

# Accreditation Standards for Dietetic Education Programs in Canada 2014

Owner: Partnership for Dietetic Education and Practice

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**PDEP - PFPN**

*Partnership for Dietetic Education and Practice*

*Partenariat pour la formation et la pratique en nutrition*

**ACCREDITATION STANDARDS  
FOR DIETETIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
IN CANADA**

**2014**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

These Accreditation **Standards** were developed by an expert committee appointed by the Partnership for Dietetic Education and Practice (PDEP) of Canada. The standard development process is described in Appendix I.

PDEP is a national partnership organization involving regulators, educators, and Dietitians of Canada. One of its key mandates is to develop and maintain Canadian standards for dietetic education. The Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice – 2013 (ICDEP) were developed under PDEP’s direction. The **ICDEP** (see <http://www.pdep.ca/page.aspx?page=390&app=77&cat1=338&tp=12&lk=no&menu=42>) are integral to the Accreditation Standards as they define entry-to-practice competencies for dietitians, and articulate associated minimum requirements both for academic and internship/practicum components of dietetic education.

## 2. CONTEXT FOR DIETETIC EDUCATION ACCREDITATION

**Accreditation** is a process of self and peer evaluation for institutions/organizations and assesses the delivery of services and programs against standards of acceptability. In the context of dietetic education, accreditation has two primary purposes to:

- Assess program compliance with the approved minimum national education requirements, and
- Encourage programs to strive for quality improvement.

The ultimate intended outcome of the accreditation process is confidence on the part of stakeholders that accredited programs demonstrate the minimum level of quality and effectiveness needed to protect the public interest, and address needs of students/interns and the profession.

Accreditation of **dietetic education programs** provides a range of benefits/uses for stakeholders, as depicted in Table 1.

**Table 1: Benefits of Accreditation of Dietetic Education Programs**

FOR:	ACCREDITATION PROVIDES:
University and internship/practicum programs	A key tool for program planning and curriculum development.
Regulatory organizations	An efficient and reliable means to identify educational programs that produce graduates who meet entry to practice requirements
Dietetics profession and the public	Assurance that new graduates are adequately prepared for practice.
Practitioners	A mechanism for input to reflect evolving approaches to practice
Prospective applicants to a dietetics program	Reassurance of the program’s commitment to educational quality
General public	Assurance that education and training is adequate to ensure quality dietetic services that will evolve to reflect changes in knowledge and approaches to practice.

## 3. ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR DIETETIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CANADA - 2014

### Overview

The Accreditation Standards for Dietetic Education Programs in Canada have been designed to apply to both academic and practicum/internship educational programs. The standards are benchmarks that describe the minimum expectations of a program of study and provide the framework for periodic accreditation review. There are six Standards including:

**Standard 1** – Program Governance and Structure,

**Standard 2** – Program Administration: Students/Interns,

**Standard 3** – Program Administration: Curriculum,

**Standard 4** – Program Administration: Academic and Professional Staff,

**Standard 5** – Program Administration: Resources, and

**Standard 6** – Program Evaluation.

Each standard includes a broad statement outlining an overall expectation of the educational program, and more specific explanatory information is presented in three columns:

**Criteria** – predetermined elements or specified expectations forming the basis for testing or judging whether a standard has been met;

**Elaboration** – a more detailed description of the expectations for meeting the criterion; and

**Documentation Required** – a description of the requirements and examples of how the criterion can be met.

The Standards and Criteria apply to all education programs and models (academic and internship/practicum). Where some variations in criteria exist between academic and practicum/internship models, this is clearly identified in the “Elaboration” or “Documentation Required” columns.

**Note:** Terms included in the Section 4. GLOSSARY are bolded the first time they appear in the Standards document.

## STANDARD 1 - PROGRAM GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

*The Dietetic Education Program (referred to hereafter as the Program) is housed within a parent institution/organization that has an education mandate. The institution/organization respects the autonomy and professional nature of dietetic education and recognizes and supports its unique needs at the highest level of administrative authority. The Program's philosophy (vision, mission, and objectives) is explicitly stated and aligned with those of the parent institution/organization and reflects a professional program leading to entry into the regulated practice of dietetics.*

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
1.1 The Program is housed in and delivered by a <b>parent institution/organization</b> such as a university, health facility, or corporation.	<p>1.1.1 One component of the parent institution's/organization's mandate is to support and deliver education.</p> <p>1.1.2 The parent institution/organization is accredited and/or licensed and/or registered in Canada.</p>	<p>1.1.1.1 Documentation of the parent institution's/ organization's educational mandate.</p> <p>1.1.1.2 Documentation of the parent institution's/organization's accreditation status and/or license and/or registration.</p>
1.2 The Program's parent institution/organization supports the achievement of the Program's objectives, and values professional practice education.	1.2.1 There is formal documentation of the parent institution's/organization's support for the professional practice nature of the Program.	<p>1.2.1.1 Description of the administrative structure of the parent organization/institution showing lines of authority, responsibility, and decision-making (e.g., organizational chart, reporting structure).</p> <p>1.2.1.2 Documentation that the parent organization/institution recognizes the professional practice nature of the Program that leads to entry into a regulated health profession (e.g., letter of support from administration).</p>
1.3 The professional practice nature of the Program is explicitly acknowledged by the parent organization/institution in communication materials.	1.3.1 There is a statement in Program materials indicating the professional practice nature of the Program that leads to entry into a regulated health profession.	1.3.1.1 Communication materials (e.g., university calendars, Program brochures, organization websites) describing the Program as a professional education program.
1.4 Program support by the parent institution/organization is stable and ongoing.	1.4.1 There is formal documentation of the parent institution/organization's ongoing support of the education Program.	1.4.1.1 Documentation from the administrative head of the unit (e.g. faculty, school, department, service, program) stating commitment to the sustainability of the Program (e.g., letter stating financial support, evidence of a financial plan and budgeting process).

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
<p>1.5 The Program is guided by a mission, vision, and objectives that support student/intern centered dietetic education and achievement of practice competence, and are congruent with that of the parent institution/organization.</p>	<p>1.5.1 The <b>Program’s mission</b>, vision, and objectives are clearly stated in a publicly available description of the Program.</p> <p>1.5.2 The Program mission, vision, and objectives are grounded in the Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice (ICDEP),<sup>1</sup> have a student/intern centered focus, and reflect those of the parent institution/organization.</p> <p>1.5.3 Program educators (faculty and staff) are aware of the Program mission, vision, and objectives and use them to guide the continuing development and <b>evaluation</b> of the Program.</p>	<p>1.5.1.1 Program descriptions include reference to mission, vision, and objectives and are publicly available (e.g., Program brochure, website description, university calendars).</p> <p>1.5.2.1 A description of how the Program mission, vision, and objectives reflect the professional nature of dietetics education, are student/intern centered, and embody ICDEP.</p> <p>1.5.3.1 Evidence of communication with Program educators that indicates their awareness of the Program mission, vision, and objectives (e.g., meeting minutes, record of discussions/events).</p> <p>1.5.3.2 Evidence that the mission, vision, and objectives are considered in the ongoing program planning process (e.g., meeting minutes, record of discussions/events).</p>

<sup>1</sup> PDEP. (April 2013). The Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice. Author: Ottawa

## STANDARD 2 - PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION: STUDENTS/INTERNS

*The Program has fair, equitable, inclusive, and transparent policies and procedures that support **student/intern** achievement.*

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
2.1 There is a fair, equitable, inclusive, and transparent approach to Program policy and procedure development.	2.1.1 The Program has a defined process for development of policies and procedures relating to administration and operations.	2.1.1.1 Description of the consultative process for policy and/or procedure development, monitoring, revision, and institutional approval (e.g., description of process for decision making and approval).  2.1.1.2 Evidence of a process to inform users (e.g., students/ interns, faculty/coordinators/ preceptors) about policies and/or procedures.
2.2 There are appropriate policies and/or procedures to guide Program administration.	2.2.1 Policies and/or procedures at the Program and/or organizational level must, at minimum, address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- admissions;</li> <li>- progression through the program and completion;</li> <li>- withdrawal and termination,</li> <li>- complaints and appeals;</li> <li>- service disruption;</li> <li>- regulatory and legislative requirements related to privacy, confidentiality human rights, fairness, duty to accommodate; and</li> <li>- regulatory registration as appropriate.</li> </ul>	2.2.1.1 Description of minimum admission requirements for program entry (e.g., GPA, high school/ Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel [CEGEP], graduation requirements).  2.2.1.2 Articulation of methods used to assess suitability of candidates for dietetics/ practicum Program (e.g., in-person standardized interviews, verbal and/or written communication skills assessment, evaluation of an understanding of the dietetics profession, evaluation of the commitment to client-centred care, standardized tests).  2.2.1.3 Documentation describing the standardized, objective measures used to assess and rank applicants for admission.  2.2.1.4 Description of requirements for successful student/intern progression and completion of the Program.

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
		<p>2.2.1.5 Description of processes to monitor student/intern progression and assess successful completion of the Program.</p> <p>2.2.1.6 Description of what constitutes failure to meet Program requirements and what constitutes academic/professional misconduct.</p> <p>2.2.1.7 Description of the appeal, complaint, withdrawal, and termination processes.</p> <p>2.2.1.8 Articulation of the course of action in the event of service disruption within an academic or practicum setting.</p> <p>2.2.1.9 Documentation to demonstrate compliance with regulatory and legislative requirements related to privacy, confidentiality, human rights, fairness, and duty to accommodate; and regulatory registration as appropriate (e.g., policies and procedures related to release of student/intern information, access to a neutral third party to hear and resolve disputes, and document management and retention).</p>
<p>2.3 There are advising processes and support services available to facilitate student/intern achievement.</p>	<p>2.3.1 Students/interns are aware of the availability of advising resources in relation to their progress and status in the Program.</p> <p>2.3.2 Students/interns are informed of availability of support services.</p>	<p>2.3.1.1 Description of the processes for advising students/interns (e.g., assigning an <b>advisor</b>, access to on-line forum, blogs, workshops, peer-to-peer exchanges).</p> <p>2.3.2.1 Evidence that students/interns are informed of availability of support services (e.g., health services, counseling, accommodation, financial aid).</p>

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
2.4 There are opportunities available to strengthen the professional culture of the student/ intern experience.		2.4.1.1 Documentation that opportunities are available for profession related activities (e.g., student/intern societies, provincial regulatory authority presentations, community outreach, volunteerism, forums for student/intern dialogue, education sessions, conferences, rounds/workshops).

### STANDARD 3 - PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION: CURRICULUM

The **curriculum** is student/intern centred and based on achieving the Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice (ICDEP). Applicable components of ICDEP (i.e., **Foundational Knowledge, Academic Performance Indicators, Practicum Performance Indicators**) depend on the nature of the Program. There is an on-going process for curriculum review and update that is responsive to changes in dietetic practice, advances in technology, research, and current issues relevant to the profession.

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
3.1 The curriculum is aligned to current Canadian standards, reflects the Program's philosophy, and evolves to address changes in dietetic practice, advances in technology, research, and current issues relevant to the profession.	<p>3.1.1 The curriculum is designed to support the achievement of the ICDEP.</p> <p>3.1.2 Learning outcomes of the curriculum contribute to the achievement of philosophy (mission, vision and objectives) of the Program.</p> <p>3.1.3 The Program utilizes quality improvement approaches.</p>	<p>3.1.1.1 Evidence of a statement in the institution/ organization course calendar or internship/practicum manual indicating that the Program supports the achievement of the ICDEP.</p> <p>3.1.1.2 Current course syllabi/ practicum, and/or a description of planned learning activities and their outcomes.</p> <p>3.1.2.1 A statement explaining how the curriculum facilitates achievement of learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.1.3.1 Description of curriculum-related quality improvement mechanisms (e.g., course evaluations, intern feedback, exit interviews, surveys, focus group interviews).</p>
3.2 The curriculum is logically constructed to facilitate the students/interns achievement of expected learning outcomes.	3.2.1 The curriculum sequencing is appropriate for progressive student/intern learning. Flow of learning builds in complexity with reinforcement as required to achieve the ICDEP.	<p>3.2.1.1 Mapping of the curriculum demonstrating where and how the ICDEP are incorporated into components of the curriculum.</p> <p>3.2.1.2 Course outlines/outcomes and/or practicum/ internship rotations objectives showing a link to the ICDEP (e.g., ICDEP Performance Indicators and Foundational Knowledge).</p>

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
	<p>3.2.2 Student/intern tasks during all stages of learning must contribute to meeting ICDEPs in a meaningful way and must be at an appropriate level of complexity.</p> <p>3.2.3 The curriculum fosters progressive learning and development of analytical/critical thinking skills.</p> <p>3.2.4 The curriculum provides opportunities to develop professional skills.</p> <p>3.2.5 The curriculum provides opportunities to develop interprofessional practice skills.</p>	<p><b>For Internship/Practicum Programs:</b></p> <p>3.2.1.3 Evidence that internship/practicum meets guideline requirements including a minimum of 1250 hours of supervised practice-based learning.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>3.2.2.1 A description of learning activities that demonstrate a relationship to the ICDEP (e.g., Academic: Foundational Knowledge cognitive levels 1-3 achieved with course learning activities; Practicum: performance rating scale).</p> <p>3.2.3.1 Demonstration that the curriculum plan includes strategies to achieve progressive learning.</p> <p>3.2.3.2 Demonstration that the curriculum plan includes strategies to build analytical/ critical thinking skills.</p> <p>3.2.4.1 Demonstration of learning activities within the curriculum that build professional practice skills.</p> <p>3.2.5.1 Demonstration of learning activities within the curriculum that build interprofessional practice skills.</p>
3.3 Teaching/precepting and learning practices support the achievement of student/intern learning outcomes.	3.3.1 A diversity of teaching/precepting methods is employed that reflects current and emerging trends in education.	3.3.1.1 Description of educational methods used (e.g., case-based learning, classroom experiences, laboratory experiences, distance learning, web-based learning, simulation learning, use of computer technology).

<sup>2</sup> The requirement for 1250 hours is based on current practice amongst Dietetic Education Programs in Canada, as indicated in the 2013 National Inventory of Dietetic Program Elements, 2013 (Dietitians of Canada), and is slightly less than the low end of the range of practicum hours. It is also in keeping with the 1200 minimum practicum hours required by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics 2012 Accreditation Standards.

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
3.4 Evaluation of student/intern performance reflects achievement of the expected learning outcomes.	3.4.1 Evaluation criteria are clearly defined and consistently applied. The evaluation criteria are communicated to the student/intern.	<p>3.4.1.1 Description of the methods used to evaluate didactic and experiential learning (e.g., self-evaluation, peer feedback, 360 degree feedback, educator/ preceptor evaluation).</p> <p>3.4.1.2 Evidence that scoring <b>rubrics</b> are used to evaluate learning outcomes.</p> <p>3.4.1.3 Documentation describing the process of <b>Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition</b> when appropriate.</p>
3.5 There is a mechanism for ongoing curriculum review, analysis, and updating.	<p>3.5.1 There are formal mechanisms in place for ongoing curriculum review, analysis, and updating.</p> <p>3.5.2 There are formal mechanisms in place to elicit periodic input about the curriculum.</p>	<p>3.5.1.1 Documentation about formal mechanisms used for curriculum review, analysis, and updating that include student /intern participation (e.g., Curriculum Committee meeting minutes, record and/or outcome of group discussions, <b>preceptor</b> feedback on program materials).</p> <p>3.5.2.1. Examples of methods used to gather feedback (e.g., stakeholder consultations/focus group interviews, evaluation questionnaires).</p> <p>3.5.2.2 Description of approaches for eliciting input from a representative sample of students/interns.</p> <p>3.5.2.3 Description of approaches for eliciting input from a variety of stakeholders (e.g., field experts, dietitians/preceptors).</p> <p>3.5.2.4 A description of how this information is used in curriculum review, analysis and updating (e.g., revised course outlines, proposals for course changes, meeting minutes, outcome of discussions).</p>

## STANDARD 4 - PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION: ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF

*There is a sufficient mix, depth, and balance of **academic/professional staff** to achieve the objectives of the Program.*

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
<p>4.1 There is an appropriate mix of academic/professional staff to effectively plan and deliver the program and to facilitate achievement of student/intern learning outcomes</p>	<p>4.1.1 Individuals involved in program planning, coordination, and delivery are appropriately qualified for their role.</p> <p>4.1.2 Program planning, coordination, and delivery demonstrate significant involvement of registered dietitians.</p> <p style="background-color: #00a0c0; color: white; padding: 2px;"><b>For Academic Programs:</b></p> <p>4.1.3 Academic faculty have a post-graduate degree, are experientially qualified, and are engaged in scholarly/ professional activities and service.</p> <p>4.1.4 Criteria for recruitment, tenure/promotion, workload, and expectations for scholarly /professional activities are comparable to those for faculty in other units of the organization.</p> <p>4.1.5 Contract and sessional teaching personnel have a post-graduate degree and/or are academically and experientially qualified.</p>	<p>4.1.1.1 Documentation describing the mix and credentials of academic/ professional staff involved in the program planning, coordination, and delivery (e.g., list of academic/professional staff involved in the Program).</p> <p>4.1.2.1 Evidence that dietitians, who are faculty or professional staff associated with the Program involved in program planning, are registered with the provincial regulatory body.</p> <p>4.1.2.2 Documentation demonstrating the individuals who are involved in program planning, coordination and delivery (e.g., meeting minutes, record of discussions/events).</p> <p>4.1.3.1 Curriculum vitae of academic faculty affiliated with the Program.</p> <p>4.1.4.1 Documentation of policies for recruitment, tenure/promotion, and workload (e.g., faculty collective agreement).</p> <p>4.1.5.1 Curriculum vitae of contract and sessional teaching personnel currently affiliated with the Program.</p>

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
	<p><b>For Internship/Practicum Programs:</b></p> <p>4.1.6 Role of the preceptors is clearly documented.</p> <p>4.1.7 Preceptors are academically and experientially qualified for their role in assisting interns to achieve the ICDEP.</p>	<p>4.1.6.1 Documentation of preceptors' role and the Program's expectations of their participation in the teaching program.</p> <p>4.1.7.1 Documentation of preceptors' qualifications to match their areas of instruction/ preceptorship.</p> <p>4.1.7.2 Documentation of registration number for preceptors who are dietitians.</p>
<p>4.2 The individual responsible for directing the Program has the appropriate credentials and is appointed by an administrative head within the institution/organization.</p>	<p><b>For Academic Programs:</b></p> <p>4.2.1 The designated <b>Program Director</b> (faculty member responsible for directing the Program) has a PhD, is appointed to a full-time tenure/ tenure-track position, is registered with the provincial dietetic regulatory body, and a member of Dietitians of Canada.</p> <p>4.2.2 The Program director is appointed by the administrative head of the department/unit.</p> <p>4.2.3 The Program director has time and support to manage the planning, coordination, delivery, and evaluation of all required aspects of the Program.</p> <p><b>For Internship/Practicum Programs:</b></p> <p>4.2.4 The Practicum/internship <b>Program Coordinator</b> has a post-graduate degree; is registered with the provincial dietetic regulatory body and is a member of Dietitians of Canada; has a permanent or renewable contract position (with term), and has a minimum of three years of work experience prior to appointment.</p>	<p>4.2.1.1 Curriculum vitae of the Program director, including the registration number with the provincial regulatory body and Dietitians of Canada membership number.</p> <p>4.2.2.1 Description of the process used to appoint the Program director.</p> <p>4.2.3.1 Documentation of the support provided (e.g., description of role and workload including research involvement, service responsibilities, teaching load including course relief, and administrative support provided to the program).</p> <p>4.2.4.1 Curriculum vitae of the practicum/internship coordinator, including evidence of registration with the provincial dietetic regulatory body and membership in Dietitians of Canada.</p> <p>4.2.4.2 Documentation of the terms of the position including length of appointment.</p>

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
	<p>4.2.5 The Program practicum/ internship coordinator has the skills, time, and support to manage the planning, coordination, delivery, and evaluation of all required aspects of the Program.</p>	<p>4.2.4.3 In the event that a short - term replacement (one year or less) for the Program Coordinator is required, the replacement must be registered with their provincial regulatory body, be a member of Dietitians of Canada, and must have relevant experience or post-graduate studies. Should the replacement exceed initial expectations, the requirements of 4.2.4 must be met.</p> <p>4.2.5.1 A role description with a breakdown of activities, and evidence of skill development related to education and management (e.g., details on role and workload, including responsibilities description; ratio of coordinator to students; and skills development including course work, conferences).</p>
<p>4.3 The Program’s number and type of academic appointments and professional positions are sufficient for the students/interns to achieve learning outcomes.</p>	<p><b>For Academic Programs:</b></p> <p>4.3.1 The Program has no fewer than three full-time faculty members, including the director, who hold a tenure-track/tenured appointment; these faculty are registered with the provincial dietetic regulatory body and are members of Dietitians of Canada.</p> <p>4.3.2 The ratio of full-time faculty to contract/sessional teaching personnel is adequate for students to achieve learning outcomes.</p>	<p>4.3.1.1 Curriculum vitae of academic staff affiliated with the Program including evidence of registration with the provincial dietetic regulatory body and membership in Dietitians of Canada.</p> <p>4.3.1.2 Documentation demonstrating that the Program meets the minimum number of faculty.</p> <p>4.3.2.1 Documentation of teaching responsibilities/ workload requirements for all full-time and contract/sessional teaching personnel to demonstrate adequate interaction of faculty/teaching personnel to support quality education.</p>

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
	<p>4.3.3 Faculty/student ratios in nutrition/dietetics professional courses are conducive to students achieving learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>For Internship/Practicum Programs:</b></p> <p>4.3.4 A plan is in place to ensure the Program has a sufficient number of dietitians/preceptors for students/interns to achieve learning outcomes.</p>	<p>4.3.2.2 Justification for the ratio of full-time faculty to contract/sessional teaching personnel complement (e.g., allocation of teaching workload, course caps and enrollment).</p> <p>4.3.3.1 A description of nutrition/dietetics professional courses that have an enrolment cap, as required, to facilitate students achieving the course learning outcomes.</p> <p>4.3.4.1 A description of the plan and processes the Program has in place to ensure access to a sufficient number of dietitians/preceptors.</p> <p>4.3.4.2 Documentation of ongoing commitment from preceptors and placement sites to achieve student/intern learning outcomes (e.g., letter of support, terms and conditions of affiliation agreements).</p>
<p>4.4 The Program has agreements with internal /external partners as required to facilitate the achievement of student learning outcomes.</p>	<p>4.4.1 Formal/informal agreements are in place with departments or units within the organization, off-site agencies, and other community resources that contribute to the achievement of student/intern learning outcomes/professional experiences.</p> <p>4.4.2 There is on-going communication with internal/ external partners to ensure Program objectives are being met.</p>	<p>4.4.1.1 List of and contact for the internal and external providers of all academic courses and practicum/internship sites/agencies.</p> <p>4.4.1.2 Sample of cooperative agreements/<b>affiliation agreements</b> both internal and external to the organization.</p> <p>4.4.2.1 Documentation of communication with internal/external partners to support achievement of Program objectives.</p>

## STANDARD 5 - PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION: RESOURCES

*The Program has sufficient physical, financial, learning, technology/information resources and support personnel as required to provide quality education.*

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
5.1 The physical resources are sufficient to enable the Program to fulfill its philosophy (mission, vision, objectives), and student/intern achievement of learning outcomes.	<p>5.1.1 Physical space is sufficient, accessible and organized in a manner that facilitates program delivery.</p> <p>5.1.2. <b>Learning resources</b> reflect current dietetic practice, are sufficient in amount, and are available when needed.</p> <p>5.1.3 The institution/ organization is responsible to oversee the safety of the learning/work environment.</p>	<p>5.1.1.1 Documentation about space for faculty/ coordinators/ preceptors that provides privacy for program responsibilities and for counseling students/interns.</p> <p>5.1.1.2 Evidence of compliance with legislation pertaining to accessibility.</p> <p><b>For Academic Programs:</b></p> <p>5.1.1.3 Documentation that the number and size of the classrooms/laboratories and accompanying facilities meets the requirements of the Program.</p> <p><b>For Academic Programs:</b></p> <p>5.1.1.4 Documentation that the scheduling requirements of the Program are met and support the achievement of student learning outcomes (e.g., course timetables).</p> <p>5.1.2.1 Demonstration that supplies, equipment, specialized material, and software are available for professional courses/practica.</p> <p>5.1.3.1 Evidence that physical spaces meet safety standards, and that workplace safe practices policies exist and are followed (e.g., WHMIS training, hand hygiene, immunizations, criminal record checks).</p> <p>5.1.3.2 Evidence that facilities are well maintained to support dietetic education in a present-day environment.</p>

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
5.2 Academic/professional staff and students/interns have access to sufficient learning resources including library and technology resources.	5.2.1 There is institutional support for providing access to educational technology and scholarly materials.	5.2.1.1 Documentation of the extent of access to scholarly and educational materials in either hard copy or electronic format for staff and students/interns (e.g., Practice-based Evidence in Nutrition, nutritional analysis software).  5.2.1.2 Description of access to and application of electronic course/program management software, if used.  5.2.1.3 Description of institutional provision of information technology support.
5.3 Funding of the Program by the parent institution/ organization supports the achievement of the Program's expected learning outcomes.	5.3.1 Program funding is sufficient for Program delivery.	5.3.1.1 Evidence of support from parent institution/organization (e.g., letter).  5.3.1.2 Acknowledgement of the contractual relationship between provider and student/intern (e.g., acceptance in Program, course registration, formal service contracts).
5.4 The Program is provided with technology, administrative support, and technical support to meet the needs of the academic/professional staff.	5.4.1. Adequate technology, administrative support, and technical support are available to the Program director/ internship coordinator and Program faculty/preceptors.	5.4.1.1 Description of the Program's available technology and information technology (IT) support; and administrative and technical support staff, including their roles/training/job descriptions.

## STANDARD 6 - PROGRAM EVALUATION

*There is a broad-based, systematic, and continuous evaluation process to assess the effectiveness of the Program in fulfilling its philosophy (vision, mission and objectives), and achievement of learning outcomes.*

CRITERIA	ELABORATION	DOCUMENTATION REQUESTED
<p>6.1 The Program engages in regular and comprehensive program assessment/evaluation, and uses the results to foster ongoing program improvement in line with current and emerging practice, as well as the philosophy of the parent institution/organization.</p>	<p>6.1.1 Processes are in place for <b>formative and summative program evaluation</b> using quantitative /qualitative methods.</p> <p>6.1.2 The Program gathers information from key stakeholders (e.g., students/ interns, educators/ preceptors, graduates, employers, provincial regulatory bodies, national association, and the practice community) on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>6.1.3 The outcomes of data analysis are used for program evaluation and improvement.</p> <p>6.1.4 The results of the program evaluation are disseminated to key stakeholders.</p>	<p>6.1.1.1 Description of the process in place to assess/evaluate the Program including the type, frequency, sources, and responsibility for data collection.</p> <p>6.1.2.1 Description of data/information collected from key stakeholders (e.g., student satisfaction questionnaires, results of focus group interviews, graduation rates, employers' satisfaction with entry-level graduates, and evaluations from an external advisory committee).</p> <p>6.1.3.1 Description of how the evaluation results are incorporated into the Program (e.g., curriculum revision, modifications to experiential learning, course proposals).</p> <p>6.1.4.1 Evidence of the communication to key stakeholders about results of the program evaluation.</p>
<p>6.2 The Program monitors its compliance with accreditation standards and evaluation criteria on an ongoing basis.</p>	<p>6.2.1 There is an internal review procedure to ensure on-going compliance with accreditation standards.</p> <p>6.2.2 Required reports, including substantive changes, are submitted per the policies of the accreditation organization.</p>	<p>6.2.1.1 Description of the review procedure to assess on-going compliance.</p> <p>6.2.2.1 Description of the mechanism to communicate changes to the accreditation organization.</p> <p>6.2.2.2 Copies of reports submitted to the accreditation organization.</p>

## 4. GLOSSARY

**Academic/professional staff** – Includes academic faculty, teaching personnel, internship coordinators, and preceptors.

**Accreditation** – A process of self and peer evaluation that assesses the delivery of services and educational programs to a minimally acceptable level of quality.

**Advisor** – An advisor is defined as any person having contact with the student/intern who is formally designated to act as a representative of the Program. This person can be a faculty member, professional staff, internship coordinator, and/or preceptor.

**Affiliation, partnership or written agreement** – A legally binding document between two parties/facilities that sets forth the activities and relationships for both parties/facilities.

**Canadian Dietetic Registration Examination (CDRE)** – The national examination developed and administered by the Alliance of Canadian Dietetic Regulatory Bodies. The CDRE is a one-day electronic examination designed to test practice-based knowledge, application, and critical thinking skills required to competently and safely practice dietetics. The CDRE is administered in May and November each year at sites across Canada. The CDRE is a requirement for registration in all provinces except Québec.

**Curriculum** – All planned educational experiences (academic and internship/practicum) are under the direction of the Program and facilitate students/interns in achieving expected outcomes.

**Dietetic Education Program** – A professional program in dietetics incorporating academic and/or practicum components offered by a parent institution/organization and its affiliates and partners.

**Evaluation** – The process of rating or appraising achievement of a predetermined standard or goal.

**Evidence** – The documents, actions, or other practical means by which a program of study demonstrates how it has met or not met each measure of effectiveness.

**Formative Evaluation** – An ongoing evaluation of progress or achievements.

**Foundational Knowledge (FK)** – The practice of dietetics requires a broad range of foundational knowledge in the sciences, social sciences and behavioural sciences, as well as achievement of learning outcomes directly related to the ICDEP. It is expected that sufficient education in these areas will be provided so as to foster success in attainment of the practice competency performance indicators.

**Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice (ICDEP)** – ICDEP articulate the competency standards for entry to dietetic practice and provides a unified or integrated framework for the education, training and evaluation of dietitians at the point of entry to practice in Canada. The ICDEP include **Practice Competencies**, Foundational Knowledge, and Academic and internship/practicum Performance Indicators.

**Learning Resource** – An element or elements used to support student education, including classroom and library facilities, laboratory and clinical facilities, written and audio-visual materials, equipment, education tools, and the advice of experienced individuals.

**Program Mission** – A statement of purpose defining the unique nature and scope of the parent institution or the dietetics education Program.

**Parent Institution/organization** – The entity (e.g., university, health facility, corporation, or other entity) has overall responsibility and accountability for the dietetics education Program. It has an educational mandate and is accredited and/or licensed and/or registered in Canada.

**Performance Indicator** – Tasks that can be carried out within an assessment vehicle and for which successful completion provides an indication of the candidate’s ability to proficiently perform a Practice Competency.

**Practice Competency** – Task that is performed in practice that can be carried out to a specified level of proficiency. At entry-to-practice, entry-level proficiency all Practice Competencies is expected

**Preceptor** – A practitioner who supervises and supports students/interns in the achievement of practical education learning outcomes. The preceptor’s role is also to model professional attitudes and behaviours.

**Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)** – A PLAR process enables adult learners to create valid, reliable, and comprehensive documents based upon their unique strengths and life circumstances. PLAR requires that students/interns reflect on documented past experiences and consider how those experiences contribute to dietetic competency development. Prior Learning may include the skills and knowledge a person has gained through life and work situations.

**Program Director/Program Coordinator** – The individual responsible for assuring the accreditation standards, policies and procedures are met at an accredited program.

**Rubric** – A guide listing specific criteria for grading or scoring academic papers, projects, or tests and/or assessing practicum learning. In many cases, scoring rubrics are used to delineate consistent criteria for grading. A scoring rubric can also provide a basis for self-evaluation, reflection, and peer review. It is aimed at accurate and fair assessment, fostering understanding, and indicating a way to proceed with subsequent learning/teaching.

**Standards** – Standards are benchmarks that describe the minimum expectations of a program of study and provide the framework for the accreditation review. Standards are consensus-based and set the benchmark for the quality of the Program and accreditation review.

**Students/Interns** – Learners in a classroom/laboratory/supervised practice experience setting.

Students/Interns include those enrolled in an accredited dietetic education Program leading towards meeting the practice requirements of a dietitian. This includes students enrolled in an undergraduate dietetic education Program, students/interns/ stagiaires completing an integrated dietetic education Program, post-degree dietetic interns, and students completing a Master’s degree Program with internship.

**Summative Evaluation** – A “final” or overall evaluation within a specified area.

**Transparency** – The concept of making accreditation processes easier to understand, including opening them up to public scrutiny and making them subject to challenge or change.

## 5. REFERENCES

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics. (2012). Accreditation Standards. Authors: Chicago.

Association of Accrediting Organizations of Canada. (2013). Guidelines for Good Practice of Accreditation Programs. Authors: Ottawa. Available: [www.aaac.ca/](http://www.aaac.ca/)

Dietitians of Canada. (2013). National Inventory of Dietetic Program Elements. Authors: Toronto.

In the preparation of these standards, information from the following websites was reviewed:

### CANADIAN PROGRAMS

Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada [www.aaac.ca/](http://www.aaac.ca/)

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists Academic Accreditation Program  
<http://www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=42>

Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs (CCAPP) [www.ccapp-accredit.ca](http://www.ccapp-accredit.ca)

Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board [www.engineerscanada.ca](http://www.engineerscanada.ca)

Canadian Medical Association Joint Accreditation Program <http://www.cma.ca/learning/conjointaccreditation>

Canadian Technology Accreditation Board [http://www.cctt.ca/landing\\_4.asp](http://www.cctt.ca/landing_4.asp)

Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME) [www.cahme.org](http://www.cahme.org)

Commission for Dental Accreditation in Canada [www.cda-adc.ca/cdacweb](http://www.cda-adc.ca/cdacweb)

Council for Accreditation of Canadian University Programs in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology  
[www.cacup-aslp.ca](http://www.cacup-aslp.ca)

Council on the Accreditation of Respiratory Therapy Education (COARTE)  
<http://www.csrt.com/en/coarte/index.asp>

Dietitians of Canada Accreditation Process <http://www.dietitians.ca/>

Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) [www.lcme.org](http://www.lcme.org)

Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing Accreditation Program <http://www.casn.ca/en/21>

National Environmental Programs Accreditation – Eco Canada

<http://www.eco.ca/public/services/educator/accreditation-environmental-programs/331/>

Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada [www.peac-aepc.ca/](http://www.peac-aepc.ca/)

## INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics <http://www.eatright.org/ACEND/>

Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA)

<http://daa.asn.au/universities-recognition/accreditation-of-dietetic-programs/>

United Kingdom Health Professions Council <http://www.hpc-uk.org/education/processes/approval/>

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation>



## 6. APPENDICES

Appendix I: Background and Development Process for Accreditation Standards

Appendix II: Accreditation Standards Development Working Group

Appendix III: Accreditation Guiding Principles, Processes, and Core Values

## Appendix I: Background and Development Process for Accreditation Standards

In 2009, provincial dietetic regulators (the Alliance), the national professional association (Dietitians of Canada), universities and dietetic internship/practicum programs came together to form a new organization: The Partnership for Dietetic Education and Practice (PDEP).

PDEP was formed to create new opportunities to work collaboratively in areas where the goals and achievements of a partner are influenced by the activities and mission of the others. The Partnership undertakes projects in areas of common interest to benefit the safety and quality of dietetic services and the advancement of the dietetic profession in Canada. Examples of key PDEP-led initiatives include:

- The development of the *Integrated Competences for Dietetic Education and Practice (ICDEP)*, a set of dietetic competences that will be implemented by all PDEP partners, and
- The creation of a new accreditation agency and standards that will support quality dietetic education within academic and internship/practicum programs.

The Accreditation Standards Development Working Group (ASDWG), an *ad hoc* committee working under the direction of the Accreditation Working Group of PDEP, developed the accreditation standards, which were approved and adopted by the PDEP Steering Committee (PDEP SC). The composition of the ASDWG reflects the collaborative nature of PDEP and was composed of:

- 1 Representative from the Alliance of Canadian Dietetic Regulatory Bodies,
- 1 Dietitians of Canada Representative, and
- 4 Dietetic Education Representatives (2 from university programs, 2 from internship/practicum programs).

The Alliance and DC representatives were appointed by their respective organizations, and the Dietetic Educator representatives were chosen through an application and selection process overseen by the Accreditation Working Group of the PDEP SC. The Dietetic Educator representatives were volunteers selected to represent both academic and internship/practicum programs, the various models in dietetic education, and geographical location. The role of Dietetic Educator members was to represent the broader community of professionals who engage in the education and training of dietitians both at the university level and in internship/practicum programs. In keeping with Terms of Reference developed by the PDEP SC, no member of ASDWG received compensation for their participation.

The Accreditation Standards Development Working Group (Appendix II) began the development process in April 2012. They created a Philosophy, Core Values and Framework document to guide their work (Appendix III). This document was approved by the PDEP SC in September 2012. The ASDWG submitted the first draft of the PDEP Accreditation Standards for Dietetic Education Programs in Canada to the PDEP SC in January of 2013.

A consultation process with key stakeholders (focus groups and an on-line survey) was conducted in April and May 2013. Subsequently, members of the ASDWG met in November 2013 to review results of the consultations and, based on feedback received, made revisions to the Standards.

## Appendix II: Accreditation Standards Development Working Group

- **Heidi Bates**, MSc, RD, Director, University of Alberta Integrated Dietetic Internship, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB
- **Isabelle Giroux**, PhD, DtP/RD, BÉd, ÉFI/PHEc, Professeure agrégée / Associate Professor, Honours Bachelor in Nutrition Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON
- **N. Theresa Glanville**, PhD, RD, Professor of Applied Human Nutrition, Graduate Program Coordinator, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, NS
- **Fern Hubbard**, BA, MEd, Registrar, College of Dietitians of BC, Vancouver, BC
- **Katherine Vandenbussche**, MHS, RD, Professional & Education Leader, Clinical Nutrition, Sunnybrook Health Science Centre, Toronto, ON
- **Marlene Wyatt**, MA, RD, Director of Professional Affairs with Dietitians of Canada

## Appendix III: Accreditation Guiding Principles, Processes, and Core Values

### ACCREDITATION GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles provide a framework for decision-making and action during the evolution and implementation of the dietetic education accreditation process. The guiding principles integrate the core values underpinning accreditation into the work of the ASDWG in establishing the standards, and processes of accreditation.

The ASDWG guiding principles include accreditation standards and processes.

### ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

1. Are developed based on an environmental scan that considers national and international accreditation standards for dietetics and other health/non-health professions;
2. Include consultation phases that seek feedback/input from relevant stakeholder groups;
3. Contain elements that ensure program quality and sustainability, such as but not limited to, resources, students, and governance;
4. Are based on the core minimum knowledge and skill set that are appropriate for safe, competent and ethical dietetics practice as defined by the ICDEP;
5. Are designed on an accreditation framework that contains a Standards statement, Criteria. Elaboration and Documentation Required.
6. Are designed to measure educational processes and reflect outcome based standards;
7. Include evaluation of academic and internship/practicum programs within a combined and progressive standards set;
8. Measure a minimum standard of achievement and promote programs to strive beyond this;
9. Are written in a user-friendly manner, include definitions of terms as needed to provide clarity, and do not contain wording that is ambiguous. They include criteria that can be evaluated by evidence; and offer clear evidence expectations (documentation required) to support the site review and surveyor evaluation purposes;
10. Are flexible enough to respond to changes in the education, practice or regulatory environment; and
11. Evaluate both academic and internship/practicum programs using explicit standards that are recognized by provincial regulatory authorities as the national standard.

## ACCREDITATION PROCESSES

1. Evaluate programs relative to minimum standards as established by PDEP using the process of self and peer evaluation;
2. Recognize autonomy of individual programs;
3. Involve a survey team that is appropriately informed, works in a transparent manner and respects the confidential nature of materials in the self-study and information learned during site visit;
4. Include an appeal process; and
5. Allow for participation in both English and French.

## CORE VALUES UNDERPINNING THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

During accreditation, an education program undertakes a process of self-study and external review by peers with the purpose of evaluating, enhancing, and publicly recognizing quality education. For this process to be an effective and constructive exercise, the ASDWG identified core values to underpin the accreditation process. These core values informed the deliberations of the ASDWG in establishing accreditation standards, and are the foundation for program review during the accreditation process. The values identified as integral to the accreditation of dietetics education training in Canada are:

- **INTEGRITY**  
The accreditation process is honest, reliable and consistent in both purpose and action.
- **RESPECT**  
All interactions and communications demonstrate respect and tolerance. The accreditation process acknowledges and embraces the diversity of dietetic education in Canada and respects the autonomy of educational programs to develop and deliver curricula within the framework of national standards
- **FAIRNESS AND EQUITY**  
The accreditation process is fair, reasonable, and applied equitably to all.
- **TRANSPARENCY**  
Information about accreditation processes is open and available to stakeholders. Communication is clear, transparent and designed to foster understanding and open dialogue.
- **OBJECTIVITY**  
Accreditation standards and processes are rational, evidence based, and justifiable.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY**  
The accreditation process is accountable to PDEP partners and stakeholders including the general public and students. The accreditation site visit reviewers are qualified and trained peers. The accreditation process and its outcomes are overseen by PDEP partners and stakeholders who are responsible for all accreditation decisions.

- *QUALITY IMPROVEMENT*

Accreditation stimulates and supports quality assurance and continuous improvement. The processes of accreditation recognize the ever-changing nature of the dietetic profession encourages ongoing review and promotes educational innovation and excellence. It supports the development of educational environments that foster the pursuit of life-long learning.