



DEPARTMENT OF  
FAMILY RELATIONS  
AND APPLIED NUTRITION

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# Dietetic Internship Applicant's Handbook 2018-2019

# **Dietetic Internship Applicant's Handbook**

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## Internship overview

To become a dietitian, you must graduate from an undergraduate program accredited by Partnership for Dietetic Education and Practice (PDEP). Then you need to complete one of the accredited dietetic internship programs or specific combined Masters/ Practicum programs across the country. The AHN program is an accredited undergraduate program. Finally, you must pass the Canadian Dietetics Registration Exam.

Internship programs are usually administered by health care organizations and last about 40-50 weeks. Entry to internship programs is competitive. The application process involves completing official application forms from Dietitians of Canada, and preparing a resume and personal letter for three internship programs. All parts of the application package must be completed and available for review by the programs of your choice by about mid January. Applicants are initially contacted about the results of the selection process starting in mid-March. It can take a few weeks for all the results of the first round selection process to be communicated to applicants. Some internship programs may have additional positions after the first round so there may be an opportunity to apply for second round positions in April.

### *What exactly is a dietetic internship? What will I be doing?*

A dietetic internship provides practical experience that is necessary for you to qualify as a registered dietitian. Basically you will apply what you have learned throughout your four years of university in various practical settings. Currently, programs are 40-50 weeks long and tend to have 2-3 week rotations, so you get a fair bit of exposure to different programs, services, and clinics and work with several dietitians. The rotations will include various client populations and learning experiences (e.g., general medicine, diabetes education, pediatric and geriatric care, and menu planning and budgeting). The Dietitians of Canada website has a video call 'A day in the life of an intern' that provides additional insights at the following URL:

<https://www.dietitians.ca/Become-a-Dietitian/Program-Match-Process/Program-Match-Process/How-to-apply.aspx>

In each clinical area you will learn to assess, plan, and treat specific groups of patients/clients by nutritional means. All programs also have research, foodservice and management components. Interns who successfully complete the program have demonstrated the entry-level competencies for dietetic practice and are eligible to write the Canadian Dietetics Registration Exam (CDRE). More information about the CDRE is available on the College of Dietitians of Ontario web site [www.collegeofdietitians.org/](http://www.collegeofdietitians.org/).

### *Are all dietetic internship programs the same?*

No. Not all programs are the same. Some internships are quite specialized and are at organizations “known” for a specific area (e.g., pediatrics at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto). Other programs are more general, and give an equal balance of clinical, administration

and community nutrition. There are a few that have more of a focus on community-based nutrition; however, all programs do include experiences in community, clinical, and food service. The program brochures/websites may give a breakdown of how many weeks are spent in each area of dietetics. Often programs incorporate time for electives where you can put more emphasis on an area of particular interest.

### ***How should I begin preparing for an internship?***

In fourth year is the time to take full advantage of the career services on campus. Visit the Co-operative Education and Career Services website (<https://www.recruitguelph.ca/cecs/>) for more information about services offered, career planning information and upcoming workshops. Go to the program meetings on the internship application process. *Please note that these steps are useful for you even if you don't want to apply for internship. They will help you prepare for job hunting too!*

## **Finding out about internship programs**

### ***How can I find out more about dietetic internships?***

There are a few ways to learn more about the various dietetic internship programs.

You can visit the Dietitians of Canada (DC) web site to learn more about both accredited dietetic internship programs as well as combined Masters/ Practicum programs across the country at:

<https://www.dietitians.ca/Become-a-Dietitian/Practicums/Internship-Routes.aspx>

-Scroll down to see the full list-

Basic contact information and the location of internship programs are also provided in the back of the DC application package. Please note that the DC application package is usually available in late September.

You have a chance to learn more about the internship programs by viewing prerecorded webinars on The DC website at:

<https://www.dietitians.ca/Become-a-Dietitian/Program-Match-Process/Program-Match-Process/Internship-Match-Webinars.aspx>

You can ask questions of the program coordinators by attending live Q &A webinar sessions in November. The AHN Student Association will announce details about the live webinar via email.

You might make arrangements before fourth year to visit several places that offer internships and ask for a tour of their facilities. You could call, or email, the internship director during a time when he or she is not too busy with interns, and you are not too busy with school.

### ***When does internship start? How long is it? Full time?***

Internship programs start at different times, usually ranging from August to October. You should check the start date for each program, before you apply to ensure that you will be available for the start of the internship. The internships range anywhere from 40 to 50 weeks; however, generally they are 45 weeks in length.

Yes, the internship is a full-time job, so you must be willing to work at least 40 hours every week. Further, there will also be assignments, preparing for presentations, studying for various rotations, and working on projects. It is generally not possible to hold another job simultaneously.

### ***Do I get paid?***

This depends on the program. Some programs do give a small weekly stipend, but most do not. In fact, in some programs you must pay a tuition fee before you start. Many programs require that you become a student member of Dietitians of Canada and pay for Professional Liability insurance as well. So, in many ways the internship can be considered another year of full-time, intensive study.

### ***What qualities are the internship directors looking for?***

Internship directors are looking for people who have a combination of academic preparation, good work and communication skills, problem-solving skills, and self-confidence. They want people who have a good basic understanding of the sciences and the way the body functions, who understand food and the qualities of food, and who are able to apply their knowledge to different lifestyle situations. Internship directors are looking for leadership skills; often, these are gained in student activities or other job experience. The individual internship programs may emphasize specific qualities and skills and ask for evidence of these qualities or skills. Read the program brochures carefully to determine which qualities are important to highlight.

### **Tips for finding out about internship programs:**

Research the program – look through the program website, talk to current and past interns, etc.

It is a good idea to take advantage of all opportunities to talk to people in the field, including career nights, special speakers, alumni events, etc.

Since internship directors are very busy, only email the internship director if you have a few relevant questions to ask before you apply. Do not ask for information that is available on the

| [website](#), in the program brochure or in the webinar.

The DC Student Network has a Member to Member Discussion area where you can ask other members any questions you may have about internships or the process.

## Applying for internships

### *How do I apply for dietetic internships?*

The DC internship application package is usually available by the end of September. The package will be available on the DC website (in the 'How to Apply' section). Detailed instructions for completing the application forms are included with the application package. It will also be on the AHN References courselink course, in the content section.

You must prepare various documents that will be uploaded to the matching system.

The basic documents that you will need to for the application include:

- a cover letter (personal letter),
- a resume,
- a signed confirmation of completion form
- your un-official academic transcript, and
- the names and contact information of three referees who have agreed to complete forms for you .

Some internship programs may require additional components, so read the program website and [brochure](#) carefully. For example, there may be an application fee or certain topics must be addressed in the personal letter.

Additionally, you will pay an application fee to Dietitians of Canada when you register for the computerized internship selection process on-line. Payment must be made by credit card or Pay Pal. Once the payment has been processed you will receive information about how to access the on-line system. The on-line system will provide further instructions on how to create a personal profile and indicate your choice of internship programs. You can to apply to three programs in Canada.

### *When do I apply for dietetic internships?*

The due date for applications is **January 18, 2019**. Be sure to input your information into the on-line system and to upload your documents before the deadline. It takes time to update resumes, write personal letters and get references agree to provide support for your application, so give yourself plenty of time to get your application package together.

### *Who should I use as a reference?*

Instead of a letter of recommendation, the reference is given using a specific on-line confidential

reference form. This form will ask your referees to rank you on various characteristics, such as team skills, self-reflection, critical thinking, decision making, application of knowledge, time management, initiative, and communication skills.

You will need **three referees** who will complete the forms on your behalf. Your referees should know you well enough to provide insights on the above mentioned characteristics. Be sure to leave plenty of time for organizing references and for your referees to complete the on-line form. Please read the brochure for the programs you are interested in to see if you will need to request a reference from an AHN faculty member who knows your academic performance. If you do need an academic reference, this would count as one of your three references. Procedures for obtaining a reference from AHN faculty are provided during information sessions held for 4<sup>th</sup> year students each fall.

### ***What marks do I need to apply?***

Most internship programs will review the application of a student who has a minimum average grade of 75% (in the last 2 years of study). So an average of 75% is considered good and anything above that is great. A few people who have averages between 70-74% get internships, but these applicants have strong work experiences, exceptional communication skills and very strong references. Someone with an average below 70% should probably look at other career and training options. Note that not all internship programs put the same emphasis on marks. High marks do not guarantee getting an internship and having the minimum required average does not mean you will not get an internship. Most internship selection committees look at the balance of experience, academics and how you come across in your application package and interview. If you are concerned about marks, talk to or email the internship coordinator to see how much emphasis they put on marks.

### **Tips to help prepare for internship applications:**

Read the websites and brochures of the specific programs you are applying to very carefully. They will tell you what qualities they are looking for (highlight how you developed these qualities in your application) and what format they want for the personal letter and whether they want something extra such as a sample of your academic work.

The point of the personal letters is to highlight or explain further your experiences and essentially why you would be a fit for their program. Various styles and formats can be used and still be ok. Check the program brochure to see if there are any formatting requirements. Everyone has strengths (highlight **these** in your letter) and weaknesses, and you can learn many transferable skills even if your work experience has not been nutrition-related.

Be prepared to articulate what sets that program apart for you. Is it the community focus? The specialties for which that the hospital is known? Is it because you talked to someone who went through the program and got a good feel for it? You may want to address this in your letter, but be sure you have an answer if you get an interview. The director wants to make sure you know the internship program and have good reasons for choosing them.

Do write your OWN letter using a business letter format. Do have someone read your resume

and personal letter to catch any spelling and grammar mistakes that the spelling and grammar checker missed. For example, in Canada and the U.S. we spell dietitian with a 't' instead of dietician with a 'c', even though word processing programs use the latter spelling. Having someone else read your letter can also identify sections that do not flow as well; another person can give you suggestions for making the letter easier to read.

Make sure you sign your personal letter.

Be sure of the name of the internship director whenever possible. This information is usually provided in the application package from DC and updates should be on the DC website. Additionally, you could always find out who the current director is by calling and asking questions.

You need a clear print out of your unofficial transcript to upload. Please note that you will need to upload all undergraduate transcripts that contribute to your accredited degree program. If you are successful in the application process you will need to get official transcript(s) for the program you are matched with.

If needed, you can get an official U of Guelph transcript on the 3rd floor UC. They usually take a few (3-5) working days before you can pick them up and they cost \$12 each. Visit the Undergraduate Program Services website for more information at: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/undergraduate/transcripts>

Make sure your references know you well and can speak positively about your accomplishments. Take the time to let them know what you have done that they might not have actually witnessed. Also try and get a variety of people who can talk about different things that you have done to be references.

## **Internship Interviews**

### ***When are the internship interviews?***

After you submit your documents on-line, pay for any application fees and complete the DC on-line registration process, you will have to wait for the internship programs to look through and score all the applications. Most internship programs have interviews with selected applicants in person or by phone. If your package meets their criteria, you will be contacted and asked to do an interview sometime in the month of February. Interviews may be held during Reading Week, so plan your vacations wisely.

### ***Do all internship programs have interviews?***

No, some internships do not ask for an interview but make their decisions on the basis of the material received. When deciding which programs to apply to, check to see if they hold interviews.

***Is it true that some of the interviews involve really strange questions?***

Yes, some programs want to see if you keep your cool on the spot. They want people who already have the skills and the knowledge, but just haven't had an opportunity to apply them in a professional setting. They are looking for people who don't need a lot of training and who can adjust to a new situation quickly.

Some places may ask you clinical nutrition questions, and they may not necessarily be interested in whether or not your answer to the question is perfect, but rather how you deal with the question and work towards your answer. The reason for this is that in practice you may not always have the answers, but you need to have the skills to figure out how to find the answer.

Some internships conduct group interviews. These have differing formats, but often involve participating in group discussions and/or short writing and calculation exercises with members of the interviewing committee.

Refer to Appendix A for some sample interview questions.

**Tips to help prepare for an interview:**

Try to find out what type of interview to expect in advance. Check the program brochure or website for information.

If you get a chance, go through a mock interview. It's a good way to find out about distracting habits that you could work on.

Career Services has numerous resources for preparing for interviews.

Think about some good questions to ask about the program before you get there. It shows that you have given the internship some serious thought. Things some people asked about: application numbers, where graduate interns found jobs, how quickly they had jobs, what sort of partnerships existed in the program for external placements, types of research projects, etc. Also feel free to make a closing comment, something you feel they should know about you if it didn't come up in the interview.

If you don't live near the location of the interview, leave plenty of extra time for your trip so you can arrive early.

Bring a book in case you have to wait. Or do something else that will calm you before the interview.

Smile!

Be confident. They have asked you for an interview because they liked your application package and they would like to get to know you a bit better.

If you have more than one interviewer, make sure you connect with each one.

If you are having a phone interview, don't just wear your pjs. Wear something that makes you feel professional, but comfortable too.

Relax and be yourself. Many internship coordinators realize you are nervous and may ask you a few "small talk" questions at the beginning of the interview to help you relax.

When answering questions, use specific examples that you have thought of ahead of time that highlight your strengths. Also prepare to answer questions about weaknesses that you have and how you deal with them.

Dress and act appropriately for a professional workplace.

Shake their hands when you meet them, even if they don't initiate the handshake. Shake hands at the end of the interview as well (if you feel comfortable doing so). Send a thank you note! (if you feel comfortable doing so)

## **Internship matching**

### ***How do internship directors decide? What is their procedure?***

Usually internship directors have a committee to help make this decision. Some of them will give scores to each application, and then use the scores to rank applicants for their position. They rank more students than the number of positions because not all the students they offer a position to accept it.

### ***Does my preference for an internship program get considered?***

No. With the on-line computerized system your three choices for internship are equal and are not ranked for preference. This means that you could be offered more than one internship position when you are contacted by the on-line selection system.

### ***When do I find out if I am matched with an internship?***

About mid March, you will receive an e-mail message from the on-line computerized system indicating if you were successful and which program(s) you were matched with or that you were not matched with an internship program.

If you are successfully matched, follow the instructions for indicating acceptance or rejection of the offer(s) by the prescribed deadline.

If you are not successfully matched on at first, **be patient!** You may be matched with an internship program later on in first round. As applicants who received more than one internship offer reject the ones they do not wish to pursue, the declined offers are sent out to the next ranked applicants. The process usually takes about 2 weeks. You will need to check your email

regularly during this period.

Also, there may be a second round process if an internship program runs out of ranked applicants to choose from before all of the internship positions are filled. Some additional internship positions may be open after the first round process. The academic advisor will send notification of these opportunities to you.

### ***Do people really get internships?***

About half of the students who apply for a dietetic internship or a combined Masters/Practicum program are successful each year.

## **Re-applying**

### ***What if I don't get matched with an internship?***

If you don't get accepted in first-round, you can either apply again during the second-round (if there is one) or you can get some relevant work experience and try the next year. Many graduates find the year of experience between graduation and getting an internship to be particularly useful for career planning.

### ***How many times can I apply?***

You may apply up to three years after you have graduated. For example, if you apply in the winter of your 4<sup>th</sup> year you can apply three more times after you graduate for a total of four times before you would need to complete academic upgrading.

## Appendix A: Sample Interview Questions

### Questions compiled from Internship Applicants (no particular order)

- Why do you want to be a dietitian?
- Why did you apply to this program? (For example: there are many downtown Toronto teaching hospitals affiliated with UofT – why does this one in particular interest you?)
- What do you know about this program/hospital/city?
- What do you expect of your internship?
- Why are you interested in this internship program? What does it offer you?
- What does an administrative dietitian do?
- What does a community dietitian do?
- What does a clinical dietitian do?
- What brought you to the field of dietetics? (very common!)
- What would you like to be doing five years from now?
- How did you prepare financially for the internship?
- What nutritional assessment would you do on a homeless man who is admitted for pneumonia?
- What considerations should be kept in mind when counseling someone with diabetes?
- A patient is on a fluid restricted diet but they keep drinking the pops and drinks their family members bring in. What do you do?
- What would you do if one of your fellow interns wasn't pulling their weight on a group project?
- How would you assess patient satisfaction with food services?
- If you could go to any workshop seminar to improve your skills, what would it be on?
- How do you respond to the statement: “the dietitian an intern is working with is not responsible for the intern’s learning.”
- What are some features of excellent customer service? Give an example of a business that demonstrates excellent customer service.
- What does dressing professionally mean to you?
- What would you do if the dietitian you were working with did not meet these professional dress standards?
- What would you do if the dietitian you were working with started talking/gossiping about other dietitians personal lives?
- - Where do you see Health Care going in the next 5-10 years? Where do you see business going over the same time frame? How are they related?

- Write down the glycolysis pathway.
- A parent approaches you, asking for advice on the use of naturopathic supplements. What do you say?
- During your clinical relief rotation you witness a doctor prescribing a formula to a child that you feel is inappropriate and potentially harmful. What do you do?
- In a group, what role do you play?
- What does self-directed learning mean to you?
- What makes a good intern?
- What makes a good mentor? What would you expect of your mentor?
- Tell me something funny about yourself
- How do you respect yourself / take care of yourself?
- How do you deal with having a lot to do at the same time (time management)?
- What is your greatest accomplishment?
- How would you describe your leadership style?
- How would your peers describe your leadership style?
- What is your strongest aspect of communication?
- How would your peers describe your work ethic/style?
- Give an example of when you used your problem-solving skills?
- Tell us about a time you worked effectively in a group.
- Tell us about a time you were criticized by a supervisor.
- Tell us about a time you got criticism that you didn't agree with. What did you do?
- Tell us about a time you had to work with someone whose opinion you didn't agree with.
- Tell us about the work experience you are most proud of and why?
- Describe a problem and how you solved it.
- Describe a difficult situation and what skills you used to get through it.
- Name a time you were criticized and what you did to deal with it.
- Describe a time when you had to reprimand someone who you supervised.
- What is your definition of professionalism?
- What do you bring in to the program?
- Describe a time you had to work on a team with someone who didn't pull their weight. How did you deal with this? What might you have done differently?
- Describe a time when you received feedback you didn't agree with. What did you do and why?

- What was your most challenging course and why?
- What are your greatest strengths?
- What are your weaknesses? How have you tried to improve on these?
- What would your references say about you?
- What was your favourite/least favourite course?
- Tell me about a positive group experience.
- When was the last time you set goals and objectives for yourself and completed them?
- What qualities do you bring that would be important as a dietetic intern?
- What would you do if the dietitian you were on rotation with gave misinformation to a patient/client?

### **Behavioural questions:**

- These are not specific questions asked in internship interviews, but they are typical behavioural questions that you might get asked.
- Describe a time on any job which you've held in which you were faced with problems or stresses which tested your coping skills. What did you do?
- Give an example of a time in which you had to keep from speaking or not finishing a task because you did not have enough information to come to a good decision.
- Give an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
- Tell me about a time in which you had to use your spoken communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you.
- Give me an example of a time in which you felt you were able to build motivation in your coworkers and subordinates at work.
- Describe a situation in which you felt it necessary to be very attentive and vigilant to your environment.
- Give an example of a time in which you had to use your fact finding skills to gain information for solving a problem - then tell me how you analyzed the information to come to a decision.
- Give me an example of an important goal which you had set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.
- Describe the most significant written document/report/presentation which you have had to complete.
- Give me an example of a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to get a job done.
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you.
- Describe a situation in which you were able to effectively "read" another person and guide your actions by your understanding of their individual needs or values.
- Describe the most creative work-related project which you have carried out.
- Describe a time in which you felt it was necessary to modify or change your actions in order to respond to the needs of another person.
- What did you do in your last job to contribute toward a team work environment? Be specific.
- Describe a situation in which you were able to positively influence the actions of others in a desired direction.
- Tell me about a time when you had to work collaboratively in a group and how successful it was.

## **Strategy for Answering Behavioural Questions (STARS)**

S – Situation: outline the situation

T - Task: describe the task

A - Action: describe what action you took

R - Result: how did it turn out?

S - Summary

## **Group Interviews**

In group interviews they are looking for how you interact with your peers. Are you able to listen, facilitate discussion, lead, let others lead, discuss topics realistically, be creative, communicate effectively, problem-solve, think quickly, support others, etc.

Examples of group interview questions/tasks:

- Brainteasers
- Decision making of how to prioritize RD tasks and why
- Dealing with situational problem: daughter brings it to your attention that her father was served mac and cheese. He's on a puree only diet and he had difficulty with the mac and cheese and choked. Had to form a "committee" of people from various areas of foodservice etc to figure out how to deal with the problem and assess if problem was fixed. Then, individually had to write a letter to the daughter informing of what has been done and where the process was at.

## **Additional Tips**

*\*Practice potential interview questions\**. There is nothing like being in an interview and not knowing how to answer a question. Set up mock interviews at career services, or with friends or family.

*\*Know your resume well.\** Before the interview, reflect on each job/volunteer experience listed so you'll be prepared to remember times you were challenged/things you learned/people you interacted with

*\*Have some questions ready\**. They'll often ask if you have any questions for them at the end, this is a great chance to impress them by having some prepared.

## Appendix B: Sample Personal Letters Written by Students

### Letter #1

Date

Internship address

Dear Ms. \_\_\_\_\_,

I am very interested in completing my dietetic internship at \_\_\_\_\_. I am a fourth-year University of Guelph student, and will complete my Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Applied Human Nutrition this semester. After visiting \_\_\_\_\_ and researching the dietetic internship program, I believe I can make a contribution to your Clinical and Food Service nutrition programs.

After becoming a Registered Dietitian, my career goal is to work in a clinical setting that involves both research and patient care. I am self-directed and function well in a team environment, handling a diverse range of challenges. Therefore the following aspects of your program particularly attract me:

- The focus on practical application learning.
- The strong independent research component.
- The diversity of the work and people.

My studies at Guelph have enabled me to develop many strengths and skills. Academically, I have aimed for excellence in all my courses, which include nutritional sciences electives and food service operations courses. This required the development of self-discipline, strong work ethic, and good study habits. I have also had to learn time management since I combined significant work experience with the academic course load.

Since 20XX, I have worked with the YMCA-YWCA of Guelph, as an administrative and fitness staff member. I have learned to instruct groups of fitness classes, and adapt fitness programs to suit the needs of many individuals. This work has allowed me to improve my self-confidence, leadership skills, and ability to motivate others. It has also taught me how to communicate effectively with large groups, as well as with individuals.

Last summer, I worked with a community health team, including a dietitian, at a Community Health Centre in Guelph. During this time I applied nutrition knowledge and program planning skills, in order to establish a program of nutrition education for people learning English as a second language. This program taught me a lot about communicating with an ethnically diverse group. I also worked with parents and children, in order to develop a toddler-feeding workshop. In this position I worked with minimal supervision, and I was able to learn how to independently plan and deliver nutrition programs.

Throughout university, I have also developed skills by participating in a range of volunteer activities:

- I designed and conducted several Nutrition Health and Wellness workshops at the YMCA-YWCA, which helped me be a more effective public speaker. I also created handouts and displays, which facilitated development of my written communication skills and creativity.
- I have been a mealtime supervisor with the Eating Disorders program at Homewood Health Centre. This enabled me to develop my listening skills, and to learn how to deal with food-related problems that are associated with eating disorders.
- I have experienced clinical research with the Human Nutraceutical Research Unit at the University of Guelph, by assisting with clinical trials, symposiums, and various research related tasks. I have learned how to do research, and how to summarize it in a way that is easily understood by the public. An example of this is an article I wrote on the benefits of fish oil for the centre's newsletter.
- Most recently, I have become involved with the Feeling Better Program, which is a home exercise program for the frail elderly. I am learning a lot about this group, helping them realize the benefits of keeping active and healthy.

I have attempted to achieve personal balance through extracurricular activities. As a member of the Applied Human Nutrition Student Association, I have been involved in team building and leadership activities such as social events and career nights. I am dedicated to personal fitness and enjoy a regular exercise program.

With regard to personal development, I would like to improve my ability to speak about complex subjects to groups, without extensive use of notes. For future presentations, I will focus more on rehearsal, planning and preparation. I am also being mentored by a family member who is an experienced public speaker, and I am considering formal training courses.

In summary, I am self-motivated, and hard working with a well-rounded skill set appropriate for this internship. I am committed to the profession and to health on a personal level, and am keen to continue my professional development and make a contribution to the success of \_\_\_\_\_.

I appreciate you taking the time to review my application package and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

## Letter #2

Date

Internship address

To the members of the internship selection committee:

I am applying for an internship position in your organization for the year 20xx-20xx. My interest in the \_\_\_\_\_ internship is based partly on meetings with \_\_\_\_\_ at the annual Internship Forum in Toronto. Through my discussions with \_\_\_\_\_ it became clear that the \_\_\_\_\_ internship can provide self-directed learning opportunities within the framework of dynamic hospital environments. Your program offers a balance of clinical, administrative, and community approaches to nutritional support. This is important to me because of the comprehensive nature of diabetes management, which is my main area of interest and professional development. I feel your program will provide me with a wealth of experience in both routine and more complex nutritional care cases found in a large teaching hospital. The well-established partnerships with external agencies provides an opportunity to put community and educational skills to practice.

I bring a professional background in scientific research administration to the field of dietetics, my new career direction. My past work experiences are varied, but the concepts of food service operation and the provision of nutritionally-balanced, interesting food have been a key part of many of my experiences. I manage the kitchen for a 100-person rural research station, involving budgeting, menu planning, and overseeing of kitchen staff. Many of the nutrition skills obtained during this position were acquired through self-directed, experiential learning. More recent experiences include collecting 24-hour diet recall data from healthy seniors, and coding food frequency questionnaire data from a First Nations Community. My work and life experience provides me with a broad range of skills to draw upon during an internship, and in future employment.

After XX years in environmental science I had an opportunity to reevaluate my career, and chose to focus more completely on my growing interest in nutrition and health. My success throughout my current academic program has been directly related to the satisfaction derived from finding my academic niche. My educational program has allowed me to explore the role of diet in the prevention of Type 2 diabetes in at-risk individuals and I am eager to explore this further. My interest in diabetes education is both professional and personal; I have had Type 1 diabetes for eight years, and understand the daily challenges of living with a chronic condition. I have found this to be a valuable perspective in guiding others who experience similar constraints. My work experience has taught me the importance of sensitivity, open communication and rapport building. My volunteer experience in nutrition has focused on education and providing people with the resources to thrive. Through my volunteer experience, I am discovering skills in advocacy, and the important balance between teaching and learning.

My past experience with relocation has shown that I adeptly establish myself in a new setting. Discovering what \_\_\_\_\_ has to offer is an exciting possibility. I offer my skills in people management, critical analysis and self-direction. I value the kind of experiential learning that your program offers, and am eager to further develop my dietetic skills in a

professional environment. I would like my career to focus on helping people make appropriate dietary choices that are acceptable for a social, cultural and personal perspective.

I trust that you will find my mature outlook, adaptability, enthusiasm, and career goals well tailored to fit with the design of your internship program. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

### Letter #3

Date

Internship address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ and selection committee,

It is with great enthusiasm that I express my interest in the \_\_\_\_\_ Internship Program. I have been very impressed with the presentation and promotion of the program at the annual Internship Forums, on the hospital website and from talking to past interns. I hope to convey through this letter that my goals, skills, and personality are a fit for your program.

Many experiences have contributed to my interest in the field of nutrition and dietetics. Opportunities to talk, job-shadow, volunteer for and work with dietitians in industry, community and clinical settings has given me an idea of the diversity of the field. As a student member of Dietitians of Canada, I have attempted to familiarize myself with events and issues that pertain to healthcare professionals and dietitians in particular. My past two summers as a research assistant led to a serious interest in pursuing research. Exposures such as volunteering in Calcutta with Missionaries of Charity, in a thrift store in Waterloo and for the University of Guelph campus-wide Student Nutrition Awareness Program have contributed to a strong sense of social responsibility. These are but a few of the experiences from which I have formed goals and an idea of where I will fit into this healthcare profession.

My short-term career goals include completing an internship, qualifying as a registered dietitian and working in clinical nutrition. From the outset of my career, I would like to be actively involved in research projects as well as in groups working on issues of food security. Long-term goals involve completing a Master of Science degree and contributing to the field with practice-based research. \_\_\_\_\_, being committed to innovative research and practical application, would be a great fit for these career goals.

Through numerous activities, I have acquired and developed the skills and attributes that your program is looking for. I have maintained an academic average above 80% throughout my university career and was awarded the Marie-Pier Lamourex Memorial Scholarship for my academic achievements. In demonstration of being highly motivated and a self-directed learner, I have worked fairly independently on research projects under Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_, during the past two summers. As a result, I was motivated in my final semester to take an applied statistics course at the graduate level in an attempt to better grasp data analysis.

In conclusion, I am a self-motivated, adaptable individual with a wide range of skills well suited to the \_\_\_\_\_ internship program. I thank you for considering my application package, and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

