

TERMS OF REFERENCE - DIETITIAN AND NUTRITIONIST REGULATION COUNCIL

1. Purpose The purpose of the Dietitian and Nutritionist Regulation Council (DNRC) is to protect the public by regulating the Australian dietetics profession to ensure practitioner efficacy and safety to practice. The DNRC is aligned with the guiding principles of the National Law governing registered health professionals (Annexure B).

For reference, the DNRC will undertake all regulatory activities, including action formerly delegated to the Australian Dietetic Council (ADC).

2. Functions

The DNRC responsibilities:

1. The DNRC has operational responsibility to implement the Board's strategic objectives within the regulatory framework for Dietitians Australia (DA).
2. The DNRC shall have operational responsibility for overseeing the management of practitioner accreditation, skills recognition, course credentialing, and managing complaints.
3. The DNRC shall recommend to the Board for consideration and/or approval:
 - a) Decisions on regulatory matters
 - b) Regulatory policies and procedures, or changes thereto, which are aligned with the DA Strategic Plan and best practice health regulation.
4. The DNRC shall ensure the Board is up-to-date on regulatory issues, domestically or internationally, with impact on DA or its members.

3. Composition

The Board shall endorse a skills matrix to be used to ensure that the composition of the DNRC have adequate relevant capabilities and representation from across the membership of Dietitians Australia in order to undertake the regulatory functions.

- **Chairperson:** Appointed by the Board from among the dietetic members of the Council for a three-year term. The Chairperson cannot concurrently hold office as a Director of Dietitians Australia.
- **Deputy Chairperson:** A member of the Council appointed by the Council, serving concurrently with the Chairperson's term.
- **Members:** Seven voting members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair, appointed by the Board for a three-year term with an option for a second three-year term, comprising:
 - a) Five Senior Dietitians
 - b) Two External Representatives:
 - i. one member with accreditation and/or credentialing expertise from another profession, and
 - ii. one representative with regulatory experience.

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c) To ensure continuity of membership two dietitian members and one of the external appointees shall retire after the first year as determined by lot, but are eligible to be appointed.

- **Secretariat:** As appointed by the CEO (non-voting).
- **Staff:** Manager, Regulatory Services (non-voting).

4. Roles and Responsibilities for the DNRC

1. **Advisory Role:** Provide advice to the Board on procedures and issues related to accreditation and recognition of dietitians, including the international, political, and governmental contexts.
2. **Accreditation Review:** Recommend the accreditation of dietetics programs and review Accreditation Standards to reflect current and emerging community health needs.
3. **Monitoring:** Monitor national and international perspectives on professional standards.
4. **Compliance and Quality Improvement:** Ensure DNRC meets regulatory requirements and engages in continuous quality improvement of accreditation and recognition services.
5. **Risk Management:** Strengthen risk management processes to ensure informed decision-making and mitigate potential governance failures.

5. Reporting and Performance

1. **Regular Reporting:** Submit reports to the Board on activities and progress towards strategic goals. Reports should include status updates, final reports before ceasing operations, and member information reports.
2. **Annual Reports:** Prepare an annual report for inclusion in the Dietitians Australia Annual Report.
3. **Communication:** Ensure timely and accurate communication with stakeholders, including universities and government agencies, through various media channels in alignment with the Board position on issues.
4. **Board reporting:** The Chair or in their absence the Deputy Chair shall attend Board meetings when DNRC reports are presented for consideration by the Board.
6. **Performance:** The DNRC shall be assessed on their performance against key performance indicators set by the Board.

6. Meetings

1. **Frequency:** The DNRC will meet at least six times per year, with additional meetings scheduled as needed.
2. **Quorum:** A quorum will be one-half of the number of Members or the closest number above that fraction. At least one member without dietetic qualifications must be present.

8. Dissolution

The Board shall dissolve the DNRC if its functions are no longer relevant or if it is not fulfilling its stated terms of reference.

9. Amendments

These Terms of Reference may be amended by the Board.

10. Roles and Responsibilities of the Dietitians Australia Board

For clarity, the Dietitians Australia Board shall:

- a) **Decision-making Role:** Consider the recommendations of the DNRC on standards, policies, procedures and issues related to accreditation and recognition of dietitians, including the international, political, and governmental contexts; and make decisions that provide clarity and guidance to the DNRC in undertaking their obligations.
- b) **Approval:** Consider recommendations made by the DNRC on regulatory matters and assure themselves that the required processes have been followed in accordance with the directions of the Board prior to approving recommendations.
- c) **Non-interference:** Ensure that the Board or any members of the Board does not interfere in the decision-making of the DNRC or any DNRC panel regarding regulatory decisions, ensuring that decision making is independent of the Board. However, the Board may provide an opinion on regulatory issues, which the DNRC may accept or reject at their discretion.
- d) **Resourcing and management:** The Board shall ensure the CEO has delegation to manage the resourcing of support to the DNRC to enable them to carry out their regulatory functions.

11. Regulatory Governance Skills Matrix: The Council shall ensure that the following skills and capabilities are available to the Council from its membership. Members are expected to be able to demonstrate competence across a range of criteria, but not expected to be competent in all.

Table: Regulatory Governance Skills Matrix

Rank	Skill/Attribute	Descriptor	Rationale
Essential			
1	Governance and Compliance	Understanding and enforcing governance structures and compliance standards.	Critical for aligning activities with legal and regulatory standards, ensuring that all regulatory actions meet governance requirements.
2	Accreditation and Credentialing	Managing and leading processes for accreditation and professional credentialing.	Essential for managing and leading accreditation and credentialing processes, which are core functions of regulatory services.
3	Complaints Handling & Professional Conduct	Handling complaints and enforcing standards of professional conduct.	Central to maintaining professional standards and handling complaints effectively, crucial for upholding public trust.
4	Risk Management	Identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks within regulatory contexts.	Vital for identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks within regulatory contexts, ensuring operational and reputational integrity.
5	Critical Thinking & Decision Making	Analysing complex situations and making informed decisions.	Necessary for analysing complex situations and making informed decisions that impact regulatory outcomes and public safety.
6	Nutrition and Dietetics Expertise	Expertise in dietetics, relevant for evaluating	Helpful for roles involving direct evaluation of dietetics qualifications

Rank	Skill/Attribute	Descriptor	Rationale
Essential			
		professional qualifications and practices.	or practices, though not essential for all regulatory staff.
7	Policy Development & Strategic Planning	Contributing to or leading policy development and strategic planning initiatives.	Important for contributing to or leading policy development and strategic initiatives that shape regulatory frameworks.
8	Ethics and Integrity	Upholding high ethical standards and demonstrating integrity in actions and decisions.	Non-negotiable for maintaining high ethical standards and integrity in all regulatory processes, fostering trust and accountability.
9	Effective Communication	Conveying complex regulatory issues clearly to diverse stakeholders.	Essential for conveying complex regulatory issues clearly to diverse stakeholders, ensuring alignment and understanding.
10	Operational Efficiency	Optimising processes and improving the efficiency of operations.	Key to optimising regulatory processes and improving operational effectiveness, avoiding delays and ensuring smooth operations.
11	Collaboration and Teamwork	Working effectively in teams and with various stakeholders.	Important for working effectively across teams and with various stakeholders in regulatory functions.
12	Leadership and Influence	Leading teams and influencing decisions in a regulatory environment.	Crucial for those in leadership roles, enabling effective management and influence within the regulatory environment.
13	Conflict Resolution	Mediating disputes and resolving conflicts fairly and effectively.	Important for mediating disputes and resolving conflicts within regulatory settings, ensuring fair and just outcomes.
14	Financial Acumen	Managing budgets and overseeing financial operations in a regulatory context.	Relevant for managing budgets and financial oversight in regulatory contexts, ensuring resources are used efficiently.
15	Cultural Competency	Implementing culturally responsive practices, particularly with First Nations Peoples.	Important for ensuring culturally responsive practices within healthcare regulation, particularly with First Nations Peoples.
16	Interdisciplinary Knowledge	Understanding and collaborating across different health fields.	Valuable for understanding and collaborating across different health fields, enhancing regulatory decision-making.
17	Advocacy and Public Engagement	Promoting professional standards and engaging with the public and stakeholders.	Relevant for promoting professional standards and engaging with the public, important for broader regulatory roles.
18	Community Connection	Building and maintaining connections with	Useful for engaging with community or consumer groups, more critical for public-facing roles.

Rank	Skill/Attribute	Descriptor	Rationale
Essential			
		community or consumer advocacy groups.	

Evaluation Process

1. Application Review:

- **CV and Statement:** Initial scoring based on submitted CV and statement addressing required criterion.
- **Documents:** Check qualifications, past experiences, and examples provided.

2. Interviews:

- **Structured Questions:** Use standardised questions to assess against attributes.
- **Panel Assessment:** Multiple evaluators score each response against skills matrix.

3. References:

- **Verification:** Confirm integrity, expertise, and collaboration skills through references.

ANNEXURE A - MEMBERS SELECTION CRITERIA

ANNEXURE B - GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE NATIONAL LAW GOVERNING REGISTERED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

ANNEXURE A - MEMBERS SELECTION CRITERIA

General Attributes for All Council Members:

1. **Displays Integrity:**
 - Demonstrates ethical behaviour and maintains high professional standards.
 - Acts in the public interest and upholds the reputation of the profession.
2. **Thinks Critically:**
 - Capable of independent judgment and critical thinking.
 - Able to analyse complex issues and make informed decisions.
3. **Applies Expertise:**
 - Holds relevant qualifications and senior level experience in nutrition and dietetics.
 - For dietitian members, must hold Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) status.
 - For external members, must have regulatory experience.
4. **Focuses Strategically:**
 - Demonstrates strategic thinking and long-term planning capabilities.
 - Understands and contributes to the strategic goals of the DNRC and DA.
5. **Collaborates in the Interests of the Profession:**
 - Works effectively as part of a team.
 - Collaborates with other members to advance the profession.
6. **Knowledge/Experience of Regulatory Practice:**
 - Has extensive knowledge and experience in regulatory practice.
 - Demonstrates effectiveness in regulatory roles and activities.
7. **Knowledge of Higher Education Course Quality and Approval Requirements, including AQF:**
 - Understands university course quality and approval requirements, including TEQSA.
 - Has experience with course approvals and maintaining educational standards.

Additional Attributes for Chairperson:

1. **Demonstrates Leadership:**
 - Proven leadership skills and experience in leading teams or organisations.
 - Ability to guide the council and facilitate effective decision-making.
2. **Engages Externally:**
 - Experience in engaging with external stakeholders, including government bodies, professional organizations, and the public.
3. **Chairs Effectively:**
 - Experience in chairing meetings and leading discussions.
 - Ability to manage differing views and drive consensus.

Additional Attributes for External Members:

1. **Demonstrates Strong Community Connection:**
 - Active engagement in community activities or organisations.
 - Brings a community perspective to the council.

Regulatory Governance Skills Matrix Assessment Rubric

1. This table aligns to the Skills Matrix and provides a guidance rubric for evaluation of skills at the member level and for the Council. This rubric will guide interview panels and ensure consistency in evaluating all applicants.
2. Candidates will be required to provide examples of past experience and accomplishments aligned with the skills matrix during their application process. These will be verified through reference checks and evaluated against the competency-based rubric during interviews.

Skill/Attribute	Level 1 (Basic)	Level 2 (Proficient)	Level 3 (Advanced)
Governance and Compliance	Basic awareness of governance structures. Follows established processes.	Applies governance structures and ensures compliance. Identifies issues and suggests solutions.	Leads governance processes and enforces compliance. Advises on complex regulatory matters and shapes policy.
Accreditation and Credentialing	Understands basic processes. Supports administrative tasks.	Manages accreditation and credentialing processes independently.	Leads development and implementation of accreditation systems. Sets benchmarks and drives credentialing innovation.
Complaints Handling & Professional Conduct	Assists in handling complaints under supervision. Understands standards of professional conduct.	Manages complaints and enforces professional conduct independently.	Develops and implements policies for handling complaints. Leads investigations on professional conduct.
Risk Management	Identifies potential risks with guidance. Follows risk management protocols.	Assesses and mitigates risks in routine operations. Proposes risk control measures.	Develops risk management strategies. Leads risk assessment and crisis response at an organizational level.

Skill/Attribute	Level 1 (Basic)	Level 2 (Proficient)	Level 3 (Advanced)
Critical Thinking & Decision Making	Follows guidelines for analysing situations. Makes decisions with support.	Analyses complex situations, makes informed decisions, and suggests improvements.	Leads critical analysis, makes strategic decisions, and drives policy changes.
Nutrition and Dietetics Expertise	Understands basic principles of nutrition and dietetics. Provides support in evaluations.	Applies expertise in professional evaluations and consultations.	Acts as a subject matter expert. Leads assessments and policy development in nutrition and dietetics.
Policy Development & Strategic Planning	Participates in policy development with guidance. Contributes to discussions.	Leads policy development for specific areas. Shapes strategic plans and initiatives.	Directs comprehensive policy development. Drives long-term regulatory frameworks.
Ethics and Integrity	Follows ethical guidelines. Demonstrates integrity in daily tasks.	Applies ethical standards in decision-making. Resolves ethical dilemmas.	Champions organisational ethics and leads integrity initiatives.
Effective Communication	Communicates regulatory information clearly with support.	Effectively communicates complex issues to stakeholders independently.	Leads communication strategies. Engages diverse audiences and drives regulatory initiatives.
Operational Efficiency	Understands processes and suggests minor improvements.	Optimises processes, reduces delays, and improves efficiency.	Drives organisational efficiency. Implements significant process innovations.
Collaboration and Teamwork	Works cooperatively in teams with guidance.	Leads teams and fosters cooperation among diverse stakeholders.	Builds high-functioning teams. Drives cross-functional collaboration and resolves conflicts.
Leadership and Influence	Supports team leaders and influences decisions on a small scale.	Leads teams and influences decisions within projects or departments.	Shapes organisational leadership. Influences stakeholders at multiple levels.

Skill/Attribute	Level 1 (Basic)	Level 2 (Proficient)	Level 3 (Advanced)
Conflict Resolution	Participates in resolving conflicts with guidance.	Mediates conflicts independently. Ensures fair outcomes.	Leads complex dispute resolutions. Develops conflict management frameworks.
Financial Acumen	Assists in budgeting and financial management under supervision.	Manages financial resources, ensuring adherence to budgets.	Directs financial strategy. Oversees large budgets and ensures financial sustainability.
Cultural Competency	Demonstrates cultural awareness in daily interactions.	Implements culturally responsive practices, especially with First Nations Peoples.	Leads initiatives that integrate cultural competency across policies and practices.
Interdisciplinary Knowledge	Has basic understanding of related health fields. Contributes to interdisciplinary discussions.	Collaborates effectively across health disciplines, leveraging interdisciplinary knowledge.	Drives interdisciplinary collaborations and enhances decision-making through cross-field integration.
Advocacy and Public Engagement	Supports advocacy initiatives and public engagement under guidance.	Leads public engagement efforts and advocacy campaigns. Represents the organization publicly.	Shapes public advocacy strategies. Influences policy and engages high-level stakeholders.
Community Connection	Participates in community outreach and builds relationships.	Leads community engagement initiatives. Develops sustainable connections with advocacy groups.	Develops and leads long-term community partnerships. Influences regulatory outcomes through community involvement.

ANNEXURE B - GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE NATIONAL LAW GOVERNING REGISTERED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN AUSTRALIA

The guiding principles of the National Law governing registered health professionals in Australia are designed to ensure the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme operates effectively and transparently. These principles are outlined to support public safety, maintain confidence in the healthcare system, and ensure the integrity and competence of registered health practitioners:

1. Public Safety and Confidence:

- The primary objective is to protect the public by ensuring that only health practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practice in a competent and ethical manner are registered.
- This principle aims to enhance public confidence in the healthcare system.

2. Transparency and Accountability:

- The scheme must operate transparently, providing clear and accessible information to the public about the regulation of health practitioners.
- Decisions and actions taken by regulatory bodies must be accountable and justifiable.

3. Efficiency and Effectiveness:

- Regulatory processes and operations should be efficient, minimising unnecessary administrative burdens while ensuring effective oversight of health practitioners.
- The scheme should facilitate timely and appropriate regulatory responses.

4. Fairness:

- The regulatory system should be fair and impartial, treating all practitioners and stakeholders equitably.
- This includes ensuring that registration fees are reasonable and reflect the cost of administering the scheme.

5. National Consistency:

- The National Law aims to establish consistent standards across all Australian states and territories, ensuring that health practitioners are subject to the same regulatory requirements regardless of where they practice.

6. Quality and Safety of Healthcare:

- The scheme promotes the continuous improvement of health service quality and safety.
- This involves setting and maintaining high professional standards for education, training, and practice.