University of PEI
Dietetic Internship
Applicant’s Handbook

Revised Sept 2017
Introduction to the Handbook

This handbook was put together to provide information and answer some questions you may have as you consider applying to a dietetic internship program. The handbook provides information on both the graduate application route as well as, the University of Prince Edward Island Integrated Dietetic Internship program.

It is important to be knowledgeable about the dietetic profession and the internship program to which you plan to apply. To become better informed about graduate internship programs you should visit the Dietitians of Canada website www.dietitians.ca and review the material posted under the section a career in nutrition.

If you are planning to apply to the University of Prince Edward Island Intergraded Dietetic Internship program talk to students presently in the program and/or arrange to meet with the coordinator. The more information you have the better informed you will be to make the right decision and prepared for the selection process. If you are planning to apply to the UPEI program make sure you attend the information session held each fall in the Department of Applied Human Sciences.

Not all internship programs are represented in this handbook, so do not use this as your only source of information. If applying to a graduate internship program make sure you do some further research. This handbook was put together to help future applicants gain an understanding of the process. Internship programs change the way they interview and the types of questions they focus on from year to year.

The tips (*) and sample interview questions included in this handbook are from a number of dietetic internship applicants and the University of Guelph Applicant’s Handbook. The information and suggestions presented are from the personal experiences of the applicants and should be regarded as such.

Contained in the appendix you will find sample personal letters. The letters were submitted trusting that they will not be copied or misused. They are intended to be examples of what can be done for a personal letter.

Hopefully the information contained in the handbook will be helpful as you consider applying to a dietetic internship program.

Internship Overview

Individuals who are interested in becoming a dietitian may choose one of the following routes to complete the required education and training. The traditional route is to complete an accredited undergraduate program in Foods and Nutrition and then complete a graduate dietetic internship program offered by various health organizations in Canada. The second route is to complete an integrated dietetic internship program such as the University of PEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program. Integrated programs are offered at the university level in conjunction with a Foods and Nutrition undergraduate degree program. The final route available is to complete an undergraduate degree in foods and nutrition and then to do a specified masters in nutrition and dietetic internship. Following graduation from the academic and internship programs individuals must pass the national registration exam set by “The Alliance of Canadian Dietetic Regulatory Bodies” to become a registered dietitian.

What exactly is a dietetic internship? What will I be doing?

A dietetic internship provides the practical experience that is necessary for you to qualify to practice as a registered dietitian. Basically, internship provides students the opportunity to apply the theory they have learned throughout the four years of university in various practical settings.
In the early stages of the internship program students spend time in practice areas which allow them to become familiar with food service operations and the role of the dietitian. As they progress through the program students spend more time with practising dietitians learning the skills and gaining knowledge associated with this profession. During each level the student is assigned increasing amounts of responsibility under the supervision of a dietitian. At the final level of the program students must complete Supervised Staff experience where they perform all the duties of the dietitian.

Currently dietetic internships range in length from 32-50 weeks. Dietetic interns are exposed to a variety of programs, services, and clinics as they work with various dietitians. The placements introduce students to diverse client populations and learning experiences (e.g. general medicine, diabetes education, and geriatric care as well as menu planning and budgeting). In the area of clinical nutrition students learn to assess, plan and manage the nutritional health of specific groups of patients/clients. During the food service placements they learn about and participate in the operations of a food service department. Finally while in Population/Public Health placements students assess population nutrition concerns then develop and implement programs to address these concerns. Internship programs also include a research component where students may participate in a research project or complete a research based course. Interns who successfully complete the internship program have demonstrated the entry-level competencies for dietetic practice and are eligible to write the Canadian Dietitian’s Registration Exam (CDRE). More information about the CDRE is available from your local College of Dietitians or Registration Board.

**Are all dietetic internship programs the same?**

Dietetic internship programs vary greatly. Some are quite specialized programs which are known for a specific area of practice (e.g. pediatrics at the IWK in Halifax). Other programs are more general, and give an equal balance of time to clinical, administration, and community nutrition. The University of Prince Edward Island Integrated Dietetic Internship program plans student training where approximately equal amounts of time are allocated to each area. Other programs have more of a focus on community-based nutrition, however all programs do include experiences in Population/Public Health, Nutrition Care, and Food Service Management. Some programs incorporate time for electives where you can put more emphasis on an area of particular interest. The program brochures and/or websites may provide a breakdown of how many weeks are spent in each area of dietetics.

**Finding out about Graduate Internship Programs**

**How can I find out about dietetic internships?**

Research the program- look through the program brochures, check out the hospital or program website, talk to current and past interns.

You can visit the public side of Dietitians of Canada (DC) web site (www.dietitians.ca) and review the information in the 'Career in Nutrition' section.

If you are a qualifying member of DC, you can access information on the members only side of the website in the 'Career Centre' section for students.

Internship brochures are updated and distributed each fall by the various internship programs. Please note that not all internship programs produce and distribute a brochure. Most post all the program information on their website.

You have a chance to meet graduate program internship directors and interns of the Atlantic Canada Region at the annual Internship Forum held in Halifax. The forum takes place each fall.
You might make arrangements before fourth year to visit several organizations that offer internships and ask for a tour of their facilities. You could call, or email, the internship director and request a meeting/tour during a time when he/she is not too busy with interns, and you are not too busy with school.

Dietitian of Canada members have access to a Student Network where students and interns can post articles. Some interns may post articles about their experiences which could give you the inside scoop. There is also a Member to Member discussion area where you can ask other members questions you may have about internship programs.

**What is the internship forum?**

The internship forum is a meeting for students from accredited nutrition programs in Atlantic Canada to learn about applying for a graduate dietetic internship. At the internship forum you can:

- meet graduate internship directors and recent interns,
- ask questions about the various Atlantic Canada internship programs,
- hear presentations about internship programs and advice for applying and writing cover letters, and
- collect internship brochures.

**The UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program**

The UPEI integrated dietetic internship is an innovative and progressive program. This program offers students the opportunity to complete a degree in Foods and Nutrition and the competences/performance indicators established by the *Partnership for Dietetic Education and Practice* for entry level dietetic practice in just four and one half years. *This dietetic education program is an accredited program recognized by the Partnership for Dietetic Education and Practice (PDEP) and prepares students for eligibility for registration with a provincial dietetics regulatory body.*

Graduates of this program are prepared to meet the challenges of an exciting and ever changing dietetic work environment. The program fosters self-direction and lifelong learning, qualities which are essential to remain competent in dietetic practice. The blend of traditional and non-traditional experiences allow students to explore the diversity which exists in dietetic practice and help them recognize the potential to apply these skills in a variety of settings. The following section will provide an overview of the program’s structure, admission requirements, and guiding principles.

**Department of Applied Human Sciences Vision, Mission and Goals**

**Vision:**

We aspire to be a collegial, interdisciplinary department that fosters inspired teaching, outstanding scholarship and community connections that enhance our national and international reputation.
Mission:

The mission of the Department of Applied Human Sciences is to promote the health and optimal development of individuals, families and communities by:

- Preparing students to be leaders in their chosen discipline or profession
- Generating new knowledge through outstanding scholarship
- Forming strong links with the community and engaging in professional service

Goals

Students graduating from programs in the Department of Applied Human Sciences should:

- be capable of being a leader in their profession.
- have an understanding of core knowledge in their chosen discipline.
- have a global perspective.
- be critical thinkers.
- be problem solvers, able to integrate knowledge and apply it.
- be reflective, evidence-based professionals.
- be creative and innovative.
- be effective in oral and written communication.
- be self-directed and committed to lifelong learning.
- understand and apply the principles of professionalism.
- be comfortable working with diverse populations.
- be able to work effectively as part of a team.

UPEI Integrated Dietetic internship Program Objectives and Outcomes:

The UPEI integrated dietetic internship program is designed to enhance the learning experience of participating student interns through the integration of theory and practice in nutrition and dietetics. The program includes two levels of non-classroom learning experiences. It is based on the integrated (Stage) program at McGill University, where each level of the program is coordinated with the undergraduate Bachelor of Science degree (major: Foods and Nutrition).

a) To enhance teaching and the learning experience of participating student interns through the integration of theory and practice in nutrition and dietetics.

b) To provide dietetic interns with opportunities to develop the skills needed to achieve the competence of an entry level dietitian, as outlined in the “Integrated Competencies for Dietetic education and Practice”.
Program Outcomes (2014)

- Students who have completed the internship program will rate their level of confidence at the time of entering the dietetic profession as “Good” or higher.
- Students graduating from the program will indicate on the exit survey that “this would be their program of choice if they were to do it again”.
- Graduates from the program will be successful in passing the CDRE exam.
- Graduates seeking employment in the area of dietetics will be successful in finding work within six months of graduation.
- Graduates working in the area of dietetics will report using PEN or other credible resources as a part of their evidence based practice.

2. Program Description:

a. Academic Component:

All students will complete the academic component of the program, as outlined in the Bachelor of Science in Foods & Nutrition program. The academic requirements are similar to the Foods & Nutrition major program. Students in the integrated program are required to take two additional courses FN 4220 Quantity Food production and FN 4830 Evidence-Based Practice in the Health Sciences.

It is also strongly recommended but not required that students in the integrated program take Lifespan Nutrition FN 3710 as an elective. A sample student schedule, with internship placements identified, is included.

Sample Student Schedule for Integrated Program

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>Winter Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>FN 1110 Intro Foods</td>
<td>Math 1110 or 1120</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chem 1110 General Chemistry I</td>
<td>Chem 1120 General Chemistry II</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One of UPEI 1010, 1020, or 1030</td>
<td>UPEI 1010/1020/1030</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bio 1310 Cell Biology</td>
<td>SS Elective</td>
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<td>SS Elective</td>
<td>Free elective</td>
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| Year 2 | FN 2110 Intro Nutrition I         | FN 2120 Intro Nutrition II         |
|        | FN 2610 Communications            | M 2210 Introductory Statistics     |
|        | Chem 2430 Organic Chemistry       | Bio 1220 Human Physiology          |
|        | Bus 1710                          | FN 2230 Determinants of Dietary Behaviour |
|        | Free Elective                     | Bio 2060 Microbiology              |

| Year 3 | FN 3310 Research Methods          | FN 3020 Advanced Foods             |
|        | FN 3510 Nutritional Assessment    | FN 3820 Program Planning           |
|        | FN 3210 Food Service Systems      | FN 3520 Clinical Nutrition I       |
|        | FN 3830 Professional Practice     | Chem 3530 Biochemistry             |
|        | Free Elective                     | Free Elective                      |
Level I  9 - 10 weeks
Includes: 1 week professional practice course, a four or five week food service placement and a four week clinical nutrition placement.

Year 4
FN 4610 Clinical Nutrition II  FN 4120 Advanced Nutrition
FN 4310 Evidence Based practice  FN 4220 Quantity Food Production
Free Elective  FN 4340 Community Nutrition
Free Elective  Free elective
Free Elective  Free elective

Level II  27-30 weeks
Includes: Class days, 6-8 weeks in food service management, 10-15 weeks in Nutrition Care and a 8-10 week placement in Population/Public Health. Program level II will be no less than twenty six weeks

b. Internship Component:
The program includes two levels of non-classroom learning experiences, which are coordinated with the undergraduate Bachelor of Science degree (major: Foods and Nutrition). The total program length of the internship will vary from 36 to 40 weeks, depending on student learning needs and experiences desired. Students will be able to complete their undergraduate and professional education in 4.5 years.

Internship combines practical training and knowledge acquisition. During internship students are required to be at the placement site on a full-time basis, forty hours a week. During work hours students are expected to develop and practice dietetic skills. There will be situations during the program where students will be expected to work on location during week-ends and evenings. Projects and assignments which have been assigned are to be completed outside of work hours in the evenings and on week-ends. The internship component of the program is outlined in learning guides containing the broad competency areas, performance indicators, sample learning activities and possible placements (training locations) options. Using these, the intern can develop and/or demonstrate the competencies required by the Partnership for Dietetic Education and Practice to meet the requirements for entry level practice. The learning guides are purchased by the student at the beginning of each program level.

Placements
The student in the dietetic internship program completes training in four broad areas of dietetics practice; nutrition care, management, population/public health, research. Below is a list of some of the typical placement locations where students would complete some of their training.

Food Service:  Hospital and nursing home dietary departments, school and university campuses, penitentiaries,

Nutrition Care:  Acute care hospitals, long term care facilities, mental health hospitals, diabetes education centres, eating disorder clinics, cancer clinics.
Pop/Public Health: Prenatal nutrition, family resource centres, health centres, school nutrition programs, public health programs, grocery stores, pharmacies, youth programs, sport centres.

Research: Professional Practice Course.

**Level 1** is nine to ten weeks in length and has three sections identified: professional practice course, four week nutrition care placement and a four-five week food service management placement.

The professional practice course provides the intern opportunities to prepare for their practicum by i) developing an understanding of the policies and procedures, program plan, portfolio development, etc for the integrated internship, ii) having an opportunity to bridge theory and practice, enhancing the quality of their learning experience during the practicum experience and iii) becoming familiar with the organization, policies, and general procedures of the placement institution(s)/organization(s). Students complete basic food service management and nutrition care placements following the professional practice course.

**Level 2**, is twenty-seven to thirty weeks in length. The performance objectives and activities have been grouped into the three practice areas: I) food service management II) nutrition care specialties and III) population/public health. This has been done to provide some order and structure and to facilitate the scheduling of activities and experiences.

c. Internship Fees and associated costs

*Please note that most provincial student loans programs do not cover the dietetic internship program. The provinces of Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick do not provided financial assistance for students in internship programs. In previous years students who are residents of PEI have been successful in qualifying for a student loan for the internship component of their education.*

- Students are required to pay a tuition fee for each program level. This fee is determined annually and is set by the Board of Governors.
- Student fees will be charged for the fall term of level II
- Dietitians of Canada on line courses 1.) critical nutritional support 2.) Public and Population Health Needs Assessment 3.) Interprofessional team in dysphagia management 4) Behaviour modification management.
- Transportation and possible out of province accommodation costs.
- Immunizations and criminal record check
- Clothing- uniform, lab coat, professional clothing for levels II and III
- Incidentally- Dietitians of Canada membership, conference and workshop fees, course materials and name tags
3. Eligibility and Application Process

Ten internship seats are available annually. Students who are enrolled in the foods and nutrition program and are in their third year of study may apply to the program.

a.) Academic- Applicants must be Bachelor of Science (Foods & Nutrition) students enrolled in their third year of study in the Foods & Nutrition Program at UPEI. Applicants must have completed the minimum number of required courses (FN 1110, FN 2110, FN 2120, FN 2610, FN 3210, FN 3310, FN 3510, FN 3830, Bio 1220, Bio 1310, Chem 1110 and 1120, Chem 2430). An overall Cumulative GPA of 3.0 (74-76%) is required. Students must also maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 in nutrition courses with no nutrition mark below a GPA of 2.7.

b.) Work and Volunteer Experience - In addition to academic performance both, work and volunteer experience are considered in the selection process. It is beneficial for students applying to the internship program to have quality experiences. Experiences may range from working in a dietary department to volunteering with a school breakfast program. It is beneficial if students have some experience working or volunteering in a health related field.

c.) Qualifying membership with Dietitians of Canada- Students who hold qualifying membership in Dietitians of Canada demonstrate a commitment to the profession were they hope one day hold full membership. Membership in Dietitians of Canada is a requirement for application to the dietetic internship program.

d.) Personal characteristics: Students considered for the integrated internship program should demonstrate the following characteristics; a clear understanding of the dietetic profession, professional commitment, desire to practice in the field of dietetics, highly motivated, self-directed, strong work ethic, adaptable/flexible, good interpersonal skills, problem solving skills, leadership skills, good organizational and communication skills. It is essential that applicants demonstrate a good ability to seek out and respond positively to feedback on their performance.

e.) Transportation- Students accepted into the program must have access to personal transportation as placements occur throughout the province. Students must be prepared to complete placements in assigned localities. At some time during the program each student will be required to travel outside their residential area. Placements are arranged in communities from Souris to Alberton.

f.) Travel- Students accepted into the program must be willing to travel to other provinces to complete some of their training in predetermined locations. Out of province placements provide students the opportunity to gain experience in clinical dietetics and food service experience in a medium/large hospital setting. All cost associated with out of provide placements are the responsibility of the student.

g) Immunizations and Criminal Record Check- All students accepted into the Integrated Dietetic Internship Program must show evidence of having immunizations up to date. The UPEI Dietetic Internship “pre-placement immunization form” must be
completed by a Physician or Public Health Nursing validating immunity status. Students accepted into the program must also have a criminal check completed by their local police detachment. Documentation showing evidence of no criminal record is required prior to entry into the program.

**Important Dates, 2016/2017:**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Sept</td>
<td>Internship information session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Oct</td>
<td>Application packages ready for pickup in the Department office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 Jan</td>
<td>Completed applications submitted to Department office by 4:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>09-20 Jan</td>
<td>Selection committee to review applications (tentative)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week of Jan 23</td>
<td>Interviews (tentative)</td>
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<tr>
<td>08 Feb</td>
<td>Selection committee reports to Advisory committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Feb</td>
<td>Students notified of results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>Professional Practice Placement</td>
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**Selection Process-**

All applications are screened by the internship coordinator to determine if they meet established criteria. Application packages which meet the established criteria will be reviewed by the selection committee. The selection committee is comprised of the Program Director or a faculty member, one other Integrated Internship Advisory Committee member or dietitian who has acted as a preceptor, and an individual from Human Resource Development. The committee will review the applications and determine admissibility based upon student academic performance, paid and unpaid work experience, references, student motivation and personal suitability.

Students who meet admission criteria will be required to complete a critical thinking exercise which will be graded. The results of this exercise are one component of the scoring used as a part of the selection process (see ranking form).

Interviews will be conducted and applicants ranked. Applicants will be notified in writing, by the first week of February, of the outcome of the selection process.

**Note:**

*Students who are accepted into the integrated internship and withdraw may be less successful in obtaining a graduate dietetic internship. Students not accepted to the integrated dietetic internship program can pursue other options, such as a graduate dietetic internship, graduate studies or other nutrition-related career options.*
Tips to consider when applying:

Begin by learning as much as you can about the dietetic profession and the UPEI Dietetic internship program. Use this information to demonstrate how you are a suitable candidate for the program. Think of examples which demonstrate how you have the personal characteristics the program is looking for in students.

Cover letter

The point of the cover letter is to highlight or explain further your experiences and essentially why you would be a good fit for this program. Everyone has strengths so make sure that you highlight these. It is important to explain why you are interested in dietetics and why you have chosen this field. There is no right or wrong way to prepare your cover letter. Make sure it is professional in appearance with all words spelt correctly and proper grammar used throughout. The letter should be no longer than 1.5 pages.

Have someone read your resume and cover letter to catch spelling mistakes that the spell checker missed. For example a spell checker may spell dietitian with a “c”. While both are technically correct Dietitians of Canada has chosen to go with “dietitian” so this is the form which should be used in the text of your package. As someone else reads your letter they can identify sections that do not flow well and provide suggestions for improvement. Make sure you sign your cover letter.

References:

You will need to have two individuals act as referees. Instead of a letter of recommendation, the referee is asked to complete a “Confidential Report”. This is a form that ranks different characteristics, such as dependability, initiatives, organizational skills, leadership qualities, time management and analytical ability. Copies of the confidential report are included in the application package. Give your referees plenty of time to fill out the forms and get them back to you. This allows them time to give careful consideration to what they would like to say.

Selecting appropriate references is very important. Make sure the people you ask to complete references know you well and can speak positively about your accomplishments. People who know you and can comment effectively on the different things you have done make the best references. Take the time to let them know what you have done that they may have not actually witnessed. Encourage your references to write comments on the forms. Comments are often more valuable and given more weight than the number rating recorded. Other individuals who can act as references include employers or supervisors from your volunteer or paid work.

In addition to the two references previously mentioned you will need to submit a “Department composite reference”. This reference is completed by the faculty in the Department of Applied Human Sciences. Students must make a formal request to the Professional Practice Coordinator (dietetics) indicating that they would like to have a composite reference prepared. It is beneficial if the professors know who you are so take the time to get to know your profs. Be an active participant in class, or visit them to ask questions during office hours. This allows you to stand out and they will learn more about your personal characteristics. This will be helpful when they complete the
composite reference.

**Interviews**

**When will the interviews take place?**
The interviews take place after the January 4th deadline. They are usually scheduled during the third week of January.

**Who will be interviewed?**
The standard practice regarding interviews is that applicant packages which meet the established criteria will advance to a pre-interview rating process. The packages will be scored based on academic performance and completed reference forms. The top fourteen applicants will be granted an interview.

**What are the interviews like?**
The interview panel consists of three individuals, the Director of the internship program or a faculty member, a practising dietitian, and an individual from Human Resource Development. Each applicant is interviewed for approximately thirty minutes.

**How to prepare for the interview:**
Be prepared to articulate how and why you became interested in the dietetic profession and becoming a dietitian. As well, you should be able to discuss what it is about this particular program that makes it of interest to you. Does the program have a particular focus of interest for you. The selection committee want to make sure that you are familiar with the program and have sound reasons for choosing to apply. You may have covered this in your letter but be prepared to give an answer if you get an interview.

Think about the types of questions which may be asked. Approach individuals and inquire about the types of questions commonly asked in interviews. Then consider questions which may be specific to an interview for a dietetic internship. A list of sample questions is included at the end of the handbook. It is always a good idea to do a mock interview. This helps you identify distracting habits and increases your comfort level with answering questions.

**Contacts:**  Professional Practice Coordinor Linda Smith (628-4371), ljsmith@upei.ca

**Applying for Graduate Internships**

If you are considering the graduate internship route arrange to meet with the person responsible for academic advising.

The DC internship application package is usually available from the Members Only side of the DC website by mid-October. Instructions for completing the application forms are included with the application package.
You must put together an application package for each of the programs that you are applying to.

A basic application package sent to an internship program includes:

- cover letter (personal letter),
- a resume,
- the application forms from DC
- your academic transcript,
- three confidential reports completed by three referees.

Some internship programs may require additional components, so read the brochures carefully. For example, there may be a length restriction for the personal letter or certain topics must be addressed in the letter.

Additionally, you will pay an application fee to Dietitians of Canada when you register for the computerized internship selection process on-line. Payment must be made by credit card. Once the payment has been processed you will receive information about how to access the on-line system. The on-line system will provide further instructions on how to create a personal profile and indicate your choice of internship programs. You can apply to three programs in Canada.

The due date for applications is around February 1st. Be sure to input your information into the on-line system and to get your application package to the internship programs before the deadline. It takes time to update resumes, write personal letters and get references to fill out the forms, so give yourself plenty of time to get your application package together.

Who should I use as a reference?

Instead of a letter of recommendation, the reference is given using a 'Confidential Report', a form that ranks your different characteristics, such as dependability, initiatives, organization skills, leadership qualities, time management and analytical ability.

You will need three references that will complete the confidential report form on your behalf. At least one reference should be from an academic instructor who is familiar with your work and one from a registered dietitian. Almost all UPEI Foods and Nutrition faculty members are registered dietitians and members of DC. It’s quite common to request a 'comprehensive or composite report', which includes comments from all faculty members of your choosing. Usually by fourth year you will have been taught by almost the entire faculty, so they will be able to evaluate your performance. This would count as one of your three references. You will need to secure two additional references to complete confidential report forms. Other sources of references are employers or supervisors of your volunteer work.

What marks do I need to apply?

An average grade of 75% is considered good and anything above that is great. A few people who have averages between 70-75% get internships, but these people have strong work experiences and exceptional communication skills. Anyone with an average below 70% should probably look at other options besides an internship. Note that not all internship programs put the same emphasis on marks. High marks do not guarantee getting an internship spot and low marks do not mean you will not get an internship. Most internship selection committees look at the balance of experience,
academics and how you come across in your application package and interview. If you are concerned about marks, talk to or email the internship coordinator to see how much emphasis they put on it.

**Tips to help prepare for internship applications:**

Read the brochures of the specific programs you are applying to very carefully. They will tell you what qualities they are looking for (highlight how you developed these qualities) and what format they want for the personal letter (1 or 2 pages, single spaced or double spaced etc.) and whether they want something extra like a practicum report.

If you decide that you don't meet the criteria that the internship director is looking for (eg. A type of experience or a mark in a specific course), contact the director to ask about it as it may not always be an exclusion criterion.

The point of the personal letters is to highlight or explain further your experiences and essentially why you would be a fit for their program. All styles and formats can be used and still be ok! There is no one right way to do this! Everyone has strengths (highlight these in your letter) and weaknesses, and you can learn many transferable skills even if your experience isn't technically nutrition related.

Have someone read your resume and personal letters to catch any spelling mistakes that the spell checker missed. For example, in Canada and the U.S. we spell dietitian with a ‘1’ instead of dietician with a ‘c’. even though word processing programs use the latter spelling. Having someone else read your letter can also identify sections that do not flow as well; another person can give you suggestions for making the letter easier to read.

Be sure of the name of the internship director. This information is provided in the application package from DC and updates should be on the DC website. Additionally, you could always find out who the current director is by calling and asking questions.

You need an official transcript for EACH program that you apply to. Be sure to request these well in advance of the submission deadline as it usually take a few working days before you can pick them up.

Part of your application is getting 3 different people to fill out “Confidential Report” forms rating you on different skills, and qualities. Make sure your references know you well and can speak positively about your accomplishments. Take the time to let them know what you have done that they might not have actually witnessed. Also try and get a variety of people, who can talk about different things that you have done, to be references.

Getting to know your profs is another good idea. Try to ask questions in class or during office hours so that you stand out more to them, and they can learn more about your personality.

Be prepared to articulate what sets that program apart for you. Is it the community focus? The specialties for which that the hospital is known? Is it because you talked to someone who went through the program and got a good feel for it? You may want to address this in your letter, but be sure you have an answer if you get an interview. The director wants to make sure you know the internship program and have good reasons for choosing them.

**Internship Interviews**

Revised Sept 2017
When are the internship interviews?

After you submit your applications to the three internship programs and complete the DC on-line registration process (these are due about February 1st of every year), you must wait for the internship programs to look through and score all the applications. Most internship programs have interviews with selected applicants in person or by phone. If your package meets their criteria, you will be contacted and asked to do an interview sometime in the month of February. Interviews may be held during Reading Week, so plan your vacations wisely.

Do all internship programs have interviews?

No, some internships do not ask for an interview but make their decision on the basis of the material received. When deciding which programs to apply to, check to see if they hold interviews.

Is it true that some interviews involve really strange questions?

Yes, some programs want to see if you keep your cool on the spot. They want people who already have the skills and the knowledge, but just haven't had an opportunity to apply them in a professional setting. They are looking for people who don't need a lot of training and who can adjust to a new situation quickly. Some places may ask you clinical nutrition questions, and they may not necessarily be interested in whether or not your answer to the question is perfect, but rather how you deal with the question and work towards your answer. The reason for this is that in practice you may not always have the answers, but you need to have the skills to figure out how to find the answer.

Tips to help prepare for an interview:

Try to find out who is on the interview panel in advance, and the type of interview they conduct.

If you get a chance, go through a mock interview. It's a good way to find out about distracting habits that you could work on.

Think about some good questions to ask about the program before you get there. It shows that you have given the internship some serious thought. Things some people asked about: application numbers, where graduate interns found jobs, how quickly they had jobs, what sort of partnerships existed in the program for external placements, types of research projects etc. Also feel free to make a closing comment, something you feel they should know about you if it didn't come up in the interview.

If you don't live near the location of the interview, leave plenty of extra time for your trip so you can arrive early.

Bring a book in case you have to wait or do something else that will calm you before the interview. Breathe deeply.

Smile!

Be confident. They have asked you for an interview because they liked your application package and they would like to get to know you a bit better.
If you are having a phone interview, don't just wear your pjs. Wear something that makes you feel at least a bit professional - but comfortable too.

Relax and be yourself. Many internship coordinators realize you are nervous and may ask you a few "small talk" questions at the beginning of the interview to help you relax.

When answering questions, use specific examples that you have thought of ahead of time that highlight your strengths. Also prepare to answer questions about weaknesses that you have and how you deal with them.

Be professional.

Shake their hands when you meet them, even if they don't initiate the handshake. Shake hands at the end of the interview as well (if you feel comfortable doing so).

Send a thank you note (If you feel comfortable doing so)
Internship Matching

_How do internship directors decide? What is their procedure?_

Usually internship directors have a committee to help make this decision. Some of them will give scores to each application, and then use the scores to rank applicants for their position. They rank more students than the number of positions because not all the students they offer a position to accept.

.Does my preference for an internship program get considered?

No. With the on-line computerized system your three choices for internship are equal and are not ranked for preference. This means that you could be offered more than one internship position.

_When do I find out if I am matched with an internship?_

Around March 15th, you will receive an e-mail message from the on-line computerized system indicating if you were successful and which program(s) you were matched with or that you were not matched with an internship program.

If you are successfully matched, follow the instructions for indicating acceptance or rejection of the offer(s) by the prescribed deadline.

If you are not successfully matched on March 15th, be patient! You may be matched with an internship program later on in first round. As applicants who received more than one internship offer reject the ones they do not wish to pursue, the declined offers are sent out to other applicants ranked by an internship program. Also, there may be a second round process if an internship program runs out of ranked applicants to choose from before all of the internship positions are filled.

_Do people really get internships?_

Each year, across the country, about half of the students who apply for a dietetic internship or a combined Masters/Practicum program are successful.

_Re-applying_

_What if I don’t get matched with an internship?_

If you don't get accepted in first-round, you can either apply again during the second-round or you can get some relevant work experience and try the following year. Many graduates find the year of experience between graduation and getting an internship to be particularly useful for career planning.

_How do I apply for a second-round?_

A list of internship programs that have positions still available after the first-round will be e-mailed to all unsuccessful applicants by the on-line computerized system. You can only apply to one of these positions and you must put together another application package and send it to the internship program by the due date, generally April 30th. Only applicants in the first round can apply in the second round.
How many times can I apply?

You may apply up to three years after you have graduated. After three years you must apply to DC for an academic assessment to find out what coursework would make you eligible to apply for internship. Details on this process are on the DC website in the 'How to become a dietitian' section.
Appendix A: Internship Application Package.

Application for Dietetic Internship

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS
Candidates who wish to apply for a dietetic internship must be graduates of a Dietitians of Canada (DC) accredited undergraduate program or have been assessed for academic equivalency to meet accredited program standards. Applicants must also be Canadian citizens, landed immigrants, or international students at the time of application. International students are only eligible to apply in the year of their university graduation.

1. Applicants Needing Upgrading
If you graduated from a DC accredited program, and it has been more than 3 years since you graduated, you must first obtain an academic assessment from DC or from a DC accredited undergraduate program. For example, a graduate of April 2010 who applies in February 2012, does not require an assessment for upgrading purposes. However, if that graduate applies in February 2013, an assessment for upgrading will be required. To obtain more information and a DC assessment, please refer to the DC website at [www.dietitians.ca/jpdfcdrn_assessmentinfo_sheet.pdf](http://www.dietitians.ca/jpdfcdrn_assessmentinfo_sheet.pdf).

When you apply for internship, you must provide written confirmation that your academic requirements have been met in order to have Confirmation Completion / Academic Program forms signed. Official university transcripts will verify this. If some courses remain in progress at the time of application, you must submit written confirmation of this as well. Any courses in progress or proposed must be completed before the internship program begins.

HOW AND WHEN TO APPLY

Application packages are available by mid-October from your university course director or can be downloaded from Dietitians of Canada Member's Only website: [www.dietitians.cajmembers_onlyjinternshipmatch.asp](http://www.dietitians.cajmembers_onlyjinternshipmatch.asp). The application package contains the forms necessary to make application and a Summary Listing of Dietetic Internship Programs. Obtain program brochures from your university program director or consult the Member's Only side of the DC website at [www.dietitians.cajmembers_onlyjinternshipmatch.asp](http://www.dietitians.cajmembers_onlyjinternshipmatch.asp) for condensed versions of the information.

You may apply to 3 programs. Be sure to apply only to those programs from which you would accept an internship position. Completed applications must reach the directors of each dietetic internship program no later than February 1st of each year.
Re-applying

What if I don’t get matched with an internship?

If you don’t get accepted in the first-round, you can either apply again during the second-round or you can get some relevant work experience and try the next year. Many graduates find the year of experience between graduation and getting an internship to be particularly useful for career planning.

How do I apply for second-round?

A list of internship programs that have positions still available after the first-round will be e-mailed to all unsuccessful applicants by the on-line computerized system. You can only apply to one of these positions and you must put together another application package and send it to the internship program by the due date, generally April 30th. Only applicants in the first round can apply in the second round.

How many times can I apply?

You may apply up to three years after you have graduated. After three years you must apply to DC for an academic assessment to find out what coursework would make you eligible to apply for internship. Details on this process are on the DC website in the “how to become a dietitian section.”
GRADUATE INTERNSHIP SELECTION PROCESS

DC uses a web-based computer system that permits dietetic internship programs to enter a listing of ranked applicants whom they will accept, and that allows student applicants to enter the 3 internship programs to which they have applied. The system then matches the program and student lists, and makes offers to successful applicants up to the number of positions available. Some students will receive more than one internship offer, from which they must choose, resulting in program openings. The selection process then continues to move down the program's list of ranked applicants, notifying successful applicants until all positions have been filled. Applicants enter their selection information via a web-link and receive notification of position acceptance by email. To apply for internship selection, an applicant must pay an Internship Selection fee. The fee allows the student to access the computer system to input their internship program choices. The deadline for application for the selection process is February 1.

APPLICATION FORMS & DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

It is your responsibility to submit each of the following items to your 3 internship program choices, with the exception of those items asterisked* and noted below. Be sure to check the DC website and you package to confirm instructions for application.

- Personal letter
- Resume
- Transcript of Marks
- Dietetic Internship: Applicant's Contact Information Sheet
- Confirmation of Completion of Academic Program.
- Confidential Report on Dietetic Internship Application
- Acknowledgement of Dietetic Internship Application
- Dietetic Internship Acceptance Form (Only if accepted) *
- Any other material requested on the Internship Brochure for the individual program

INSTRUCTIONS FOR EACH FORM/DOCUMENT

Personal Letter
Your reasons for selecting the internship program should be included in this letter to each director. Check the individual internship brochures for requirements that are specific to each program.

Resume.
Your resume should include your education paid and volunteer employment experience and any relevant extracurricular activities.

Transcript of marks
Your document must be an official transcript bearing the university's seal or a notarized copy. For students in DC accredited degree programs transcripts must include marks for all courses completed by the end of the first semester of the current academic year. For students assessed by DC transcripts must include marks for all courses completed at the time of application. Be sure to order your transcript(s) early as it may take a few weeks for processing by the university. When you graduate you must also forward an official transcript of your marks to the internship program in which you are enrolled.

Revised Sept 2017
Dietetic internship Applicant’s Contact Information Sheet

This contact sheet will be an important reference for the internship director. Make sure it includes your present and permanent contact information. If any of the information changes notify the director. A copy must be included in each internship application package. You will need an extra copy of this form if you need your Confirmation of Completion of Academic Program form signed by DC’s Professional Affairs designate.

Confirmation of Completion of academic Program (If you are completing your degree in a DC accredited undergraduate program)

This form confirms that you have met or will meet DC’s academic requirements. Fill in your name the degree(s) you completed or will be completing the name of the university/ies at which you completed or are completing your degree(s) and the date(s) of your graduation. Ask your university program director to sign copy of this form for each internship program you are applying to.

Confidential Report on Dietetic Internship Application

You must provide 3 references for each internship program you apply to. Your 3 referees must complete the Confidential Report on Dietetic Internship Application. Include a copy of this report from each of your 3 referees in each application package. Be sure to choose your referees carefully. Referees should know you well enough to judge your performance in most, if not all, of the areas specified on the report form. It is preferred that at least one referee be a DC member. Others referees should include those you know you in a professional, student, or business capacity, for example, a university faculty member, a previous or current employer, and a supervisor of a volunteer work experience. Ask your referees to return each of their 3 completed forms to you in sealed envelopes that carry their signature across the flap. Photocopies of the confidential report will only be accepted if the signature is original.

Note: The information in the Confidential Reports is for the use of the internship program only and cannot be released to the applicant or any other party at any time, including after the completion of the application process.

Acknowledgement of Dietetic internship Application

Include one copy in each internship application package. The internship director uses this form to acknowledge receipt of your application. You complete Part A. The internship director completes Part B, indicating whether your application is complete or whether any information is missing. You are responsible for ensuring that the director receives any missing documents no later than February 1.

Dietetic Internship Acceptance Form

DC sends you notification if you have been accepted into an internship program. Once you have entered the computer system to accept the position, you must return this form to the director immediately - by mail or fax. If you fax the form, you must also mail the copy to the internship program. If you should subsequently decline a position, you must send written notification of your decision to the director as soon as possible.
Selection Process Round 1:

Prior to the start of round one, internship programs will enter a list of all applicants whom they are willing to accept into the numeric order of choice (i.e. #1 is first choice). This list is generated from those applicants who have applied to their program, have created a profile, and have entered their program choices in the system.

- In the first selection process of the round, internship program selection choices are only considered down to the total number of positions that the program has available.

- On March 6 the round selection will begin. An email notifies all applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful, of the results of the selection process. Some successful applicants will receive more than one offer.

- Successful applicants must enter the system to accept a position within 2 days of notification. If a successful applicant does not enter the system within the deadline period, they are disqualified from this selection process but may be offered a position in a subsequent Round selection process. An applicant who declines a position may also be offered a position in a subsequent Round process. An applicant who is offered a position but decides not to accept an internship this year, has the option of declining all positions offered in this and subsequent rounds.

- For programs that do not fill all of their available positions in the first selection process of Round, subsequent selection processes will occur by moving down the list of applicants still available on their program’s ranking form. Each subsequent selection will follow within approximately 2 days of the previous notification. Offers will be sent by email to the next applicant on the program list. Successful applicants will be given a response deadline (approximately 2 days).

- The selection process or round will continue until all programs have filled their available positions. If a program runs out of available applicants, a Round 2 selection process may be required.

Please note: After successful applicants accept a position through the computer selection process, they must send the Dietetic Internship Acceptance Form directly to the internship program within 48 hours of acceptance.

Selection Process Round 2:

- If round 2 is required, all unsuccessful applicants will receive an email to inform them of the application process and the deadline for application. Only applicants from round 1 are eligible to apply, and an application can only be made to one program.

- An application package for round 2 can be obtained from the DC office. The package will contain available internship program openings and the dates for the round 2 selection process.

- Applicants apply directly to the Dietetic Internship Program. Applicants may request that components contained in their round 1 package (transcripts, confirmation of completion of academic program forms or reference letters) be forwarded from the relevant internship director directly to the Round 2 program director. All other parts of the application package must be supplied by the applicant directly to their Round 2 program choice.
• Once applicants have submitted their internship package to the program, they must go into the internship selection program and enter the program they have applied for. There is no additional charge for the Round 2 application process.

• Successful applicants will be informed by email of the program that has selected them. They must then enter the computer system to verify acceptance of the program, by the date specified in the email. **Please note: The applicant must send the Dietetic Internship Acceptance Form directly to the internship program within 48 hours of acceptance.**

**Completion of Annual Internship Selection:**

• For more information on dietetic internship application, contact your university program director or faculty advisor or the DC office:

Dietitians of Canada  
604-480 University Avenue  
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1 V2  
phone: (416) 596-0857 (Press #4, then follow instructions), Fax: (416) 596-0603  
Email: centralinfo@dietitians.ca  
Website: www.dietitians.ca (Members Only side)
Appendix B: Sample Interview Questions

Questions compiled for internship applicants

Why do you want to become a dietitian?

Why did you apply to this program? (why does this one in particular interest you?)

What do you know about this program/hospital/city?

What do you expect of your internship?

Why are you interested in this internship program? What does it offer you?

What does an administrative dietitian do?

What does a community dietitian do?

What does a clinical dietitian do?

Define “dietitians”.

What brought you to the field of dietetics?

What would you like to be doing five years from now?

How did you prepare financially for the internship?

What nutritional assessment would you do on a homeless man who is admitted for pneumonia?

A patient is on a fluid restricted diet but they keep drinking the pop and other beverages their family members bring in. What do you do?

What would you do if one of your fellow interns wasn't pulling their weight on a group project?

How would you assess patient satisfaction with food services?

If you could go to any workshop seminar to improve your skills, what would it be on?

How do you respond to the statement: "the dietitian an intern is working with is not responsible for the intern's learning."

What are some features of excellent customer service? Give an example of a business that demonstrates excellent customer service.

What does dressing professionally mean to you?

What would you do if the dietitian you were working with did not meet these professional dress standards?

What would you do if the dietitian you were working with started talking/gossiping about other
dietitians personal lives?

Where do you see Health Care going in the next 5-10 years? Where do you see business going over the same time frame? How are they related?

A parent approaches you, asking for advice on the use of naturopathic supplements. What do you say?

During your clinical relief rotation you witness a doctor prescribing a formula to a child that you feel is inappropriate and potentially harmful. What do you do?

In a group, what role do you play?

What does it mean to be self-directed?

What makes a good intern?

What makes a good mentor? What would you expect from your mentor?

Tell me something funny about yourself?

How do you deal with having a lot to do at the same time (time management)?

What is your greatest accomplishment?

How would you describe your leadership style?

How would your peers describe your work ethic/style?

Give an example of when you used your problem solving skills?

Tell us about a time you worked effectively in a group.

Tell us about a time you were criticized by a supervisor

Tell us about a time you got criticism that you did not agree with. What did you do?

Tell us about a time you had to work with someone whose opinion you didn't agree with.

Tell us about the work experience you are most proud of and shy?

Describe a problem and how you solved it.

Describe a difficult situation and what skills you used to get through it.

Name a time you were criticized and what you did to deal with it.

Describe a time when you were required to reprimand someone who you supervised.

What is your definition of professionalism.

What do you bring to the program?

Describe a time you had to work on a team with someone who didn't pull their weight. How did you deal with this? What might you have done differently?
Describe a time when you received feedback you didn't agree with. What did you do and why
What was your most challenging course and why?
Tell me about yourself.
What are your greatest strengths?
What are your weaknesses?  How have you tried to improve on these?
What would your references say about you?
What was your favorite./least favorite course?
What course did you struggle with the most?
Tell me about a positive group experience..
When was the last time you set goals and objectives for yourself and completed them?
What qualities do you bring that would be important as a dietetic intern?
What would you do if the dietitian you were on rotation with gave misinformation to a patient/client?
Have you ever had to stand up to a supervisor because you thought they were wrong?
Who is your mentor?  Who inspires you?
Explain a situation where you had to be self-directed, flexible, responsible.
How have you prepared for this interview?
Do you like being challenged?
What quality about yourself have you been working to improve, and how have you done so?
Describe a moving/touching experience you have had with a child
Do you have any questions for me?

Behavioural questions:

These are not specific questions asked in internship interviews, but they are typical behavioural questions that you might get asked.

Describe a time on any job which you've held in which you were faced with problems or stresses which tested your coping skills. What did you do?

Give an example of a time in which you had to keep from speaking or not finishing a task because you did not have enough information to come to a good decision.

Tell me about a time in which you had to use your spoken communication skills in order to get a point
across that was important to you.

Give me an example of a time in which you felt you were able to build motivation in your coworkers and subordinates at work.

Describe a situation in which you felt it necessary to be very attentive and vigilant to your environment.

Give an example of a time in which you had to use your fact finding skills to gain information for solving a problem - then tell me how you analyzed the information to come to a decision.

Give me an example of an important goal which you had set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.

Describe the most significant written document/report/presentation you have had to complete.

Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.

Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.

Describe a situation in which you were able to effectively "read" another person and guide your actions by your understanding of their individual needs or values.

Describe a time in which you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.

Describe a situation in which you were able to positively influence the actions of others in a desired direction.

Tell me about a time when you had to work collaboratively in a group and how successful it was.

**Strategy for Answering Behavioural Questions (STARS)**

S - Situation: outline the situation
T - Task: describe the task
A - Action: describe what action you took R - Result: how did it turn out?
S - Summary

**Group Interviews**

In group interviews they are looking for how you interact with your peers. Are you able to listen, facilitate discussion, lead, let others lead, discuss topics realistically, be creative, communicate effectively, problem-solve, think quickly, support others, etc.

Examples of group interview questions/tasks:

**Brainteasers**

Decision making of how to prioritize RD tasks and why

Dealing with situational problem: daughter brings it to your attention that her father was served mac and cheese. He's on a puree only diet and he had difficulty with the mac and cheese and choked. Had to form a
'committee' of people from various areas of foodservice etc to figure out how to deal with the problem and assess if problem was fixed. Then, individually had to write a letter to the daughter informing of what has been done and where the process was at.

Additional Tips

* Practice potential interview questions*. There is nothing like being in an interview and not knowing how to answer a question. Set up mock interviews at career services, or with friends or family.

* Know your resume well. * Before the interview, reflect on each job/volunteer experience listed so you'll be prepared to remember times you were challenged/things you learned/people you interacted with

* Have some questions ready*. They'll often ask if you have any questions for them at the end, this is a great chance to impress them by having some prepared.
Appendix C: Sample Cover Letters

January 25, 2003

Dear Ms Morris,

I am very interested in completing my dietetic internship at _______. I am a fourth-year University of Guelph student, and will complete my Bachelor of Applied Sciences degree in Applied Human Nutrition this semester. After visiting _________ and researching the dietetic internship program, I believe I can make a contribution to your clinical and food service programs.

After becoming a Registered Dietitian, my career goal is to work in a clinical setting that involves both research and patient care. I am self-directed and function well in a team environment, handling a diverse range of challenges. Therefore the following aspects of your program particularly attract me:

- The focus on practical application learning
- The strong independent research component
- The diversity of work and people

My studies at Guelph have enabled me to develop many strengths and skills. Academically, I have aimed for excellence in all my courses, which include nutritional sciences electives and food service operations courses. This required the development of self-discipline, strong work ethic, and good study habits. I have also had to learn time management since I combined significant work experience with the academic load.

Since 2000, I have worked with the YMCA-YWCA of Guelph, as an administrative and fitness staff member. I have learned to instruct group fitness classes, and adapt fitness programs to suit the needs of many individuals. This work also allowed me to improve my self-confidence, leadership skills, and ability to motivate others. It has also taught me how to communicate effectively with large groups, as well as with individuals.

Last summer, I worked with a community health team, including a dietitian, at a Community Health Centre in Guelph. During this time I applied nutrition knowledge and program planning skills, in order to establish a program of nutrition education for people learning English as a second language. This program taught me a lot about communicating with an ethnically diverse group. I also worked with parents and children in order to develop a toddler-feeding workshop. In this position I worked with minimal supervision, and I was able to learn how to independently plan, and deliver nutrition programs.

Throughout university, I have also developed skills by participating in a range of volunteer activities:

- I designed and conducted several Nutrition Health and Wellness workshops at the YMCA-YWCA, which helped me be a more effective public speaker. I also created handouts and displays, which facilitated development of my written communication skills and creativity.
- I have been a mealtime supervisor with the Eating Disorders program at Homewood Health Centre. This enabled me to develop my listening skills, and to learn how to deal with food-related problems that are associated with eating disorders.
- I have experienced clinical research with the Human Nutraceutical Research Unit at the University of Guelph, by assisting with clinical trials, symposiums, and various research related tasks. I have learned how to do research, and how to summarize it in a way that is easily understood by the public. An example of this is an article I wrote on the benefits of Fish Oil for the centre's newsletter.
- Most recently, I have become involved with the Feeling Better Program, which is a home exercise program for the frail elderly. I am learning a lot about this group, helping them realize the benefits of keeping active and healthy.

I have attempted to achieve personal balance through extracurricular activities. As a member of the Applied Human Nutrition Student Association, I have been involved in team building and leadership activities such as social events and career nights. I am dedicated to personal fitness and enjoy a regular exercise program.

With regard to personal development, I would like to improve my ability to speak about complex subjects to groups, without extensive use of notes. For future presentations, I will focus more on rehearsal, planning and preparation. I am also being mentored by a family member who is an experienced public speaker, and I am considering formal training courses.

In summary, I am self-motivated, and hard working with a well-rounded skill set appropriate for this internship. I am committed to the profession and to health on a personal level, and keen to continue my professional development and make a contribution to the success of. I appreciate you taking the time to review my application package and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Revised Sept 2017
Letter of Application

To the members of the intern selection committee:

I am applying for an internship position in your organization for the year 2003-2004. My interest in the _______ internship is based partly on meetings with __________________________ at the annual Internship Forum in Toronto. Through my discussions with_____ it became clear that the _______ internship can provide self-directed learning opportunities within the framework of dynamic hospital environments. Your program offers a balance of clinical, administrative, and community approaches to nutritional support. This is important to me because of the comprehensive nature of diabetes management, which is my main area of interest and professional development. I feel your program will provide me with a wealth of experience in both routine and more complex nutritional care cases found in a large teaching hospital. The well-established partnerships with external agencies provides an opportunity to put community and educational skills to practice.

I bring a professional background in scientific research administration to the field of dietetics, my new career direction. My past work experiences are varied, but the concepts of food service operation and the provision of nutritionally-balanced, interesting food have been a key part of many of my experiences. I managed the kitchen for a 100-person rural research station, involving budgeting, menu planning, and overseeing of kitchen staff. Many of the nutrition skills obtained during this position were acquired through self-directed, experiential learning. More recent experiences include collecting 24-hr diet recall data from healthy seniors, and coding food frequency questionnaire data from a First Nations community. My work and life experience provides me with a broad range of transferable skills to draw upon during an internship, and in future employment.

After 14 years in environmental science I had an opportunity to reevaluate my career, and chose to focus more completely on my growing interest in nutrition and health. My success throughout my current academic program has been directly related to the satisfaction derived from finding my academic niche. My educational program has allowed me to explore the role of diet in the prevention of Type 2 diabetes in at-risk individuals and I am eager to explore this further. My interest in diabetes education is both professional and personal; I have had Type I diabetes for 8 years and understand the daily challenges of living with a chronic condition. I have found this to be a valuable perspective in guiding others who experience similar constraints. My work experience has taught me the importance of sensitivity, open communication and rapport building. My volunteer experience in nutrition has focused on education and providing people with the resources to thrive. Through my volunteer experience, I am discovering skills in advocacy, and the important balance between teaching and learning.

My past experience with relocation has shown that I adeptly establish myself in a new setting. Discovering what London has to offer is an exciting possibility. I offer my skills in people management, critical analysis and self-direction. I value the kind of experiential learning your program offers, and am eager to further develop my dietetic skills in a professional environment. I would like my career to focus on helping people make appropriate dietary choices that are acceptable from a social, cultural and personal perspective.

I trust that you will find my mature outlook, adaptability, enthusiasm, and career goals well tailored to fit with the design of your internship program. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,