Competency Requirements for Registered Nutritionists (RNutr)

UK Voluntary Register of Nutritionists (UKVRN)

Association for Nutrition

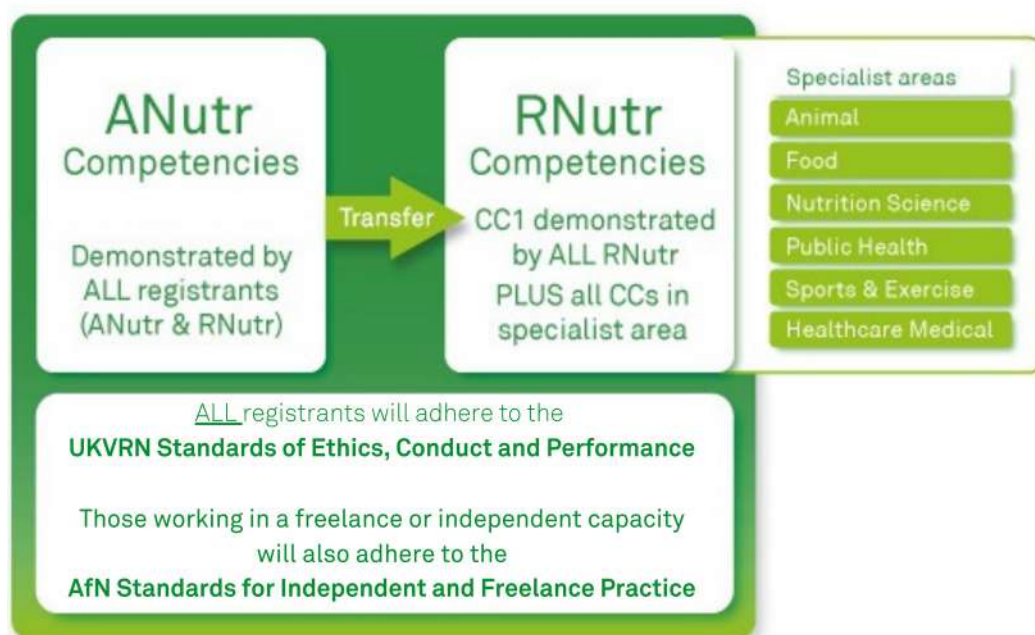*Regulating Professionals – Raising Standards – Improving Health*

Introduction

The UK Voluntary Register of Nutritionist (UKVRN) is a competency-based register of individual nutritionists who are qualified and competent in nutrition science and who agree to uphold professional and ethical standards through a comprehensive code of conduct (Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance). The UKVRN is governed and maintained by the Association for Nutrition.

This document describes the competency requirements for registration with the UKVRN as a Registered Nutritionist (RNutr). Only individuals who meet the required standards expected in evidence-based science and professional practice can be admitted to and remain on the UKVRN.

As shown in the figure below, all registrants who wish to be registered on the UKVRN as a Registered Nutritionist (RNutr) must be able to demonstrate achievement of all sub-competencies of the five Core Competencies set out in the ANutr document, and all sub-competencies of CC1 Professional Conduct and Practice set out in this (RNutr) document.

Additionally, Registered Nutritionists must be able to demonstrate achievement of all sub-competencies from CC2-5 of their individual specialism: Animal, Food, Nutrition Science, Public Health, Sports & Exercise, or Healthcare-Medical.

ANutr Competencies

Demonstrated by ALL registrants (ANutr & RNutr)

Transfer

RNutr Competencies

CC1 demonstrated by ALL RNutr PLUS all CCs in specialist area

Specialist areas
- Animal
- Food
- Nutrition Science
- Public Health
- Sports & Exercise
- Healthcare Medical

ALL registrants will adhere to the
UKVRN Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance

Those working in a freelance or independent capacity will also adhere to the
AfN Standards for Independent and Freelance Practice

Registered Nutritionist Specialist Areas of Competence

All Registered Nutritionists **must** select at least one specialist area (up to a maximum of two). These specialist areas are:

Animal	Animal nutritionists understand the specific characteristics of their nominated species of expertise, applying their knowledge of nutrition science to their welfare, dietary needs and nutritional disorders, advising others or developing research or programmes that increase understanding of their nominated species of expertise. **Registered Nutritionists specialising in Animal Nutrition will use the suffix (Animal) after their title RNutr.**
Food	Food Nutritionists often work within, or supporting, the food industry. This may involve considering the science, ingredients, policy, legislation and regulations involved in the consumption or marketing of a food item, in a variety of roles such as, training, education, customer service, health promotion or improvement, communication, product development or research. **Registered Nutritionists specialising in Food will use the suffix (Food) after their title RNutr.**
Health-care Medical	Healthcare-Medical Nutritionists are GMC-registered and licensed medical practitioners who are dually qualified in nutrition science and use their nutrition knowledge and experience as a routine part of their job, usually within a clinical environment, to advise on individual and population nutritional needs and management. **Registered Nutritionists specialising in Healthcare-Medical Nutrition will use the suffix (Healthcare-Medical) after their title RNutr.**

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Nutrition Science	Nutrition Scientists often work in research roles, whether in academia, food industry or research institutes. They apply their knowledge of nutrition science, including expertise from fields such as molecular biology, biochemistry, physiology or genetics, to investigate how the metabolic and physiological demands of the body are met through diet, and how food and food-related chemicals may cause, prevent or affect risk factors of disease. **Registered Nutritionists specialising in Nutrition Science will use the suffix (Nutrition Science) after their title RNutr.**
Public Health	Public Health Nutritionists often work in research, government, NHS, non-governmental organisations, local authority settings, charities or with individuals. They apply their knowledge of nutrition science in the development, implementation and evaluation of nutrition research, policies and programmes, to ensuring understanding of the impact of food and diet on health and wellbeing, and to the improvement of diet and health, of people and communities. **Registered Nutritionists specialising in Public Health Nutrition will use the suffix (Public Health) after their title RNutr.**
Sports & Exercise	Sports and Exercise Nutritionists often work with individuals, athletes, or groups within educational settings, research, or the sports nutrition industry. They apply their knowledge of nutrition science to the development, implementation and evaluation of nutritional strategies to optimise performance in sport and exercise. This can include determining the energy, fluid and nutrient demands of sport and exercise, and providing tailored dietary advice to individuals and groups. **Registered Nutritionists specialising in Sports and Exercise Nutrition will use the suffix (Sports and Exercise) after their title RNutr.**

Core Competencies in Nutrition

The following core competencies in nutrition apply to all UKVRN registrants (ANutr and RNutr). Core Competency 1 is overarching and underpinned by Core Competencies 2-5:

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- Core Competency Requirements for Registered Associate Nutritionists (ANutr)
- UKVRN Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance
- AfN Standards for Independent and Freelance Practice
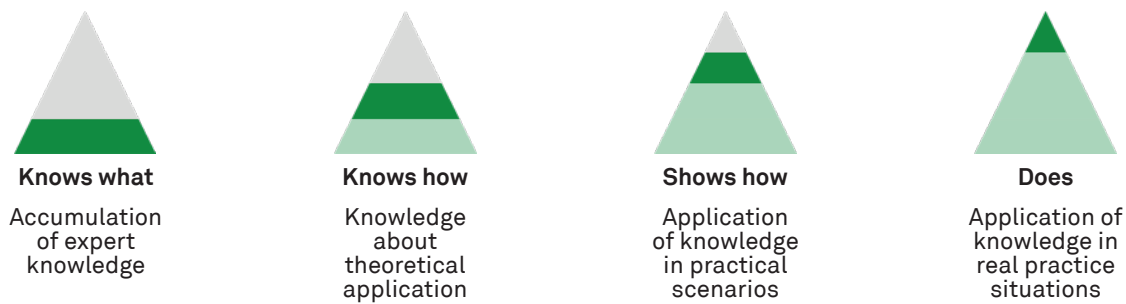- Core Competencies Guidance Notes for Applicants
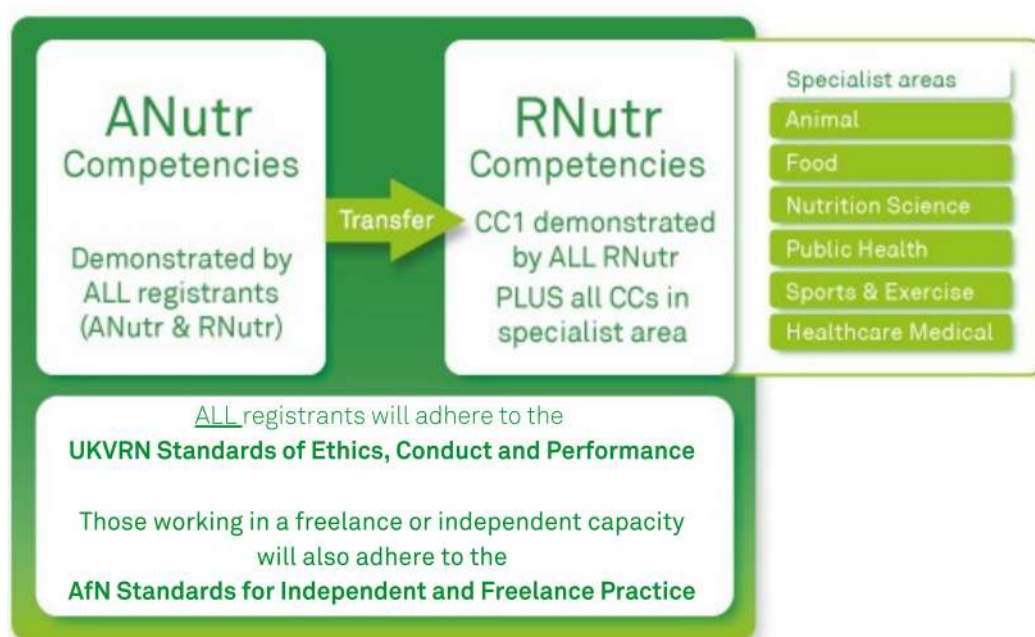
Competence Levels

Throughout this document, we use an adapted version of Miller's Pyramid[1] to help individuals visualise the level of each sub-competency.

Key:

Knows what	Knows how	Shows how	Does
Accumulation of expert knowledge	Knowledge about theoretical application	Application of knowledge in practical scenarios	Application of knowledge in real practice situations

This has been designed as a guide to help you to visualise the **_minimum level_** for each sub-competency, reflecting the variety of activities undertaken by registrants within each specialist area. This means at times, there may be a 'Shows How' pyramid displayed for a sub-competency you undertake in active practice. If this is the case, it would be expected that you demonstrate your activities at the higher level of 'Does'.

Example

NS2c – Examine factors which can affect the following:

- *Cellular integrity*
- *Energy metabolism and expenditure*
- *Bioavailability of micro and macronutrients*

If you specialise in the area of Nutrition Science and are currently researching the bioavailability of micro and macronutrients in your active practice, you will demonstrate your activities at the 'Does' level.

Core Competency 1: Professional Conduct and Practice (applies to applicants of _all specialisms_)

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should:

CC1a – Demonstrate ethical and professional practice through upholding the UKVRN Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance, including, but not limited to:

- Identifying and applying the principles of equality, diversity, equity and inclusion (EDEI) that should be fully considered, assessed and applied throughout all areas of practice and activities
- Working within your own scope of practice, appreciating the limits of your skills and knowledge, being aware of   , referral pathways and in compliance with legal requirements
- Applying the scientific principles mastered through your education and continuing professional development (CPD) to your professional practice and public activities

CC1b – Apply appropriate communication skills throughout all areas of practice, by:

- Establishing appropriate professional relationships, collaborating effectively and ethically, including, but not limited to, with health/medical professionals and in brand, sponsorship and influencer activities
- Respecting and reflecting the current scientific evidence which underpins your practice and activities, enabling informed choices about nutrition
- Advising on and presenting nutritional science information and research findings to a range of audiences in a suitable format across different communication media
- Checking that the information you have provided is accurate and has been understood correctly, including when communicated in different languages

CC1c – Demonstrate development of professional practice and competence, by:

- Undertaking CPD activities and reflective practice in accordance with AfN requirements, submitting CPD record for assessment if selected for audit

- Keeping up to date with relevant research developments, using research to develop evidence base, critiquing and applying findings to improve own practice
- Keeping up to date and, where appropriate, participating in the development of food and nutrition policies (e.g., through contributions to scientific committees, expert groups or consultation responses), and explaining where these align with international policies
- Developing and/or applying policies to assess risk, and evaluating and adapting own practice in line with best practice standards, legislation, official guidelines, policies and protocols
- Participating in and recognising the importance of mentorship to the development of your practice and the profession, including peer-to-peer and RNutr-to-ANutr

CC1d – Demonstrate awareness of developing evidence base and its application in practice, by:

- Promoting the role of nutrition in sustainability, recognising national and international frameworks and terminology, and outlining associated issues
- Accessing, obtaining and analysing relevant data from large nutrition-related data sets, such as NDNS, Kantar, AHDB, PFMA and ONS*, and big data sets, such as Google Trends, applying findings to the development of research, policies, activities and programmes
- Identifying gaps in the evidence base, recognising their associated limitations and opportunities, appropriate to your professional context
- Advising on the general principles and methods associated with factors including determining the efficacy, health attributes, nutrition and health claims, safety and legal aspects of foods/feeds and drinks, and the use of supplements

* Large dataset examples: National Diet & Nutrition Survey (NDNS), Kantar Worldpanel, Agriculture and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB), Pet Food Manufacturers Association (PFMA), Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Animal

CC2-5 for those who apply their knowledge of nutrition science to the welfare, dietary needs and nutritional disorders, advising others or developing research to increase understanding, of their nominated species of expertise.

Core Competency 2: Science and Research Skills

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

AN2a – Explain the science underpinning current feed policy

AN2b - Explain the complementarity between the food needs of humans and your nominated species of expertise, and how this can impact on owner/public understanding of the needs of the animal

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

AN2c – Accurately assess the nutritional requirements for maintenance and production or performance in your nominated species of expertise (growth, lactation, egg production, sport etc.)

AN2d – Design and implement a feeding programme to meet the needs of specific clients/species

AN2e – Apply computerised methods to calculate ration/feed formulation and describe the assumptions these methods make and their limitations

Core Competency 3: Food Systems

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

AN3a – Explain feed manufacturing and development processes, describing:

- The quality control systems and microbiological safety issues in production
- The importance of sustainability in feed production and procurement
- Bioavailability of nutrients in feed
- Adaptation of systems to improve nutritional value of feed
- Reformulation, fortification and functional feeds
- Legislation for the control of feeds, their use/marketing and labelling

AN3b – Describe the effects of dietary constituents, species variations and different processing techniques on the composition of animal-origin foods and the possible impact on human nutrition/health and sustainability

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

AN3c – Communicate practical dietary advice following official guidelines on the nutritional requirements and considerations during health, disease and recovery of your nominated species of expertise

AN3d – Advise on feedstuffs and ingredients, detailing their chemical composition, nutritive value, potential anti-nutrients and toxins

AN3e – Identify and develop solutions to feeding management problems for your nominated species of expertise

Core Competency 4: Social and Behaviour

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

AN4a – Describe the impact on feed choice, dietary intake and feeding practices, related to:

- Human health and nutrition trends (including obesity and diet trends)
- Human behaviour and perception
- Animal behaviours regarding season, age, reproductive status and resource competition
- Marketing, including campaigns, labelling strategies and veterinary promotion
- Food and feed prices
- Feed systems

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

AN4b – Advise and influence owners/managers/farmers to make positive nutritional choices for the maintenance, production, performance, health and welfare of your nominated species of expertise

AN4c – Identify and advise on how the feeding behaviours of your nominated species of expertise impacts on nutrient requirements, digestion, health, natural behaviour and welfare

Core Competency 5 Health and Wellbeing

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

AN5a – Describe the development and production process of specialist feeds and supplements, such as balanced energy-protein supplements or supplements to pasture

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

AN5b – Identify dietary needs of specified animals, using markers of nutritional status and diet related health, applying findings to research, or development of feed strategies

AN5c – Advise on the impact of animal feeding and management on the risk of animal/zoonotic diseases and disorders such as acidosis, ketosis, laminitis, post-weaning diarrhoea, parasite control, locomotor disorders, digestive and metabolic disorders

AN5d – Calculate requirements, and based on the results, advise on the development, and support the implementation, of feeding programmes, to meet the needs of the individual animal/herd (such as managing obesity, feed sensitivity, production gains, age, fertility)

Food

CC2-5 for those who apply their knowledge of nutrition science within, or supporting, the food industry. Such as in menu and product development, policy and regulation, training, health promotion, research and communication.

Core Competency 2: Science and Research Skills

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

FN2a – Explain the science underpinning current food policy

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

FN2b – Accurately assess the nutritional content/contribution of food and food products, interpreting results and reporting on them in multiple settings, formats and platforms, appropriate to your area of work

FN2c – Analyse and evaluate food intake records, recipes and/or diets, either manually, or using appropriate computer programmes

Core Competency 3: Food Systems

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

FN3a – Explain food manufacturing and development processes, describing:

- The quality control systems and microbiological food safety issues in production
- The importance of sustainability in food production and procurement
- Bioavailability of nutrients in food
- Adaptation of systems to improve nutritional value of food
- Reformulation, fortification and functional foods

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

FN3b – Communicate practical dietary advice following accurate dietary assessment and application of dietary or nutritional guidelines, in multiple groups, sub-groups, and settings

FN3c – Apply dietary or nutritional guidelines to product development, menu or meal planning, marketing or other consumer communications

FN3d – Interpret food labels, guideline daily amounts and front of pack labelling to advise your practice

FN3e – Develop guidance, systems or plans around food safety, food hygiene, sustainability and/or environmental awareness

Core Competency 4: Social and Behaviour

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

FN4a – Describe how the following can impact on food choice and dietary intake:

- New developments in food science, including reformulation
- Socio-cultural settings, including high- and low-income communities
- Psychological and societal factors
- Marketing, including campaigns, labelling strategies and store tours

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

FN4b – Identify socio-economic disparities in nutrition and food choice, designing where appropriate new products, research or interventions to address them

FN4c – Advise on food processing, manufacturing, and preparation/service needs associated with specific population groups, considering age, sex, cultural and socio-economic background, specific dietary requirements and health issues

FN4d - Apply the principles of behaviour change in your practice as a food nutritionist and, where appropriate, in intervention design, implementation and evaluation, recognising and developing plans to overcome barriers to implementation

Core Competency 5: Health and Wellbeing

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

FN5a – Describe the development and production process of specialist dietary products, such as balanced energy-protein supplements

FN5b – Explain how national programmes, such as universal fortification programmes, are developed and implemented

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

FN5c – Identify health needs of specified individuals, groups, and communities, using markers of nutritional status and diet related health, applying findings to research, or development of menus or food products

FN5d – Advise on healthy catering, menus and/or healthy product development taking account of current standards and guidelines

Healthcare Medical

Additional CC1, and CC2-5 for GMC-registered and licensed medical practitioners who apply their knowledge of nutrition science as a routine part of their job, usually within a clinical environment, to advise on individual and population nutritional needs and management.

Core Competency 1: Professional Conduct and Practice (additional for Healthcare Medical)

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

CC1e – Demonstrate Good Medical Practice by holding continuing registration with the General Medical Council (GMC), adhering to the GMC ethical guidance framework

CC1f – Apply the principles of medico-legal ethics when dealing with complex nutritional and hydration care, especially when involved in end-of-life care and withholding or withdrawal of artificial feeding

CC1g – Identify referral pathways and other health care professionals within clinical and community/support settings with expertise in nutrition

Core Competency 2: Science and Research Skills

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

HC2a - Identify the processes involved in the disruption to homeostasis of nutrition in diseased, physiologically and surgically altered states, including starvation, hypermetabolic and catabolic states

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

HC2b - Apply appropriate methods to assess nutritional status, including history and physical examination, growth charts, laboratory, body composition, and diagnosis and treatment of nutrient deficiencies and excess

HC2c - Manage chronic conditions, identifying nutritional causes and consequences, and recognising inter-individual differences in dietary response

HC2d - Calculate macro- and micro-nutrient, and energy needs and DRVs in health and disease, acknowledging the relationship between DRVs and the % RI/NRV used on the labels of vitamin and mineral supplements

Core Competency 3: Food Systems

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

HC3a – Advise on the role of alcohol in relation to the following: energy, toxin, social and the management of over-consumption

HC3b – Identify and manage food allergies and intolerances, advising on impact on food choices and referring on, when required, for suitable nutrition support

HC3c - Manage specialised diets and dietary patterns, including, DASH (Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension), 'Mediterranean', Special/ Adapted Diets, and supplementation, advising on food choices and preparation

Core Competency 4: Social and Behaviour

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

HC4a – Describe basic mental health and illness paradigms including addictive behaviour patterns e.g., alcohol consumption, extreme dietary restrictions, disordered eating and eating disorders

HC4b – Describe specific nutrition-related medical needs during the life course such as pregnancy, breast feeding, ageing and end of life care

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

HC4c – Identify and influence nutritional choices in health and disease

HC4d – Deliver, refer, or signpost to, social and behavioural interventions at population and individual levels

HC4e – Avoid weight stigma (obesity and cachexia) in all aspects of practice, including verbal and written communications

Core Competency 5: Health and Wellbeing

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

HC5a – Describe the changes in nutritional demands and body composition relating to acute and chronic ill health, and their management, including:

- Fluid and hydration (including over-hydration), lean mass, fat mass
- Functional nutritional state
- Reductive adaptation, refeeding syndrome
- Ageing, sarcopenia, cachexia
- Under- and over-nutrition

HC5b – Identify appropriate uses of oral, enteral and parenteral methods of nutritional support, and routes of delivering feed e.g., enteral tube feeding NG, PEG, and post-pyloric, confirming safe placement of device and recognising the influence of medication

HC5c– Explain the impact of gastro-intestinal surgical intervention of the gastro-intestinal tract; peri-operative nutrition, enhanced recovery and long-term consequences

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

HC5d – Identify and manage diseases and conditions related to your specific area of medical practice, referring for specialist support when appropriate. Including, but not limited to:

- Diagnose and manage intestinal failure, referring to appropriate specialities including regional or national intestinal failure centres for advice and on-going care

- Using and interpreting results from validated tools for screening for malnutrition e.g., 'MUST' (Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool)
- Identify and manage malnutrition, including under- and over-nutrition, in critically ill patients and patients living with obesity, proving appropriate weight management advice
- Identify eating disorders, referring for specialist help when appropriate
- Developing/delivering food, nutrition and health policies

Nutrition Science

CC2-5 for those who apply their knowledge of nutrition science to investigating how the metabolic and physiological demands of the body are met through diet, and how food and food-related chemicals may cause, prevent or affect risk factors of disease.

Core Competency 2: Science and Research Skills

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

NS2a – Explain the evidence behind the protective/adverse roles of dietary bioactive compounds

NS2b – Explain the evidence surrounding genetics, epigenetics, gene-nutrient interactions and foetal programming

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

NS2c – Examine factors which can affect the following:

- Cellular integrity
- Energy metabolism and expenditure
- Bioavailability of micro and macronutrients

NS2d – Identify and describe factors affecting the nutritional significance of minerals and trace elements, their absorption, storage and excretion, designing ways to prevent mineral deficiencies and excess

NS2e – Investigate the mechanistic basis of the action of nutrients in the body, and/or food components associated with protection against diseases, such as CVD and cancers

Core Competency 3: Food Systems

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

NS3a – Describe the biological mechanisms underpinning health risk assessment and epidemiology

NS3b – Explain the health benefits and/or risks of reformulation, fortification, novel and functional foods

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

NS3c – Advise colleagues, legislators, non-governmental organisations and/or other organisations on matters related to nutritional science, in multiple settings

NS3d – Advise on the development and implementation of nutritional strategies, for example in areas of food poverty, famine or chronic malnutrition

Core Competency 4: Social and Behaviour

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

NS4a – Describe how the following can impact on food choice and dietary intake:

- New developments in food science, including reformulation
- Socio-cultural settings, including high- and low-income communities
- Psychological and societal factors

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

NS4b – Provide advice on the scientific evidence related to the dietary management of health and disease states

NS4c – Formulate research questions and design research and interventions to examine the impact of diet availability and dietary habits on public health and healthy development

Core Competency 5: Health and Wellbeing

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

NS5a – Explain the underpinning science and practicalities of strategies for improving nutrition at the population level

NS5b – Explain the impact of the processing of foods on health

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

NS5c – Identify gaps, formulate research questions and/or conduct research on the mechanistic aspects of nutrition related to health status or life-stage

NS5d – Design, implement and evaluate studies, interventions or policies, disseminating the findings to multiple audiences, across multiple platforms

Public Health

CC2-5 for those who apply their knowledge of nutrition science to supporting the public to understand how food and diet can impact on health and wellbeing, such as via 1:1 advice or the development, implementation or evaluation of nutrition research, policies and programmes.

Core Competency 2: Science and Research Skills

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

PH2a – Advise on how the demands of physical activity impacts metabolism, nutrient and fluid needs, how this affects energy and nutrition requirements, and how individual needs may differ from population level dietary reference values

PH2b – Accurately assess diet in several different population groups and settings, using anthropometry, dietary records and/or biomarkers, communicating, reporting, and advising on results appropriately

PH2c – Measure, describe and interpret patterns of food/nutrient intake or markers of nutrition

Core Competency 3: Food Systems

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

PH3a – Explain how the sociology and politics of institutions and other stakeholders might affect or be affected by changes in the national and global food supply

PH3b – Explain the importance of sustainability and equity as it relates to the development and delivery of public health programmes

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

PH3c – Undertake modelling exercises to determine impact of changes in food composition or consumption, e.g., as a result of reformulation

PH3d – Translate food information to nutrients, using it to advise multiple groups and settings, and/or research

Core Competency 4: Social and Behaviour

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

PH4a – Explain the principles of controlling non-communicable diseases

PH4b – Explain the social determinants of health, considering relevant research developments

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

PH4c – Advise on healthy diets and nutrition, including how to modify food/nutrient intake, at individual and population level, considering factors such as age, sex, religion, culture, socio-economic background, disability, cooking skills and physical activity, in multiple settings across multiple platforms

PH4d – Advise, and where appropriate support evidence development, on how behavioural/social aspects of nutrition can impact on different population groups – at either a local, national or international level, and for both low- and high-income communities

PH4e – Incorporate behaviour change techniques into activities developed for multiple populations (at individual, group or population level), targeted at the needs of the specific audiences

Core Competency 5: Health and Wellbeing

> **As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:**
>
> **Use your knowledge and understanding to:**
>
> PH5a – Explain the pathways involved in nutrition-related referrals, e.g., for diabetes and eating disorders within the UK National Health Service (NHS), and other healthcare systems (such as private and international, where appropriate)
>
> **Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:**
>
> PH5b – Support, develop and/or implement evidence-based food, nutrition and health policies, strategies and/or programmes, for multiple population groups and settings, undertaking effective stakeholder engagement
>
> PH5c – Develop and deliver nutrition related interventions and public health campaigns designed to improve population diet, such as growth monitoring, weight management referral schemes and prevention of undernutrition in infants, micronutrient supplementation, food co-ops, and school-based schemes
>
> PH5d – Propose solutions to reduce nutrition-related disease risk appropriate for specific individuals or groups, considering specific population and life-stage

Sports and Exercise

CC2-5 for those who apply their knowledge of nutrition science to the development, implementation and evaluation of nutritional strategies to optimise performance in sport and exercise.

Core Competency 2: Science and Research Skills

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

SE2a – Describe the principles of training, components of fitness and the physiological demands of exercise and sporting performance, evaluating their impact on the energy and nutritional requirements of an athlete, explaining how these vary from current dietary reference values and recommendations

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

SE2b - Measure and estimate the energy and nutritional requirements for different levels and types of sport, exercise and physical activity and monitor nutritional status, using findings to advise individuals, groups, and/or research

SE2c – Explain the importance of hydration in sport and exercise, applying appropriate methods to assess hydration status

SE2d – Access and refer to IOC consensus statements, recognising the underpinning evidence-base

Core Competency 3: Food Systems

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

SE3a – Explain the structure, hierarchies, roles, funding and rules relating to the Sporting World

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

SE3b – Review the role of ergogenic aids and nutritional supplements and provide evidence-based guidance on the safe and effective use of dietary or nutritional supplements, being aware of regulatory bodies, current evidence and guidelines

SE3c – Adhere to international and domestic support nutrition policies, procedures and legal restrictions on supplement and drug use, with specific regard to WADA doping rules and regulations, always working in an ethical manner

SE3d – Advise on the provision of nutrition during training and competition, considering factors including food availability, access, facilities and timing

Core Competency 4: Social and Behaviour

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

SE4a – Describe the change in nutritional demands and ability of athletes to achieve nutritional goals, considering the impact of factors such as travel, environment, ambitions, values, beliefs, motivations, training and performance pressures

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

SE4b – Advise on diet at individual and population level, suggesting how to modify intake in relation to factors such as age, sex and sport, considering the impact of factors including dietary requirements and special diets, disability, income, shopping and cooking skills on achieving dietary goals

SE4c – Assess dietary intake and counsel individuals and teams to achieve an optimum diet for performance through meal adaption/ menu modification, recognising meal timing in relation to training and competition

SE4d – Design dietary interventions and strategies to support changes in body mass and composition

Core Competency 5: Health and Wellbeing

As a UKVRN Registered Nutritionist, you should be able to:

Use your knowledge and understanding to:

SE5a – Explain the role of nutrition in the prevention and recovery from illness and injury

Practically apply your knowledge and understanding to:

SE5b – Contribute to the development and/or implementation of strategy and policy on food and nutrient-based standards to provide advice to athletes for various sports and physical activity

SE5c – Contribute to awareness, development and/or implementation of nutrition and hydration policies and practices for clubs and governing bodies, working with food providers to ensure availability of appropriate foods and meals

SE5d – Contribute to the development and/or production of food and drink-based education guidelines, materials or programmes for individuals or teams

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
AfN	Association for Nutrition
Appropriate communication skills	Conveying relevant information, at an appropriate time and in a way which suits the audience.
Appropriate professional relationships	Relationships that maintain professional boundaries, in accordance with the AfN Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance, whether with brands, service users or colleagues.
Bias	A disproportionate preference towards one idea, thing or person, often in a way that is closed-minded, prejudicial, or unfair. In scientific research this could include selection bias, information bias or confounding.
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.
Competence	Level of skill, knowledge and ability to do something successfully.
Complementarity	The relationship between two or more things that improve or emphasise each other's qualities.
Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	The undertaking of activities to continually learn in order to develop, maintain and enhance knowledge and skills.

Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (EDEI)	EDEI ensures fair treatment and opportunity for all. It aims to eradicate prejudice and discrimination on the basis of an individual or group of individual's protected characteristics. Equality is ensuring everybody has equal rights and access to opportunities. Diversity is recognising, respecting and valuing the differences between people and groups of people. Equity is ensuring a level playing field for everyone, being fair and impartial and ensuring people are not treated less favourably because of their characteristics, by providing support and assistance depending on specific needs or abilities. Inclusion is creating an environment where everyone is, and feels, welcome and valued.
Evidence/evidence-base/current scientific evidence	Body of information drawn from published studies, statistical analyses and grey literature to determine a consensus on what is known about the topic/subject.
Food matrix	The physical structure of food and how its molecules interact and impact on the way we digest and absorb the nutrients within food.
Food & nutrition literacy	Having the skills and knowledge to understand the impact of food and nutrition choices, preparation and consumption, on our health, community, environment and economy.
Healthy Catering	Food provision that supports access and consumption of healthy options.
Health claims	Any statement about a relationship between food and health. Nutrition and health claims used in commercial communications must be evidence-based and authorised for use following scientific assessment of the evidence, overseen by the UK Government. A register of nutrition and health claims that may be made in commercial communications in Great Britain can be found on the UK Government website.

Large nutrition-related data sets/big data	Large data sets, often used by nutritionists in research, policy, activities and programmes. Examples include, National Diet & Nutrition Survey (NDNS), Kantar Worldpanel, Agriculture and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB), Pet Food Manufacturers Association (PFMA), Office for National Statistics (ONS). Big data includes Google Trends.
Mentor - ANutr	An AfN 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).
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).
Methods of assessment	Any means of evaluating, estimating or determining e.g., nutritional status, dietary requirements or body composition, such as tests, tools and calculations.
Multiple platforms	More than one different media used to communicate messages or information in any form. For example, delivering a talk to a community group or academic conference, one-to-one consultation, written reports, magazine articles, blogs or social media outputs.
Multiple populations	More than one different target population, for example specific to children, adults, men, vegetarians, pregnant women.
Multiple settings	More than one different setting where information is communicated, for example one-to-one consultations, community groups, schools, academic conferences, or workplaces.
Nominated species of expertise	The biological species that services are provided relation to. For example, canine, bovine, equine.

Non-nutrient components	Food components that do not contribute to energy intake and are not considered to be nutrients, such as phytochemicals, probiotics, fibre, colourings, flavourings and food additives. Some non-nutrient components of food may be beneficial, while others may be harmful to the body.
Nutrition/Nutritional Science	The science of food, nutrients, other substances, intake and biochemical processing of food substances, relationship to health and disease, and the application of this to policy and practice (frequently drawing on social sciences to understand factors influencing food choice and health status).
Peer-peer	Mentorship and support from those at a similar career stage. AfN encourages peer mentoring, providing facilitated Zoom sessions to allow RNutr to benefit from each other's different experiences and expertise developed during careers.
Practice	Activities in which you apply your knowledge and skill in a paid or unpaid capacity.
Professional Conduct and Practice	How you behave and act in settings where you are seen to have a professional role (this includes when working, volunteering and on social media).
Reflective practice	Reflective practice can be defined as "learning through and from experience towards gaining new insights of self and practice" (Finlay, 2008). Following any CPD, you should reflect on the activity, considering whether it aligned with your aims, what you learnt, and how you will use it in future practice.
Scope of practice	The areas of nutrition in which a registrant is trained, has the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to practice safely and effectively.

Socioeconomic	The interaction of social and economic factors. Can be used to describe differences between groups relating to a combination of their social class and financial situation.
Societal	Related to or involving society.
Standards	The ethical principles by which all UKVRN registrants must abide.
Sustainability/Sustainable diets	Dietary patterns that promote all dimensions of individuals' health and wellbeing; have low environmental pressure and impact; are accessible, affordable, safe and equitable; and are culturally acceptable (FAO and WHO, 2019).
UKVRN	United Kingdom Voluntary Register of Nutritionists
UKVRN-registrants	Registered Associate Nutritionist (ANutr), Registered Nutritionist (RNutr) and Registered Nutritionist & Fellow of Association for Nutrition (RNutr FAfN).
UKVRN Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance	AfN 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.

References

1 Miller, G (1990) The assessment of clinical skills/competence/performance. Academic Medicine, 65(9):S63-7.

Version	Details	Date
1.0	First version implemented	July 2012
1.1	Reviewed and amended	February 2014
2.0	2019 (updated) Registration Competencies approved and published	October 2019
3.0	2024 (updated) Registration Competencies approved and published	April 2023