



Department of

**Health, Social Services  
and Public Safety**

An Roinn

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

DIETITIAN



“ The key skills required to becoming a dietician include good team player, excellent communication skills, nutritional knowledge, time management and the ability to use your own initiative. ”

**THE HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TEAM NEEDS YOU**

## DIETITIAN

Dietitians are uniquely qualified to translate scientific information about food into practical dietary advice. As well as providing impartial advice about nutrition and health, Dietitians also advise about food related problems and treat disease and ill health. Many Dietitians work in the National Health Service and may work in one or more specialist areas eg diabetes, children's health, cancer, whilst others work with people in the community. They are a key part of the healthcare team.

The Dietitian's overall aim is to educate patients to make informed food choices required for the dietary management of their condition and to ensure nutritional needs are met.

Dietitians assess patients according to their specific needs, draw up nutritional care plans based on those needs and counsel patients about diet. They work closely with patients who need therapeutic diets, such as those with kidney disease, liver problems, food allergy, eating disorders or diabetes. They also help to care for people who, because of illness, injury or surgery, need liquid food given through a tube.

Dietitians also have a major role in nutrition and health promotion initiatives. They work in partnership with community groups and network with other agencies. Community dietitians provide nutrition training for primary care and community workers. They promote good nutrition by developing and implementing nutrition strategies and policies, produce nutrition resources and work with the media.

### Skills Required:

The work demands a high level of knowledge and expertise. Your training will ensure that you have the necessary clinical skills. However, you must also be able to explain complex issues in simple language, to be able to motivate clients and be sensitive to the different cultural issues and attitudes surrounding food.

### Training Programme:

#### *BSc Hons Dietetics*

University of Ulster undergraduate full-time four year programme

#### *PgD/MSc Human Nutrition and Dietetics*

University of Ulster postgraduate full-time two year programme

### Entry Qualifications:

BSc Hons Dietetics: A minimum of 300 UCAS Tariff Points to include grades BB. A-levels in two science subjects, preferably including Chemistry are required.

PgD/MSc Human Nutrition and Dietetics: A First Science degree usually needs to contain an appropriate amount of human physiology and biochemistry.

### Career Pathway:

You may work in a hospital or community setting and could go on to specialise in a clinical area, such as oncology, paediatrics, renal, diabetes or to work with particular groups, such as elderly people or those with learning difficulties. Teaching or health education are also options, or you could take on a management role, eventually being responsible for controlling a budget and planning and marketing a dietetic service. There is a recognised promotional pathway within the Northern Ireland Health & Personal Social Services (HPSS).

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**Professional Recognition:**

Eligibility for State Registration with the Health Professions Council (HPC) in Dietetics is obtained on graduation following satisfactory completion of the course, which includes the hospital dietetics placement and subsequent examinations.

**How to Apply:**

For undergraduate full-time programme, application should be made through Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

**Web Links:**

The University of Ulster – [www.ulster.ac.uk](http://www.ulster.ac.uk)  
British Dietetic Association – [www.bda.uk.com](http://www.bda.uk.com)

**Contact address for further copies**

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