



The Association
of UK Dietitians

Practice-based Learning in a Higher Education Institution Environment

A guide to support development of education and academic practice-based learning (PBL) experiences for dietetic pre-registration learners in a higher education institution (HEI) environment.



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The purpose of this guide

The purpose of this HEI practice education guidance document is to expand PBL opportunities for dietetic learners. This guide aims to alleviate the growing pressure on PBL in health and care settings, by offering alternative PBL opportunities in the HEI environment and provide insight into academic career pathways, preparing graduates for diverse roles in dietetics.



For the purpose of this guidance document 'clinical' PBL is referred to as PBL in a health & care setting. The glossary at the end of the document provides a wider list of relevant terminology.

Objectives of this guide:

01

To enhance PBL capacity:

Increase learner PBL options within HEIs to help meet the rising demand for PBL. By providing a flexible alternative to health and care based PBLs, this guide aims to reduce dependency on PBL in health and care settings and accommodate a higher number of learners.

02

To foster awareness of academic careers:

Expose learners to the varied roles and knowledge required for dietitians within academia, including curriculum development, educational theory, and interdisciplinary collaboration. By observing lecturers and engaging in academic settings, learners will gain insights into potential career pathways.

03

To develop learners' educational and leadership skills:

Equip learners with skills in lesson planning, teamwork, and leadership within an academic environment. Through peer learning, content development, and engagement with HEI faculty, learners will gain valuable competencies that support their growth as well-rounded dietitians.

04

To encourage interdisciplinary collaboration:

Promote interaction with other healthcare programs and educational teams within HEIs, offering learners opportunities to participate in collaborative, interdisciplinary learning experiences.

05

To align with educational standards and competencies:

Ensure that the PBL guide aligns with the British Dietetic Association (BDA) Common Assessment Tool (CAT) Competencies (BDA, 2025) and the Four Pillars of Dietetic Practice as seen in the BDA Dietetic Career Framework (2025), maintaining high educational standards and fulfilling requirements for registration as a dietitian.

06

To provide a framework for sustainable implementation:

A guide that HEIs can implement with available resources, allowing for a hybrid delivery format and flexible staffing solutions.

07

To support equitable access to PBL opportunities:

Address potential barriers to access, including staffing and infrastructure limitations, by developing clear guidelines on PBL eligibility and requirements.

What is PBL?

PBL is the period(s) of study and activities undertaken by learners as a formal element of their dietetic pre-registration training whilst in the practical learning environment. (BDA Curriculum Framework (2020). PBL takes place during structured periods of work-based learning, integrated throughout pre-registration training. It provides learners with opportunities to develop their professional skills and capabilities and consolidate their learning, bringing together academic theory and workplace practice, in a supervised and structured environment.



The BDA Curriculum Framework (BDA,2020) provides a detailed explanation of the expectations for PBL. The guidance currently stipulates that learners must undertake 1000 hours of PBL. Of these 1000 hours, 350 hours must be within a clinical setting (health and care setting). Whilst the remaining 650 hours could be undertaken in alternative settings.

What is PBL in a HEI environment?

PBL within a HEI environment is a **structured educational approach that immerses learners into the academic profession**. Through impactful experiences such as shadowing academic professionals, curriculum development, interdisciplinary collaboration, and leadership tasks, learners gain valuable insights of the role of a lecturer and skills that prepare them for the diverse demands of their future careers. This process should encourage critical thinking, teamwork, professionalism and leadership skills, all within a supportive academic environment.

Ultimately, PBL in a HEI environment offers learners impactful experiences that deepen their understanding of their future roles, exposes them to potential career pathways in academia, and fosters an appreciation for evidence-based practice and the broader impact of their dietetic roles.



What are the benefits of PBL in a HEI environment?

Benefits for HEIs

Benefits for practice educators

Benefits for learners



Benefits for HEIs

Increased PBL capacity

Implementing PBL in an HEI environment further supports the reduction of dependency on health and care based PBL, creating additional opportunities to meet the 1000 PBL hour requirements. This expanded capacity allows HEIs to accommodate more learners, supporting the growing demand for dietetic education.

Curriculum relevance & innovation

Allows HEIs to accommodate learners on PBL, supporting the growing demand for dietetic education.

Promoting HEI dietetic career opportunity to learners

Hosting PBL opportunities in HEIs provides learners with firsthand exposure to academic roles in dietetics, such as teaching, research, and curriculum development. This not only raises awareness of HEI-based careers among dietetic learners but also helps address recruitment challenges by inspiring the next generation of dietetic lecturers and educators.

Benefits for practice educators

Professional development

Enables HEI staff to engage in PBL, allowing educators to continue to enhance and innovate in the PBL environment and gain new experiences for professional growth.

Contribution to workforce development

Educators play a pivotal role in shaping future professionals, contributing to the development of a competent and prepared workforce.

Recognition and career advancement

Active involvement in PBL can lead to recognition within the academic and professional communities, potentially opening avenues for career progression

Alleviates pressures on PBL hours in the NHS.

Implementing PBL in an HEI environment reduces dependency on health and care based PBL, creating additional opportunities to meet the 1000 PBL hour requirements.

Benefits for learners

Engage in a HEI career pathway

PBL within an HEI environment provides learners with the opportunity to explore and experience roles in academia, such as teaching, research, and curriculum development. This exposure can inspire learners to consider career pathways beyond PBL in an health and care based setting, addressing the need for future dietetic educators.

Development of professional skills in alternative settings:

PBL in a HEI environment allows learners to build transferable skills such as teaching, leadership, professionalism, research, project management, and interdisciplinary collaboration. These broader competencies are valuable across diverse career settings, broadening the learner's potential career opportunities.

Strengthened interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary collaboration

Engaging in HEI-based PBL often involves working with peers from other healthcare disciplines, such as nursing, physiotherapy, or public health. This fosters teamwork, communication, and an appreciation of how dietetics integrates within broader healthcare teams, preparing learners for interdisciplinary roles in their future careers.

Delivery formats

When can PBL in a HEI take place?

Delivery model



When can PBL in a HEI take place?

PBL in a HEI environment can be part of any stage of the 1000 PBL required hours however, due to the nature of the role of a lecturer, it would be best positioned as a middle PBL opportunity or alongside PBL in a health and care setting as a final PBL opportunity, as learners will start the PBL with some experience of the dietetic role.

Early PBL	Aims to introduce learners to dietetic practice and can take place across all settings.
Middle PBL	Can take place across all settings.
Final PBL	Usually occurs in a clinical setting (health and care setting).

Delivery model

This PBL opportunity could run full-time or part-time and could be delivered alone, or in conjunction with other areas of PBL including: research, leadership or health and care dietetics. It is recommended that the PBL runs as a hybrid PBL, combining in-person and virtual activities to mimic the role of the academic.

This guide is based on a two week (75 hours) full time draft timetable (see appendix 1) however, in practice PBL in a HEI environment may be 1-4 weeks (37.5-150 hours maximum) and could be adapted to a part-time opportunity alongside PBL in a health and care setting. It is important that PBL in a HEI environment is developed using a structured educational approach that immerses learners into the academic profession and consideration needs to be given to the length of time it is reasonable for a learner to:

- Settle into the new environment and learn about how it works.
- Meet the competencies that are set out for that PBL setting.



Staffing

This type of PBL opportunity can be run internally by dietetic HEI staff with support from other departments within the HEI where appropriate.

External associate tutors or freelance dietitians could also be used to deliver this opportunity and **the guide has been developed to show where external staff may be used.**



Benefits of using dietetic HEI staff to run PBL in a HEI:

1. Supervision from registered dietitians within the HEI team
2. Learners can shadow dietetic lecturers
3. The dietetic HEI team can claim the NHS England tariff (England HEIs only).

Benefits of integrating non-dietetic HEI staff in the PBL:

1. Learners gain exposure and shadowing opportunities with interdisciplinary teaching teams; learning more about other professions and contributing to other healthcare programmes.
2. Learners can gain exposure and shadowing opportunities within the educational team.

Benefits of using an external dietitian to support PBL in a HEI:

1. Long arm supervision; external dietitians could draft timetables, liaise with Practice Education Facilitator / Course Director / teaching team to book PBL opportunities and virtually supervise the learners, undertaking weekly meetings and alleviating the workload pressure on the HEI dietetic team. Further information on long arm supervision and other models of supervision can be found on page 15.



Supervision levels

The level of supervision for a learner undertaking PBL in a HEI environment will depend on the activities they undertake and the level of PBL.



The 3 levels of supervision are:

Observing practice (level 1):

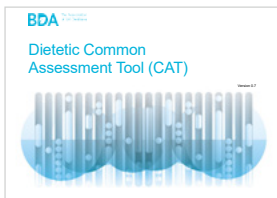
Learners may observe HEI staff giving lectures, chairing meetings and undertaking projects.

High support (level 2):

When learners are undertaking part of a lecture, facilitating a workshop or undertaking a practice role a practice educator will provide face-to-face guidance and support within close proximity.

Low support (level 3):

During set peer learning or independent study practice educators may be available for supervision and support but will not directly oversee the activities undertaken. Where required, they may provide support through phone call or online meetings.



Supervision levels for PBLs can be found in the dietetic common assessment tool (BDA, 2025).



Models of supervision

The BDA promotes the use of a variety of learner supervision models when facilitating PBL and encourages the range of options to become a normal part of education and training. These different supervision models can also support an increase in PBL capacity.



Peer assisted learning:

Two learners or more are supervised by one practice educator with emphasis on peer and self-directed learning; as the learners support one another by working collaboratively and enabling the development of different skill sets (Dawes & Lambert, 2010). The practice educator moves between supervision and facilitation.

Split or share model:

These models describe situations where one learner is shared between two or more members of a team, ideally with one lead educator to co-ordinate activities. This can be beneficial for part time staff or enabling a learner to have PBL activities in different settings.

Blended PBL:

Blended PBL models may offer a mix of virtual PBL and face-to-face PBL. Advantages of this approach relate to the flexibility in training models, including the ability to teach learners virtual working skills, mirroring and ensuring that learners are acquiring skills that make them work ready in today's climate. It also has the benefit of reducing travel time and allowing for flexibility around learner additional needs or reasonable adjustments that may prevent PBL in health and care environments.

Long arm supervision:

In the HEI the learners spend time with dietetic HEI staff, and where appropriate non-dietetic teaching teams or departments, external associate tutors and/or freelance dietitians can be used.

External and freelance dietitians could long arm supervise PBL in a HEI to support the internal dietetic team. Their role could include; drafting timetables, liaising with the teaching team, booking PBL opportunities and virtually supervising the learners, undertaking weekly meetings and alleviating the workload pressure on the HEI dietetic team.

It is important to choose the model that best suits the PBL opportunity and this requires skillful and comprehensive planning by the HEI.

We suggest you include multi-supervision models for an enhanced learner experience including: peer learning, meaning more than one learner would be recommended to undertake this PBL at any one time.



More information on supervision models can be found in the Pre-registration Dietetic Practice Based Learning (PBL) Guidance (BDA, 2023).

Role of HEI staff

HEI staff integrate the Four Pillars of Dietetic Practice, by conducting research, facilitating learner learning, maintaining professional practice, and leading academic initiatives, thereby advancing dietetic education and practice. Dependent on their role (education or research) they may have greater responsibilities across different pillars e.g. research or facilitated learning.

By engaging in PBL in a HEI environment, learners will gain exposure to capabilities across all four pillars. These capabilities have been mapped to activities within the example timetable (Appendix A).



To find more information of the Four Pillars of Dietetic Practice you can access BDA Dietetic Career Framework (2025).

The varied roles of HEI staff can be seen in the infographic below.



Teaching represents the majority of their professional output. Typical tasks include:

- Curriculum development for new and current courses.
- Preparation and delivery of educational content e.g lectures, seminars and workshops; using a mix of different teaching methods and resources.
- Creating assessments and giving feedback.
- Supervising dissertations.
- Learner pastoral support.
- Supporting admissions teams.
- Projects and research with educational outputs.



The majority of their professional output is research but their time is often split more evenly between research and teaching. Typical tasks include that of a teaching lecturer and:

- Applying for research funding.
- Carrying out reviews, experiments or field work.
- Designing research method.
- Analysing results.
- Writing up publications.
- Supervision of other researchers.



The vast majority of their professional output is research. Typical tasks include:

- Applying for research funding.
- Carrying out reviews, experiments or field work.
- Designing research method.
- Analysing results.
- Writing up publications.
- Supervision of other researchers.
- Lecturing their specialty / research area.

Suggested learning activities

These suggested activities will expose learners to the varied roles and knowledge required by dietitians within academia, including curriculum development, educational theory, and interdisciplinary collaboration. By observing lecturers and engaging in academic settings, learners will gain insights into potential career pathways in a HEI environment.



Suggested learning activities

Shadowing experiences with dietetic/health professional lecturers, researchers/education team.

For example: learning support teams.
Learners could attend meetings and
lectures to gain an understanding of
the role of a dietitian.

A scoping or asset mapping activity to identify need.

For example:

- teaching resources
- learner support systems
- interdisciplinary collaboration
- development of HEI PBL for future use.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) in dietetics and dietetics learning

Audit or service evaluation of retrospective practice, outcomes, and evidence base.

e.g. teaching resources in
the dietetics programme and
ensuring alignment with BDA's
the Four Pillars of Dietetic
Practice.

Undertaking set learning: educational theory

Attending CPD activities

e.g. workshops,
webinars, enabling
theory to practice
development.

Projects or resource creation.

For example: Development and
possible delivery of a peer-led teaching
and mentorship programme or
interdisciplinary education materials,
such as:

- case studies
- lectures
- seminars
- podcasts

Updating reading lists, case studies and
problem solving scenarios, simulation
and outreach materials
for socials and admissions.

See the following appendices for an example timetable and more detailed example activities:

- A** Appendix A - example timetable. Including activities that are mapped across to the Common Assessment Tool (CAT) capabilities and four pillars of dietetic practice.
- B** Appendix B - more detailed examples of activities and resources. Which include learning outcomes, activities that learners could undertake, time required to complete the tasks and the deliverables that could be achieved.
- C** Appendix C – additional HEI example tasks.

Additional factors to consider

Finances

Paperwork

Training

Pastoral care



Finances

By hosting a PBL opportunity you can claim the NHS England training tariff (for HEIs in England only). This may be used towards in house or external staff time.

We are aware that Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland do not have the same tariff arrangements in place, so internal funding would need to be secured if using external staff to deliver this type of PBL.

Paperwork

Hours

The practice educator will set core or acceptable working hours for their PBL and learners will maintain a PBL attendance log weekly.

Performance logs

Performance should be tracked throughout the PBL by learners with timely succinct entries and reflections within a performance tracker and by practice educators providing narrative feedback on dietetic learner performance. Feedback from practice educators should give context using concrete examples, indicate relative strengths and weaknesses, focus on learner growth and professional development, and provide clear actionable steps to improve (approximately 50 words) (BDA CAT, 2025).

Weekly review

On a weekly basis (or approximately 37.5 hours of PBL), a weekly review summary is used to link learning more explicitly with the 12 dietetic capabilities. Due to the short nature of this PBL opportunity (2 – 4 weeks), you may wish to include a half way review, however, it is not mandatory.

Training

It is vitally important that individuals taking responsibility for PBL have received the relevant training associated with the role and engage in regular follow up training to ensure skills are up to date with ongoing support available. Any practice educators, including internal and external collaborators, should meet the usual HEI requirements for practice educators which usually consists of HEI led training and BDA practice educator online training [available through the BDA learning zone](#).

Additional practice educator training may include the PBL in a research environment online module. Module one is for Practice Educators, HEIs and potential providers and includes: curriculum mapping and learning outcomes, examples of paperwork, examples of projects, case studies, supervision and legal considerations.

More information can be found in the [Pre-registration Dietetic Practice Based Learning \(PBL\) Guidance \(BDA, 2023\)](#).

If looking to utilise the CAT paperwork then appropriate training must be completed. More information on CAT training can be found in the [CAT Guidance document](#).

Pastoral care

Dietetic learners will require pastoral support like any other PBL setting, supporting learners pastorally as part of an inclusive team culture. Dietetic learners will require a PBL supervisor who undertakes the end of week reviews, this may be an internal or external staff member, however, it is recommended that this is not their personal tutor to ensure that the learner has a member of faculty to approach with any ongoing concerns. In addition, the HEI may wish to consider allocating the learner a buddy or mentor, someone who is not involved in their PBL assessment but can provide support throughout their PBL.

The [BDA wellbeing and resilience webpage](#) provides information and signposting to a variety of resources that can be used to support delivery of pastoral support to learners.

Appendices

[Appendix A](#) – Example timetable

[Appendix B](#) – Example activities included in the example timetable

[Appendix C](#) – Additional HEI suggested activities

[Appendix D](#) – Case study, University of Hertfordshire (internally led)

[Appendix E](#) – Case study, University of East Anglia (externally led)

[Appendix G](#) – Case study, learner experience



Appendix A – Example timetable

Week 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Introduction	Educational theory	Curriculum design	Creating educational materials	Delivery of educational materials
	F2F	F2F	Online	Online	F2F
9 – 9.30am	Read through introduction pack / timetable	Shadowing lecturer	Task on BDA / HCPC curriculum	Present curriculum design project – peer review	Presentation of group project 1
9.30 – 10.30am	Meeting with the lead practice educator				
10.30 – 12.30pm	Speed networking with dietetic lecturers		Educational theory task: Curriculum design	Group project 1	Reflections and end of week supervision meetings
12.30 – 1pm	Lunch				
1 – 3pm	Educational theory and pedagogy task	Workshop on educational theory with lead practice educator	Individual project 1: Curriculum design	Group project 1	Interdisciplinary Teaching Discussion
3 - 4pm		Shadowing lecturer			Group reflections and observations of interdisciplinary teaching – identify dietetic opportunity
4.30 – 5pm					Reflections

Appendix A – Example timetable

Week 2	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Assessment & feedback	Learning environment & support	Inclusive education	The role of the researcher in a HEI	Four Pillars of Dietetic Practice
	Online	F2F	Online	F2F	F2F
9 – 9.30am	Educational theory task: assessment & feedback	Teams meeting with neurodiversity support lead	Meet with the admissions lead	Presentation of group project 2	Reflection
9.30 – 10.30am		Teams meeting with dietetic practice lead to discuss reasonable adjustments	Group project 2		Educational theory: educational roles in dietetics
10.30 – 12.30pm	Assessment marking task	Educational theory: learning environment task			
12.30 – 1pm	Lunch				
1 – 2pm	Group discussion on assessment & feedback	Inclusive teaching practices workshop	Group project 2	Meet with a dietetic researcher	PBL summary blog
2 – 3pm	Meeting with the learning enhancement team (LET)			Shadow research dietitian (labs / undertaking data analysis)	Final reviews / portfolio of evidence
3 - 4pm	Learning teaching support team (LTS) meeting				
4.30 – 5pm	Discussion with practice education lead & reflections				

Appendix A – Example timetable

Week 1				
Example activities	Self-directed activity	Overview of the session	CAT capabilities	Activity suitable for external support / long-arm supervision
Read through introduction pack / timetable	Yes	To provide an opportunity to review the timetable and prepare any questions for the meeting with the lead practice educator.	Facilitated learning	
Meet with lead practice educator	No	To provide an overview of work placement policies & procedures and introduce learners to projects. Learners to advise lead practice educators of reasonable adjustments or additional requirements for PBL.	Professional practice	Yes
Speed networking	No	Attend an introductory session (30 minutes each) with various dietetics programme staff (e.g., module leaders, clinical educators, research-focused lecturers, practice education leads, admission lead etc.). Discuss their roles, responsibilities and work profiles across the dietetics programme.	Professional practice	
Education theory task	Yes	Understanding the underpinning educational theory and pedagogy	Facilitated learning	Yes
Shadowing lecturer	No	Observe a dietetics lecturer undertaking a lecture. Take notes on teaching techniques, learner engagement strategies, and content delivery. Opportunity to engage in peer review.	Professional Practice Facilitated learning	
Workshop on educational theory & pedagogy	No	Discussing the set tasks and shadowing. Covering topics such as adult learning principles, learning styles, and active learning strategies.	Professional Practice Facilitated learning	Yes

Appendix A – Example timetable

Week 1				
Example activities	Self-directed activity	Overview of the session	CAT capabilities	Activity suitable for external support / long-arm supervision
Shadowing lecturer	No	Observe a dietetics lecturer undertaking a seminar, workshop or discussion. Take notes on teaching techniques, learner engagement strategies, and content delivery. Reflect on the difference between this observation and this morning's lecture. Opportunity to engage in peer review.	Professional Practice Facilitated learning	
Workshop on BDA/HPCPC curricula	Yes	Introduce learners to the BDA and HCPC curricula resources. In pairs, learners to map lectures to HCPC and BDA curricula.	Professional Practice Facilitated learning	Yes
Educational theory task: curriculum design	Yes	An opportunity to reflect on learning theory & curriculum design, identifying considerations when planning curriculum.	Facilitated learning	Yes
Individual project 1: curriculum design (task1).	No	A focused curriculum design project to develop practical skills in educational planning and resource creation	Professional Practice Research and Evidence Facilitated learning	Yes
Presentation of individual project 1	No	Presentation to peers & dietetic team member communicating the key components of their designed learning session, demonstrating an understanding of curriculum alignment with professional standards and the ability to engage peers or faculty through clear and structured delivery. Opportunity to engage in peer review.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership	Yes
Group project 1: educational materials	No	To collaboratively design a one-hour lecture that aligns with the HCPC standards and BDA competencies, focusing on a specific curriculum topic. This task develops teamwork, communication, and curriculum planning skills while reinforcing the ability to deliver structured educational content.	Professional Practice Research and Evidence Facilitated learning	Yes

Appendix A – Example timetable

Week 1				
Example activities	Self-directed activity	Overview of the session	CAT capabilities	Activity suitable for external support / long-arm supervision
Presentation of group project 1	Yes	Delivery to dietetic team member(s) of their educational material (e.g. lecture / workshop/ seminar) with 10 minute summary of how it meets the requirements of the task. Opportunity to engage in peer review.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership	
End of week review	Yes	Learner to identify up to three capabilities for which evidence has been captured and summarises progress and reflecting on areas for developing practice. Practice educators to review previous week actionable steps and evidence for capabilities and complete a wellbeing check in.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership	Yes
Interdisciplinary teaching discussion	No	Discussion with an AHP lecturer on the role of the dietitian and the importance of dietetic collaboration in healthcare.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership	
Group discussions	No	Group reflections & observations from interdisciplinary teaching discussions – identify dietetic collaboration opportunity.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership	Yes
Feedback to supervisor on discussions	No	By engaging in reflective discussions and providing structured feedback to supervisors, the learner will develop critical communication and analytical skills, demonstrating their ability to articulate insights, evaluate professional practices, and contribute constructively to the enhancement of educational and practice-based processes.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership	Yes

Appendix A – Example timetable

Week 2				
Example activities	Self-directed activity	Overview of the session	CAT capabilities	Activity suitable for external support / long-arm supervision
Educational theory task: assessment & feedback	Yes	To provide an opportunity for learners to identify appropriate methods of providing feedback, the importance of planning assessment and evaluation.	Facilitated Learning	Yes
Assessment marking task (task 2)	Yes	Gain hands on experience of using the senate scale and providing constructive feedback.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning	Yes
Group discussion (task 2)	Yes	Learners will participate in a discussion on assessments with peers to compare and contrast their marking and feedback.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning	
Teams meeting with learning enhancement team	No	To gain an understanding of what is available for learners to support their learning	Facilitated Learning	
Learning teaching support team (LTS) meeting	No	To gain an understanding of next steps of assessment and marking (e.g. fails / moderation / external examining / school boards).	Facilitated Learning	
Discussion with practice education lead and reflections	No	Discussion of grading and feedback, compare with supervisor. Reflect on learning & experiences.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning	Yes
Teams meeting with neurodiversity support	No	To gain an understanding of what is available to learners with additional needs that may require reasonable adjustments.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning	
Teams meeting with dietetic practice education lead to discuss reasonable adjustments	No	To gain an understanding of reasonable adjustments at university and on practice placement for dietetic / AHP learners.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning	

Appendix A – Example timetable

Week 2				
Example activities	Self-directed activity	Overview of the session	CAT capabilities	Activity suitable for external support / long-arm supervision
Educational theory: learning environment task	Yes	To appreciate the importance of the learning environment and learning preferences of learners, considering reasonable adjustments and learner requirements.	Facilitated Learning	Yes
Self-study: learner engagement (task 5)	No	Gain an understanding of how to maximise learner engagement through use of educational technology tools.	Facilitated Learning	Yes
Inclusive teaching practices workshop (task 3)	Yes	Discussion on barriers to inclusivity in dietetic education, identifying strategies to overcome these barrier.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning	Yes
Meet with the admissions lead	No	Introduction to group project 2: strategies for promoting the dietetic profession to diverse audiences.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership	
Group project 2 (task 4)	Yes	Inclusive Admissions: strategies for promoting the dietetic profession that is respectful and inclusive of different cultures, needs and backgrounds.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership	
Group project 2 presentations	No	Presentation of group project 2 with peer feedback. Opportunity to engage in peer review.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership	
Meet with nutrition / dietetic researcher*	No	An introduction to the role of a dietitian in research, current projects.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning	
Shadow research dietitian*	Yes	Shadow research dietitian (labs or undertaking data analysis).	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Research & Evidence	Yes

*This activity could be replaced with the opportunity to teach their group 1 project as a group to other dietetic years.

Appendix A – Example timetable

Week 2				
Example activities	Self-directed activity	Overview of the session	CAT capabilities	Activity suitable for external support / long-arm supervision
Reflection	No	Reflect on the role of a research dietitian in a HEI.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership Research and Evidence	Yes
Educational theory: Educational roles in dietetics (task 6)	No	Reflect on the role of a lecturer, linking with capabilities and the four pillars of dietetic practice.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership Research and Evidence	Yes
PBL summary blog	No	To engage in a written summary of experiences on placement which can be shared with future learners, for admissions and on social media.	Professional Practice Leadership	Yes
End of week / placement review	Yes	Learner to identify capabilities for which evidence has been captured and summarises progress and reflecting on areas for developing practice. Practice educators to review previous week actionable steps and complete wellbeing check in. If end of placement review, practice educator and learner to complete 100 word entry of progress towards the capabilities of the Four Pillars of Dietetic Practice. Practice educator to check hours and make judgment on whether the learner has attained minimum levels for progression for relevant capabilities and passed this PBL stage.	Professional Practice Facilitated Learning Leadership	Yes

Appendix B – Task 1: Curriculum design

Task description:

You are tasked with designing a **one-hour teaching session** for dietetic learners on a **nutrition topic***. The session should align with the BDA curriculum (2020) and the HCPC SOPs (2023).

Learning outcomes for the task:

By completing this task, you will:

1. Gain experience in designing a focused learning session aligned with HCPC SOPs and BDA curriculum (2020).
2. Develop skills in structuring educational content.
3. Build confidence in delivering educational content to an audience of peers and lead practice educator with an emphasis on clarity, enthusiasm, and professionalism.
4. Participate in a structured peer review process, offering constructive and specific feedback on your peers' presentations, focusing on content, delivery, and alignment with professional standards.

Steps to complete the task:

1. Define learning outcomes:

Write 2–3 measurable learning outcomes for the session.

Example: "By the end of this session, learners will be able to identify key strategies for reducing obesity in school-aged children."

2. Session outline:

Create a brief outline of the session, including:

- Introduction (10 minutes): Overview of the topic and its relevance to dietetic practice.
- Main Content (30 minutes): Key points, research evidence, or strategies related to the topic.
- Activity (15 minutes): Design an interactive activity, such as a group discussion or case study related to the topic.
- Conclusion (5 minutes): Recap key points and answer questions.

*This nutrition topic may be something you wish the learners to teach other dietetic or AHP learners during this PBL, or it may be a new topic you wish to integrate into the dietetic curriculum.

3. Teaching method:

Identify the primary teaching strategy, such as a short presentation with interactive elements (e.g. polls, group discussions).

4. Resource list:

Identify 3 – 4 resources (e.g. journal articles, recent publications, infographics, or videos) to support your session.

5. Reflection question:

Create one reflection question for learners to consider after the session.
Example: "How can dietitians collaborate with schools to promote healthy eating habits among children?"

Deliverables:

A **one-page session plan** with the following sections:

- 🔹 Topic
- 🔹 Learning outcomes
- 🔹 Session outline
- 🔹 Teaching method
- 🔹 Resources

- 🔹 Reflection Question
- 🔹 15 minute presentation to peers and lead practice educator / dietetic staff member of session plan.
- 🔹 Engage in peer review of others presentations

Guidance and support:

Use the **BDA Curriculum Framework** and HCPC standards as references to ensure the session aligns with professional competencies.

Time allocation (4 Hours):

- 🔹 **1 Hour:** Research and identify key points for the session.
- 🔹 **1 Hour:** Develop the session outline, learning outcomes, and activity.
- 🔹 **1 Hour:** Write the session plan and prepare for review.
- 🔹 **1 Hour:** Prepare for presentation of task.

Appendix B – Task 2: Mastering the Senate Scale: providing constructive feedback in dietetic education

Task description:

To teach dietetic learners how to apply the Senate Scale effectively for assessing work and providing constructive feedback that supports learning and development.

This task is designed to help you understand and practice assessment and feedback by using the Senate Scale, a framework commonly employed in academic settings to evaluate the quality of assessments submitted. You will apply the scale to assess a peer's work and provide feedback that aligns with best practices in dietetic education.

Learning outcomes:

By completing this task, you will:

1. Understand the principles and criteria of the Senate Scale for academic assessment.
2. Develop skills in providing constructive, balanced, and actionable feedback.
3. Enhance your ability to critically evaluate academic and practical work in dietetics.
4. Reflect on the role of assessment and feedback in supporting professional growth and competency development.

Steps to complete the task:

1. Re-familiarise yourself with the Senate Scale:

Familiarise yourself with the Senate Scale criteria, focusing on key elements such as content quality, structure, presentation, originality, and critical analysis. Look up any terms you are not familiar with.

2. Practice assessment:

- You will be provided with an anonymised piece of work, such as a short essay.
- Use the Senate Scale to assess the work, assigning a grade and providing a rationale for your evaluation.

3. Provide constructive feedback:

Write two constructive points for the author of the work, ensuring it is:

- Specific: Highlight specific strengths and areas for improvement.
- Actionable: Suggest concrete steps the author can take to enhance their work.
- Balanced: Include both positive feedback and areas for development.

4. Participate in a feedback discussion:

- Present your assessment and feedback to your group or supervisor.
- Compare your evaluation with peers and discuss differences in interpretation or scoring.
- Discuss processes within HEIs and next steps (e.g. moderation, double marking, external marking).

5. Reflect on the experience:

Complete a brief reflective exercise on what you learned about, providing feedback and how this task will inform your future practice.

Completed tasks:

1. A **completed Senate Scale evaluation form** with your grading and rationale.
2. A **feedback document** written for the author of the assessed work.
3. A **reflection statement** summarising your experience and key takeaways.

Time allocation (4 Hours):

- **30 minutes:** Review the Senate Scale and provided work.
- **1.5 hours:** Complete the assessment and feedback.
- **1 hour:** Participate in a discussion on assessments with peers or supervisors.
- **30 minutes:** Write your reflection statement.

This task is designed to improve learners' understanding of assessment frameworks while reinforcing their ability to provide meaningful feedback, a skill essential for both educational and professional settings in dietetics.

Appendix B – Task 3: Discussion and workshop: fostering inclusivity in dietetic education

Task description:

To engage learners in a structured workshop type discussion about the principles of inclusive teaching and explore practical strategies for creating accessible and equitable learning environments in dietetic education.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this discussion-based workshop, participants will:

1. Understand common barriers to inclusivity in dietetic education.
2. Identify practical strategies to overcome these barriers and foster an inclusive learning environment.
3. Reflect on their own experiences and explore ways to promote inclusivity in their future teaching or professional practice.

Workshop Structure:

1. Introduction (10 minutes):

- Briefly explain the importance of inclusive teaching in dietetic education and professional practice.
- Share key principles of inclusive teaching, such as:
 - Respecting diversity, including but not limited to: cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic and learning differences.

- Addressing accessibility needs (physical, sensory, and cognitive).
- Creating equitable opportunities for engagement, representation, and expression.

■ Prompt for discussion:

Ask participants: “What does inclusive teaching mean to you, and why do you think it is important in dietetic education?”

2. Group discussion: Barriers to inclusion (15 minutes):

- Divide participants into small groups (3–5 members each) and ask them to discuss the following questions:
 1. What barriers might learners face in engaging with dietetic education as a learner (e.g. cultural, religious, linguistic, accessibility challenges)?
 2. What strategies have you experienced or observed that help overcome these barriers?
 3. Do you have any other strategies would you suggest to overcome these barriers?
- Use the Senate Scale to assess the work, assigning a grade and providing a rationale for your evaluation.

3. Scenario-based discussion: Designing inclusive learning (20 minutes):

■ Present a scenario to the group:

“You are designing a teaching session for a diverse group of learners, including both UK and international learners, those with visual impairments, English as a second language (ESL) learners, and those from varied cultural backgrounds. The topic is ‘Healthy Eating’, how would you ensure this session is inclusive for all?”

■ Facilitate a whole-group discussion, prompting participants to consider:

- Strategies for making content accessible for all learners (e.g. providing materials in multiple formats, using visual aids with descriptions).
- Using culturally inclusive examples and language.
- Creating interactive elements that engage all learners.

4. Reflective discussion: Inclusive practices in their own learning (10 minutes):

■ Ask participants to reflect on and share:

1. What inclusive practices have they personally experienced as learners that made a positive impact?
2. What changes or improvements would they suggest for dietetic education to become more inclusive?

5. Summary and closing (5 minutes):

■ Summarise key points discussed during the workshop:

- Common barriers to inclusion in education.
- Practical strategies for fostering inclusivity.
- Insights from participants’ personal experiences.

■ Encourage participants to think about how they can incorporate inclusivity into their future teaching or professional roles.

Discussion prompts:

■ What are some examples of inclusive teaching practices you have seen or used?

■ How can you ensure that dietary advice and teaching materials are culturally sensitive?

■ What tools or technologies might help make teaching more accessible?

This discussion format ensures active participation and allows learners to collaboratively explore inclusive teaching practices while reflecting on their relevance in dietetic education

Appendix B – Task 4: Inclusive admissions - strategies for promoting applications to the dietetics programme: Reaching diverse audiences

Task description:

The objective of this task is to collaboratively research, design, and deliver a presentation on strategies for promoting dietetic programmes to diverse audiences, ensuring the messaging is inclusive, engaging, and accessible to individuals from varied cultural, socioeconomic, and educational backgrounds. As a group, you will create a **10-minute presentation** on strategies to promote applications to the dietetics programme. Your presentation should outline specific approaches to engage diverse prospective learners, highlight the benefits of the programme, and showcase how the programme fosters inclusivity and accessibility.

Learning outcomes:

By completing this task, you will:

1. Understand and articulate strategies for promoting applications to the dietetics programme in an inclusive and accessible way.
2. Collaborate effectively with peers to design and deliver a professional presentation.
3. Develop skills in creating outreach and communication strategies tailored to diverse audiences.
4. Build confidence in presenting and discussing promotional strategies in a professional setting.

Steps to complete the task:

1. Research and plan (30 minutes):

Divide roles within your group:

- 🔹 **Target audience lead:** Research the demographics of prospective learners, including underrepresented groups, and their potential barriers to applying (e.g. awareness, finances, academic preparation).
- 🔹 **Messaging and communication lead:** Develop inclusive messaging that appeals to diverse groups, emphasising the programme's benefits, such as career opportunities and its supportive learning environment.
- 🔹 **Outreach and engagement lead:** Explore outreach strategies, such as school visits, online campaigns, or community events, that can effectively reach a wide audience.
- 🔹 **Visual and digital media lead:** Investigate tools and platforms (e.g., social media, webinars, or infographics) to promote the programme in engaging and accessible ways.

2. Develop presentation content (45 minutes):

- 🔹 **Introduction:** Define the purpose of the task and explain why promoting inclusivity and diversity in programme applications is important.

➤ **Strategies:** Present key strategies under the following headings:

- **Targeted outreach:** For example, visiting schools in underrepresented communities, partnering with cultural organisations, or attending career fairs.
- **Inclusive messaging:** For example, using testimonials from current learners of diverse backgrounds, avoiding jargon, and emphasising programme accessibility (e.g. scholarships, part-time study options).
- **Digital campaigns:** For example, creating engaging social media posts, hosting live Q&A sessions with current learners, or producing videos showcasing the programme's strengths.

➤ **Case example:** Provide a brief example of a proposed outreach activity, such as a virtual open day tailored to prospective learners from non-traditional educational backgrounds.

3. Prepare for presentation (30 minutes):

- Create slides or visual aids to support your presentation.
- Ensure your presentation is structured, clear, and engaging.
- Practice delivery as a group, allocating speaking roles to ensure equal participation.

4. Deliver the presentation (10 minutes):

- Present your strategies to the class or audience.
- Use interactive elements, such as polling the audience about what might appeal to prospective learners or sharing a sample video or social media post.

5. Facilitate a Q&A session (5 minutes):

Be prepared to answer questions from the audience and discuss your proposed strategies further.

Deliverables:

1. A **10-minute group presentation** including visual aids.
2. A **case example** demonstrating one specific outreach or engagement strategy.
3. A **list of references** for the tools, resources, and research used.

Key guidelines for content:

- Use examples that are realistic and achievable for the dietetics programme.
- Avoid assumptions about barriers or preferences; base your strategies on research and evidence.
- Ensure messaging is inclusive, highlighting the programme's commitment to diversity, equity, and support.

Discussion prompts:

1. **Relevance and clarity:** How well does the presentation address the goal of promoting programme applications to diverse audiences?
2. **Application of strategies:** Are the proposed strategies practical and supported by evidence or examples?
3. **Engagement:** Does the presentation engage the audience through clear delivery, visuals, and interaction?
4. **Collaboration:** Was the task distributed fairly among group members, and did everyone contribute?

This group presentation task prepares dietetic learners to think critically and creatively about engaging diverse prospective learners, fostering awareness of inclusivity in higher education outreach.

Appendix B – Task 5: Enhancing learner engagement through educational technology

Task description:

The objective of the task would be to explore and evaluate educational technology tools that enhance learner engagement, and to develop strategies for integrating these tools into a learning session for dietetic education. As a future dietitian and educator, understanding how to engage learners effectively is crucial. This task will introduce you to a range of educational technology tools that can foster interactivity and engagement in learning sessions. You will research tools, evaluate their potential benefits, and outline how you could incorporate one or more tools into a dietetic learning session.

Learning outcomes:

1. Gain an understanding of how educational technology tools can enhance learner engagement in dietetic education.
2. Develop skills in selecting and integrating appropriate tools into a learning session.
3. Build confidence in designing interactive, technology-supported activities.
4. Reflect on the role of technology in fostering active learning and improving teaching effectiveness.

Steps to complete the task:

1. Research educational technology tools:

- 🔹 Explore commonly used tools for learner engagement, such as:
 - **Kahoot!:** Interactive quizzes and polls.
 - **Mentimeter:** Live audience engagement through polls, word clouds, and Q&A.
 - **Padlet:** Collaborative boards for brainstorming and sharing ideas.
 - **Nearpod:** Interactive presentations with quizzes, polls, and virtual field trips.
 - **Google Jamboard:** Collaborative whiteboard for group activities.
- 🔹 Focus on tools that align with your teaching objectives and fit within a dietetic education context.

2. Evaluate the tools:

Consider the following questions:

- 🔹 How does the tool enhance learner engagement?
- 🔹 What types of activities or interactions does it support (e.g., quizzes, collaboration, discussion)?
- 🔹 Is it easy to use for both instructors and learners?
- 🔹 How can it be tailored to dietetic education topics?

3. Develop a plan for integration:

Select one or more tools and outline how you would use them in a one-hour learning session. Include:

- The chosen topic (e.g., “Nutrition for Mental Health” or “Sustainable Eating”).
- A specific activity where the tool will be used (e.g., a quiz, brainstorming session, or case study discussion).
- A brief explanation of why you chose the tool and how it supports the learning objectives.

4. Create a sample activity:

- Design a short activity (5–10 minutes) using your selected tool.
- Provide instructions for how the activity will run and what the learners are expected to achieve.

5. Reflection:

- Write a brief reflective statement on what you learned about using technology to enhance engagement.
- Consider how this experience will influence your approach to teaching and learner engagement in the future.

Deliverables:

1. A **summary of the chosen tool(s)**, including their features, benefits, and potential challenges.
2. A **detailed plan** for integrating the tool(s) into a one-hour learning session.
3. A **sample activity** designed using the selected tool.
4. A **reflection statement** outlining key takeaways and how you will apply this knowledge in future teaching.

Time allocation (2hours):

- **45 minutes:** Research and evaluate tools.
- **45 minutes:** Develop the integration plan and sample activity.
- **30 minutes:** Write the reflection statement.

This task equips learners with practical knowledge of modern educational tools, preparing them to create engaging and interactive learning environments in dietetic education.

Appendix B – Task 6: Exploring educational roles in dietetics and reflecting on the four pillars of dietetic practice

Learning outcomes:

By completing this task, you will be able to:

1. Identify the different educational roles within dietetics.
2. Appreciate the various skills required for each role to teach, advise, and train their audiences.
3. Reflect on how the **BDA Four Pillars of Dietetic Practice** are integrated into the role of a dietitian

Activity 1: Identify educational roles:

Describe the educational role of the following dietitians:

- Lecturer
- Researcher
- Practice educator
- Lead practice educator
- Clinical dietitian
- Dietetic manager
- School or paediatric dietitian
- Diabetes/weight management group educator

- Committee or specialist group member
- Dietitian in journalism
- Public health dietitian
- Social media dietitian
- Industry dietitian

Activity 2: Leadership in dietetics

1. Define leadership vs. management:

- Use the following prompts to define and distinguish between leadership and management in the context of dietetics:
 - Leadership: Inspiring and influencing others toward a shared goal.
 - Management: Organising resources and processes to achieve goals efficiently.
- Write a brief comparison of the two concepts.

2. Explore compassionate leadership:

- Watch this video on **compassionate leadership**: [Compassionate Leadership Video](#).
- Summarise the key elements of compassionate leadership. How does it relate to dietetic practice?

3. Leadership qualities in dietetics:

- Identify the leadership qualities dietitians need in the roles listed in activity 1. Consider:
 - Empathy and communication (compassionate leadership).
 - Decision-making and adaptability.
 - Vision and the ability to inspire others.
- Reflect on how leadership qualities align with the leadership pillar of practice.

Activity 3: Reflective exercise on the four pillars

Reflect on the educational roles and leadership qualities explored in activities 1 and 2. Answer the following questions:

- Which of the Four Pillars of Dietetic Practice (practice, research and evidence, facilitated learning & leadership) do you feel most drawn to, and why?
- How does the role of the HEI dietitian (lecturer / researcher) practice across the four pillars?

Task outcomes:

By completing this task, you will:

1. Understand the diversity of educational roles in dietetics and their connection to the four pillars of dietetic practice.
2. Recognise the importance of leadership qualities, including compassionate leadership in dietetic practice.
3. Reflect on your personal development in relation to the four pillars and identify areas for growth in your dietetic career.

Appendix C – PBL in a HEI environment: Other suggested activities

In addition to the suggested activities in the draft time (Appendix A), additional suggested activities for PBL in a HEI can be found below:

1. Undertaking set learning: educational theory

- 🔹 **Activity:** Engage in focused study sessions on adult learning theories, pedagogical principles, and active learning techniques.
- 🔹 **Purpose:** Help learners understand the foundational principles of effective teaching and how these can be applied in dietetic education.
- 🔹 **Example:** Completing an online module or self-directed study which can later be applied to projects within the PBL.

2. Shadowing experiences

- 🔹 **Activity:** Observe lecturers, researchers, and members of educational support teams (e.g., learning support or disability services) in action.
- 🔹 **Purpose:** Provide insight into the multifaceted roles of dietitians in HEIs and the interdisciplinary nature of academic work.
- 🔹 **Example:** Attend and reflect on a department meeting discussing curriculum updates or join a researcher for a data analysis session to understand the role of evidence in teaching.

3. Scoping or asset mapping activity

- 🔹 **Activity:** Conduct a scoping or mapping exercise to identify gaps or new needs within the HEI setting.
- 🔹 **Potential Areas:**
 - Evaluate the availability and effectiveness of teaching resources.

- Assess learner support systems for dietetic learners.
- Explore opportunities to enhance interdisciplinary collaboration or AI integration into dietetic education.

- 🔹 **Purpose:** Equip learners with skills in critical thinking, evaluation, and strategic planning while identifying areas for future improvement.

- 🔹 **Example:** Map the current use of simulation tools in dietetic education and propose opportunities for expanding their use.

4. Audit or service evaluation

- 🔹 **Activity:** Perform audits or evaluations of current educational practices or materials.

🔹 **Potential areas:**

- Review teaching resources used in the dietetics program for alignment with the four pillars of dietetic practice.
- Evaluate learner outcomes linked to specific teaching strategies or resources.
- Analyse existing case studies or problem-solving scenarios for relevance and inclusivity.

- 🔹 **Purpose:** Help learners develop analytical skills and understand the importance of evidence-based teaching practices.

- 🔹 **Example:** Audit the use of interdisciplinary activities in the curriculum and suggest improvements based on current best practices.

5. Projects and resource creation

- 🔹 **Activity:** Create or contribute to the development of educational resources, outreach materials, or learner-led initiatives.
- 🔹 **Potential areas:**
 - Design a peer-led teaching and mentorship programme for first-year dietetic learners.
 - Develop interdisciplinary educational materials, such as case studies, simulations, or seminars.
 - Update and expand reading lists to include diverse perspectives and recent evidence-based research.
 - Create outreach materials (e.g., social media posts, brochures) to promote the dietetics programme and engage prospective learners.
- 🔹 **Purpose:** Encourage creativity, collaboration, and application of theoretical knowledge to practical challenges.
- 🔹 **Example:** Develop a podcast episode discussing emerging trends in dietetics and its application in public health.

6. Attending CPD activities

- 🔹 **Activity:** Participate in professional development opportunities, such as workshops, webinars, or academic conferences.
- 🔹 **Purpose:** Bridge theory and practice by exposing learners to the latest advancements and discussions in dietetics and education.
- 🔹 **Example:** Attend a BDA webinar on leadership in dietetics and reflect on how to incorporate leadership principles into educational content.

7. Additional suggested activities

- 🔹 **Simulation development and delivery:** Collaborate on creating realistic simulated scenarios for teaching dietetic competencies, such as patient counseling or team-based problem-solving.
- 🔹 **Teaching observation and assistance:** Observe a dietetic lecture or seminar and assist in facilitating activities, such as group discussions or practical exercises.
- 🔹 **Outreach and recruitment support:** Contribute to admissions events or public engagement activities to promote the dietetics program, showcasing its inclusivity and opportunities for growth.
- 🔹 **Policy review and development:** Assist in reviewing departmental policies related to practice-based learning or educational standards, suggesting updates to align with current BDA and HCPC guidelines.

8. Reflection and learning outcomes

Learners should be encouraged to reflect on their experiences during each activity to assess how they align with the **four pillars of dietetic practice**. Key reflection questions include:

- 🔹 **Professional practice:** How does this activity inform your understanding of applying evidence-based dietetic knowledge?
- 🔹 **Facilitated learning:** How did you contribute to or observe the teaching and learning process?
- 🔹 **Leadership:** What leadership qualities did you observe or demonstrate during this activity?
- 🔹 **Research and evidence:** How did this activity incorporate evidence-based practice or promote innovation?

Appendix D – Case study 1

Education

By: Anya Bricknell

Senior Lecturer in Nutrition and Dietetics

University of Hertfordshire

Delivery: Internal supervision

As part of their PBL experience at level 6, final year dietetics learners at the University of Hertfordshire undertake a two-week leadership PBL in a variety of settings. In 2024, two learners undertook this leadership PBL with a university lecturer to demonstrate leadership in an education setting.

The learners were tasked with developing content for a new module for first year learners, aimed at developing their understanding of dietetics and growing study skills. They had input into the module learning outcomes, and considered how those outcomes could be achieved through a range of educational content. The learners were encouraged to work independently and managed their own time. They had regular supervision by an academic dietitian and were able to ask questions. The learners also had opportunity to discuss their progress with a programme development group and incorporate ideas from others into their project. Part of their experience also included participating in a programme development committee and employer engagement event.



Takeaway points:

- Learners reported enjoying the independence of running their own project and having tangible results that were going to be used in future.
- Learners enjoyed exploring another side of dietetics and seeing how educational courses are put together, which they felt enhanced their understanding of dietetic education beyond their experience as learners.
- Staff found it enjoyable to work with learners on an aspect of dietetics that they usually are less involved in and valued their perspective on the learning experience.
- The two-week timescale was felt to be an appropriate length for this kind of PBL experience. Staff felt that continuing the intensity of support required would be less sustainable over a longer period of time. On completion of the PBL learners felt that they had achieved the skill development that they could from the scenario they were working in, as well as achieving the PBL learning outcomes.
- Learners felt that they improved in employability skills such as schedule management, professional communication, co-working and problem solving.

Appendix E – Case study 2

Education

By: Ellie Coles

Registered Dietitian

Former Lecturer in Nutrition and Dietetics at University of East Anglia

Delivery: External supervision

As part of their PBL experience at level 7, final year dietetics learners at the University of East Anglia undertake a three-week elective PBL in a variety of settings. In 2024, two learners undertook this PBL to gain experiences of leadership in an education setting. This practice education opportunity was externally hosted by a freelance dietitian and former lecturer.

The learners were tasked with engaging in the theory of education (activities, discussions and workshops) and to put their new-found knowledge of education and engagement into practice by developing educational content tailored to year one dietetic learners. They were given time to research, compile resources and create educational content for any area of the dietetic programme (within the BDA curricula) that they struggled with, and re-design the delivery for future dietetic learners, whilst reflecting on the theory behind the development of the resources.

The learners met with the parenteral and enteral nutrition group (PENG) learner and education officer (practice education lead) to plan an educational event for the 2024 learner webinar, and were tasked with writing the social media, LinkedIn and webpage content for the advert of the webinar. They had regular supervision by an academic dietitian, allowing them to ask questions about their projects. They worked together and independently and were encouraged to engage in peer learning, sharing ideas and providing one another with feedback on their set tasks and projects. Both learners were given flexibility in their working hours to enable them to practice diary management and independent working alongside timetabled events. At the end of the PBL, the learners engaged in reflective learning by sharing experiences and discussing the role of education across all areas of dietetics and the applicability of their learning to their future practice.



Takeaway points:

- Learners reported that the practice education opportunity introduced them to the role of education in dietetics and that they would recommend the PBL to future dietetic learners.
- Learners reported that they benefited from having independence of managing their own time.
- Learners valued the opportunity to work with PENG and contribute to the 2024 learner webinar, however, they felt they would benefit from undertaking (wholly or in part) a lecture, workshop or seminar.
- Learners reported that they had sufficient supervision, and the practice education lead managed to support both learners alongside two others on another PBL, with ease due to learners independent projects.
- The three-week time-scale felt appropriate in length however, learners did report that they felt the workload was high and although achievable, would benefit from being reviewed.
- On completion the PBL learners shared their insights of skill development and experience in education via blog posts and social media posts.

Appendix F – Case study 3

Learner Experience

By: Bethan Hytch

MSc in Dietetics

University of East Anglia

Delivery: External supervision

I had the exceptional chance to complete practice-based learning (PBL) with Ellie Coles (within 'To Be A Dietitian') this summer. This PBL opportunity provided a totally different viewpoint on dietetic practice compared to health and care based PBL I had originally imagined when I began my studies, and I am thankful for the opportunity.

Over three weeks, I worked on several exciting projects that tested my skills in new ways. Two of my main responsibilities were; designing a learner webinar for the BDA PENG specialist group; and creating educational resources aligned with BDA guidelines. I learnt how to research and evaluate evidence, condense complex information into digestible formats, and design materials that were accessible and user-friendly for dietetic learners. This process deepened my appreciation for the importance of balancing scientific rigor with practical application.

Another key part of my PBL was developing content for a social media and blogging project. I collaborated with another learner to produce engaging, evidence-based posts that promoted balanced nutrition. This taught me how to communicate health information to diverse audiences while maintaining professional integrity and adhering to confidentiality guidelines. It was a rewarding challenge to create content that was not only accurate but also relatable and visually appealing.

Working in a largely remote setting was initially daunting. I worried about staying motivated and navigating the independence required for such a PBL. However, the regular check-ins with my supervisor and the clear structure of my tasks helped me thrive. I quickly realised that working remotely sharpened my organisational skills and taught me how to manage my time effectively. It also gave me a new perspective on



communication—without the nuances of face-to-face interaction, I had to be more mindful of tone and clarity in all my virtual collaborations.

One of the most memorable parts of my PBL was attending a live webinar hosted by the British Dietetic Association. Watching dietitians use digital platforms to educate and inspire large audiences was incredibly motivating. It gave me a clear vision of how I could integrate my passion for education and public health into my future career.

Reflecting on this experience, I can confidently say that this PBL has been a transformative part of my learning journey. It pushed me out of my comfort zone, showed me the breadth of opportunities within dietetics, and equipped me with a range of transferable skills that I'll be able to utilise across a variety of dietetic roles and settings.

To anyone about to embark on an education and academia focused PBL in a HEI environment, my advice would be to embrace the differences and trust the process. Say yes to new opportunities, remain open to learning in unexpected ways, and remember that every skill you develop is valuable. This experience has expanded my understanding of dietetic practice and inspired me to think more broadly about my future. I'm excited to see where this journey takes me next!

Glossary

Educational theory: A collective of ideas and principles that guide teaching and learning practices used to inform development of curriculum, teaching methods as well as approaches and assessments.

Educational technology: Digital technology used to facilitate teaching and learning.

HEI-based careers: Working in a higher education institution (HEI). This includes as a lecturer, researcher, course leader, learner services or head of department.

HEI-based PBL: A period of study and activities undertaken by learners as a formal element of their dietetic pre-registration training within a higher education setting e.g. education teaching teams, research environment or learner services. It's hands-on experience and experimental learning in a real or simulated educational environment.

Interdisciplinary collaboration: People from different work disciplines working together to solve a problem or create a new idea. This can involve sharing knowledge, skills, and expertise to achieve a common goal.

PBL capacity: the maximum number of dietetic learners who can take part in a PBL at any given time.

PBL in a health and care setting or health and care setting PBL: The period (s) of study and activities undertaken by learners as a formal element of their dietetic pre-registration training within a health and care setting e.g. dietetic team in the NHS or private practice. Often a health and care setting PBL will include working with service users and giving dietetic advice.

Senate Scale: An assessment system used by HEIs to set standards for grading assessments. The scale helps learners understand their marks and how to improve their work

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