

DIETITIANS BOARD



Te Mana Mātanga Mātai Kai Dietitians Board Registration Examination

Information for candidates

Written Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Examination Information

The written examination has been developed by the Dietitians Association Australia and the Dietitians Board of New Zealand and is administered by the Dietitians Association Australia.

The examination questions are based on the Registration Competency Requirements in New Zealand and the National Competency Standards in Australia.

The examinations assess a candidate's competence to practise in the New Zealand setting and this is an important consideration in preparation for sitting the examinations.

Access to a range of Exam Preparation Resources is provided to support overseas educated dietitians who have applied to sit the Board Registration Examination.

All candidates are strongly recommended to undertake some self-guided study to refresh their knowledge in the core dietetic areas, especially focusing on areas in which they have not recently practised.

Copies of examination papers are NOT available for study. However, sample questions and answers are available.

Format of Written Examination

The Written Examination is a 150 minute written Multiple-Choice Question (MCQ) examination consisting of 120 questions.

- The examination question paper is printed on both sides.
- The computer answer sheet is printed on both sides.
- All 120 questions are to be answered.
- All questions are of equal value.
- All answers must be on the **computer answer sheet** provided.

The examination is a closed book examination and candidates are not permitted to take reading or reference materials in the examination room. A standardised resource kit will be provided with the written examination if required.

Sample multiple-choice questions provide an example of the examination style and format and indicate the depth of knowledge required. They do not necessarily represent the degree of difficulty of the examination or the issues to be covered.

Scope of Written Examination

The multiple choice questions within the exam may be drawn from all areas of dietetic practice. The examination is designed to assess the minimum level of competency required to practise dietetics. The questions have been validated against entry-level practitioner standards and requirements. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate competency across a range of practice settings.

Assessment of Written Examination

The questions are validated against the performance of entry-level practitioners. Candidates must demonstrate sufficient competency in all areas of practice and in all aspects of the dietetic process to pass the examination. The pass mark is based on the difficulty of the questions on a particular examination, and therefore can vary between exams, in order to represent the same standard of competency.

What is an MCQ?

An MCQ asks a single question (the stem) and provides multiple options for an answer. Candidates must choose the correct answer. There is only one correct answer in the options provided.

There are different types of multiple choice questions used in the exam.

- Stand-alone MCQs – each question covers a specific topic
- Case-based MCQs – case-based questions provide a more detailed scenario and require the candidate to consider all aspects of the case to make a judgement based on the information which is provided.
- Extended matching questions – involving several questions based on a common list of options.

What do MCQs test?

Questions are designed to test competency across a range of settings including individual case management, community and public health nutrition and food service management. Questions will cover all aspects of the dietetic process from assessment and planning through to implementation and evaluation. Some questions test a single concept or item of knowledge while others will test the application of this knowledge.

How to read an MCQ

Candidates should read all questions carefully. There are no trick questions. Incorrect answers (known as distracters) are designed to reveal lack of knowledge, incorrect knowledge or incorrect application and a lack of critical thinking. There is only one correct answer for each question based on the information provided.

Oral Examination Information

The oral examination has been developed by the Dietitians Board of New Zealand in collaboration with the Universities of Otago, Massey and Auckland and is administered by the Dietitians Board of New Zealand. It is run in a way similar to an **Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)** often used in health sciences.

Candidates must be able to demonstrate sound:

- Counselling skills
- Nutritional care processes
- Cultural competence
- Health literacy

Format of Oral Examination

The Oral Examination consists of reading time, role play(s), debriefing and self-critique. The expected length of time for this process is 90 minutes. An actor plays the role of the patient/client and there are two assessors present.

Each candidate is given time at the beginning of the assessment to study the Case Information for Candidates (referral letter and other patient/client information where provided). A typical day's dietary intake will also be provided in the case information as diet history taking is not included in the role-play. Additional information should be collected by the candidate when necessary (medical, social or dietary information).

The assessors will welcome the candidate, review the purpose of the oral examination, explain the procedures and answer any questions before the role-play begins.

At the conclusion of the "consultation(s)" the candidate will be provided with an opportunity to critique their performance, add any qualifying comments they would like to make and undertake a discussion around

professional development. The candidate is asked what they feel they did well and what they feel they could have done better or need to improve on. This takes the form of an oral critique.

Scope of Oral Examination

The oral examination is designed to assess verbal counselling skills, response to cues, critical thinking, insight and reflection in a dietetic counselling situation. The oral examination takes the form of a role play of a client counselling session where the client is presenting in response to a referral from another health practitioner.

In particular the oral examination will be assessing a candidate's ability to:

- Conduct nutrition assessments for infants, children, adolescents, adults and older people
- Analyse and interpret nutrition assessment data
- Demonstrate an evidence informed approach to practice
- Select, plan and implement patient/client centred nutrition care
- Prescribe and evaluate the use of special purpose foods including vitamin and mineral supplements for infants, children and adults
- Identify potential nutritional implications of alternative and complementary therapies
- Use an interdisciplinary approach to the delivery of nutrition care
- Comply with the legal requirements and procedures for clinical documentation
- Manage a continuum of nutrition care for individuals
- Conduct effective communication
- Facilitate effective nutrition counselling
- Demonstrate culturally appropriate practice and an understanding of Tikanga
- Demonstrate professionalism

Candidates must be able to:

- structure an interview
- speak clearly and concisely and to use appropriate language
- understand the problem from the client's point of view and respond to cues given by the client
- explain relevant diet-disease relationships
- prioritise the client's health problems and negotiate nutritional management goals with the client
- give relevant, practical dietary advice that is accurate, correct, complete and easily understood by the client
- encourage client to make any necessary diet changes
- recommend an appropriate evaluation and follow-up plan

Assessment of Oral Examination

Each examiner will complete an Oral Exam Assessment Form to document the candidate's performance against the criteria set out in the Oral Exam Assessment Guide.

To pass the oral exam the candidate must demonstrate competency in all three parts of the oral examination.

- Part 1 – Performance in Phases of the Interview**
- Part 2 – Performance in Overall Communication Skills
- Part 3 – Safety of Practice

**Please note that Part 1 includes 4 phases. Each phase must be assessed as Competent Overall.