

**STANDARDS FOR THE
ACCREDITATION
OF
NUTRITION PROGRAMMES

IN THE
CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY
(CARICOM)**

**Caribbean Accreditation Authority
for Education in Medicine
and other Health Professions**

CAAM-HP- 2017

**For further information, contact:
The CAAM-HP Secretariat
P.O. Box 5167, Kingston 6, Jamaica
Tel: (876) 927-4765
Fax: (876) 927-6781**

Copyright 2016 by the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine. All rights reserved. All material subject to this copyright may be photocopied for non-commercial purposes, scientific or educational, with citation.

**STANDARDS FOR THE ACCREDITATION
OF
NUTRITION AND DIETETIC DEGREE
PROGRAMMES**

**Caribbean Accreditation Authority
for
Education in Medicine
and Other
Health Professions**

CAAM-HP- 2017

**For further information, contact:
The CAAM-HP Secretariat
P.O. Box 5167, Kingston 6, Jamaica
Tel: (876) 927-4765
Fax: (876) 927-6781**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
A. Accreditation	1
B. Definitions	1
C. Goals	2
D. Criteria for Evaluation	3
E. Areas	3
F. Use of Standards	4
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS	5
I. INSTITUTIONAL SETTING	5
A. Governance and Administration	5
B. Vision, Mission, Values, and Strategies	7
C. Academic Environment	7
D. Safe and Positive Practice Environments	8
II. STUDENTS	8
A. Admissions	8
B. Visiting and Transfer Students	10
C. Student Services	10
1. Academic and Career Counselling	10
D. The Learning Environment	11
E. Student Assessment	12
F. Student Representation	12
III. EDUCATION PROGRAMMES	13
A. Curriculum Development and Management	13
B. Teaching and Supervised Experience in Nutrition	16
C. Teaching and Evaluation	18
D. Geographically Separated, On-line, and Franchise Programmes	19
E. Programme Assessment and Renewal	20
F. Programme Effectiveness	21
1. Outcomes	21
IV. FACULTY AND STAFF	22
A. Number, Qualifications and Functions	22
B. Personnel Policies	23
C. Professional Development of Faculty and Staff	23
V. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES	24
A. General Facilities	24
B. Finances	25
C. Information Resources and Library Services	25
VI. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION	26
1. Assessment and Registration Exams	26

STANDARDS FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS OF DEGREE NUTRITION PROGRAMMES

INTRODUCTION

A. Accreditation

Accreditation is a peer review process designed to attest to the educational quality of new and established educational programmes.

The Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and other Health Professions (CAAM-HP) is established to accredit dental, medical, veterinary, and other health professions education programmes leading to professional degrees required for practice in CARICOM member states. By assessing and judging the compliance of professional education programmes with nationally and internationally accepted standards of educational quality, this accreditation agency serves the interests of the general public in the CARICOM member states and the interests of students enrolled in the programmes of the schools. The Accreditation reports are intended to attest to member governments, registration bodies (local, regional, and international), as well as education institutions, and the quality of the programmes offered by the participating institutions.

B. Definitions:

Nutrition and Dietetics: The profession that involves the application of the science of human nutrition, and the relationship between people and the use of food as therapy or for the promotion and maintenance of health and wellness.

Nutrition: The science of the nutrients in food, their use in the body as well as the environmental and other factors that impact on how the body uses food to attain or maintain health.

Dietetics: The application of the science of human nutrition, other related sciences and the use of food as medical nutrition therapy for promotion and maintenance of health and wellness.

Dietitian: an individual trained in the science of nutrition and dietetics and has met the minimum academic requirements (baccalaureate degree) with successful completion of both specified didactic education and a minimum of 1200 hours supervised practice experiences through a formal approved educational programme accredited through an institution or governing body and has passed a registration board exam. The supervised practice experience requires areas of foodservice, clinical nutrition and community nutrition. Dietitians may carry the title of Registered Dietitians or Registered Dietitian-Nutritionists.

Nutritionist/Nutritionist Scientist: an individual who studies nutrition at the baccalaureate or advanced (Master's) level and has not completed a supervised practice experience nor has taken the registration exam.

C. Goals

The goals of the accreditation process are to:

1. Develop quality nutrition education programmes, consistent with the ideals of the profession, the society and the parent institution and which meet the requirements of the profession's regulatory bodies.
2. Produce nutritionists and dietitians for the region who are educated to function responsibly in diverse health care environments, contributing to health promotion and maintenance services; nutritionists and dietitians who provide care to individuals across their lifespan, to families, groups and communities with a variety of health problems.
3. Develop within graduates a keen awareness of the values of the profession of nutrition and dietetics.
4. Foster systematic enquiry into the nutrition and health care system.
5. Evaluate programme outcomes relative to the institution's mission, vision, and programme objectives.
6. Create awareness of the value of continuing quality improvement of the education programmes and their impact on the development of the profession and its contribution to positive health outcomes.
7. Assure the public of the competence of the graduates of these programmes and their ability to practice ethically and safely.

Emphasis is to be placed on professional nutrition competence on graduation, valuing and observing self-directedness for life-long learning in maintaining personal and professional development.

Evidence of education in ethical standards, evidenced-based decision-making and clinical competence, is a primary focus in establishing these standards for professional nutrition education.

D. Criteria for Evaluation

The following three values or qualities are essential to the development of an education programme, and are the criteria against which all aspects of the programme are judged.

Relevance: The extent to which the goals, activities, and outcomes of the nutrition education programme(s) are a response to the health needs of a society.

Relatedness: The inter-relatedness of the parts of a nutrition education programme, i.e., curriculum, teaching of nutrition, practice of nutrition, dietetics and research, and administration, and their influence in developing and achieving programme goals.

Accountability: The extent to which the nutrition programme values its primary responsibility of teaching students, its relationships with stakeholders, and developing within students the obligation to embrace the responsibility for safe and ethical practice.

E. Areas

To achieve and maintain accreditation, nutrition education programmes must meet the following six standards portrayed in this document as identified by CAAM-HP.

1. The Institutional Setting
2. The Students
3. Education Programmes
4. The Faculty
5. Educational Resources
6. Continuing Professional Education

These standards identify basic elements that are required of all accredited nutrition education programmes, while allowing for creativity in the pursuit of excellence in programme development and execution.

Each standard, written to provide an inter-related and holistic view of the programme, is supported by criteria and annotations, which elaborate the respective standards and guide and enhance the accreditation evaluation process.

These standards have been compiled consistent with global nutrition accreditation authorities, which include the International Confederation of Dietetic Associations (ICDA), Canada, Europe, and the USA.

The broad aim is to produce dietitians and nutritionists for the region who are trained in and can demonstrate and accept responsibilities in a wide variety of areas inclusive of health promotion and the prevention and treatment of disease through evidence-based nutrition therapy. The health and well-being of individuals is a primary focus in establishing these standards for nutrition education and is dependent on achieving high professional clinical and interpersonal ethical standards, judgement, and skills. Dietitians and nutritionists should

also be capable of contributing to the general debate on the provision of healthcare to individuals, communities, and societies.

F. Use of the standards

This document presents the CAAM-HP accreditation standards for degree nutrition programmes in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

The standards are intended to guide the nutrition programme in the development, implementation, and evaluation of their curriculum.

It is the responsibility of the nutrition programme to seek accreditation from CAAM-HP.

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

I. INSTITUTIONAL SETTING

A. Governance and Administration

IS.1 The nutrition programme's defined governance structures and functions, including the responsibilities and privileges of administrative officers, faculty, students, and committees, are promulgated in the university by-laws and in the nutrition programme's handbooks.

IS.2 The defined administrative structure and functions, including committees of the nutrition programme must show their relationships within the university, and indicate the autonomy of the faculty as a body responsible for decision-making affecting all aspects of the professional education programme.

A description/flow chart of the governance and administrative structure should be available.

IS.3 The governance and administrative committees of the nutrition programme should have representation from academic staff, students, and other stakeholders.

The roles of the faculty and students and other stakeholders in the governance of the programme should be clearly defined and known to all.

Important areas where there must be direct faculty involvement include admissions, curriculum development, implementation and evaluation, student promotions, and policy formulation.

There should be evidence produced of regular meetings of stakeholders for members to discuss the institution's and nutrition programme policies and practices.

IS.4 The nutrition programme should have a link with the Ministry of Health and various institutions providing different levels of care, to serve as a conduit for pertinent information related to the needs of the health sector.

IS.5 The governing body responsible for oversight of the nutrition programme is composed of persons who have the educational needs of the institution as a primary interest and have no conflict of interest in the operation of the school, its facilities, and/or other related teaching or service facilities.

IS.6 The terms of office of governing body members should be of sufficient duration to permit an understanding of the nutrition programme and operations.

IS.7 Administrative officers and members of the faculty must be appointed by, or on the authority of the programme's committee or its parent institution.

Written policies on appointments of officers and faculty should be presented.

IS.8 The director/coordinator of the nutrition programme must have access to the administrative head of the university or other university officials charged with final responsibility for the programme, using appropriate university chain of command to fulfill the responsibilities of the office.

IS.9 There should be a clear understanding of the authority and responsibility for nutrition programme matters among the administrative officials of the university, the director or programme coordinator, the faculty, and the administrative officials of other components of the teaching complex and of the university.

IS.10 The nutrition programme's administration should include a director or programme coordinator and other such staff necessary to accomplish the mission and strategies of the institution and the nutrition programme.

Areas that require institutional administrative support for the programme include admissions, student affairs, academic affairs, faculty affairs, postgraduate education, continuing education, clinical sites relationships, research, and business, planning, and fund raising.

An organizational structure showing how the programme is integrated within the administrative structure of the institution should be presented.

IS.11 There should be evidence of active attempts to address excessive turnover or long-standing vacancies in programme leadership, where a vacancy could negatively impact institutional stability, especially planning for or implementing the educational programme.

IS.12 The nutrition programme should interface constructively with other disciplines in the parent institution, clinical practice sites, professional organizations, government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and with regional and international partners.

IS.13 Regular evaluation of the nutrition programme director's/coordinator's effectiveness in advancing the vision, mission and strategies of the school, and in leadership and administration of the programme must be done.

IS.14 A system of record keeping of matters pertinent to the programme's administration, curriculum and student's affairs must be kept.

IS.15 Students and other records are kept confidential, according to the institution's written policy on such matters.

B. Vision, Mission, Values and Strategies

- IS.16 The nutrition programme must have defined statements of its vision, mission, goals, objectives, and strategies, which are congruent with those of the parent institution, and the guidelines for the preparation of the professional nutritionist or dietitian.

The nutrition curriculum must be designed to provide graduates with general professional competencies that are appropriate for entry into ethical and safe nutrition practice, life-long learning, and serve as the foundation for advanced nutrition education.

- IS.17 The vision, mission, goals, objectives, and strategies of the nutrition programme are defined by its principal stakeholders, which include the director, faculty, the profession, university, health authorities and wider society.

Documentation of the programme's vision, mission statement, goals, and objectives should be presented.

- IS.18 The strategies should portray the educational process that would result in a professional nutritionist or dietitian competent to practice in CARICOM countries, in keeping with the roles of professional nutritionist and dietitian in the health care system, and with an appropriate foundation for pursuing advanced education in nutrition and dietetics.

The strategies should support research and evidence-informed practice and be up to date within the context of the parent university mandates, health system goals, and expectations for professional practice.

- IS.19 The governance and administration of the nutrition programme should promote its vision and mission, and facilitate the achievement of its goals and objectives.

The vision, mission, goals, and objectives are accessible to current and prospective faculty and students.

Evidence should be available to show that the faculty regularly evaluates the adherence of these statements with programme preparation, delivery and evaluation.

C. Academic Environment

- IS.20 The nutrition programme is a component of a university which should be registered in the country where it is based. The university should offer other graduate, research and professional degree programmes that contribute to the academic environment of the nutrition programme.

Documentation of the legal status of the nutrition programme and/or parent university must be presented.

- IS.21 Faculty and students must have the opportunity to participate in research and other scholarly activities of the programme and university.

Evidence of research work undertaken by the faculty/students within the nutrition programme should be presented.

- IS.22 Faculty members should work mutually in teaching, research, and appropriate health care delivery programmes.

There is evidence of close interaction among faculty members in the various disciplines and an understanding of the relevance and integration of the various disciplines to nutrition and dietetic practice and nutrition education.

- IS.23 The nutrition programme must meet the accreditation/registration requirements as outlined by the recognized accreditation authority in the country where it is based.

Documentation of any national accreditation status is presented.

D. Safe and Positive Practice Environments

- IS.24 The nutrition programme must create and maintain a safe and positive work environment for faculty, staff, and students.

The nutrition programme's director/coordinator ensures that appropriate systems and protocols for safe practice environments, risk management and safety are employed within the workplace by all faculty, staff, and students.

There must be written policies and strategies which are congruent with the parent university's established policies and procedures, for developing and maintaining a positive work environment, including strategies for dealing with grievances, workplace stress, discrimination, and violence.

II. STUDENTS

A. Admissions

- S.1 Students must meet the minimum admission criteria defined by the university for its degree programme and as deemed essential preparation for completing the nutrition curriculum.

- S.2 The nutrition programme must develop and publish policies, criteria, and procedures for the selection and admission of students that are made readily available to potential applicants and their academic advisors.

The nutrition programme's publications, advertising, and student recruitment present a comprehensive and accurate representation of the vision, mission, goals, and objectives of the programme, and the school's criteria for selection and the admissions process.

- S.3 The nutrition programme and parent university informational materials must describe the requirements for admission, and the qualifying degree as offered on-site, off-site or through distance education, such as on-line programmes.
- S.4 The nutrition programme should develop and publish technical standards for the admission of persons with disabilities in consonance with any legal requirements in the jurisdiction where the school is established.
- S.5 The final responsibility for selecting students for admission to the nutrition programme should reside with a duly constituted faculty committee.
- S.6 The nutrition programme should have a pool of applicants sufficiently large and possessing the published qualifications to fill its entering class.
- S.7 The size and characteristics of the student intake must be related to the capacity of the nutrition programme at all stages of the education process.

The size of the entering class and of the student body as a whole is determined not only by the number of qualified applicants, but also the adequacy of critical resources:

- Finances
- Size of the faculty and the variety of specialties they represent
- Library and information systems resources
- Number and size of classrooms, student laboratories, and clinical experience sites and facilities
- Student services
- Instructional equipment
- Space for the faculty

- S.8 The nutrition programme should select from among its qualified applicants students who demonstrate the intelligence, integrity, personal and emotional characteristics necessary for them to become effective and competent nutrition professionals.
- S.9 The nutrition programme should have policies and practices ensuring the gender, racial, cultural, and economic diversity of its students.

The extent of diversity needed depends on both the institution's and programme's vision, mission, goals, the expectations of the community in which it operates, and its implied or explicit social contract at the national and/or regional level.

B. Visiting and Transfer Students

- S.10 Institutional resources to accommodate the requirements of any visiting or transfer students must not significantly diminish the resources available to existing enrolled students.
- S.11 Transfer students from other faculty, departments or institutions for selected courses should possess qualifications equivalent to the students they will join in the courses.
- S.12 Transfer students should not be accepted into the final year of the programme except under exceptional circumstances.
- S.13 The accepting institution and/or nutrition programme must verify the credentials of visiting students, formally register and maintain a complete roster of such students, approve their assignments, and provide evaluations to their parent schools.

Registration of visiting students allows the programme accepting them to establish protocols or requirements for health records, immunization, exposure to infectious agents or environmental hazards, insurance, and liability protection comparable to those of their own enrolled students.

C. Student Services

1. *Academic and Career Counselling*

- S.14 The system of academic advisory services for students should integrate the efforts of faculty members, programme director/coordinator, and student affairs officers with the school's counselling and tutorial services.
- S.15 There should be a system to assist students in career choice and application to any extra-mural or postgraduate programmes, and to guide students in choosing elective courses.
- S.16 The process of applying for extra-mural and postgraduate programmes must not disrupt the education of the students.
- S.17 There must be a system in place to review and approve students' proposed extra-mural programmes and to ensure the return of performance appraisal by the host programme.
- S.18 The institution and/or programme should develop financial aid resources that minimize any student indebtedness, and provides students with essential financial aid and management counselling.
- S.19 The institution and/or programme must have a system of confidential counselling and health services for its students that includes programmes to promote their well-being and facilitate their adjustment to the physical and emotional demands of the nutrition programme being pursued.

- S.20 Confidential counselling or health reports should **not** normally be used in academic evaluations or the promotion of students.
- S.21 Health and disability insurances should be available to all students.
- S.22 The nutrition programme must have policies addressing students' exposure to infectious and environmental hazards and should follow the guidelines in the jurisdiction in which they study in determining appropriate management, including immunization.

The nutrition programme institutes these policies by:

- Education of students about methods of prevention and control of cross-infection;
- Procedures for care and treatment after exposure, including definition of financial responsibility; and
- All registered students (including visiting students) are informed of these policies before undertaking any educational activities that would place them or patients at risk.

D. The Learning Environment

- S.23 The nutrition programme must define and publish the standards of conduct for the teacher-student relationship, and have written policies for addressing violations of these standards.

Mechanisms for reporting violations of these standards, such as incidents of harassment or abuse, assure that they can be registered by the student and investigated without prejudice to the student or faculty.

The policies specify mechanisms for the prompt handling of such complaints and promote educational activities aimed at preventing inappropriate behaviour.

- S.24 There should be no discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, age, race, religion, or creed in the admissions process and throughout the programme.
- S.25 The nutrition programme must publish for all faculty and students its standards and procedures for the evaluation, advancement, and graduation of its students and for disciplinary action.
- S.26 Students records should be confidential and available only to members of the faculty and administration with a need to know, unless released by the student or as otherwise governed by laws concerning confidentiality.
- S.27 Students must be allowed to review and challenge their records.

- S.28 Both the institution and programme should ensure that students have adequate study space, lounge areas, and personal lockers or other secure storage facilities.

E. Student Assessment

- S.29 The nutrition programme's written policy must ensure ongoing assessment of students' performance in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains at all levels of the educational programme.
- S.30 The nutrition programme must define and document the methods of assessment, including the criteria for progression in the programme.

Assessments should be both summative and formative. Summative assessment results guide student progression, and formative assessment results guide students in the learning process.

Assessment methods should be clear, concise and known to students.

- S.31 The nutrition programme should ensure consistency in the application of the assessment methods throughout the programme.
- S.32 The reliability and validity of assessment methods should be evaluated and updated as required.
- S.33 There must be written policies for student transfer, withdrawal, and termination.
- S.34 There must be a formal and transparent process for taking any action that adversely affects the status of the student.

The process includes timely notice of the impending action, disclosure of the evidence on which the action would be based, an opportunity for the student to respond, and an opportunity to appeal any adverse decision related to promotion, graduation, or dismissal.

F. Student Representation

- S.35 The nutrition programme **should have** student representation on appropriate committees, policy development activities and other matters relevant to the students.

Students participate in the early detection and correction of problems and deficiencies associated with inter alia, course delivery including clinical experiences.

There is evidence to show that students actively participate on select committees, and other appropriate activities in the governance of the programme and in the ongoing efforts to improve programme quality.

- S.36 Students should actively participate on select committees, and other appropriate activities in the governance of the nutrition programme's implementation and in the ongoing efforts to improve programme quality.

Minutes of appropriate committees showing the membership and participation of students should be available.

III. EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

A. Curriculum Development and Management

- EP.1 The nutrition degree programme must prepare graduates to function ethically and safely as a practitioner in all health care or other settings, contributing to health promotion, restoration and maintenance of health and the care of individuals across the lifespan, their families, and in community groups.
- EP.2 The nutrition faculty or department should have the responsibility and authority for the design, implementation, and evaluation of a coherent and coordinated curriculum; are accountable for the programme outcomes and have sufficient resources to fulfill this mandate.

An institutional body (commonly a curriculum committee) oversees the educational programme as a whole. An effective central curriculum authority exhibits:

- Faculty, student, and administrative participation;
- Expertise in curricular design, pedagogy, and evaluation methods; and
- Empowerment to work in the best interests of the institution's programmes without regard for parochial or departmental pressures.

The phrase "coherent and coordinated curriculum" implies that the programme as a whole is designed to achieve the faculty or department's overall educational objectives. Evidence of coherence and coordination includes:

- Logical sequencing of the various segments of the curriculum;
- Content that is coordinated and integrated within and across the academic periods of study (horizontal and vertical integration); and
- Methods of pedagogy and student evaluation that is appropriate for the achievement of the programme's educational objectives.

Evidence of effective curriculum management includes:

- Evaluation of programme effectiveness by outcome analysis;
- Monitoring of content and workload in each discipline, including the identification of omissions and redundancies; and
- Reviewing the stated objectives of individual courses and practical experiences, as well as methods of pedagogy and student evaluation to assure congruence with institutional educational objectives.

Minutes of the curriculum committee meetings and reports to the faculty governance and director document that such activities take place and show the committee's findings and recommendations.

- EP.3 The curriculum is congruent with and responsive to any national or regional guidelines and standards.

There is evidence of the use of national or regional nutrition regulations and other related documents, such as internationally defined competencies for the professional nutritionists and dietitians and the nutrition code of ethics.

- EP.4 The curriculum must be designed, developed, implemented and evaluated to reflect clear statements of expected student learning outcomes that are consistent with the overall programme expectations.

- EP.5 The curriculum scope, objectives, course descriptions, sequencing, and methods of integration should guide faculty and students' progression at each level of implementation.

The educational objectives represent the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains consistent with the level of behaviour the student is expected to exhibit at that particular stage of the curriculum.

Student achievement of these objectives is shown by specific and measurable outcomes as documented in the courses.

- EP.6 Sequence, relevance, relatedness, integration, and internal consistency should be observed in defining curriculum statements, course objectives, and content, learning objectives, teaching/learning methods, learning experiences, student evaluation methods, and enable students to develop life-long self-directed study skills.

- EP.7 The curriculum should prepare nutrition students to recognize and appropriately address gender, cultural and religious biases in themselves and others during the process of providing nutrition care and counseling to individuals, populations, and communities.

- EP.8 The curriculum content must cover cultural diversity and belief systems with respect to health and illness and the manner in which people of diverse cultures and belief systems perceive and respond to health, illness, various symptoms, and treatments.

Faculty and students should demonstrate an understanding of the manner in which people of diverse cultures and belief systems perceive health and illness and respond to various symptoms, diseases, and treatments.

To demonstrate compliance with this standard, the nutrition programme must document objectives relating to the development of skills in cultural matters, knowledge of international codes of professional conduct, and demonstrate the extent to which the objectives are being achieved.

EP.9 The nutrition programme must observe the following minimum standards which include the didactic programme and supervised practice experience:

- a. **120** total credits for the didactic portion of the programme in Nutrition
- b. The programme determines the minimum GPA requirements and qualifying examinations such as CAPE and CXC for acceptance into the programme
- c. The programme determines its length after taking into consideration learning activities that students must accomplish to obtain 120 credit hours, and
- d. Completion of 1200 hours of supervised practice experience to fulfill the requirements of the B.Sc. Degree in Nutrition.

EP.10 Mandatory courses for the nutrition undergraduate degree programme must include subjects from biological, e.g., anatomy, physiology, biochemistry; physical; behavioural and social sciences; the humanities; food science, as well as courses in clinical, community, and foodservice management.

EP.11 Instruction within the basic sciences should include laboratory or other practical exercises that entail accurate observations of biomedical phenomena.

EP.12 The curriculum should include elective courses to supplement required courses.

Electives should permit students to gain exposure to and deepen their understanding of disciplines and provide opportunities for students to pursue individual academic interests.

EP.13 There must be comparable educational experiences and equivalent methods of evaluation across all alternative instructional sites.

Courses should be similar in experience. The instruments and criteria used for student evaluation, as well as policies for the determination of grades, should be the same at all alternative sites.

The faculty who teach at various sites must be knowledgeable in the subject matter to provide effective instruction, with a clear understanding of the objectives of the educational experience, and the evaluation methods used to determine achievement of those objectives.

Opportunities to enhance teaching and evaluation skills should be available for faculty at all instructional sites.

While the types and frequency of problems, clinical conditions, and experiences at various sites may vary, each course or supervised experience must identify the core experiences needed to achieve its objectives, and ensure that students receive sufficient exposure to such experiences.

To facilitate comparability of educational experiences and equivalency of evaluation methods, the course coordinator must orient all participants, teachers and students, about the educational objectives and grading system used. This can be accomplished through regularly scheduled meetings between the coordinator of the course or clinical experiences and the directors of the various sites that are used.

The programme director/coordinator should review student evaluations of their experiences at alternative sites to identify any persistent variations in educational experiences or evaluation methods.

B. Teaching and Supervised Experience in Nutrition

- EP.14 The programme must document that students complete at least 1200 hours of supervised practice experiences with a minimum of 900 hours in professional work settings; a maximum of 300 hours may be in research or alternate supervised experience such as simulation, case studies and role playing. The program must document the planned hours in professional settings, research, simulations, case studies and role playing.
- EP.15 Supervised practice experience in a professional setting must occur in the following areas: clinical, food service and community. A minimum of 480 hours (12 weeks) must occur in clinical supervised practice setting. The nutrition programme must determine appropriate remaining hours for food-service, community and other elective rotations of interest which allows students to attain competencies through various activities.
- EP.16 The teaching and supervised experience must be consistent with the curriculum statements, courses, and objectives and have defined objectives, related to student placements, teaching, supervision, and evaluation.
- EP.17 The curriculum must prepare students for their role in addressing the realities of demographic, epidemiological, and socio-economic influences on health, nutrition and dietetics.
- EP.18 Clinical, community, and foodservice management supervised experience must cover the continuum of wellness to ill-health and include health promotion, restoration of well-being and rehabilitation.
- EP.19 Clinical supervised experience must include practical experiences working as a member of a multi-disciplinary team.

The objectives for clinical education should include quantified criteria for the types of patients, the level of student responsibility, duration of the experiences, and the appropriate clinical settings needed for the objectives to be met; they should also specify the extent of student interaction with patients.

EP.20 The facilities where supervised experience are conducted should have adequate space, equipment, supplies and multi-media technology for students to learn and practice basic nutrition skills in preparation for the administration of safe and ethical nutrition practice at all sites.

EP.21 Nutrition students must achieve mastery of core concepts in order to advance in each supervised experience.

The faculty should employ various methods of assessing students' mastery. The results must be documented and made known to students and preceptors. Students should not provide unsupervised patient care without evidence of mastery in the applicable clinical procedures.

Students must be required to exhibit scrupulous ethical principles in caring for patients, families, and communities and in relating to others involved in care.

The nutrition programme must ensure that students receive instruction in appropriate professional ethics, human values, communication skills, and patient and staff safety, before engaging in supervised experience activities.

Adherence to ethical and safety principles must be observed, evaluated, and reinforced throughout all formal instructional efforts.

EP.22 Clinical, community, and foodservice management teaching activities should be pursued in diverse environments that best serve the educational programme interests, such as the range and level of service and care provided, and include health and related health sectors, regional, international organizations/agencies, and NGOs.

EP.23 Clinical or other facilities that serve as major sites for nutrition students' clinical experiences must be approved for health care delivery by the regulatory bodies in the jurisdiction.

Students' clinical experience sites should include primary, secondary, and tertiary level health care facilities for all ages.

Documentation of the assessment of the clinical sites by the jurisdiction regulatory body should be available.

EP.24 The criteria used for the selection of supervised practice sites, levels of student participation, supervision, and evaluation should be based on written programme

objectives which are made known to all students, faculty, and others with responsibilities in the education programme.

- EP.25 Clinical Instructors/Preceptors, who teach, supervise, and evaluate nutrition students, must be familiar with the educational objectives of the course, be competent in their assigned specialty, and are prepared for their roles in teaching, supervision, and evaluation.
- EP.26 Supervision of student learning experiences must be provided throughout required supervised experience by members of the school's faculty and approved staff from the affiliated institutions/agencies.
- EP.27 Written contractual agreements, which state the responsibility of the nutrition programme and the agencies for placement of students for their required learning experiences, should exist between the institution and affiliated teaching sites.
- EP.28 The nutrition department must retain the control of the education programme for students in the partnership between the school and the affiliated clinical and community sites.

C. Teaching and Evaluation

- EP.29 The nutrition programme must demonstrate the use of recognized approaches to teaching and learning in their programmes; approaches that reflect current and emerging trends in education technology, adult education, self-directed learning, e-learning, clinical simulation, and are aimed at eliciting active student participation and achieving programme objectives.
- EP.30 The faculty should employ a variety of instructional methods that satisfy the requirements of the course objectives, content, learning experiences, and student characteristics.

There should be evidence of a variety of instructional technologies, which are current and relevant.
- EP.31 The faculty of each course should collaboratively set the standards of achievement in that course, including knowledge, attitudes, and practice in the course.
- EP.32 The faculty, preceptors/coordinators of all courses and supervised experiences must design and implement a system of formative and summative evaluation of student achievement in each course and supervised experience.
- EP.33 Regular feedback on students' progress in achieving the expected programme outcomes must be documented and made available to students and faculty and a system of remediation implemented.

Evaluation of student performance must measure not only the retention of factual knowledge, but the development of the skills, behaviours, and attitudes needed in

professional practice, as well as the ability to use data appropriately for solving problems commonly encountered in practice.

Those directly responsible for the evaluation of student performance should understand the uses and limitations of various test formats, reliability and validity issues, and objective vs. subjective formats.

Courses or supervised experiences that are short in duration may not have sufficient time to provide structured evaluation activities but should provide some alternate means (such as self-testing or faculty, preceptor/coordinator consultation) that allow students to measure their progress in learning.

EP.34 Where teacher-student interaction permits these forms of assessment, narrative descriptions of student performance, including personal qualities and interactions should be included as part of the evaluation in all required courses and supervised experience.

D. Geographically Separated, On-line and Franchise Programmes

EP.35 The nutrition programme's administration is responsible for the quality and conduct of the educational programmes and for assuring the adequacy of faculty, preceptors, and other resources at all educational sites.

The nutrition programme must demonstrate the means by which faculty and preceptors at dispersed sites participate in, and are held accountable for student education that is consistent with the objectives and performance expectations established by the course or supervised experience.

EP.36 The preceptors of each geographical site should be administratively responsible to the director/coordinator of the programme.

EP.37 Preceptors at all sites should be functionally integrated by appropriate administrative mechanisms.

Mechanisms to achieve functional integration can include regular meetings; electronic communication; periodic visits to all sites by the programme coordinator; sharing of supervised experience evaluation data and other types of feedback regarding faculty performance of their educational responsibilities.

EP.38 The programme director/coordinator must assume ultimate responsibility for the selection and assignment of all nutrition students when geographically separated campuses are operated.

EP.39 There must be a single standard for promotion and graduation of students across geographically separate sites.

EP.40 Students assigned to all sites should have the same rights, receive the same support services and have the opportunity to move among the components of the nutrition programme.

E. Programme Assessment and Renewal

EP.41 The nutrition programme must conduct ongoing and systematic formative and summative assessments of the performance of its current students.

The appropriate committee should give attention to the impact on students of the amount of work required, including the frequency of examinations and their scheduling.

EP.42 Programme administration must document student progress toward completion of the degree requirements.

EP.43 There should be a dynamic process in place for regular review and renewal of the nutrition programme's vision, mission, goals, objectives, strategies, structures and functions.

The nutrition programme should engage in a process of total quality improvement to facilitate curriculum renewal and update in response to changing health and social issues / problems and national, regional or international priorities.

EP.44 The nutrition programme and resources should be kept current in accordance with any change in institutional mission, strategies and policies, current trends in nutrition, epidemiology, demography, health and social conditions, health care delivery, and nutrition and dietetic regulatory requirements.

The faculty committee responsible for the curriculum must monitor the content provided in each course so that the programme's educational objectives are achieved.

The faculty committee, working in conjunction with the director/coordinator and the Head of the Department, should assure that each academic period of the curriculum maintains common standards for content and its delivery. Such standards should address the depth and breadth of knowledge required for a general professional education, currency and relevance of content, and the extent of redundancy needed to reinforce learning of complex topics. The final year should complement and supplement the curriculum to prepare students for advanced practical experiences to become professional nutritionists and dietitians.

EP.45 Accredited programmes must notify CAAM-HP of plans for any major modification of the curriculum.

Notification should include the explicitly defined goals of the change, the plans for implementation, and the methods to be used to evaluate the results.

The plan for change should include the incremental resources that will be required, including the physical facilities; faculty; student facilities; demands on library and computer facilities and operations; and equipment needs.

In view of the increasing pace of discovery of new knowledge and technology, experimentation that aims at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of nutrition and dietetics education should be encouraged.

F. Programme Effectiveness

1. Outcomes

EP.46 Graduates of the nutrition programme should have achieved established curriculum competencies and are prepared to practice professionally, ethically and safely.

EP.47 The nutrition programme should be evaluated for the effectiveness of the curriculum, documenting the extent to which its objectives have or have not been achieved, using the results to guide curriculum and programme improvement.

Relevant outcome measures include data on student performance, academic progress and programme completion rates, acceptance into postgraduate programmes, and practice characteristics of graduates.

EP.48 Students evaluation of their courses, supervised experience sites and teachers indicate the quality of the programme's performance.

EP.49 Programme effectiveness is evidenced by:

- Success rate for programme completion in the stipulated period of study;
- Performance in a university comprehensive exit exam at the end of the supervised practice experience;
- Job placement;
- Employers' performance rating at least 12 months after graduation; and
- Job satisfaction as evidenced by self-assessment at least 12 months after graduation.

IV. FACULTY AND STAFF

A. Number, Qualifications, and Functions

F.1 The recruitment and development of the nutrition programme's faculty and staff should take into account its mission and the diversity of its student body and the population it serves.

F.2 The director/coordinator of the nutrition programme should have a graduate degree in nutrition and be educationally and experientially qualified to provide effective leadership and administration in professional nutrition and dietetics education, scholarly and other activities within the programme.

The Head of the Department with assistance from the director/coordinator, has the authority to administer the business of the nutrition programme, including its educational programmes. Such authority extends to overall responsibility for the delivery of the nutrition programme and any supervised experiences at geographically separate sites, if applicable.

F.3 The nutrition programme should have a staffing plan that delineates the quantity, quality, and functions of the faculty and staff.

The profile of both faculty and administrative staff should be suitable for the implementation of the vision, mission, goals, and objectives of the nutrition programme.

F.4 The core academic faculty should be nutritionists and/or registered dietitians who demonstrate knowledge as educators and have a minimum of a postgraduate degree with advanced preparation and competence in their specialty area.

F.5 There must be a sufficient number and mix of faculty members in the subjects essential to nutrition and dietetics to meet the needs of the educational programme.

F.6 The faculty to student ratio in the clinical areas should be sufficient to ensure optimum student learning and safe patient care.

The number and type of faculty appointed in the clinical areas, should relate to the level of the students, diversity of patient care, and the health promotion and maintenance activities required.

F.7 There must be a sufficient number and mix of administrative staff for the nutrition programme to meet its academic and administrative mandates.

F.8 Faculty members should have the capability and continued commitment to be effective instructors.

Faculty members involved in teaching, course planning and curricular evaluation should possess or have ready access to expertise in teaching methods, curriculum development, programme evaluation, and student evaluation.

Faculty involved in the development and implementation of a course, clinical teaching, or larger curricular unit should be able to design the learning activities and corresponding evaluation methods (student and programme) in a manner consistent with the programme's stated educational objectives.

Nutritionists and registered dietitians appointed to the faculty, on a part-time basis or as volunteers, should be able to serve as role models for students, and provide insight into health promotion and safe and ethical practice.

Among the lines of evidence indicating compliance with this standard are the following:

- Documented participation of the faculty in professional development activities related specifically to teaching and evaluation;
- Attendance at international regional or national meetings on educational affairs; and
- Evidence that faculty members' knowledge of their specialty is current.

B. Personnel Policies

- F.9 There must be written policies for faculty appointment, renewal of appointment, promotion, granting of tenure, and dismissal that involve the faculty, the appropriate department heads, and the director/coordinator.
- F.10 Faculty members must receive written information about their terms of appointment, responsibilities, and lines of communication, privileges, and benefits.
- F.11 There should be a programme of on-going performance appraisal and feedback for faculty on their academic performance and their progress toward promotion.
- F.12 The institution and programme should have policies that deal with circumstances in which the private interests of faculty members or staff may be in conflict with their official responsibilities.

C. Professional Development of Faculty and Staff

- F.13 The nutrition programme should have a policy and system, which provides education opportunities for the continuing professional education of its faculty, part-time staff and preceptors.
- F.14 Opportunities for professional development must be provided to enhance faculty members' skills and leadership abilities in education and research.

F.15 Research and scholarly activities that contribute to the advancement of nutrition knowledge and education programme enhancement should be conducted by nutrition faculty.

V. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

A. General Facilities

ER.1 The nutrition programme must have sufficient resources to fulfill its responsibility for the management and evaluation of the curriculum.

The kinds of resources needed to assure effective delivery of the educational programme include:

- Adequate numbers of faculty who have the time and education necessary to achieve the programme's objectives;
- Appropriate teaching space for the methods of pedagogy employed in the educational programme;
- Appropriate educational infrastructure (computers, audiovisual aids, equipment, laboratories, etc.);
- Educational support services, such as examination grading, classroom scheduling, and faculty training in methods of teaching and evaluation; and
- Support and services for the efforts of the curriculum management body and for any interdisciplinary teaching efforts that are not supported at a departmental level.

The programme's facilities should include offices for faculty, administrators, and support staff, such as;

- clinical skills and other laboratories;
- classrooms and lecture hall(s) sufficiently large to accommodate a full year's class and any other students taking the same courses;
- space for student use, including study space; and
- space for library and information access.

Appropriate security systems should be in place at all educational sites.

ER.2 The university should demonstrate an ongoing commitment and support for the nutrition programme by making available resources to enable the achievement of its mission, goals, objectives, strategies, and expected programme outcomes.

ER.3 The institution or nutrition programme must have easily accessible current and relevant information materials, communication technology, and physical facilities, including but not limited to, offices, classrooms, clinical simulation laboratories, and various practice sites.

B. Finances

- ER.4 The current and anticipated financial resources of the nutrition programme should be adequate to maintain a sound programme of nutrition education and to attain other institutional goals.
- ER.5 The Head of the Department for the nutrition programme should be responsible and accountable for preparing a dedicated budget that meets the requirements of the programme, faculty, support staff, and students.
- ER.6 Pressure for institutional self-financing must not compromise the vision, mission, and quality of the educational programme, nor cause it to enroll more students than its total resources can accommodate.

The costs of conducting the nutrition programme degree should be supported from diverse sources, such as tuition, endowments, the parent university, covenants, grants from organizations and individuals, and appropriations by government.

Evidence for compliance with this standard includes documentation of adequate financial reserves to maintain the educational programme in the event of unexpected revenue losses, and demonstration of effective fiscal management of the school's budget.

Reliance on student tuition should not be so great that the quality of the programme is compromised by the need to enroll or retain inappropriate numbers of students or students whose qualifications are substandard.

C. Information Resources and Library Services

- ER.7 The nutrition programme must have ready access to a well-maintained library and information facilities, sufficient in size, breadth of holdings, and information technology to support its educational programme needs.

There is physical or electronic access to leading science and professional journals, periodicals, etc., the current numbers are available to faculty and students. The library and other learning resource centres are equipped to allow faculty and students to access information electronically, as well as to use self-instructional materials.

- ER.8 The library and information services staff are responsive to the needs of faculty, support staff, and students.
- ER.9 Educational resources, including information technology and clinical facilities technologies should be selected by faculty and are relevant, comprehensive, current, and must be accessible to faculty and students.

Professional staff supervise the library and information services, and provides instruction in their use. The library and information services staff are familiar with current international, regional and national information resources and data systems, and with contemporary information technology.

Both institutional officials and library/information services facilitate faculty and students access to information resources, addressing their needs for information during extended hours and at dispersed sites.

VI. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- CE.1 The nutrition programme should provide education programmes, conferences, and/or workshops for the continuing professional education (CPE) of its graduates, faculty, preceptors, and staff. Where appropriate such activities should be done in consultation and cooperation with national and regional authorities to satisfy professional practice requirements.
- CE.2 Continuing professional education (CPE) programmes should have the organisational structure and resources necessary to provide programmes and activities of acceptable educational quality and promote quality of care through self-evaluation conducted according to standards and criteria developed by the programme in keeping with any national, regional, and international standards.
- CE.3 The nutrition programme should provide opportunities for research and scholarly activity and the promulgation of the results of such work to the faculty, staff, students, and the nutrition and dietetics profession.

1. Assessment and Registration Examinations

- CE.4 A comprehensive assessment exam at the end of the supervised practice shall be given as a requirement of successful completion of the nutrition programme.

Nutrition programmes should be prepared to work in collaboration with national and regional authorities in setting a comprehensive registration exam to evaluate the ability of graduates entering professional practice as dietitians.

**** The Standards for the Accreditation of Nutrition Programmes in the Caribbean Community should be reviewed and updated every five years to ensure that they reflect changes within the profession and to continually meet national and international standards for educational quality.***