



Integrated Dietetic Internship Program Intern Handbook

Table of Contents

Welcome and Program Overview	5
Welcome	5
Program Mission, Goals, and Commitment to Entry-Level Competence	5
Accreditation Statement	5
Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice (ICDEPs)	6
Program Structure	6
Level I: (9 weeks)	7
Level II (26-29 weeks)	7
Program Philosophy and Learner-Centred Approach	8
Key Contacts	9
Disclosure and Protection of Student Information	9
Orientation and Pre-Placement Requirements	10
Documentation and Training	10
Program Costs	10
Accessibility Services	11
Placement Assignment	11
Prior Learning Assessment Recognition	11
International Student Considerations	11
Roles and Responsibilities	12
Intern Responsibilities	12
Preceptor Responsibilities	12
Professional Practice Coordinator Responsibilities	12
Internship Director Responsibilities	13
Placements Expectations	13
Professional Conduct	13
Communication Expectations	14

Attendance.....	14
Professional Dress.....	15
Confidentiality.....	15
Acceptance and Offering of Gifts.....	15
Disruption of Program Services	16
Social Media Use Expectations	16
Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use and Academic Integrity	17
Before Your Practicum Placements Begin	17
Dietetic Internship Course Moodle.....	17
Sample Enabling Activities	18
Learning Contracts	18
E-portfolios.....	19
Weekly Reflective Journals	20
Clinical Presentation (Level I).....	20
Clinical Case Study Presentation (Level II)	21
Required Online Courses (Level II).....	22
Evaluation of Intern Performance	23
ICDEP Attestation Logbook and Evaluation Form.....	23
Performance Ratings.....	24
Performance Expectations	24
Midpoint and Final Evaluations	24
Failure to Complete Designated Competencies and Performance Indicators	25
Academic Standards and Continuance	26
Program Completion and Transition to Registration.....	26
Program Evaluation and Quality Improvement	27
Leave of Absence	28
Voluntary Withdrawal from the Internship Program	28
Termination from the Internship Program	29
Financial Assistance Opportunities.....	30

Intern Wellness, Support, and Success Resources	30
Workload Planning and Time Management	30
Wellbeing and Counselling Supports	31
Crisis and Urgent Support Pathways	31
Difficult Placement Debriefing Process	32
Professional Resilience and Reflective Practice.....	32

Welcome and Program Overview

Welcome

Welcome to the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program. We are pleased to welcome you to this exciting and transformative stage of your professional journey.

The internship is designed to help you transition from student to emerging professional through supported experiential learning, reflective practice, and progressive competency development. Throughout the program, you will have opportunities to apply your academic learning in authentic practice environments, work alongside experienced dietitians and interprofessional teams, and develop the confidence required for entry-level practice.

This handbook is intended to serve as your practical guide throughout the internship. It complements the formal [Foods and Nutrition Dietetic Internship Policies](#) by translating program expectations, timelines, processes, and day-to-day guidance into a learner-friendly resource you can return to throughout your time in the program.

We encourage you to approach the internship with curiosity, professionalism, initiative, and a willingness to learn from both successes and challenges. Your growth will be supported by the Professional Practice Coordinator, preceptors, faculty, and peers who are committed to helping you succeed.

Program Mission, Goals, and Commitment to Entry-Level Competence

The mission of the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program is to prepare graduates for safe, ethical, evidence-informed, and competent entry-level dietetic practice across diverse settings.

The program is committed to:

- Supporting competency development across all domains within the Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice Version 3.0;
- Fostering reflective, learner-driven professional growth;
- Promoting ethical and culturally safe practice;
- Preparing graduates for registration and successful transition to the workforce;
- Ensuring all graduates are prepared to meet entry-to-practice expectations.

Accreditation Statement

The UPEI Dietetic Internship Program is accredited through Accreditation Canada's Equal Health Education Accreditation standards and is designed to meet national expectations for dietetic education and supervised practice.

Program evaluation, curriculum review, placement design, and competency assessment processes are aligned with accreditation requirements to ensure continuous quality improvement and graduate readiness for professional registration.

Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice (ICDEPs)

The UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program is guided by the [*Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice \(ICDEPs\), Version 3.0*](#), Canada's national competency framework for entry-to-practice dietitians. This framework outlines the knowledge, skills, professional behaviours, and judgment required to practice safely, ethically, and effectively across diverse practice settings.

The ICDEPs provide a consistent national standard that informs academic learning, practicum experiences, competency assessment, and preparation for professional registration.

Throughout the internship, interns are expected to progressively develop and demonstrate these competencies in a variety of settings, including clinical, community, and food provision environments.

The six domains of competence assessed during the internship are:

- Professionalism and Ethics
- Communication and Collaboration
- Management and Leadership
- Nutrition Care
- Population Health Promotion
- Food Provision

Within each domain, practice competencies describe the minimum abilities required for safe, entry-level practice, while performance indicators outline the observable behaviours used to demonstrate and assess competency achievement in practice.

These competencies form the foundation of all learning activities, evaluations, and feedback processes within the program, supporting a structured and progressive approach to developing readiness for professional practice.

Program Structure

The internship program is intentionally designed to support integrated learning, where interns continuously connect theoretical knowledge with real-world practice across a variety of dietetic settings. Rather than treating academic learning and practicum experiences as separate

components, the program emphasizes their ongoing interaction to strengthen understanding, decision-making, and professional competence.

Through this approach, interns are encouraged to apply theory in practice, reflect on practice to deepen theoretical understanding, and refine their professional reasoning through repeated cycles of experience and feedback. This integration supports the development of confident, adaptable, and reflective entry-level dietitians.

Level I: (9 weeks)

Completed during the summer semester between the 3rd and 4th year of the Foods and Nutrition degree program. Level I placements provide structured opportunities for interns to begin applying classroom learning in supervised practice settings. At this stage, emphasis is placed on bridging theory and practice as interns begin to translate foundational knowledge into real-world decision-making under preceptor guidance.

- Internship Orientation Week (1 week)
- Nutrition Care Placement (4 weeks) - typically in diabetes education, primary care clinics, long-term care facilities, and rural hospitals.
- Food Provision (4 weeks) - typically in the nutrition department of long-term care facilities and acute care facilities.

During Level I, interns are supported to make explicit connections between:

- Academic knowledge (e.g., nutrition science, assessment frameworks, food service principles)
- Observed professional practice
- Early hands-on skill development

This stage focuses on guided integration, where interns begin to understand how theory informs practice and how practice, in turn, strengthens theoretical understanding.

Level II (26-29 weeks)

Completed during the summer and fall semesters following the 4th year of the Foods and Nutrition Program. Advanced experiential learning focused on integration, application, and transition to entry-level practice.

Level II placements emphasize the ongoing integration of theory and practice across increasingly complex and authentic practice situations. Interns are expected to apply theoretical frameworks flexibly, adapt knowledge to varied contexts, and refine professional judgment through independent and supervised practice.

- Food Provision (6-8 weeks) - focus on Food Service management and leadership

- Nutrition Care Placement (10-14 weeks) - typically in an acute care setting with exposure to specialty areas such as nutrition support
- Population Health Promotion (10 weeks) - Focus on community nutrition, needs assessment, program planning, implementation and evaluation

At this stage, integration becomes more complex and independent. Interns are expected to:

- Draw on theoretical knowledge to guide decision-making in real-time practice
- Compare and reconcile classroom frameworks with real-world variability
- Reflect on practice experiences to strengthen and refine theoretical understanding
- Integrate knowledge across multiple domains of dietetic practice simultaneously

This progressive integration supports the development of entry-level competence, professional reasoning, and the ability to adapt knowledge to diverse practice environments.

Program Philosophy and Learner-Centred Approach

The UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program is grounded in a learner-centred, competency-based educational philosophy that supports each intern's progression toward safe, ethical, and autonomous entry-level practice.

The program recognizes that interns enter with diverse academic backgrounds, lived experiences, strengths, and professional goals. As a result, learning is intentionally structured to promote individualized growth, reflective practice, and progressive independence. Interns are encouraged to actively identify learning needs, seek meaningful feedback, and participate in the co-development of learning plans that align with both program competencies and personal professional interests.

A learner-centred approach means that interns are expected to take an active role in shaping their learning through:

- Setting placement-specific goals and learning contracts;
- Engaging in regular self-assessment and reflection;
- Integrating feedback from preceptors, faculty, and peers;
- Identifying areas requiring additional practice or support;
- Building confidence through progressively complex experiences.

The role of the Professional Practice Coordinator and placement preceptors is to facilitate learning through coaching, guided reflection, competency-based feedback, and the creation of safe learning environments that support growth.

The program is also committed to fostering psychological safety, professionalism, cultural humility, evidence-informed practice, and lifelong learning habits, recognizing that competence develops over time through supported experience and reflection.

This philosophy aligns with the [Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice \(ICDEPs\)](#) and reflects the expectations of contemporary health professional education, where interns are supported to become reflective practitioners capable of adapting to evolving practice environments.

Key Contacts

Successful completion of the internship program relies on clear, timely, and professional communication.

Your first point of contact for most internship-related questions is the Professional Practice Coordinator. Questions related to placement scheduling, preceptor communication, documentation, professional concerns, learning contracts, competency progression, and day-to-day practicum issues should be directed to the Coordinator.

The Internship Director supports broader program oversight, policy interpretation, progression decisions, appeals, and academic alignment.

Additional support offices that interns may access throughout the program include:

- [Department of Applied Human Sciences administrative support](#)
- [UPEI Registrar's Office](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services](#)
- [Student Counselling Services](#)
- [International Student Office](#)
- [UPEI Health Centre](#)

Disclosure and Protection of Student Information

The UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program is committed to safeguarding the privacy and confidentiality of intern information. All collection, use, disclosure, storage, retention, and disposal of student information are conducted in accordance with applicable privacy legislation, including the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP)*, as well as [University of Prince Edward Island policies and procedures related to the protection of personal information](#).

The program has established clear processes to ensure that intern records are managed securely and accessed only by authorized individuals for legitimate academic and administrative purposes. In addition, practicum placement organizations are informed of, and expected to adhere to, the program's requirements regarding the appropriate handling, sharing, and protection of student information.

All practices related to student information are guided by the [Disclosure, Protection, and Retention of Student Information Policy](#), which outlines expectations for confidentiality, secure storage, controlled disclosure, and appropriate retention and disposal of records.

Orientation and Pre-Placement Requirements

Documentation and Training

Upon acceptance into the dietetic internship program, students will participate in a 90-minute program orientation (typically early February). During this time, the Professional Practice Coordinator will advise students of the following:

- Program Structure
- Role of the Professional Practice Coordinator
- Required internship forms to be reviewed and completed
 - [College of Dietitians of PEI Intern Registration](#)
 - [College of Dietitians of PEI Code of Ethics](#)
 - [College of Dietitians of PEI Standards of Practice](#)
 - [Confidentiality Pledge](#)
 - Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form
 - [Criminal Record Check / Vulnerable Sector Check](#)
 - [Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures Webpage](#)
 - [Dietitians of Canada Principles of Professional Practice](#)
 - [Essential Skills and Attributes Required for Dietetic Interns](#)
 - [Immunization Requirements](#)
 - UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program Terms and Conditions Agreement
 - [UPEI Use of Personal Vehicle Guidelines](#)
 - WHIMIS Training

In addition to the above documents, interns will be required to complete the eight (8) interactive learning modules available through [Preceptor.ca](#), which provides additional support and training before starting their practicum placement the following May.

Program Costs

Interns will also be advised about the expected costs of the program, which include:

- Course registration for FN 3001, FN 4001 & FN 4001
- Name tags
- Uniforms such as professional dress, appropriate footwear and scrubs
- Travel expenses to and from placements both locally on PEI and off-island
- Dietitians of Canada student membership
- Dietitians of Canada Courses
 - Critical Care Nutrition
 - Counselling for Behaviour Change
 - Swallow, Screen and Assessment

Accessibility Services

During the program's orientation, interns will receive information about Accessibility Services. Interns who need accessibility accommodations for their practicum placements should review the program's [Accommodations for Disability Policy](#) and the [Accessibility Services](#) website. Interns requiring accommodation for disabilities will need to register with accessibility services and meet with the Professional Practice Coordinator right away to ensure discussions are had well in advance of placement planning.

Placement Assignment

The next step after orientation will be for the intern to book a one-on-one meeting with the Professional Practice Coordinator to discuss placement selection, as explained in depth in the program's [Practicum Placement Assignment Policy](#).

Prior Learning Assessment Recognition

During the program's orientation, interns are informed about the Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR), which allows them to receive credit for relevant work and volunteer experience completed within the three (3) years prior to entry into the program. Such experiences must demonstrate achievement of entry-level competencies required for dietetic practice as outlined in the Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice (ICDEPs) Version 3.0. Additional information about PLAR is available in the program's [PLAR policy](#).

International Student Considerations

International students enrolled in the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program are strongly encouraged to connect with the [UPEI International Student Office](#) upon acceptance into the program and on an ongoing basis. Immigration, study permit, and work authorization requirements can change over time, and the International Student Office is the most reliable source for current and individualized guidance.

The International Student Office can provide support and up-to-date information related to study permits, co-op or work authorization requirements, travel documentation, and any additional considerations relevant to practicum placement in health care settings. Interns are responsible for maintaining valid documentation and meeting all regulatory requirements for participation in practicum experiences throughout the program.

Roles and Responsibilities

Intern Responsibilities

Interns are responsible for:

- Taking responsibility for their learning
- Advocating for their learning opportunities through the development of a learning contract
- Maintaining their ICDEP Attestation Logbook/Evaluation Form
- Sharing required documents with preceptors and the Professional Practice Coordinator
- Communicating their learning needs and challenges
- Seeking feedback regularly
- Scheduling midpoint and final evaluation meetings

Interns are expected to demonstrate professional conduct consistent with the ICDEP standards and program policies.

Preceptor Responsibilities

Preceptors support intern learning and ensure supervised practice experiences meet entry-to-practice competency expectations.

Preceptors are responsible for:

- Providing orientation to the placement site
- Supervising and mentoring interns during placement activities
- Supporting competency development through learning opportunities
- Providing ongoing feedback regarding performance
- Completing midpoint and final evaluations
- Communicating concerns to the Professional Practice Coordinator
- Supporting a respectful and professional learning environment

Professional Practice Coordinator Responsibilities

The Professional Practice Coordinator is responsible for the overall coordination, oversight, and support of internship practice experiences. Responsibilities include:

- Coordinating placement planning, scheduling, and allocation in collaboration with program partners
- Supporting interns in the development and review of learning contracts
- Monitoring intern progress and supporting competency development across placements
- Providing guidance and clarification on program policies, procedures, and expectations
- Acting as the primary liaison between interns, placement sites, and the program
- Reviewing intern documentation, including ICDEP Attestation Logbooks and evaluation forms
- Addressing concerns related to intern performance, professionalism, or placement issues
- Supporting resolution of placement-related challenges in collaboration with preceptors and the Internship Director
- Maintaining accurate and confidential intern records in accordance with program and University policies
- Contributing to continuous quality improvement of the internship program

Internship Director Responsibilities

The Internship Director provides academic leadership and oversight for the Integrated Dietetic Internship Program. Responsibilities include:

- Providing strategic direction for the internship program in alignment with the University and accreditation requirements
- Overseeing program quality, consistency, and alignment with entry-level competency standards
- Supporting policy development, review, and implementation in collaboration with program leadership
- Participating in decisions related to intern progression, remediation, and termination when required
- Supporting resolution of complex or escalated intern, placement, or performance concerns
- Contributing to the evaluation and continuous improvement of the program
- Ensuring alignment with accreditation standards, regulatory expectations, and institutional policies
- Serving as a senior academic resource for interns, faculty, and placement partners when required

Placements Expectations

Professional Conduct

While enrolled in the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program, interns are expected to always conduct themselves in a professional manner, demonstrating behaviours consistent with professional standards and ethical practice. Interns must adhere to the expectations outlined in the [Professional Conduct Policy](#), which provides detailed guidance on professional behaviour across academic, practicum, and all program-related activities.

Communication Expectations

Clear and timely communication is essential to supporting learning, maintaining professional relationships, and ensuring safe and effective practice. Interns are expected to communicate in a professional, respectful, and responsive manner in all program-related activities.

Interns are expected to:

- Check their UPEI email regularly on weekdays;
- Respond to communication from the Professional Practice Coordinator and preceptors within 24–48 hours, where possible;
- Use professional email etiquette and appropriate communication styles in all written and verbal interactions;
- Notify preceptors and the Professional Practice Coordinator as early as possible regarding absences, delays, or changes in availability;
- Use University-approved platforms (e.g., Microsoft Teams, OneDrive, Outlook) for communication and file sharing.

A template for a professional email signature is available on the Dietetic Internship course Moodle site and should be used for all program-related correspondence.

Urgent matters, including illness, same-day absences, or immediate placement concerns, must be communicated directly to both the placement preceptor and the Professional Practice Coordinator as soon as possible.

Further expectations are outlined in the [Communication Policy](#).

Attendance

While enrolled in the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program, interns are required to demonstrate professional responsibility through regular attendance, punctuality, and accountability across all program-related activities, including classes, meetings, and practicum placements. Consistent participation is essential to support competency development and to prepare interns for professional practice in health care settings.

Detailed expectations regarding attendance, reporting of absences, and the implications of missed time are outlined in the [Attendance and Absenteeism Policy](#).

Professional Dress

While enrolled in the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program, interns are expected to maintain a professional appearance at all times. Professional dress supports client confidence, workplace safety, infection prevention and control standards, and the professional image of the dietetics profession.

Many placement organizations have site-specific dress code policies. Interns are required to always adhere to the dress code expectations of their placement site.

In situations where a placement organization does not have a formal dress code policy, interns are expected to follow the guidelines outlined in the Integrated Dietetic Internship Program's [Professional Dress Policy](#).

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a fundamental component of health care practice and is essential to ensuring client and patient safety. While enrolled in the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program, interns are required to adhere to all confidentiality requirements established by the program, the University, and their placement organizations.

Upon entering the program, interns must complete the UPEI Dietetic Internship Program Pledge of Confidentiality, as well as any confidentiality agreements required by their placement sites.

Further details regarding expectations for confidentiality, including the collection, use, and protection of information, are outlined in the [UPEI Dietetic Internship Confidentiality Policy](#).

Acceptance and Offering of Gifts

Interns are expected to maintain professional integrity and avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest in all interactions with clients/patients, preceptors, instructors, and others involved in the internship program. Professional judgment must remain free from undue influence or the perception of influence.

In accordance with the [Code of Ethics of the College of Dietitians of Prince Edward Island](#), interns must not solicit or accept gifts, favours, or gratuities from clients/patients. Items of nominal value that are part of routine professional courtesy may be accepted only if they do not create a real or perceived conflict of interest.

To avoid bias or the appearance of favouritism, interns must not offer gifts to preceptors, instructors, evaluators, or others involved in supervision or assessment. Non-monetary tokens of appreciation (e.g., thank-you cards) are acceptable.

Further guidance is outlined in the [Acceptance and Offering of Gifts Policy](#).

Disruption of Program Services

In the event of a disruption to program services due to circumstances beyond the control of the University, including but not limited to community disaster, labour disruption (e.g., strike), fire, public health emergency, or other unforeseen events, reasonable efforts will be made to minimize disruption to the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program.

The Foods and Nutrition Program will take appropriate steps to support interns in continuing and completing required academic and practicum components while maintaining academic standards, competency expectations, and program integrity. Where feasible, interns whose progression is delayed due to a documented program disruption will be given priority consideration for rescheduling their placements to support timely program completion.

Further details are outlined in the [Disruption of Program Services Policy](#).

Social Media Use Expectations

Interns in the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program are expected to maintain professional standards in all online and digital environments, including social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, X (Twitter), LinkedIn, TikTok, blogs, and messaging or content-sharing applications.

Social media use must reflect the same level of professionalism expected in academic and practicum settings. Interns are reminded that online content is often permanent and widely accessible and may impact professional reputation and public trust in the dietetics profession.

Interns must not post, share, or discuss any client, patient, placement site, or identifiable practicum information in any online space. This includes direct identifiers, indirect identifiers, images, or descriptions of clinical or placement experiences. Even when information is de-identified, there is still a risk of breach of confidentiality.

Professional boundaries must also be maintained in online interactions with clients, patients, preceptors, supervisors, and colleagues. Interns should avoid engaging in online relationships or communications that could compromise professional judgment or create a real or perceived conflict of interest.

Interns are expected to communicate respectfully in all online environments and avoid posting comments, images, or content that could be interpreted as unprofessional, disrespectful, or reflective of workplace frustration. Concerns or feedback regarding placements should be addressed through the appropriate program channels rather than on social media.

Social media use must also align with the expectations outlined by the [College of Dietitians of Prince Edward Island Social Media Practice Directive](#), which provides professional guidance on appropriate digital conduct for dietetic practice.

Further details on expectations, boundaries, and professional responsibilities can be found in the [Social Media Use Policy](#), which interns are responsible for reviewing and following throughout their time in the program.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use and Academic Integrity

Interns may encounter artificial intelligence (AI) tools during their academic and practicum experiences; however, all use must align with [UPEI Academic Regulations on Academic Integrity \(Section 20\)](#), placement site policies, and program expectations. These regulations apply to all internship-related academic work, documentation, and practicum activities, and interns remain fully responsible for the integrity and accuracy of all submitted work and professional performance.

AI tools may be used only in a limited and responsible manner that supports learning (e.g., clarifying concepts or assisting with editing), and must never be used to complete assessed coursework, competency-based activities, or placement documentation unless explicitly authorized by the course instructor or preceptor. Use of AI that misrepresents independent skill development or competency achievement is considered a breach of academic integrity.

Confidentiality must be maintained at all times. Interns must not input any client, patient, placement, or organizational information into AI tools, even in de-identified form.

Further details, including permitted use and limitations, are outlined in the [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Use Policy](#), which interns are responsible for reviewing and following throughout the program.

Before Your Practicum Placements Begin

Dietetic Internship Course Moodle

Upon enrollment in each dietetic internship course (FN 3001, FN 4001, and FN 4002), interns will be granted access to the corresponding Moodle site. The Moodle site serves as the central hub for program materials and provides access to the key documents, resources, and tools required to support learning and successful progression through the internship.

Within the course site, interns will find essential program documents, including policies, guidelines, templates, evaluation forms, and supporting materials for assignments and practicum requirements. Interns are expected to regularly access and review the Moodle site to ensure they are using the most current versions of all documents.

In addition to core program materials, the Moodle site includes practice-area–specific resources designed to support preparation for placements across clinical, community, and food-provision settings. These resources may include orientation materials, sample enabling activities, reference documents, and other tools to help interns feel prepared and confident as they enter each placement experience.

Sample Enabling Activities

Each placement setting within Levels I and II has a corresponding Sample Enabling Activities document available on the Dietetic Internship Course Moodle site. These documents outline recommended and optional activities designed to support achievement of required competencies at the appropriate performance level.

Interns are encouraged to complete the recommended activities where feasible, as these are intended to support attainment of core competencies during their placement. If certain activities are not available within a placement setting, interns should consult with the Professional Practice Coordinator to identify appropriate alternatives.

Additional sample activities are provided to allow flexibility in tailoring learning experiences to individual interests and professional goals. Preceptors may also suggest site-specific activities, provided they support competency development. In some cases, where activities are not known in advance, the learning contract may be developed collaboratively during the first week of placement.

Learning Contracts

Prior to each placement, interns are required to develop a learning contract outlining planned learning activities based on the Sample Enabling Activities document. The learning contract ensures that all required competencies are addressed through meaningful and feasible placement experiences.

The learning contract:

- Identifies learning activities that support achievement of required competencies
- Maps each activity to the relevant ICDEP competencies and performance indicators

Interns must share a live version of the learning contract with the preceptor and Professional Practice Coordinator via a secure shared drive. The finalized document must be reviewed and approved within the first week of placement.

Development Process

Before the Placement

Interns will:

- Draft a learning contract using the relevant Sample Enabling Activities document
- Select activities that support competency development and align with learning goals
- Map all activities to ICDEP competencies and performance indicators

During the First Week of Placement

The intern and preceptor will:

- Review and refine the learning contract
- Confirm the feasibility of activities within the placement setting
- Identify timelines and additional learning opportunities

Following this discussion, the intern will revise the document as needed. The preceptor will review and approve the final version.

The intern must then notify the Professional Practice Coordinator by email (copying the preceptor) once the learning contract is finalized and ready for review.

The learning contract must be completed and approved within one week of the placement start date.

E-portfolios

The e-portfolio is an integral component of the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program and serves both as a program requirement and a valuable professional development tool.

Throughout the internship, interns are expected to develop and maintain an e-portfolio that reflects their learning, growth, and achievement of required competencies.

From a program perspective, the e-portfolio provides documented evidence that practice competencies and performance indicators outlined in the ICDEPs have been achieved. It supports ongoing assessment and allows both interns and the Professional Practice Coordinator to monitor progress toward entry-to-practice competence.

The e-portfolio also supports placement success. During the program, interns may use their e-portfolio to showcase examples of their work as they prepare for Level II placements. It can serve as a professional introduction, helping preceptors understand an intern's experience, areas of interest, and developing skill set.

Beyond the program, the e-portfolio offers a significant professional advantage. Upon completion of the internship, it can be used during job applications and interviews to demonstrate practical experience, competency development, and readiness for practice. A well-organized e-portfolio enables interns to clearly present their skills and provide concrete examples of their work.

Guidelines for the development of the e-portfolio, along with the rubric used for evaluation, are available on the Dietetic Internship course Moodle site. Interns are expected to refer to these resources when developing and maintaining their e-portfolio.

Maintaining a thoughtful, up-to-date e-portfolio throughout the program will support the successful completion of internship requirements and serve as a valuable tool for future career opportunities.

Weekly Reflective Journals

Weekly journal reflections are an important component of the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program and are required during all practicum placements. Interns are expected to complete and maintain weekly reflections that document their experiences, learning, and professional growth throughout each placement.

These reflections provide interns with an opportunity to critically reflect on the work they have completed, the competencies they are developing, and the insights gained through practice. They support deeper learning, self-awareness, and the integration of theory into practice—key skills for entry-to-practice dietitians.

Journal reflections also serve as a communication tool between the intern and the Professional Practice Coordinator, offering insight into progress, learning needs, and any non-urgent challenges that may arise during placement. While the journal is a supportive space for reflection, it is not intended for urgent communication. Any immediate concerns, particularly those related to safety or placement issues, must be communicated directly to the Professional Practice Coordinator via email.

All journal entries must be stored in the intern's designated shared folder alongside other internship documents and shared with the Professional Practice Coordinator. Journal reflections are treated as confidential, provided no safety concerns or risks are identified, and that would require further follow-up. No record of journal reflections is retained beyond the intern's time in the program.

Detailed expectations and submission guidelines are outlined in the *Journal Reflection Guidelines* document, available on the Dietetic Internship course Moodle site.

Clinical Presentation (Level I)

As part of the Level I requirements of the internship program, interns must complete a clinical presentation focused on the nutrition assessment and management of a specific disease state. This assignment is designed to strengthen skills in evidence-based practice, clinical reasoning, and professional communication—core competencies for entry-to-practice dietitians.

Interns will select a clinical nutrition topic (with approval from the Clinical Nutrition Professor) and develop a concise, evidence-informed presentation that highlights current knowledge, nutrition implications, and best practices in management. Presentations are expected to demonstrate the integration of high-quality evidence, with an emphasis on stronger levels of evidence (e.g., systematic reviews and randomized controlled trials) where available.

The presentation will be delivered in person on campus and virtually to the faculty and staff within the Foods and Nutrition (FN) program, as well as members of the PEI dietetic community, providing an opportunity to communicate professionally with a broader audience.

Detailed expectations, including the presentation outline, evidence hierarchy, formatting requirements, and evaluation criteria, are available on the Dietetic Internship course Moodle site. Interns should also refer to the presentation rubric on Moodle to guide preparation and ensure all assessment criteria are met.

Clinical Case Study Presentation (Level II)

As part of the Level II Nutrition Care placement, interns are required to complete and present a clinical case study. This assignment is designed to integrate clinical knowledge, application of the Nutrition Care Process, and evidence-based practice within a real patient context, supporting the transition to entry-level dietetic practice.

The case study provides interns with an opportunity to take a comprehensive, in-depth approach to patient care. Interns are expected to select a patient (in consultation with their preceptor) for whom they have had meaningful involvement in nutrition care, and to explore the case through assessment, diagnosis, intervention, monitoring, and evaluation. This process supports the development of clinical reasoning, interprofessional awareness, and an understanding of how nutrition care contributes to overall patient outcomes.

A key component of the case study is the integration of evidence-based practice. Interns are expected to conduct a thorough literature search, critically appraise the evidence, and show how they applied current best practices to the nutritional management of the case. This includes evaluating the strength of evidence and aligning care decisions with established guidelines where available.

Informed patient consent is a required component of this assignment. Prior to collecting or presenting any case information, interns must obtain the patient's consent using the approved Clinical Case Study Consent Form available on the course Moodle site. Interns must ensure that all information is handled in accordance with confidentiality and privacy standards and that no identifying information is disclosed in the presentation. Preceptors should be consulted to confirm that consent procedures and documentation align with site-specific policies and expectations.

The case study is presented within the placement setting to dietitians, interns, and other members of the healthcare team, as appropriate. This provides a valuable opportunity to engage in professional dialogue, share knowledge, and receive feedback from practicing clinicians. Interns are responsible for coordinating presentation logistics with their preceptor and the Professional Practice Coordinator.

Preparation of the case study is expected to occur outside of regular placement hours, reinforcing professional accountability and time management.

Detailed guidelines, including the required presentation outline, grading expectations for evidence, consent requirements, and evaluation criteria, are available on the Dietetic Internship course Moodle site. Interns should refer to these materials, along with the case study rubric, to guide their preparation and ensure all expectations are met.

Required Online Courses (Level II)

As part of the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program, interns are required to complete a series of online courses during Level II of the internship. These courses are designed to supplement practicum experiences and ensure that all interns have equitable exposure to key practice areas, particularly those where learning opportunities may be limited due to variability across placement settings.

The required courses are offered through Dietitians of Canada and focus on specialized areas of practice that support competency development aligned with the Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice (ICDEPs). Completion of these courses is a mandatory program requirement and contributes to the achievement of entry-level competence.

Interns are required to:

- Successfully complete all required modules within each course
- Achieve a minimum grade of 80%
- Upload certificates of completion to their e-portfolio as evidence of completion

Course registration details will be provided by the Professional Practice Coordinator. Interns are encouraged to complete these courses prior to, or early within, their Level II placements—particularly clinical placements—to support application of learning in practice.

The required courses include:

- **Critical Care Nutrition**
Focuses on nutrition support for critically ill and ventilated patients, including enteral and parenteral nutrition, metabolic considerations, and clinical decision-making.
Estimated time commitment: 15–20 hours

- **Counselling for Behaviour Change**

Explores evidence-based counselling approaches, behaviour change theories, and client-centered strategies to support effective nutrition counselling practice.

Estimated time commitment: 5–6 hours

- **Swallowing Screening and Assessment**

Provides foundational knowledge of dysphagia, including assessment, screening, and identification of risk factors affecting swallowing function.

Estimated time commitment: 5–6 hours

Access to these courses requires membership with Dietitians of Canada. Interns are required to obtain student membership, which provides access to these courses at a substantially reduced cost, representing significant financial savings compared to non-member pricing. Membership also offers access to additional professional resources that support both learning during the internship and transition to practice.

Completion of these courses is an important component of the internship program and supports both competency development and readiness for entry to practice.

Evaluation of Intern Performance

Throughout the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program, evaluation is designed to support learning, guide progression, and ensure readiness for entry-level dietetic practice. By the end of Level II placements, interns are expected to demonstrate entry-level proficiency across all competencies outlined in the [*Integrated Competencies for Dietetic Education and Practice \(ICDEPs\), Version 3.0*](#). This reflects the ability to practice safely, ethically, and effectively, while recognizing personal limits and seeking appropriate guidance when needed.

ICDEP Attestation Logbook and Evaluation Form

Evaluation is an ongoing, collaborative process between the intern, preceptor, and Professional Practice Coordinator. Interns track their progress using the ICDEP Attestation Logbook/Evaluation Form by documenting learning activities and aligning them with relevant performance indicators. For each activity, interns self-assess their level of performance, and preceptors review and attest to both the completion of the activity and the assigned rating. This process supports reflection, accountability, and the progressive development of competence.

Performance is assessed along a developmental continuum, ranging from observational (Exposure) to competent/independent practice (Independent). During Level I placements, interns are generally expected to demonstrate learning at the Exposure or Supervised levels, while Level II placements focus on progression toward competent/independent, entry-to-

practice performance. Expectations may vary depending on the complexity of the activity and the practice setting, but the overall goal is consistent development toward competence across all domains.

Formal evaluation occurs at both the midpoint and final stages of each placement. Midpoint evaluations provide an opportunity to reflect on progress, identify strengths, and develop a plan to address any outstanding competencies. Final evaluations confirm achievement of required competencies and performance levels. These structured evaluations, combined with ongoing feedback, ensure that interns are supported in meeting program expectations.

The ICDEP Attestation Logbook/Evaluation Form serves as both a progress-tracking tool and the official record of competency achievement. Interns are responsible for maintaining this document, ensuring it is current, and sharing access with their preceptor and the Professional Practice Coordinator.

Performance Ratings

Performance is assessed using the following rating levels:

- **Exposure (E):** Observation only with limited or no hands-on involvement
- **Supervised (S):** Hands-on participation with direct guidance and support
- **Minimally Supervised (MS):** Increasing independence with occasional guidance required
- **Competent/Independent (I):** Consistent, independent performance at an entry-to-practice level
- **Not Applicable (N/A):** Not observed or not relevant (Level I only)

Performance Expectations

- **Level I Placements:** Interns are typically working at the Exposure (E) and Supervised (S) levels, with progression toward higher levels encouraged but not required.
- **Level II Placements:** Interns are expected to progress toward Independent (I) performance across all competencies by the end of the program. In some cases, Minimally Supervised (MS) may be appropriate depending on the context.

Midpoint and Final Evaluations

For placements longer than two weeks, a midpoint evaluation is conducted approximately halfway through the placement. This is a collaborative review between the intern and preceptor to:

- Review documented learning activities and assigned ratings
- Confirm strengths and progress
- Identify areas for further development
- Develop a plan to address outstanding competencies

A Midpoint Summary Form is completed during this discussion. The intern is responsible for documenting the preceptor's verbal feedback on the form, and both the intern and preceptor must provide an electronic signature. Once completed, the intern must notify the Professional Practice Coordinator.

Please note: For Level II Nutrition Care placements, the midpoint evaluation process may differ due to the involvement of multiple preceptors. Interns should refer to the Nutrition Care Midpoint Summary Evaluation Form available on the course Moodle site for specific guidance.

At the end of each placement, a final evaluation is conducted using the ICDEP Attestation Logbook/Evaluation Form. The preceptor reviews and attests to completed activities and final performance ratings, confirming whether the intern has met the required competencies.

Interns are responsible for:

- Accurately documenting learning activities and mapping them to competencies
- Self-assessing performance using appropriate rating levels
- Maintaining an up-to-date logbook throughout the placement
- Sharing the document with the preceptor and Professional Practice Coordinator via a shared drive link

Preceptors are responsible for:

- Reviewing and validating documented activities and performance ratings
- Providing constructive feedback at midpoint and final evaluations
- Supporting progression toward competency achievement
- Completing and signing the required evaluation documentation

Additional guidance on completing the Midpoint Summary Form, the ICDEP Attestation Logbook/Evaluation Form, and rating expectations is provided in the evaluation documents and on the Dietetic Internship course Moodle site.

Failure to Complete Designated Competencies and Performance Indicators

If an intern is unable to demonstrate the required competencies or performance indicators at the expected level, additional support and remediation may be implemented. This may include targeted learning plans, extended placement time, or other strategies to support competency development. If the required competencies are not achieved despite these efforts, progression in the program may be affected. Interns are encouraged to review the [*Failure to Complete Designated Competencies and Performance Indicators Policy*](#) for detailed information regarding expectations, supports, and potential outcomes related to competency attainment.

Academic Standards and Continuance

Maintaining strong academic standing is an essential component of success in the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program. Academic performance supports readiness for practicum learning, contributes to competency development, and ensures interns are prepared for safe and effective entry-level practice.

Interns are expected to maintain full-time enrollment between program levels, achieve a minimum grade of 70% (GPA 2.7) in all required nutrition courses, and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher across their degree. Interns are also responsible for monitoring their academic performance, communicating any concerns early, and submitting an unofficial transcript to the Professional Practice Coordinator at the end of each semester.

When academic standards are not met, the Professional Practice Coordinator, in consultation with the Program Director, reviews the situation on a case-by-case basis. Interns may be required to participate in a meeting to discuss contributing factors and develop an action plan to support improvement. Depending on the circumstances, outcomes may include probation, course repetition, delayed progression within the internship, or, in more serious cases, withdrawal from the program.

The program is committed to supporting interns in achieving academic success while ensuring fairness, consistency, and alignment with professional and accreditation standards.

For full details regarding academic expectations, review processes, and potential outcomes, interns should refer to the [Academic Standards and Continuance Policy](#).

Program Completion and Transition to Registration

Successful completion of the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program signifies that interns have demonstrated readiness for entry-to-practice as a dietitian. To meet program requirements, interns must achieve a Competent/Independent rating for all required competencies and performance indicators.

Upon completion of all program requirements, the Professional Practice Coordinator will prepare a Final Summary Evaluation confirming that required competencies have been achieved at the expected level and that the intern is prepared to proceed to the next stage of professional registration. Interns will meet with the Professional Practice Coordinator to review and sign this document. A copy will be provided to the intern, and an official copy will be retained in the intern's file in accordance with the program's [Disclosure, Protection, and Retention of Student Information Policy](#).

During this final meeting, interns will receive guidance on next steps, including how to register for the Canadian Dietetic Registration Examination (CDRE). Additional CDRE preparation materials and supports are available on the Dietetic Internship course Moodle site to assist interns in their exam preparation.

Once examination plans are confirmed, interns may request a letter of completion by emailing the Professional Practice Coordinator and specifying the regulatory college with which they intend to register. The letter will be submitted on the intern's behalf to the appropriate regulatory body.

Interns will also be notified of the internship graduation ceremony, where they will be formally recognized and presented with a certificate of completion.

Program Evaluation and Quality Improvement

To help ensure the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program is continuously evaluated to ensure it is effectively preparing interns for entry-level dietetic practice and meeting accreditation, regulatory, and partner expectations. Evaluation is an essential component of program quality assurance and supports ongoing curriculum development, placement enhancement, and continuous improvement.

Interns play an important role in this process by providing structured feedback at multiple points throughout the program and after its completion. The key evaluation activities include:

- **Placement Evaluations:** Completed by interns at the end of each practicum placement
- **Exit Evaluation:** Completed by interns at the end of the internship program
- **Professional Practice Coordinator Evaluation:** Completed at the end of the program (optional additional evaluation submitted to the Program Director)
- **Graduate Follow-Up Evaluation:** Completed approximately 12 months after graduation
- **CDRE Outcome Reporting:** Voluntary graduate reporting of exam results following completion of the Canadian Dietetic Registration Examination
- **Preceptor Evaluations:** Completed by placement preceptors, typically at the end of placements or annually as part of program review

Further details regarding specific evaluation processes, responsibilities, and outcome measures can be found in the [Evaluation of the Integrated Internship Program Policy](#), which interns are responsible for reviewing.

Leave of Absence

The UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program recognizes that interns may, at times, require a temporary leave of absence due to medical, compassionate, academic, or other significant personal circumstances. A leave of absence provides an opportunity to pause program participation while maintaining a structured and supportive pathway for return, where feasible.

Leaves of absence are not automatic and are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Approval depends on several factors, including the intern's academic and practicum standing, accreditation and competency requirements, and the feasibility of adjusting placement schedules. Interns should be aware that taking a leave may delay program progression and completion, and re-entry into placements cannot always be guaranteed due to limited availability.

Interns requesting leave must notify the Professional Practice Coordinator as soon as possible and submit a formal written request outlining the anticipated duration and intended return. In addition to program approval, interns are required to complete the University's formal Leave of Absence process through the Registrar's Office, in accordance with [Section 22 of the UPEI Academic Calendar](#).

Throughout the leave period, interns are expected to remain in good standing with the University, comply with any conditions of the leave, and maintain communication with the Professional Practice Coordinator. Prior to returning, interns must confirm their intent to resume the program and review updated expectations and placement plans.

The program is committed to supporting interns through this process while ensuring fairness, transparency, and alignment with accreditation and program requirements.

For full details regarding eligibility, procedures, timelines, and return-to-program requirements, interns should refer to the [Leave of Absence Policy](#).

Voluntary Withdrawal from the Internship Program

The UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program recognizes that, in some circumstances, interns may decide to withdraw from the program for personal or other reasons. To ensure a respectful, consistent, and well-documented process, interns are expected to follow the established procedures for voluntary withdrawal.

Interns considering withdrawal are encouraged to contact the Professional Practice Coordinator as soon as possible. A meeting will be arranged to discuss the situation, review available options, and ensure that the intern is supported in making an informed decision. In some cases, alternative pathways or supports may be explored prior to confirming withdrawal.

If an intern chooses to proceed, written confirmation of the decision to withdraw is required. This documentation is retained in the intern's file, and appropriate University offices are notified. Interns should be aware that withdrawal from the program may have implications for program progression and that registration fees are not refunded.

The program is committed to handling all withdrawal requests with professionalism, confidentiality, and care, while ensuring clear communication and appropriate documentation.

For full details regarding the withdrawal process, required documentation, and related considerations, interns should refer to the [Voluntary Withdrawal Policy](#).

Termination from the Internship Program

The UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program is committed to supporting intern success through clear expectations, feedback, and opportunities for remediation. In some circumstances, however, an intern may be required to withdraw from or may be terminated from the program if they are unable to meet academic, practicum, or professional standards.

Termination decisions are based on a formal review of documented concerns and may relate to:

- Failure to achieve required competencies
- Ongoing unsatisfactory academic or practicum performance
- Professional misconduct or breaches of confidentiality, ethics, or safety
- Inability to safely continue in a practicum setting

Where appropriate, interns are provided with opportunities for remediation. In more serious situations, or where remediation is not feasible, an intern may be removed from placement and a formal review conducted.

If termination is being considered, the intern will be informed in writing and invited to meet with the Professional Practice Coordinator and Program Director. In some cases, interns may choose to voluntarily withdraw from the program. Final decisions are communicated in writing.

Interns have the right to appeal in accordance with [University procedures](#).

For full details, interns should refer to the [Termination from the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program Policy](#).

Financial Assistance Opportunities

Interns in the UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program are encouraged to explore available financial assistance opportunities to help offset program-related costs. A range of scholarships, awards, bursaries, and grants may be available through the University of Prince Edward Island and external sources.

Information on available funding opportunities can be found through the [UPEI Scholarships and Awards Directory](#), including Academic Excellence Awards and other program-specific supports. In addition, the Work Integrated Learning Office offers a [Work Integrated Learning Bursary](#) that may be applicable to interns during their placements. Interns are also encouraged to explore [financial aid options](#) through UPEI Financial Services.

The Professional Practice Coordinator will share information about relevant funding opportunities when available; however, it is the responsibility of each intern to independently seek out and apply for all applicable scholarships, awards, bursaries, and financial assistance. Interns are also responsible for communicating any relevant financial matters related to their studies.

For additional information, interns can consult the [UPEI Scholarships and Awards Directory](#) or contact [UPEI Financial Services directly](#).

Intern Wellness, Support, and Success Resources

The UPEI Integrated Dietetic Internship Program recognizes that dietetic education and practicum training can be academically, professionally, and emotionally demanding. Interns are encouraged to proactively access available supports and develop strategies that promote well-being, resilience, and long-term professional success. Seeking support is viewed as a professional strength and an important component of safe, reflective, and sustainable practice.

Workload Planning and Time Management

Successful completion of the internship program requires strong organizational and time-management skills. Interns are encouraged to:

- Review placement schedules, assignment deadlines, and expectations in advance
- Use calendars, task lists, and scheduling tools to support organization
- Break large assignments or projects into smaller, manageable tasks
- Establish regular routines for documentation, reflection, and study

- Communicate early with preceptors or the Professional Practice Coordinator if challenges arise that may impact workload completion
- Recognize the importance of balancing academic, placement, employment, and personal responsibilities

Interns are encouraged to be realistic about their workload and to prioritize activities that support competency development, well-being, and professional growth.

Wellbeing and Counselling Supports

Maintaining physical, emotional, and mental well-being is an important component of professional practice and safe client care. UPEI offers a variety of student well-being resources, including counselling, mental health supports, health services, peer support, and wellness programming.

Interns experiencing stress, burnout, anxiety, emotional fatigue, or personal challenges are encouraged to seek support early. Accessing counselling or wellness services will not negatively impact an intern's standing within the program.

Additional information regarding available student supports and wellness resources can be found through [UPEI Student Support Services](#) and on the Dietetic Internship course Moodle site.

Crisis and Urgent Support Pathways

Interns experiencing urgent safety concerns, harassment, discrimination, significant mental health distress, or situations affecting their immediate well-being should seek support immediately rather than waiting for scheduled meetings or journal reflection reviews. Depending on the nature of the concern, interns should contact:

- Emergency services (911) in urgent situations
- Their placement site supervisor or manager for immediate placement-related safety concerns
- The Professional Practice Coordinator for internship-related concerns
- [UPEI Campus Security](#) or [Student Affairs](#), where appropriate
- [UPEI Counselling Services](#) or [University crisis resources](#)
- Community Resources for urgent mental health support

- **PEI Mental Health and Addictions Phone Line: 1-833-553-6983**
Available 24/7 for urgent mental health and addictions support through trained mental health professionals.
- **Island Helpline: 1-800-218-2885**
Free, confidential emotional support available 24/7.
- **9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline: Call or text 988**
A national 24/7 crisis and suicide support service is available anywhere in Canada.
- **Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868**
Available 24/7 for youth and young adults.
- **Hope for Wellness Helpline (Indigenous support): 1-855-242-3310**
Available 24/7 for Indigenous peoples across Canada.

Urgent concerns should always be communicated directly and not solely through journals, assignments, or email attachments.

Difficult Placement Debriefing Process

Interns may occasionally encounter emotionally difficult situations during placements, including exposure to grief, trauma, ethical dilemmas, conflict, patient decline, food insecurity, or challenging interpersonal dynamics. These experiences can be a normal part of professional health training.

Interns are encouraged to discuss difficult placement experiences with their preceptor and/or the Professional Practice Coordinator in a timely manner. Debriefing may help interns process experiences, identify learning opportunities, and access additional support where needed.

The program is committed to supporting respectful learning environments and constructive resolution of placement concerns whenever possible.

Professional Resilience and Reflective Practice

Professional resilience refers to the ability to adapt, reflect, and continue functioning effectively during periods of stress, uncertainty, or challenge. Resilience is not about avoiding difficulty, but about developing healthy coping strategies, self-awareness, professional boundaries, and support systems.

Throughout the internship program, interns are encouraged to:

- Engage in reflective practice and self-assessment
- Seek and apply feedback constructively
- Recognize personal limits and seek support appropriately

- Maintain professional boundaries and self-care practices
- Celebrate progress and competency development
- Build supportive peer and professional networks

The development of resilience, adaptability, and reflective practice skills is an important component of lifelong learning and professional competence within dietetic practice.

Additional information regarding available supports and services can be found through [UPEI Student Affairs](#) and on the Dietetic Internship course Moodle site.