



NUTRITIONIST

WHAT DOES A NUTRITIONIST DO?

Nutritionists use their scientific knowledge to provide information and advice to individuals and groups about the effect that food and nutrition can have upon their health and wellbeing, and may take part in research. They work closely with dietitians and other health professionals, such as pharmacists, GPs, and hospital or community diet and nutrition teams.

The work could include:

- giving advice to individual patients
- raising awareness of the benefits of healthy eating, and of the latest research
- aiming healthy eating campaigns at particular groups e.g. young parents; low income families
- giving talks and delivering presentations
- contributing to practical nutrition research projects
- recruiting volunteers to take part in trials
- processing and analysing biological samples
- working to make healthy food such as fruit and vegetables more easily available
- gathering statistics and judging the success of projects

SKILLS REQUIRED

Applicants for Nutrition courses and jobs will need to demonstrate that they:

- are able to relate to people from all backgrounds
- can inspire and motivate people
- have a non-judgemental attitude
- possess excellent communication skills
- have a keen interest in healthy eating
- can demonstrate a good knowledge of the impact of diet on health
- are able to take an evidence-based approach to their practice

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

- Graduates with an approved degree or postgraduate qualification can apply to join the Association for Nutrition (AfN) register. The AfN is the professional body for the voluntary regulation and registration of Nutritionists including Public Health Nutritionists, Exercise Nutritionists and Animal Nutritionists. See the AfN website for more details about registration: <http://www.associationfornutrition.org/>
- It is then possible to specialise in sports nutrition by taking a further relevant postgraduate degree and joining the voluntary Sport and Exercise Nutrition Register (SENR): <http://www.senr.org.uk/>
- Applicants will need to pass a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- When applying for a course, and for a job in nutrition, it may help to have some experience in the health service, for example as a Healthcare or Dietetic Assistant.
- Check with each course provider as entry requirements can change.

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

There is one AfN accredited undergraduate course in the West Midlands.

BSc (Hons) Human Nutrition: University of Worcester (<http://www.worcester.ac.uk/>)

Length of study: 3 years full-time

Entry requirements - qualifications: Please check the GCSE requirements with the university prior to applying.

If an applicant has an *Access to HE Diploma*, the *Access to HE Diploma (Science)* is preferred but other Diplomas are considered. 45 credits are required, with at least 15 in biology-based subjects. 12 credits need to be at Merit or Distinction.

BTEC applicants should contact the university for information on entry requirements.

Entry requirements - work experience: None specified.

NB Please check with the course provider as entry requirements can change.

EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

Nutritionists work in the NHS - for example, in hospitals, health clinics and GP surgeries - for the food industry (e.g. in product development), in sport, in national and local government, in community ventures, in the charitable sector and in the media. Some Nutritionists also work as freelance consultants.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Nutritionists working within the NHS generally work for 37.5 hours a week, Monday to Friday. Part-time and flexible work may be available.

SALARY

Salaries can range from £15,000 to £55,000 per year depending upon experience and responsibility.

NB These figures are only a guideline: see NHS pay scales, and job advertisements, for up-to-date information

LABOUR MARKET DATA

The demand for qualified Nutritionists has seen a steady growth over the years as a result of an increase in media and public interest with regard to the effects of diet and lifestyle on health.

INFORMATION SOURCES

- Association for Nutrition: <http://www.associationfornutrition.org/>
- British Nutrition Foundation: <https://www.nutrition.org.uk/>
- Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC): <http://www.hcpc-uk.co.uk>
- National Careers Service: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/>
- NHS Careers: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/>
- Prospects: <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/>
- Sport and Exercise Nutrition Register (SENr): <http://www.senr.org.uk/>
- The Nutrition Society: <http://www.nutrition-society.org/>
- UCAS: <https://www.ucas.com/>

The British Dietetic Association has also produced a useful booklet:

https://www.bda.uk.com/publications/dietitian_nutritionist.pdf

VIDEO CLIPS:

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6DQP9CnZus>
- <https://www.youtube.com/user/BritishNutrition/videos>

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