject-specific knowledge and experience, who is willing to act as a trusted adviser for another RNutr registrant (the mentee).
Multidisciplinary team (MDT)	A team of health professionals from different specialisations or fields, collaborating to deliver comprehensive patient care. In nutrition, this might include a team of Nutritionists, Registered Dietitians and Medical Doctors.
Products and Services	This includes physical and digital products, as well as resources produced by an individual/organisation and services such as assessment, analysis, reports, trainings, databases, apps etc.
Refer/Referral	To send, direct, or signpost a client to another health professional or service.
Scope of practice	The areas of nutrition in which a registrant is trained, has the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to practise safely and effectively.
Standards	The ethical principles by which all UKVRN registrants must abide.



Term	Definition
Staying up to date	Maintaining and extending knowledge and skills, e.g., this could be through a combination of learning activities known as Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
Supervision/Supervisor	Provision of oversight of an individual’s activities when undertaking a specific task, project or role. This can for example be to ensure compliance, competence or safe practice. Supervision could be provided by a line manager, senior team member or a project supervisor etc. and differs from mentoring (although it can be provided by the same individual).
The Register	The United Kingdom Voluntary Register of Nutritionists (UKVRN)
UKVRN	United Kingdom Voluntary Register of Nutritionists
UKVRN Registrants	Registered Associate Nutritionist (ANutr), Registered Nutritionist (RNutr). A Registered Nutritionist may also be a Fellow of Association for Nutrition (RNutr FAFN).
UKVRN Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance	AfN/UKVRN professional standards designed to ensure our registrants practise safely, effectively, appropriately and in the best interest of the public. The standards apply at all times to all Registrants, regardless of their field of activity, contract of employment or membership /registration with any other professional organisation.



Useful links

Medical Research Council

www.mrc.ac.uk

General Medical Council

www.gmc-uk.org

Health Care Professions Council

www.hpc-uk.org

UK Research Integrity Office

www.ukrio.org

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)

www.acas.org.uk

Advertising Standards Agency

www.asa.org

Health and Safety Executive

www.hse.gov.uk

Information Commissioners Office

www.ico.org.uk

National Institute of Clinical Excellence

www.nice.gov.uk



www.associationfornutrition.org

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1.0	Document developed and approved by Council	December 2013
1.1	Updated to reflect changes to logo and branding	June 2020
2.0	Document reviewed and updated following consultation and Council approval. to come into effect January 2022	November 2021
2.1	Document reviewed: glossary and misleading advertising wording updated to provide additional clarity. Council approved to come into effect January 2025.	September 2024