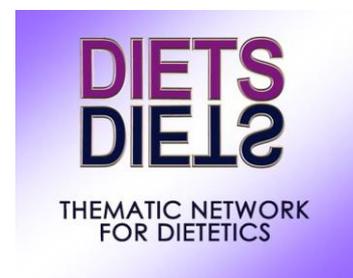




EUROPEAN
FEDERATION OF
THE ASSOCIATIONS
OF DIETITIANS



European Practice Placement Standards for Dietetics

**Assembled by the European Federation of Associations of
Dietitians (EFAD)**

Adopted by the EFAD General Meeting September 2010

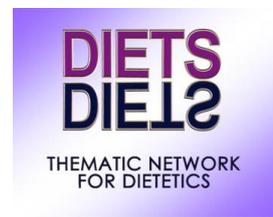
review date 2015

Definition of the concept "benchmark"

A "benchmark" originates from setting a mark on a "working bench" for measuring. A benchmark could also be cut in a rock or a rock wall and was used by surveyors as a common starting point for measurements. i.e. a fixed point or point of reference for comparisons. The word "benchmarking" is now used for the comparison process.



EUROPEAN
FEDERATION OF
THE ASSOCIATIONS
OF DIETITIANS



Contents

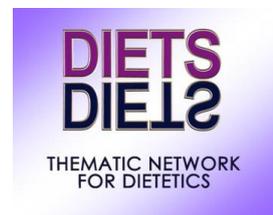
Preface

1.0	Introduction	4
1.1	Background and rationale	
1.2	How the standards were derived	
1.3	Establishing and monitoring the standards	
1.4	Summary	
2.0	The standards	7
3.0	The standards more fully explained	9
4.0	The evidence base for the Standards and good practice for placements	14
5.0	Appraising and assessing the placement or work-based learning environment	16
	References	19
	Glossary	20

Appendix 1 Results of a questionnaire on the draft standards



EUROPEAN
FEDERATION OF
THE ASSOCIATIONS
OF DIETITIANS



Preface

Dietitians working across Europe have at the forefront of their minds the nutritional health of the people of Europe. They work with health professionals and others to realise this goal. Dietitians work to make good nutrition and food a reality to the people of Europe and it has been my pleasure to be part of this team and network. One of the aims of the European Federation of Associations of Dietitians (EFAD) is to foster high standards of service and importantly fitness for purpose and fitness to practice. Working with our 30 member National Dietetic Associations we have recognised that in the spirit of convergence and sharing of best practice EFAD has a role to play in furthering not only the standards of education and training but also the maintenance of standards.

The Bologna Declaration of June 1999 called for a coherent, compatible and competitive European Higher Education Area by 2010. Further at the Convention in Salamanca in March 2001 the European universities declared that: 'European Higher Education Institutions recognise that their students need and demand qualifications which they can use effectively for the purposes of their studies and careers all over Europe...and confirm their willingness to organise themselves accordingly within the framework of autonomy.'

EFAD Member Associations made commitments at Roskilde in 2003 and in Taormina in 2007 to define priorities for the convergence of the education and practice of dietitians across Europe. As part of this commitment it was agreed to establish a European Benchmark Statement for Practice Placement Training. I am pleased to say that these Standards for Practice Placements have been made possible through the work of EFAD and the DIETS Network (Dietitians Improving the Education and Training Standards in Europe). These standards will complement the European Academic and Practitioner Standards for Dietetics which was published in 2005 (EFAD, 2005).

As dietitians we will now begin to work towards the implementation of these Practice Placement Standards across our member states, to further the health of the people of Europe through good nutrition.

Karin Hådeli

Honorary President

European Federation of the Associations of Dietitians



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background and rationale

Dietetics is a highly applied science. Dietetics asks its practitioners to have a sound and contemporary knowledge of nutrition and its associated sciences together with a deep understanding of the social, psychological and managerial contexts which influence food availability and therefore food choice. Dietitians in Europe work in many different environments which require their expertise. Some work in clinical areas, some in public health, some in administrative roles and some in research and development (Ref). Therefore student dietitians must learn how to support individuals and groups to modify or change their food behaviour to enhance their nutritional health. Students of dietetics also need to learn how to evaluate their effectiveness and become lifelong learners. Dietitians may often find themselves working quite independently on graduation and it is therefore very important that their programme of study incorporates relevant work based/practice placements where they can practise and perfect their abilities under supervision.

In 2005 *European Academic and Practitioner Standards for Dietetics* was published (EFAD, 2005). This Benchmark achieved a consensus view across Europe regarding the proportion of a programme, leading to qualification as a dietitian in the nation state that needed to be spent in placement in order to achieve a competent practitioner. It was recommended that a period corresponding to 30 ECTS credit points or half an academic year of study would be a minimum period for a practice period. Subsequently EFAD, in 2009, published *European Dietetic Competences and their performance indicators* which defined the level of competence to be achieved prior to qualification as a dietitian. Taken together these two documents provide a blue print for the education of a dietitian in Europe.

However the student of dietetics in Europe, as acknowledged by both the Academic Standards and the Competence Statements, can find employment in a variety of roles. And, as mentioned above, to prepare for these roles it is important for the student to demonstrate competence in related work-based placements. The place and the way work-based placements or practice placements are organised are related to the role the dietitian will play in their own country. The DIETS Report 2 (DIETS, 2009a) demonstrated the diversity in the length of placement, their frequency and the various work situations in which dietetic students are placed across Europe. This diversity is to be welcomed, provided it meets benchmark standards, as it reflects the roles played by dietitians in different European countries.

Given this diversity it would be considered best educational practice if standards were in place to ensure that the student had a quality learning experience wherever that placement occurred. Further it is in the student and higher education institutions best interest that the practice placement teacher or work-based supervisor has support in place to enable the provision of a robust learning experience for the student. A brief survey (see Appendix 1) indicated that 13 out of 31 respondents (42%) to a questionnaire about practice placement standards either had no Practice Placement Standards or were unaware of any for dietitians in the 19 European countries that were represented. However there was almost universal agreement by 27 of 31 respondents (84%) that draft European standards for practice placements, which appear later in these pages, were appropriate.



1.2 How the standards were derived

1.2.1 The standards proposed have been drawn in part from the best practice identified as a result of the face-to-face visits (DIETS, 2009a), the reflections on face-to-face visits (DIETS, 2009b) and the good practice identified as a result of the education-mapping questionnaire (de Looy et al, 2010 submitted). Other standards proposed for health professionals (HPC, 2009) and work-based learning (QAA, 2007) have also been influential in establishing these standards.

1.2.2 The quality of the learning experience in the practice placement should be of equal value to the learning the student experiences within the Higher Education Institution (Awarding Institution or HEI). A student undertaking taking this period of learning, in a placement or work-based environment, should have an expectation that the same standards that apply within the Awarding Institution (HEI) should equally apply within the placement. It is the responsibility of the the Awarding Institution (HEI), who will award the academic qualification, to check that the learning is of this same high standard and that the learning is productive and meaningful. The profession of dietetics needs to be clear that the preparation of the dietetic student for professional life is being undertaken appropriately. Often the student will be supervised by a non-dietitian and in these circumstances it is very important that all four partners ie the student, the Awarding Institution (HEI) , the placement teacher or supervisor and the profession itself are confident about the learning being undertaken. This can be summarised in this way:

- that the expected quality of the learning experience is introduced and maintained
- that the student has an understanding of what is expected of them and what they, in their turn, can expect

and

- that the support for the practice placement teacher and/or work-based supervisor is such that a productive outcome for all the partners is experienced.

1.2.3 Organisation of the Good Practice in Placement standards

To reflect the essential components which need to be in place for productive practice learning experiences, cited above, the European Practice Placement Standards for Dietetics have been arranged under the following headings:

Practice Placement Learning Outcomes
Responsibilities for Academic Standards and Quality
Responsibilities of the Partners working together
Responsibilities and Entitlements of Students
Support for the Practice Placement Partners
Staff Development for all those teaching students
Monitoring and Evaluation of the student experience.

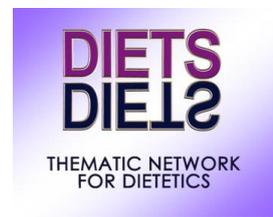
The evidence base for the derived standards is presented 4.0.

1.3 Establishing and monitoring the Standards

In some European countries it is clearly evident that the Awarding Institution (HEI) s are working together and with their practice placement teachers and/or supervisors to put in place standards and then effectively monitor their implementation. But where standards are



EUROPEAN
FEDERATION OF
THE ASSOCIATIONS
OF DIETITIANS



less well advance for practice placements 5.0 suggests a mechanism for introduction and monitoring. As with the European Academic and Practitioner Standards for Dietetics it was anticipated that many European countries would move towards implementation over a period of time and further that some countries would begin a to interpret the Academic standards to suit their own needs and situation. The same is anticipated with these standards for practice placements. Countries who at this stage have no particular methods established to monitor or support practice placements may wish to start introducing these standards in a phased manner over a number of years.

Probably the key to the successful introduction and continued evolution of standards in practice placements is for the Awarding Institution (HEI) to establish very good relationships with the practice placement teacher. A strong team can discuss and decide not only on which standards to introduce but also the timetable for their introduction. Those Nation States with coherent standards and the mechanisms for their implementation and review can be used as models and Professional Associations are only too willing to share their expertise.

1.4 *Summary*

The professional practice of dietetics requires that the student of dietetics demonstrates their competence. This requires a period of practical experience or work-based learning. But to ensure that this period(s) is effective standards for those periods of learning are required. Dietetics cannot be learned solely in a classroom and this presents a challenge to all involved in the preparation of the future dietetic professional. These European Standards for Practice Placements in Dietetics will go some way to help make those future dietetic professionals the best they can be.



2.0 The Standards

These 18 Standards should be established for all dietetic placements and work-based learning placements as good practice to ensure the quality of the learning experience while on placement. They are explained more fully in 3.0 and their evidence base is at 4.0.

Practice Placement Learning Outcomes

- Standard 1** Learning outcomes must be set for the practice placement(s) and must demonstrate how they contribute to the overall aims for the programme, normally through ECTS credit rating.
- Standard 2** The learning outcomes must be clear to the practice placement teacher, student and academic member of staff.
- Standard 3** The learning outcomes must be assessed appropriately.

Responsibilities for Academic Standards and Quality

- Standard 4** The Awarding Institution (HEI) is responsible for the academic standards and quality of all learning environments including practice placements.
- Standard 5** The Awarding Institution (HEI) must have policies and procedures by which it is able to satisfy itself that i) the appropriate standards for the approval of practice placement are in place and ii) their ongoing quality of delivery of learning is clear.
- Standard 6** The practice placement is a partner in delivery of the curriculum & must have a formal agreement of the roles and responsibilities including termination of an agreement.

Responsibilities of the Partners working together

- Standard 7** Both parties will agree on the responsibilities of each other with respect to achieving a quality student learning experience
- Standard 8** Information, support and guidance materials should be available and drawn-up by the practice placement partners and Awarding Institutions (HEIs) in consultation.
- Standard 9** Early warning systems of potential difficulties with the placement opportunity or student progress must be clearly articulated.

Responsibilities and Entitlements of Students



- Standard 10** Students will be expected to demonstrate the use of reflection and its use in lifelong learning whilst on practice placement; the Awarding Institution (HEI) should prepare the students for this process adequately
- Standard 11** The practice placement and Awarding Institution (HEI) will make clear the role, responsibilities and entitlements the student may expect while on their placement.
- Standard 12** Clear procedures should be in place and known to all if problems occur during the practice placement or a complaint needs to be made.

Support for the Practice Placement Partners

- Standard 13** The Awarding Institution (HEI) should provide clear guidance for the practice placement partner on procedures for monitoring and reporting at the end of the placement.
- Standard 14** The Awarding Institution (HEI) should provide appropriate support and training for the teachers and supervisors.

Staff Development for all those teaching students

- Standard 15** All staff within the Awarding Institution (HEI) or the practice placement must have appropriate access and be encouraged to undertake staff development in order to maintain a high quality learning experience for students.
- Standard 16** Staff development should be monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure maintenance of competence.

Monitoring and evaluation of the student experience

- Standard 17** Regular planned meetings between the practice placement partners and awarding institution, with student involvement, should be used to improve quality and advance understanding of the effectiveness of placement learning.
- Standard 18** Monitoring and evaluation should be shown to bring added benefit and improvement to the development of the curricular, the Profession and academia.



3.0 The Standards more fully explained

This section explains more fully the rationale and justification for the standards.

3.1 Practice Placement Learning Outcomes

Practice placements are an integral part of any programme leading to qualification as a dietitian. The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes. The Awarding Institution (HEI) must ensure that these learning outcomes are in place for the period(s) of practice placement. The learning outcomes:

- must be clearly identified for all practice placement teachers or supervisors, academic staff and students
- must demonstrate what areas of the curriculum are to be taught and assessed within the overall aims of the programme
- must be shown to contribute to the overall aims of the programme
- must be assessed appropriately

Various forms of agreed learning outcomes will contribute to the integration of practice-based learning into a programme. The amount or extent of practice placement learning that contributes to the overall qualification will determine the learning outcomes. In identifying the specific learning outcomes for practice placement learning, an Awarding Institution (HEI) will consider:

- whether the learning outcomes are clear and specifically designed
- whether the student has had adequate/appropriate opportunities to achieve the intended learning outcomes
- what impact will the compulsory placement component have on the intended learning outcomes of the programme as a whole

A credit value at an appropriate level, eg Year 1 (or Level 1) or Year 2 (or Level 2) etc may be given to sets of learning outcomes linked to placement learning. The credit value indicates both 'how much' (the amount) of learning is expected and 'how hard' (the relative level of difficulty) it is. The quality assurance procedures of the HEI will cover the allocation of credits to sets of learning outcomes and their award to students for achieving those outcomes.

Under the broad heading of 'Practice Placement Learning Outcomes', Standards 1-3 of Good Practice in Placement are therefore:

Standard 1 *Learning outcomes must be set for the practice placement(s) and clearly contribute to the overall aims for the programme; normally through ECTS credit rating*

Standard 2 *The learning outcomes must be clear to the practice placement teacher, student and academic member of staff*

Standard 3 *The learning outcomes must be assessed appropriately.*



3.2 Responsibilities for Academic Standards and Quality

Awarding institutions are responsible for the design, academic standards and quality of provision of their awards and this includes practice placement learning. Policies and procedures should be in place and be clearly available.

The design of higher education programmes including placement learning will involve a number of partners in addition to the Awarding Institution (HEI). An Awarding Institution (HEI) may delegate responsibility for some aspects of a programme, where the practice placement has the capacity to accept and discharge that responsibility. An Awarding Institution (HEI) together with its partner(s) may consider where devolved or shared responsibilities can be used, for example, by means of a service level contract/agreement. The contractual agreement should specify a system capable of monitoring all placements to ensure that they are able to meet the learning needs of the students. Clarity about responsibilities is important, as placement learning takes place away from the premises of the Awarding Institution (HEI).

Defined policies and procedures for securing, approving and/or allocating practice placements are important. (See Appendix B for guidance) Factors such as the capacity and capability to help students to achieve the intended learning outcomes will be an important component of these policies and procedures. It may sometimes be necessary for one or more of the partners to terminate an arrangement and policies/procedures should be agreed at the outset of any partnership as to how this will be carried out.

Under the broad heading of 'Responsibilities for Academic Standards and Quality', Standards 4 - 6 of Good Practice in Placement are therefore:

- Standard 4** *The Awarding Institution (HEI) is responsible for the academic standards and quality of all learning environments including practice placements.*
- Standard 5** *The Awarding Institution (HEI) must have policies and procedures by which it is able to satisfy itself that i) the appropriate standards for the approval of practice placement are in place and ii) their ongoing quality of delivery of learning is clear.*
- Standard 6** *The practice placement is a partner in delivery of the curriculum and must have a formal agreement of the roles and responsibilities including termination of an agreement.*

3.3 Responsibilities of the Partners working together

Awarding Institutions (HEIs) must ensure that all the practice placement partners are aware of the responsibilities of the Awarding Institution (HEI) and that the appropriate learning opportunities are in place for the students. It is vital that the responsibilities of both are clearly set out and available to both parties.

In all cases it should be all partners should understand and be clear about where (among other things) responsibility lies for the provision of appropriate learning opportunities, the health and safety of students and the assessment of students. (See 5.0 for an appraisal method). If both the placement partner and the Awarding Institution (HEI) undertake regular



monitoring and a formal agreement is in place, then the Awarding Institution (HEI) will have the assurance it needs in order to agree a placement learning opportunity.

The Awarding Institution (HEI) and any partner placement must discuss and agree about how they will provide support and guidance for students on placement. Information, support and guidance materials developed in consultation with partners will reduce duplication and ensure that appropriate, consistent and timely information is available to students at all stages of their placement. It is also important that the partners agree how they will provide each other with an early warning of potential problems that may prevent the progress of students or satisfactory completion of their learning outcomes.

Under the broad heading of 'Responsibilities of Partners', Standards 7 - 9 of Good Practice in Placement are therefore:

- Standard 7** *Both parties will agree on the responsibilities of each other with respect to achieving a quality student learning experience.*
- Standard 8** *Information, support and guidance materials should be available and drawn-up by the practice placement partners and awarding institutions in consultation.*
- Standard 9** *Early warning systems of potential difficulties with the placement opportunity or student progress must be clearly articulated.*

3.4 Responsibilities and Entitlements of Students

Awarding Institution (HEIs) must inform students of their specific responsibilities and entitlements whilst on placement, as it is expected that students will be responsible for managing their own learning and professional relationships, and for tracking and recording their own progress and achievements in their placement as lifelong learners.

Students must be provided with instruction on managing their own learning. Further, they should be supported in the practice of lifelong learning using such things as personal development planning and learning logs. The Awarding Institution (HEI) is expected to help students prepare for managing their own learning. Students should be informed of the procedures that they should follow if problems occur during their placement or if they have a complaint about their placement.

Under the broad heading of 'Responsibilities and Entitlements of Students', Standards 10 - 12 of Good Practice in Placement are therefore:

- Standard 10** *Students will be expected to demonstrate the use of reflection and its use in lifelong learning whilst on practice placement; the Awarding Institution (HEI) should prepare the students for this process adequately*
- Standard 11** *The practice placement and Awarding Institution (HEI) will make clear the role, responsibilities and entitlements the student may expect while on their placement.*
- Standard 12** *Clear procedures should be in place and known to all if problems occur during the practice placement or a complaint needs to be made*



3.5 Support for Practice Placement Partners

For their placement partners Awarding Institution (HEI) s will provide clear information about the objectives of the learning (work-based or placement), their particular roles and responsibilities and the nature and scope of the activity involved. The partners will need support and guidance for monitoring progress of students and reporting at the end of the placement. Any training for the mentor or placement teachers or supervisors must be provided before the student begins the placement.

Under the broad heading of 'Practice Placement Partners', Standards 13 & 14 of Good Practice in Placement are therefore:

Standard 13 *The Awarding Institution (HEI) should provide clear guidance for the practice placement partner on procedures for monitoring and reporting at the end of the placement.*

Standard 14 *The Awarding Institution (HEI) should provide appropriate support and training for the teachers and supervisors.*

3.6 Staff Development for all staff teaching students

Awarding Institution (HEI) s should expect that all the staff who are involved in preparing students for placement or are facilitating student learning on placement:

- are appropriately qualified
- have adequate resources to undertake the role
- have appropriate monitoring mechanisms to demonstrate continued staff competence
- are able to provide appropriate staff development opportunities and resources to support staff in their own learning

Further, students will meet and work with other staff in the placement as part of their multiprofessional and multidisciplinary roles. It is important that these staff have appropriate guidance as to their specific roles and responsibilities. For example, this might take the form of briefing about dietetic education or legislation as it affects dietetics and nutrition and other policies and practices.

Under the broad heading of 'Staff Development', Standards 15 & 16 of Good Practice in Placement are therefore:

Standard 15 *All staff within the Awarding Institution (HEI) or the practice placement must have appropriate access and encouragement to undertake staff development in order to maintain a high quality learning experience for the student*

Standard 16 *Staff development should be monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure maintenance of competence.*

3.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

To gain maximum benefit from the close engagement with practice that is available through the use of placements, the Awarding Institution (HEI) should monitor the relationship in a planned and efficient way. A close working relationship will allow both sides to gain



maximum benefit through exchange of information and understanding. In particular the relationship should be used to inform about future developments in the profession and academia.

Process and procedures should be set up to facilitate sharing of information on quality and standards. Further, there should be mechanisms for adopting best practice and improvements on a regular basis. For example, regular review meetings (including students) may prove to be extremely informative and valuable. Regular visits to placement partners to monitor quality and shared reports can be informative and contribute to effectiveness of Awarding Institution (HEI) policies and procedures as well as improve practice-based learning.

Under the broad heading of 'Monitoring and Evaluation', Standards 17 & 18 of Good Practice in Placement are therefore:

Standard 17 *Regular planned meetings between the practice placement partners and awarding institution, with student involvement, should be used to improve quality and advance understanding of the effectiveness of placement learning.*

Standard 18 *Monitoring and evaluation should be shown to bring added benefit and improvement to the development of the profession and academia.*



4.0 The evidence base for the Standards and Good Practice

During the course of the DIETS project many reports were made of the good practice in supporting students learn while on their practice placement. This information was drawn together to formulate the Standards in 2.0 and 3.0 above.

Standard	Practice Placement Standard	Best Practice
1	Learning outcomes must be set for the practice placement(s) and must demonstrate how they contribute to the overall aims for the programme, normally through ECTS credit rating.	European Academic and Practitioner Standards for Dietetics (EFAD, 2005)
2	The learning outcomes must be clear to the practice placement teacher, student and academic member of staff.	Report 3: Table 2 & 3 and 1st DIETS Conference Proceedings (DIETS, 2009)
3	The learning outcomes must be assessed appropriately.	Report 2: Tables 16, 17
4	The Awarding Institution (AWARDING INSTITUTION (HEI)) is responsible for the academic standards and quality of all learning environments including practice placements.	Report 3: Table 3
5	The Awarding Institution (HEI) must have policies and procedures by which it is able to satisfy itself that i) the appropriate standards for the approval of practice placement are in place and ii) their ongoing quality of delivery of learning is clear.	Report 3: Table 3
6	The practice placement is a partner in delivery of the curriculum & must have a formal agreement of the roles and responsibilities including termination of an agreement.	Report 3: Table 3
7	Both parties will agree on the responsibilities of each other with respect to achieving a quality student learning experience	Report 2: Section 3.26
8	Information, support and guidance materials should be available and drawn-up by the practice placement partners and awarding institutions in consultation.	Report 2: Figure 8
9	Early warning systems of potential difficulties with the placement opportunity or student progress must be clearly articulated.	2 nd DIETS Conference Proceedings (Workshops) (DIETS, 2009)
10	Students will be expected to demonstrate the use of reflection and its use in lifelong learning whilst on practice placement; the Awarding Institution (AWARDING INSTITUTION (HEI)) should prepare the students for this process adequately.	Report 2: Table 6
11	The practice placement and Awarding Institution (AWARDING INSTITUTION (HEI)) will make clear the role, responsibilities and entitlements the student may expect while on their placement.	Not reported specifically
12	Clear procedures should be in place and known to all if problems occur during the practice placement or a complaint needs to be made.	2 nd DIETS Conference Proceedings (Workshops) (DIETS, 2009)



13	The Awarding Institution (AWARDING INSTITUTION (HEI)) should provide clear guidance for the practice placement partner on procedures for monitoring and reporting at the end of the placement.	Report 2: Table 8
14	The Awarding Institution (AWARDING INSTITUTION (HEI)) should provide appropriate support and training for the teachers and supervisors.	Report 2: Table 22
15	All staff within the Awarding Institution (AWARDING INSTITUTION (HEI)) or the practice placement must have appropriate access and be encouraged to undertake staff development in order to maintain a high quality learning experience for students.	Report 2: Table 21
16	Staff development should be monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure maintenance of competence.	Report 2: Table 1, 21
17	Regular planned meetings between the practice placement partners and awarding institution, with student involvement, should be used to improve quality and advance understanding of the effectiveness of placement learning.	Report 2: Figure 13
18	Monitoring and evaluation should be shown to bring added benefit and improvement to the development of the curricular, the Profession and academia.	Report 2: Table 8



5.0 Appraising and assessing the placement or work-based learning environment

All placements or work-based placements should be visited prior to a student undertaking their placement. This is to ensure that all the necessary procedures, resources and staff are in place to ensure a positive and productive learning experience. The following is an example of how this might be achieved. It is however up to the Awarding Institution (HEI) with whom the student is registered to maintain and implement the necessary standards to satisfy itself that the placement provides all the required elements of the programme.

Approval of Practice Placement Partners

A visit to the placement or work environment is highly recommended although it is possible to do much through correspondence.

5.1 Prior to a formal visit to the practice placement the following should be prepared and be ready for discussion. A report detailing the outcomes of the visit will also be expected and Practice Placement Visit Information should be available to include:

- *Management of the Practice Placement*

A clear 'practice placement' handbook must be available to demonstrate that students, practice placement teachers and supervisors are fully prepared for the practice placement. There should also be a formal commitment by the practice placement partner available. The handbook will include information about and an understanding of:

- the learning outcomes and competences to be achieved
 - the timings and the duration of any placement experience and how associated records are to be maintained
 - expectations of professional conduct
 - the assessment procedures using performance indicators and including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure in certain or all competences and therefore to progress
 - communication and lines of responsibility
- There should be convincing information that:
 - there is a review mechanism for the learning outcomes
 - that there are teaching & learning strategies
 - The placement providers have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.
 - there is evidence of support for the practice placement within the institution and practice placement partner



- Staffing and Staff Development
 - Practice placement teachers and supervisors must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to deliver the approved and agreed practice placement and recorded as evidence of quality and quality assurance
 - Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered or recognised as a dietitian within their own Nation State, *unless* other arrangements are agreed.

In addition there should be convincing evidence that:

- staff development policies are in place
- staff CVs have been scrutinized and conclusions made
- there is a regular review of appropriate staffing for supporting the student
- audit (or research) is being undertaken to support the programme
- there is adequate finance to support staff development & research

5.2 A visit to the placement is highly recommended and after the visit the following should be considered confirming that in the practice placement a minimum standard is achievable:

- there are quality assurance mechanisms in place eg there is some evidence for placement report forms and assessment outcomes that demonstrate a quality approach
- an assessment method is available to check that learning outcomes have been achieved is clear to both staff and students

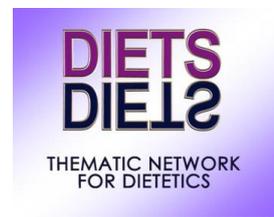
5.3 A visit can also confirm that *Resources & Facilities* are in place to support the student and that the practice placement settings provide a safe and supportive environment. This can be demonstrated through adequate:

- library facilities
- information technology facilities
- materials and information sources for students
- office and living accommodation
- student-support facilities in place, eg mentors

5.4 *Finally a report* should be produced which demonstrates whether the European Standards for Practice Placement in dietetics are being met and an action plan which both



EUROPEAN
FEDERATION OF
THE ASSOCIATIONS
OF DIETITIANS



partners may need to contribute to is drawn together with a clear list of responsibilities and dates for achievement.

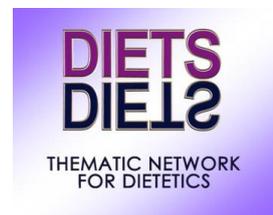
This might include

- That practice placement training for placement teachers and supervisors that should be provided by the Awarding Institution (HEI).
- How regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider can be maintained.

A date should also be set for the next visit or renewal of formal agreement.



EUROPEAN
FEDERATION OF
THE ASSOCIATIONS
OF DIETITIANS



References

de Looy A, Naumann E, Govers E, Jager MJ, Liddell J, Maramba IDC and Cuervo M (2010) *Thematic Network DIETS mapping dietetic education in Europe 2006-09: comparisons to the European Academic and Practitioner Standards for Dietetics* (Submitted)

DIETS (2009) *Proceedings of the 1st DIETS Conference held in Plymouth and 2nd DIETS Conference held in Frankfurt* available at www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu

DIETS (2009a) *Report 2: Learning about European practice placement education from each other* available at www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu

DIETS (2009b) *Report 3: Using information technology to share experiences and enhance communication skills* available at www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu

DIETS (2009c) *Proceedings of the 3rd DIETS Conference held in Lisbon* Available at www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu

DIETS (2009d) *Report 1: Building a technologically informed information and communication network in Europe* available at www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu

EFAD (2005) *European Academic and Practitioner Standards for Dietetics* available at www.efad.org

EFAD (2009) *European Dietetic competences and their performance indicators*. Available at www.efad.org

Health Professions Council (HPC) (2009) *Standards of Education and Training* Health Professions Council, Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU UK or at <http://www.hpc-uk.org/aboutregistration/standards/sets/>

QAA (2007) Section 9: Work-based and placement learning. In *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (2nd Edition) QAA, Gloucester, UK or at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeofpractice/section9/default.asp>



Glossary

Assessment

The collection of information relating to a patient's condition, taking account of the full range of relevant contextual factors, that is needed to make a clinical diagnosis and plan of management.

Awarding Institution

The Higher Education Institution (HEI) with whom the student is registered and who will award the final qualification for the students.

Benchmark statement

An initiative undertaken under the aegis of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to describe the nature and characteristics of higher education programmes in a specific subject, while representing general expectations about the standards for an award of qualifications at a particular level and articulating the attributes and capabilities that those possessing such qualifications should be able to demonstrate.

Campus based

The academic component

Clinical reasoning

The critical and analytical thinking associated with the process of making clinical decisions

Codes of practice

These may be established by the dietetic profession or incorporated into national rules and laws. They include ethical rules and principles that form an obligatory part of professional practice.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The process by which professionals update, maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills and expertise in order to ensure their continuing competence to practise. The process is systematic and ongoing.

Critical reflection

Involves exploring reasons and approaches and the underlying concepts/assumptions. The exploration is based upon an evaluation of the context and takes account of social, personal and historical influences upon the professional setting.

Dublin Descriptors

These are reproduced in full at the end of the glossary

European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

ECTS is the European system for transferring credits in further and higher education. ECTS has been developed within the EU to improve academic recognition and to transfer credits from studies or parts of studies obtained in other countries. The system is also usable for transferring credits within a country. The ECTS point system can be used to estimate the workload measured in time.

Evaluation

Review and assessment of the quality of care in order to identify areas for improvement.

**Evidence-based practice**

A commitment to using the best available evidence to inform decision-making that involves integrating practitioners' individual professional judgement with evidence gained through systematic research.

Fitness to practise

A level of practice which demonstrates an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding, skills and competency, attitude and adherence to a code of conduct for the role currently being undertaken and a commitment to maintain that level.

Higher Education Institute (AWARDING INSTITUTION (HEI))

An institution providing education at first cycle (bachelor) degree level.

Independent practitioner

A person acting in their own right

Inter-professional

Two or more professionals from different disciplines working together in an integrated way resulting in new ways of working.

Learning theories

Established ideas of how learning can be promoted.

Lifelong learning

The process of constant learning and development incorporating continuous professional development in which all individuals need to engage in a time of rapid change.

Multidisciplinary

One or more disciplines working collaboratively

Nutrigenomics

The study of how different foods can interact with particular genes to increase the risk of disease.

Non-discriminatory practice

Professional practice within which individuals, teams and organisations actively seek to ensure that no-one (including patients, carers, colleagues or students) is either directly or indirectly treated less favourably than others are, or would be, treated in the same or similar circumstances, on the grounds of age, colour, creed, criminal convictions, culture, disability, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, medical condition, mental health, nationality, physical appearance, political beliefs, race, religion, responsibility for dependants, sexual identity, sexual orientation or social class.

Practical placement /Clinical education placements

A period of education carried out in the workplace, providing the opportunity to translate theory into practice.

Practice Placement teacher

The individual responsible for the teaching and learning environment and assessment of students.



Problem solving

Exercises and processes that enable students to examine their existing knowledge and develop their learning to formulate a solution to a presented question or issue and that should deepen students' learning, as well as developing their conceptual and methodological skills, thereby enhancing their overall approach to professional practice.

Professional autonomy

The power to make decisions regarding the management of the patient/client based on the professional's own professional knowledge and expertise.

Reflective practice / reflection on action

Reflecting after the event. Often involves thinking through a situation and discussing it with a colleague. It involves being self-aware and should be action orientated and lead to change.

Reflection in action

Being aware of what you are doing. Knowing and doing at the same time

Resource

The potential or assets in a person or an organisation, eg time, money, equipment, staff, the specialist knowledge held by a person, which could be used to help or support others when needed.

Self-directed learning

Independent learning that is initiated by the student

Tool

The instrument or method

User

Anyone receiving a dietetic service – patients, clients, the public, catering services, food industry, customers

Work-based placement or learning environment

Another name for a practice placement but usually refers to a placement which does not necessarily take place in the area of the primary study eg not a dietetic placement but a placement in a brewery

Appendix 1 Results of a questionnaire on the draft standards Practice Placement Standards – results

The Standards (numbers 1-18) are for the use of Higher Education when arranging placements for the dietetic students

Question	Please chose and tick			Total
	Yes	No	Don't know	
We have nationally/local Standards for Practice	18	11	2	31
Our HEI(s) already has/have placement standards and they are like these	24	5	1	30
Appendix B provides a useful checklist to use when arranging placements	29	1	2	32
There are too many standards proposed	4	26	2	32
The standards are too complicated and I do not understand them	2	29	1	32
The standards cover all the areas that need to be in place for students	27	3	2	32
There should be standards for the qualifications of the practice placement teacher as well as these standards	26	2	3	31
I would like to see an example of standards for a practice placement	23	6	2	31
These standards would be good to have across Europe and EFAD should adopt them**	12			
The proposed Standards will offer a European Benchmark**	11			
<p>Respondents: HEIs = 20; NDAs = 12</p> <p>Number of countries = 18 plus Israel</p> <p>** these questions were sent with the first mail of the questionnaire but were not included in the second mail</p>				