

STUDY NUTRITION AT UQ FOR A REWARDING CAREER



What is NUTRITION?

The **science of nutrition** encompasses all the physiological processes and biological interactions which occur between living organisms and the foods they consume, including the psychological, sociological and cultural factors which influence food choice, with a particular focus on the consequences for health.

The **practice of nutrition** is to advance, apply and promote understanding of the effects of dietary nutrients on growth, development, reproductive capacity, health and well-being in the population.

The **function of a nutritionist** is to elicit, disseminate and apply scientific knowledge to promote health and prevent diet-related illness in the population.

CAREERS in NUTRITION

Nutritionists find employment in diverse fields including community health centres, public health units, health departments, sport & recreation centres, food production and food service industries, hospitals and universities. Increasingly, doctors, nurses and allied health workers, secondary teachers of science and health and those involved in health communication need to have a good knowledge of nutrition and a grasp of current issues in nutrition research and practice. In the June 2002 State budget, the Queensland government made a significant commitment to increase the nutrition workforce to help address issues related to indigenous health and chronic disease treatment and prevention.

You can use your SPH Nutrition studies as a foundation to a range of careers in today's expanding nutrition workforce, including:

Community and Public Health Nutritionist

With skills in program planning, implementation and evaluation, and food and nutrition policy development you can work to help improve the health of populations. If programs to prevent childhood and adult obesity or micronutrient deficiencies in mothers and children, developing community strategies to reduce food insecurity of vulnerable groups, and media campaigns to promote fruit and vegetable consumption appeal, then this is the job for you.

Clinical Nutritionist

If your interests lie with current findings in medical science and how dietary components are linked to disease causation, and how knowledge about the appropriate dietary treatment of disease is generated, you might see yourself as a clinical nutritionist. Your focus of work could be a particular disease –for example, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer or Alzheimer's disease, or it could be a particular dietary component- for example, carotenoids, folate or omega-3 fatty acids.

Nutritionist in the Food Industry

Today's increasingly complex food system has created a need for professionally qualified Nutritionists with the skills to interpret nutrition research literature for the health community and consumers, develop new food products to satisfy consumer demand for healthy and special dietary foods, and to work in the area of food regulation. Food Industry Nutritionists have the opportunity to help unobtrusively improve the health of populations by changing the available food supply.

Nutritionist in the Fitness Industry

Interested in ergogenic aids, eating for peak athletic performance and promoting healthy food choices? Everyone from elite sportsmen and sportswomen to sedentary office workers trying to 'get fit' is now recognizing the roles of, link between diet and physical activity in promoting good health. Nutritionists in the fitness industry specialize in individual dietary assessment and the development of special dietary programs to meet the specific nutritional & dietary needs and health targets of clients.

ACCREDITATION FOR NUTRITIONISTS

A framework for the formal accreditation of nutritionists working in Australia is currently being investigated by the peak professional organisations involved in food and nutrition work in Australia. These include:

- Federation of Australian Nutrition Organisations
- Dietitians Association of Australia
- Home Economics Institute of Australia Inc
- Nutrition Society of Australia
- Nutrition Australia
- Public Health Association's Food and Nutrition Special Interest Group
- Australian Institute of Food Scientists and Technologists

Once introduced, this will allow employers to readily recognise graduates from approved undergraduate programs, and will support continuing professional development.

Studying NUTRITION in The School of Population Health

The School of Population Health (SPH) Nutrition studies (12 units) at The University of Queensland focuses on providing graduates with:

- A solid grounding in the basics of Nutritional Science
- An overview of major global diet-related diseases in developed and developing countries
- An awareness of current issues in Public Health Nutrition, and
- An ability to see the social context in which food is produced and consumed

Further information is available from:

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