

What does a Dietitian do?

Dietitians advise patients, communities and groups about their dietary requirements for maintaining good health, managing food services and food and nutrition issues. They help people make healthy food choices, separating fact from fiction and distinguishing healthy eating plans from those that don't provide optimal nourishment. Dietitians play an important role in supporting other health professionals to help people make long-term change to their lives for a healthier lifestyle.

Salary

Dietitians usually earn \$46,000 to \$100,000 per year, depending on experience and where they work. Those starting out make about \$46,000. After four years' experience salary increases to about \$63,000 annually. Senior dietitians can earn up to \$95,000. Those working in private practice can earn up to \$100,000.

What subjects do I need to take at school?

- ❖ Biology
- ❖ Chemistry
- ❖ Maths
- ❖ English

How do I get into the job?

To become a dietitian you need to complete:

- ✓ Bachelor of Science in Human Nutrition **or** in Food Science and Nutrition
- ✓ a two-year masters' degree in Dietetics **or** in Nutrition and Dietetics
- ✓ registration with the New Zealand Dietitians Board

To enter tertiary training you need to have NCEA Level 3.

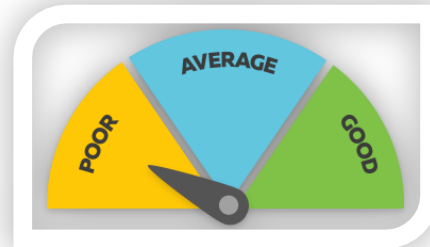
Interpersonal skills

Dietitians also need to be:

- ❖ outgoing and motivated
- ❖ able to inspire confidence in others
- ❖ patient
- ❖ able to relate to a wide variety of people
- ❖ a good communicator

Useful experience for dietitians includes work in a hospital kitchen or restaurant, food preparation, teaching or staff management experience. Dietitians should also be reasonably fit and healthy, as they act as role models for their clients.

Universities offering these degrees include Massey University and the University of Otago.



Will I get a job after studying?

According to Dietitians New Zealand, there are insufficient vacancies for the number of dietitians seeking jobs each year. However, for experienced dietitians job opportunities are reasonably good. Dietitians can work for a variety of employers, including hospitals, district health boards, private practices, government organisations, non-governmental organisations, universities, and commercial or industrial organisations. They can also be self-employed and may progress into policy or advisory work in the public sector, pharmaceuticals, the food industry, food service management, or research.

Where can I find out more?

- **Dietitians New Zealand**
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