

BDA Support Workforce Professional Development Framework

(Draft for consultation)

The BDA is committed to ensuring the dietetic unregistered clinical support workforce can maximise its contribution to care and have fulfilling careers. This Framework has been produced to allow support workers, managers, teams, and service leads to identify the knowledge, skills, and behaviours, which are collectively described as competencies, required at two levels of practice, which are defined below.

The Framework is progressive, meaning that staff working at Level 2 should be able to demonstrate that they have acquired the relevant competences from Level 1.

This guidance mirrors the BDA's [*Post Registration Professional Development Framework*](#) and is based around the four pillars:

- Practice: the application of work-based knowledge and skills.
- Evidence Based Practice Research: use of evidence to optimise outcomes.
- Facilitated Learning: the management and sharing of knowledge and information, including personal professional development
- Leadership: taking responsibility for one's actions and the quality of service provided. Contributing to strategy and service development.

The BDA is consulting its membership to gather as many views as possible on whether the guidance:

1. Covers all the competences the support workforce requires.
2. Is applicable to all settings that support workers are employed in.
3. Is clear and accessible.

Levels of practice

This Framework sets out two levels of practice and defines below, for each, the broad competences staff working at each require to effectively carry out their role.

The descriptions are summaries of the general levels of responsibility for support staff working at Level 1 and Level 2. They are based on the Skills for Health [Career Framework](#), the Health Education England AHP support worker [Competency, Education and Career Development Framework](#), the Scottish [Development and Education Framework for Levels 2 – 4 NMAHP Healthcare Support Worker](#) and relevant [NHS Job Evaluation](#) factors.

Level 1 Staff working at this level of practice will undertake fact-based judgements and, whilst supervised by registered Dietitians and working to local policies and procedures, staff at this level can work on their own. They undertake clinical and technical activities that are relatively straightforward and routine. They may also carry out administrative and other housekeeping tasks, contribute to service improvement and demonstrate their duties to other staff and students.

Level 2 Staff working at this level of practice will have in-depth knowledge and understanding so that they are able to interpret results, undertake more enhanced tasks than Level 1 staff some of which will not be routine. Staff at this level may undertake assessments and will demonstrate their duties to other staff and students including through training. They may also carry out some administrative and other housekeeping tasks and contribute to service improvement.

At Level 1 staff would be most likely to be employed at *Agenda for Change* band 3, although this may vary depending on the actual demands of their job. Staff at the second level would most likely be employed at *Agenda for Change* band 4. It is not expected that staff will require every competency in this guidance; actual requirements will again depend on job design.¹

¹ It is recognised that dietetic services do employ staff at Band 2, but it is not expected that these staff will perform clinical tasks. Staff may progress from Band 2 roles into service-user facing ones, for example through completing a healthcare [apprenticeship](#) at work.

The Development Framework

	Level 1	Level 2
	P1a	P1b
Practice Practices safely and effectively within their scope of practice	<p>Understands and operates within the scope of practice of the role.</p> <p>Understands the importance of supervision and undertaking appropriately delegated tasks.</p> <p>Works within operational policies, practices, and procedures, under the appropriate supervision of a registered Health Care Professional.</p> <p>Understands the meaning and importance of valid consent, obtains, and records it prior to any actions or care provision.</p> <p>May have own caseload of service users with non-complex needs who have previously been seen by a Registered Dietitian as appropriate.</p> <p>Ability to plan and prioritise workload within scope of practice.</p>	<p>Works independently carrying and prioritising own case load of service users with non-complex needs within scope of practice.</p> <p>Plans, organises, prioritises implements and monitors own practice and workload.</p> <p>Monitors individual's progress. Carries out basic risk assessment and able to document in care records.</p> <p>Identify and select appropriate equipment for the service user and environment.</p>

Understands the risks and benefits of their practice.

Awareness of risk policies and has the ability to identify and implement actions needed to minimise these.

Completes mandatory training on safeguarding and understands role with respect to safeguarding policies and procedures and is able to escalating accordingly.

Identifies when wider system issues are a source of risk and escalates these appropriately within own scope of practice.

Ensures safe and effective use of equipment by service users, including demonstration, and teaching of safe and appropriate use.

Plans, organises and performs straightforward, routine, and specific delegated tasks and activities working within procedures, policies and plans

	Level 1	Level 2
	P2a Understands, demonstrates, and provides person centred care.	P2b Supports service users to participate in decisions, relating to their care, to provide person centred care.
Service user focus Provides services that are respectful of service user preferences	<p>Develops, manages, and maintains positive and appropriate relationships with service users, families, and carers.</p> <p>Demonstrates respect, kindness, compassion, and empathy always. Able to identify ways to promote dignity and is aware of individuals' environments and factors that might cause discomfort.</p> <p>Acts with integrity and honesty, ensuring individuals do not experience harm by reporting situations, behaviours or errors that might lead to adverse outcomes for service users.</p> <p>Understands, promotes, and advocates for equality and diversity and demonstrates inclusion through interaction with individuals.</p>	<p>Where appropriate advocates for service users, their families, and carers.</p>

<p>Communication Can communicate effectively, taking into account service users' needs, using appropriate media and channels for the audience</p>	Level 1	Level 2
	<p>P3a Communicates generally routine information using a variety of methods including the use of interpersonal, written, verbal and non-verbal skills, to for example persuading service users to follow nutritional advice.</p> <p>Actively listens and receives information, addressing any barriers to understanding.</p> <p>Gives and acts on feedback.</p> <p>Uses tact and diplomacy.</p> <p>Consistently uses an appropriate medium for communication, taking account of the needs of others.</p> <p>Treats others fairly and interacts honestly and acts with integrity, respect, and empathy. Shows consistency and appropriateness in words and actions.</p>	<p>P3b Has well developed communication skills, such as reassurance, motivational and empathetic skills.</p> <p>Works with groups and individuals with varying or different communication needs (including sexual and gender identity; spirituality and religion; learning disabilities; physical impairment; mental health status; ethnic, racial and cultural identities; and language) ensuring that information is provided in an accessible way.</p> <p>Takes account of barriers to understanding.</p> <p>Provides and receives complex and sensitive information including that relating to service users such as communicating dietetic needs.</p> <p>Consistently uses an appropriate medium for communication. Shows consistency and appropriateness in words and actions</p>

	Level 1	Level 2
Evidence informed practice Uses best available research and evidence-based guidance	<p>E1a Understands the importance of evidence-based practice and research within the health care setting.</p> <p>Understands the importance of adhering to codes of practice, clinical procedures, and professional standards.</p> <p>Has an awareness of the policies, procedures and standards health care research must compile to.</p> <p>Understand and has the ability to find latest research and with can complete literature search at the request of clinicians.</p> <p>Able to adapt practice to specific situations.</p>	<p>E1b Works within scope of practice and to operating procedures, protocols and plans.</p> <p>Ability to find latest research and complete literature searches at the request of clinicians and for own knowledge and projects.</p> <p>Can analyse and evaluate basic research papers and present the results.</p>

	Level 1	Level 2
Outcomes Systematically collects, analyses, and communicates data on outcomes	E2a Has an understanding of the need for dietetic outcome indicators and their use in practice. Has knowledge of a range of dietetic outcome indicators-quality measures and indices within scope of practice	E2b Has a knowledge and understanding of the BDA model and process and of the dietetic outcome indicators related to service user care, quality and improvement Is able to apply and record dietetic outcome indicators in line with the BDA model and process to effectively capture relevant data within scope of practice

	Level 1	Level 2
Service evaluation and quality improvement Acts to continually improve the quality of service provided	<p>E3a Participates in service evaluation, audits and quality improvement activities.</p> <p>With support understands and complies with research governance, ethics, and protocols. May carry out routine research activities under the guidance of more experienced staff and disseminate findings.</p>	<p>E3b Participates and contributes to service evaluation, audits and quality improvement activities.</p> <p>Identifies where practice is ineffective or inefficient and with support seeks to identify the issues and solutions.</p> <p>Uses data from different relevant sources to evaluate their practice and seeks to improve.</p> <p>Applies research governance, ethics and protocols and can undertake more complex research using data collection and analysis.</p> <p>With support can disseminate research findings.</p>

	Level 1	Level 2
Facilitated Learning Develop resources and share knowledge to improve knowledge and skills of others	<p>F1a With the support of other staff and within their scope of practice able to deliver a learning session to peers, students, apprentices, and service users for example demonstrating own activities.</p> <p>Uses a limited range of teaching and learning techniques.</p> <p>Can reflect on teaching sessions and identify strengths and weaknesses and use this to improve further sessions.</p>	<p>F1b Is able to deliver a teaching session to peers, students, apprentices, and service users.</p> <p>Has the range of knowledge necessary to answer most questions and identify when further information is required.</p> <p>Uses a range of teaching and learning techniques.</p>

	Level 1	Level 2
Information and resource development Develop resources to support service delivery	<p>F2a Maintains knowledge of information and resources available to support service users.</p> <p>Signposts and enables access to information and resources in liaison with their supervising staff and team colleagues.</p> <p>Maintains complete, clear, accurate and timely records.</p>	<p>F2b. Can identify, signpost service-users to and contributes to the development of basic information and resources to support service delivery.</p> <p>Can find and appraise external resources to ensure they are fit for purpose.</p> <p>Can support service users access appropriate resources to assist their care plan including referring to other services where appropriate.</p> <p>Is aware of the variable quality of sources of information about food and service users' access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aware of the key components in developing 'good' information: Involve users in creating information • Create accurate and evidence-based health information • Communicate information clearly • Ensure it has impact and relevance

	Level 1	Level 2
Mentoring and supervision Assure and develop their own and other's skills	<p>F3a Actively accesses supervision or mentoring (as available) to develop own practice.</p> <p>Are able to demonstrate and provide evidence of competence within their scope of practice to students on placement However, the final assessment should be undertaken by a Registered Dietitian.</p> <p>Participates in the induction of new staff.</p> <p>Participates in the training and mentoring of less experienced support staff, along with pre-registration learners and apprentices in respect of tasks and responsibilities within their scope of practice.</p> <p>Contributes to colleague's learning and to the development of learning resources for others such as students and apprentices.</p> <p>Records own learning and personal development.</p> <p>Understands the importance of being a role model, for example to assist the development of others.</p>	<p>F3b Inducts new members of staff.</p> <p>May directly supervise, support and mentor other less experienced staff and students on placement and apprentices (although will not be responsible for signing off learner competence).</p> <p>Contributes to organisational learning and the learning of other staff and learning resources.</p> <p>Demonstrates role modelling, including advocating for other support staff.</p> <p>Takes and demonstrates management and leadership for own work within scope of practice.</p>

	Takes appropriate action when the performance and practice of others should be positively recognised or requires improvement.	
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	Level 1	Level 2
Self-development Maintain fitness to practice	<p>F4a Understands the importance of personal development and actively participates in learning opportunities to ensure they have the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviours to safely perform their role.</p> <p>Prepares for and participates in appraisals, agrees a Personal Development Plan (PDP), and seeks to meet their PDP objectives</p> <p>Records own learning and personal development, actively seeks feedback on performance identifying areas for improvement.</p>	<p>F4b Actively participates in learning opportunities and demonstrates self-improvement for example non guided learning and self-reflection on practice.</p>

	Level 1	Level 2
Strategy and vision Contributes to organisational strategy	<p>L1a Understands and can explain the main legislation, legal and ethical responsibilities that shape provision within their practice area including policies and strategies, to which they contribute to.</p> <p>Knows how their objectives and actions contribute to achievement of the strategy.</p> <p>Seeks opportunities to act as an advocate in promoting dietetics to colleagues.</p>	<p>L1b Understands and can explain the main legislation, legal and ethical responsibilities that shape provision within their practice area including policies and strategies, which they comment on, contribute to, and propose changes.</p> <p>Understands the purpose of strategy and how it is developed.</p> <p>Actively seeks opportunities to act as an advocate in promoting dietetics to colleagues</p>

	Level 1	Level 2
Managing change Work within a changing environment	<p>L2a Understands the range of organisations comprising the health and care system and the main legislative, legal and ethical requirements that shape service provision.</p> <p>Has an understanding of the function and role of their service and recognises that dietetic staff work within a continually changing environment.</p> <p>Understands the value of the proposed changes. Is able to work within a changing environment.</p> <p>Identifies issues with service delivery and actively seeks to address them, with support as necessary.</p>	<p>L2b Understands and can explain the range of organisations comprising the health and care system and the main legislative, legal and ethical requirements that shape service provision.</p> <p>Has a thorough understanding of the function and role of their services and recognises that dietetic staff work within a continually changing environment.</p> <p>Understands the value of the proposed changes. Is able to work within a changing environment and advocate for the changes to others.</p>

	Level 1	Level 2
Advocacy Contribute to advocacy efforts related to nutrition and health	<p>L3a Understands the aims and principles of advocacy and behavioural change and interventions.</p> <p>Has understanding of the wider social determinants of health and health inequalities.</p> <p>Contributes to advocacy efforts to improve nutrition and health in their population.</p>	<p>L3b Uses social media and other communication systems to support advocacy efforts.</p>

	Level 1	Level 2
Quality of service Assure quality of service	<p>L4a Accepts responsibility for the quality of the service they provide and with support as required acts to ensure that quality is maintained.</p> <p>With support and guidance of clinicians participates in projects to monitor, evaluate, and improve the quality of the service provided.</p> <p>Can identify improvements that have resulted from practice in their given area.</p>	(As Level 1)