



Association  
for **Nutrition**

*Regulating Professionals – Raising Standards – Improving Health*



Learning Outcomes for  
**AfN Certificate in  
Foundational Nutrition Essentials  
for Health & Social Care**

## Competence Framework in Nutrition for Health & Social Care

This document details the learning outcomes training courses must ensure students achieve for the successful awarding of:

- **AfN Certificate in Foundational Nutrition Essentials for Health & Social Care**

(Detailing the name of recipient, course completed, course provider, competencies the course covered, name of AfN certificate awarded and date of award)

The three core competencies for Health & Social Care (alongside the Code of Practice) are:

- 1.1. Fundamentals of Human Nutrition (compulsory)
- 2.2. Health, Wellbeing and Clinical Health (optional)
- 3.3. Supporting Healthier Dietary Choices (optional)

### Learning Outcomes

#### Core Competency 1: Fundamentals of Human Nutrition

(All of the learning outcomes for this competency must be achieved)

Competency Topic	Learning Outcomes to be achieved
1.1 Healthy eating guidelines	<p>Students should be aware of sources of reliable, evidence-based healthy eating guidelines and be able to briefly describe these guidelines.</p> <p>Students should be aware dietary needs can differ by gender, age, physical activity level and any physical or mobility restrictions or disabilities.</p>
1.2 Food groups & sources of nutrients	<p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe the main food groups in relation to healthy eating guidelines and the benefits of eating a variety of foods.</p> <p>Students should know and be able to describe examples of food sources of carbohydrates, proteins and fats in relation to healthy eating guidelines.</p>
1.3 Carbohydrate, protein and fat and the production of energy	<p>Students should know the amount of energy (kJ/ kcal) provided by carbohydrates, proteins and fats.</p>

Competency Topic	Learning Outcomes to be achieved
<p>1.4 Energy requirements and energy balance</p>	<p>Students should know the energy requirements (kJ/kcal) for the average male and female adult.</p> <p>Students should know and understand the principles of energy balance, how this relates to weight control and the importance of maintaining a balanced diet following healthy eating guidelines when altering energy intake to support body weight goals.</p>
<p>1.5 Eating patterns</p>	<p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe regular eating patterns and their importance for a healthy and balanced diet.</p>
<p>1.6 Portion size: meals, snacks and drinks</p>	<p>Students should know the impact of altering portion size on energy and nutrient intake.</p> <p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe how portion size can differ for different groups of individuals and for different dietary/lifestyle goals.</p>
<p>1.7 Food labels</p>	<p>Students should know how to interpret nutrition information contained on food labels in relation to food choice and healthy eating guidelines and how to compare the nutrient content of two items in the same food group.</p>
<p>1.8 Food preparation and cooking techniques</p>	<p>Students should know the impact of different food preparation and cooking techniques in relation to meeting healthy eating guidelines.</p>
<p>1.9 Hydration and fluid intake guidelines</p>	<p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe fluid intake guidelines, appropriate drinks and the importance of hydration for general health.</p>
<p>1.10 Alcohol</p>	<p>Students should know and be able to describe the alcohol content of beverages and how this relates to alcohol intake limits.</p> <p>Students should know the major health risks associated with excess intake/binge drinking.</p> <p>Students should know the alcohol contributes to energy (kJ/kcal) intake.</p> <p>Students should know that excess alcohol intake can impact of health status and common medical conditions</p>

Competency Topic	Learning Outcomes to be achieved
<p>1.11 Nutrition communication and safe practice</p>	<p>Students should know and be able to clearly and accurately communicate reliable evidence-based healthy eating guidelines and nutrition information relevant to the individual or group.</p> <p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe the limits of own knowledge and competence and when to refer on or seek further information/ support.</p> <p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe the role and expertise of recognised nutrition professionals (ANutrs, RNutrs and RDs), who to refer to, when and how.</p>

## Core Competency 2: Health, Wellbeing and Clinical Health

(Including these learning outcomes is optional)

Competency Topic	Learning Outcomes to be achieved
<p>2.1 Under and over nutrition and the health risks</p>	<p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe health risks associated with under and over nutrition, and know how this can impact on disease progression or recovery.</p> <p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe signs, of under and over nutrition and know and understand when and how to refer on for more information/support.</p> <p>Students should know that medical conditions can impact on intake, absorption and utilization of nutrients.</p> <p>Students should know of screening tools such as MUST, which are used in their workplace and when these should be used</p>
<p>2.2 Nutrition, body composition and health</p>	<p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe the relationship between nutrition, body composition and health.</p> <p>Students should know common methods of measuring body composition and health status.</p>
<p>2.3 Health effects of specific ingredients (e.g. salt, sugar, fats, additives)</p>	<p>Students should know there are health effects associated with specific ingredients and be able to find and identify reliable sources of evidence-based information which describe the health effects of specific ingredients in food, being aware there are common myths regarding some ingredients/nutrients and health/medical conditions.</p> <p>Students should know that nutrients/foods can interact with some medications (drug-nutrient interaction).</p>

Competency Topic	Learning Outcomes to be achieved
2.4 Dietary Supplements	<p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe the evidence and limitations/risks related to the use of dietary supplements (&amp; performance aids).</p> <p>Students should know and understand potential/actual conflicts of interest surrounding the sale of dietary supplements (&amp; performance aids) within the workplace.</p> <p>Students should know dietary supplements (&amp; performance aids) can interact with medications and/or impact on health/medical conditions.</p>
2.5 General strategies for promoting behaviour change in relation to nutrition	<p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe a range of strategies and approaches to support behaviour change to meet healthy eating guidelines.</p> <p>Students should know of potential barriers to public health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Students should know and understand why motivation in a manner appropriate and acceptable to the individual is important.</p>

**Core Competency 3: Supporting healthier dietary choices**  
(Including these learning outcomes is optional)

Competency Topic	Learning Outcomes to be achieved
3.1 Health based food choice	<p>Students should know food choices which may be made for health reasons that have specific dietary requirements.</p> <p>Students should be able to respond appropriately to basic questions from an individual with a special dietary requirement, and know when to seek further information/ support.</p>
3.2 Dietary Records	<p>Students should know and be able to briefly describe how to use dietary records as a monitoring tool to support behaviour change (e.g. food diary, food recall and food frequency questionnaires) and be aware of their limitations.</p>
3.3 Religious, cultural and ethical food choice	<p>Students should know specific food choices for religious, cultural and ethical reasons.</p> <p>Students should know cooking and preparation methods required for religious, cultural or ethical reasons.</p>

Competency Topic	Learning Outcomes to be achieved
<p>3.4 Understanding and communicating healthier food choices</p>	<p>Students should know and be able to describe healthier choices in the context of a healthy balanced diet, and how food choice can be supported for individuals to meet healthy eating guidelines.</p> <p>Students should know how to find local services that individuals can be referred/directed to, such as food banks, cooking classes, weight management services and diabetes-prevention programme provisions.</p>
<p>3.5 Food intolerances and allergies</p>	<p>Students should know the difference between food intolerances and allergies.</p> <p>Students should be know how food labels indicate common allergens.</p> <p>Students should know where to seek information/ support for those with food intolerances and allergies in making food choices.</p>

### Code of Practice (All Compulsory)

1. Students must know and be able to demonstrate their understanding of the boundaries of their role and responsibilities, including:

- a) Working within the limits of their knowledge, competence and skills
- b) Understanding the boundary of their role and when/how to refer on as appropriate
- c) The need to seek supervision when situations are beyond their competence and authority
- d) Promoting and demonstrating good practice as an individual and as a team member
- e) Being accountable for their own decisions and behaviours

2. Students must know and be able to demonstrate their understanding of the need to maintain their levels of competence, including:

- a) Maintaining competence within their role and field of practice
- b) Keeping knowledge and skills up-to-date to ensure safe and effective practice
- c) Understanding own development needs and make continuing improvements

3. Students must know and be able to demonstrate their understanding of the need to uphold basic standards of good character, including:

- a) Respect dignity, privacy and safety of individuals
- b) Ensuring actions are honest, trustworthy, reliable and dependable
- c) Ensuring services provided are delivered equally and inclusively
- d) Respecting the views, wishes and wellbeing of individuals

### **Notes on boundaries and responsibilities (All Compulsory)**

The competencies listed above are only for use by those working with the general (healthy) population or by those working within a multidisciplinary team within a clinical employment setting, where a suitably qualified clinical professional is the clinical lead and responsible for allocating support activities to suitably qualified and competent individuals.

A student successfully completing a certified course should be able to aid an individual in understanding how official guidelines are applied to their them and their food preferences and signpost to reputable information sources, such as NHS Choices, recognised health charities, Government advice and to suitably qualified medical and nutrition professionals. Completion of a certified course does not qualify an individual to provide prescribed, individualised or bespoke advice that goes outside of supporting achievement of official nutrition recommendations or in relation to an individual's medical condition(s).

Individuals requesting/requiring prescribed, individualised or bespoke advice in relation to nutrition, dietary advice in relation to medical conditions, dietary advice or support for the primary aim of influencing sporting/fitness performance (i.e. for elite/professional individuals or groups) should be promptly referred on to a suitably qualified medical or nutrition professional (ANutr, RNutr, RD).

