

NATUROPATHIC NUTRITION ASSOCIATION

CORE ELEMENTS of knowledge & understanding for Naturopathic Nutrition Education (Nutrition Advisor Level)



www.nna-uk.com

Categories and minimum SEEC equivalent levels for the Core Elements document – details of the level descriptors can be found at: www.seec.org.uk/docs/resources.htm

• Key Naturopathic Principles	Level 4
• Anatomy & Physiology	Level 4
• Biochemistry	Level 4
• Pathophysiology	Level 4
• Food Chemistry & Safety	Level 4
• Naturopathic Dietary Therapy	Level 4
• Factors affecting health & wellbeing	Level 4
• Healthy Lifestyle Advice	Level 4
• Detoxification	Level 4
• Assessment Protocols	Level 4
• Practice, Ethics & Professional Development	Levels 4 & 6

Study time

The minimum length of study time has been determined by the Naturopathic Nutrition Association as being in the region of 400 hours to include a minimum of 10 hours of contact time with tutors to develop skills in case study work.

NATUROPATHIC PRINCIPLES and PHILOSOPHY

Level 4

Aims

- To understand the naturopathic principles and philosophy of health and disease.
- To describe the key concepts of conventional medicine and naturopathic nutrition.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of naturopathic philosophy, core principles and definitions.
2. Discuss key similarities and differences between conventional medicine and naturopathy.

ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

Level 4

Aims

- To provide basic knowledge and understanding of the relevant areas of anatomy and physiology that are essential to the understanding of health and disease as understood by conventional medicine and relevant to a naturopathic perspective
- To understand the naturopathic concept of the web-like interaction of physiological processes.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Identify the component parts of the upper digestive tract, small intestine and large intestine, and explain the digestive process through them
2. Describe the structure and function of the pancreas and the liver, and explain their influences on digestive processes
3. Describe the structure and function of cells
4. Explain the basis of homeostatic mechanisms within the body, and in particular in relation to blood sugar control

BIOCHEMISTRY

Level 4

Aims

- To understand the sources, structure and function of macronutrients, micronutrients, enzymes and water, their metabolic processes and interactions, and their roles with regard to individual dietary requirements
- To understand the impact on health of the roles played by gut microbiota
- To understand the anabolic and catabolic processes, including energy production within cells, and their control at molecular, cellular, tissue and whole body levels.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Describe the structure and function of carbohydrates, lipids, proteins and enzymes
2. Explain the benefits of adequate water
3. Understand the relevance of dehydration and explore the sources and function of various beverages
4. Describe the metabolism of carbohydrates, lipids and proteins and their control and integration and energy productions within cells
5. Describe the metabolism of micronutrients, e.g. vitamins, minerals and trace elements
6. Explain the interactions of micronutrients at the cellular level
7. Suggest dietary examples of a range of individual macro and micronutrients
8. Explain the role of enzyme cofactors in key metabolic pathways
9. Identify the acid and enzymes needed for digestive processes and evaluate the functions they serve
10. Describe cellular structure in relation to energy production and toxicity within cells, and explore the influence of diet and lifestyle on energy production
11. Suggest typical signs and symptoms that could be associated with a deficiency, excess (toxicity) and imbalance of macro and micronutrients and other orthomolecular compounds.
12. Discuss factors that may affect nutrient bioavailability
13. Discuss energy production in the context of food intake and expenditure
14. Explain the roles of and give examples of different types of gut bacteria, probiotics and prebiotics

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY

Level 4

Aims

- To comprehend the aetiology, clinical features and evaluation of a range of common disorders of the gastrointestinal system
- To comprehend the concept of blood sugar control and the organs and systems involved in its homeostasis
- To understand the pathways by which dysfunction may lead to disease processes and degeneration and the factors involved
- To develop an understanding of the limits of the student's own therapeutic capabilities and thereby enhance the skills for appropriate referral

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Discuss factors that may cause pathology in the gastrointestinal system
2. Demonstrate an understanding of common disease affecting the gastrointestinal, system
3. Discuss signs and symptoms of blood sugar imbalance
4. Provide dietary advice to help rebalance and maintain blood sugar homeostasis
5. Recognise when to recommend clients for conventional medical assessment or referral to an appropriately qualified practitioner

FOOD CHEMISTRY and SAFETY

Levels 4

Aims

- To explore food chemistry
- To understand basic factors involved in food production and sale
- To explore factors relating to the safety of food

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Identify common sources of food toxins, contamination and genetically modified food
2. Explain factors relating to food safety
3. Discuss adverse reactions to foods
4. Identify and discuss sources of information relating to regulations governing food production and labelling in the UK

NATUROPATHIC DIETARY THERAPY

Level 4

Aims

- To develop an understanding of the naturopathic context of nutrition as a means to maintaining good health
- To develop the skills to advise on and modify diets appropriately in order to use food as a therapeutic tool
- To understand basic factors affecting food choice
- To comprehend how different types of diet may impact on health and well-being
- To comprehend common causes of excess weight and obesity, including childhood obesity

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a basic understanding of how traditional naturopathic knowledge can be incorporated with a science-based approach to nutrition
2. Explain common influences of food processing that may affect the nutritional content of food
3. Understand the influence of diet on bodily function
4. Identify how disorders associated with stress, energy and general well-being may be associated with dietary imbalances, and suggest dietary modifications
5. Suggests the benefits and disadvantages of various approaches to weight control
6. Explain body mass and body composition
7. Explain factors influencing individual dietary requirements for macro and micronutrients
8. Provide dietary examples and identify problems that occur with both excess and deficiency of a range of nutrients*
9. Describe advantages and disadvantages of different types of diet**

**For example: carbohydrates, proteins, fats/lipids including essential fatty acids, different types of dietary fibre, whole foods*

***For example: vegetarian, vegan, whole food, high protein : low carbohydrate, high carbohydrate : low fat, and recommendations of government agencies e.g. 'The Eatwell Plate'*

FACTORS AFFECTING HEALTH STATUS & WELLBEING

Levels 4

Aims

- To establish the relationship between the general well-being of an individual and commonly encountered factors that may have a negative influence on health
- To understand the importance of exercise and sunlight on general well-being

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Understand the need for balance within bodily systems in order to maintain well-being and health
2. Discuss factors that may disrupt balance within bodily systems, resulting in progression towards lack of well-being and disease
3. Discuss basic factors affecting food choice and how they may impact on health and well-being
4. Understand how the impact of illness may extend beyond the presenting symptoms
5. Explain the importance of exercise on general well-being and advise on basic exercise as appropriate for the individual
6. Explain the importance of sunlight in the maintenance of health

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE ADVICE

Level 4

Aims

- To emphasise the importance of the basic lifestyle requirements for health
- To provide an understanding of the impact of the environment on health and disease
- To establish the relationship between diet and lifestyle in relation to general well-being, energy and stress

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Describe the basic requirements for health such as good nutrition, sunlight, clean air and water, adequate rest and relaxation, and appropriate exercise and activity levels.
2. Explain the importance of oxygen in the maintenance of general well-being and cellular energy production in particular
3. Suggest dietary and lifestyle adjustments in relation to signs associated with stress and anxiety

DETOXIFICATION

Level 4

Aims

- To provide a basic understanding of elimination via the bowels
- To explain how diet, lifestyle and environment may contribute to a toxic internal environment

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Explain the normal physiological processes involved in the elimination pathway of the bowels
2. Understand the roles of the liver, gall-bladder and portal circulation and explain the aetiology, signs and symptoms of disease associated with a toxic internal environment
3. Understand the influences of diet, lifestyle and environment that may result in a toxic internal environment

ASSESSMENT PROTOCOLS

Level 4

Aims

- To develop the skills that would enable the student to suggest a naturopathic approach to nutrition in order to help effect optimal health and well-being in the client
- To recognise how a range of factors may all contribute to the client's condition *

**For example: biochemical, mental/emotional, environmental and dietary factors*

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Take a basic naturopathic nutrition case history
2. Explain the cumulative effect of predisposing factors
3. Interpret and evaluate assessment results in relation to the individual, including the impact of the client's lifestyle and environment on health.
4. Discuss the appropriateness of the client's condition for nutrition advice
5. Explain circumstances where it may be appropriate to collaborate with and/or refer a client to another healthcare provider

PRACTICE, ETHICS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Levels 4 & 6

Aims

- To ensure understanding of, and the ability to apply, the ethical, legal and professional requirements of good practice
- To promote student awareness of their limits of professional competence *
- To promote student self-development to ensure effective professional advancement and communication
- To develop naturopathic nutrition skills in order to competently educate each client
- To reflect on personal progress and seek advice as appropriate in order to enhance personal development, competence and confidence

**Nutrition Advisors are not qualified to:*

- a) *recommend most nutritional supplements or herbal remedies, exceptions being a multivitamin and/or multiminerals, vitamin C, probiotics; (in all cases recommendations must be in accordance with the individual manufacturer's dosage/frequency/safety advice as provided on packaging)*

- b) discuss with clients or make recommendations in respect of prescribed or over-the-counter medication*
- c) offer recommendations in regard to medically diagnosed conditions, other than basic general advice on optimal diet, lifestyle and environmental factors*

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Understand the safety of the therapeutic strategy appropriate for the individual
2. Understand moral and ethical values relevant to professional practice
3. Practise in accordance with the Codes of Professional Conduct of the Naturopathic Nutrition Association
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the law concerning client confidentiality and the need for accurate record-keeping, and secure and confidential methods for storing client records
5. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of limits of personal competence and when and how to make referrals
6. Demonstrate the application of naturopathic nutrition principles
7. Demonstrate the skill to effectively educate each client, explaining the purpose and benefits of naturopathic nutrition advice
8. Describe ways of ensuring client understanding of the individual therapeutic strategy in order to maximise client compliance
9. Reflect on progress in studies in order to develop further naturopathic nutrition skills