

WORKING IN THE WORLD OF NUTRITION.

Thank you for your enquiry about getting into nutrition. It is exciting that you are obviously passionate about helping others eat well and live a healthy balanced life – yay!

I am regularly asked for more information on how to get started in the nutrition world, so I have put together the answers to the most common questions.

1. Do I need to study nutrition? And if so, where and what should I study?

If you are seriously looking to get into nutrition and making a career of it, it is best to do it properly – that is doing an undergrad or post-grad degree in human nutrition (there are some combined courses with sports/psychology etc.). A degree is generally 3+ years when studying full time, but a post-grad qualification will vary in duration. In NZ, several Universities are offering Human Nutrition degrees. If you live outside of these areas, some of the Universities offer distance learning. These qualifications would allow you to work as a nutritionist (you can become registered through the [Nutrition Society of New Zealand](#)). To become a dietitian, further study would be required. There is information about what is required in the links below.

- [Otago University](#)
- [The University of Auckland](#)
- [Massey University](#)
- [Auckland University of Technology](#)
- [Ara](#)

I trained in the UK to be a Dietitian which over there is a four-year full-time course; it works a bit differently over here. I can't comment on the ins and outs of courses here; you will need to contact the universities to see what the courses involve and how it all works.

2. What is the difference between a Dietitian and a Nutritionist?

[See here for a great breakdown.](#)

3. What types of jobs can I get as a Nutritionist or Dietitian?

Before you start, you need to think – where am I going to get a job? How will I get an income? I say that because as amazing and interesting nutrition is, there are sadly very few jobs available. As a Registered Nutritionist or Dietitian, there are various settings you can find work including Government, community, public health, sport and recreation, education and research, the food industry and the health sector. My advice - Get creative, think about different ways you can use your nutrition qualification; Be proactive - get your name out there, volunteer and make people realise they need a nutrition expert working for them!

To work in private practise work, you will most likely need some prior nutrition experience to get a job. If I were to contract someone, they would need to have a degree and a few years nutrition experience and show excellent skills at managing a consultation, giving effective advice, writing meal plans, and answering tricky nutrition questions on the spot. You may want to go out on your own and set up your own business and see people 1:1 which is excellent, but it's really good to have a clear plan of how you would make this work before you start studying so that you have the best chance of succeeding.

I hope this helps and I wish you the best of luck with your future!

Claire Turnbull.

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