

Individuals desiring to become Nutrition and Dietetics Technicians have several educational routes available to them under the *2017 Accreditation Standards* and the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards*.

***2017 Accreditation Standards:***

- The *2017 Accreditation Standards for Nutrition and Dietetics Technician (DT) Programs* detail the expected competencies and program requirements for the preparation of nutrition and dietetics technicians at the associate degree level. Graduates of this program, who are issued a verification statement, are eligible to take the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) exam to become a Nutrition and Dietetics Technician, Registered (NDTR).
- The *2017 Accreditation Standards for Didactic Programs in Nutrition and Dietetics (DPD) Programs* detail the expected competencies and program requirements for the preparation of students for supervised practice to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN). Graduates of this program, who are issued a verification statement, also are eligible to take the CDR exam to become an NDTR.
- ACEND has made no decision to end the preparation of NDTRs at the associate degree level. These associate degree programs continue to be accredited under the *2017 Accreditation Standards*.
- CDR has made no decision to change the required minimum degree level (associate degree) to be eligible to take the registration examination to become an NDTR.

***Future Education Model Accreditation Standards:***

- The *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Bachelor's (FB) Programs* detail the expected competencies and program requirements for the preparation of nutrition and dietetics technicians at the bachelor's degree level. Graduates of this program, who are issued a verification statement, are eligible to take the CDR exam to become an NDTR.
- The competencies expected of graduates of FB programs differ from both the DT and DPD programs accredited under the *2017 Accreditation Standards*.
- Graduates of FB programs are expected to manage the purchasing, production and service of food and the personnel involved in those operations; educate clients/patients on healthful food choices, lifestyle and activity; and assist the RDN with client/patient screening, nutrition intervention and client/patient education.
- Graduates of FB programs are expected to demonstrate their ability to integrate food and nutrition knowledge in managing foodservice operations and apply principles of medical nutrition therapy for clients/patients with less complex, less acute nutritional health care needs when environmental supports are in place (e.g. policies, procedures, validated tools, administration, credentialed staff such as registered dietitian nutritionists). They are expected to work in hospitals, long-term care facilities, schools, colleges and universities, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), child care centers, head start programs, Child and Adult Care Food Programs, congregate/home-delivered feeding programs for older adults, food banks/food pantries, health clubs, fitness centers, corporate wellness programs, grocery stores, restaurants, sustainable food systems and food cooperatives.
- These standards are available only for adoption by demonstration programs. ACEND will collect and review outcomes data from programs, faculty/preceptors, graduates and employers before making any decisions about whether to require these standards of all programs in the future.

## For Additional Information

- Review back issues of the monthly ACEND Standards Updates that are posted on the ACEND website [www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel](http://www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel).
- Participate in a monthly ACEND virtual town hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 1:00 pm CT; information on how to connect to the town hall is available at [www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel](http://www.eatrightpro.org/FutureModel).
- Contact ACEND (acend@eatright.org; 800-877-1600 x5400).

## Questions That Have Come to ACEND

This section includes questions that have been raised on town hall and in-person meetings, on phone calls or through emails and ACEND's response to each. The following questions are divided into four sections: 2017 Accreditation Standards, Future Education Model Accreditation Standards, Demonstration Programs and CDR Credential Exam.

### 2017 Accreditation Standards Questions

**Question:** *Will CP and DI programs be required to offer a master's degree for their students by 2024 and/or require a master's degree to issue a verification statement?*

**ACEND Response:** CP and DI programs accredited under the *2017 Accreditation Standards* are not required to offer a master's degree by 2024. These programs issue their verification statement based on completion of the programs requirements. Programs could choose to require a master's degree for program completion but are not required to do so by the *2017 Accreditation Standards*. After January 1, 2024, students will need to have a master's degree to be eligible to take the registration exam to become an RDN; however, this master's degree could be earned prior to, concurrent with, or after completion of a CP or DI program. A variety of routes to meet this requirement are detailed in the Information for Students guide on the CDR website <https://www.cdrnet.org/new-graduate-degree-eligibility-requirement-effective-january-1-2024>.

**Question:** *Will DI programs that do not currently offer a master's degree program need to require that students have a master's degree before entering the DI program after 2024?*

**ACEND Response:** DI programs accredited under the *2017 Accreditation Standards* that do not currently offer a master's degree will not be expected to require that students enter with a master's degree by 2024. ACEND does not prescribe admission requirements; all programs set their own pre-requisite requirements for admission. Students desiring to enter a dietetic internship are required by the *2017 Accreditation Standards* to have at least a bachelor's degree and have completed an ACEND-accredited DPD or Foreign Dietitian Education (FDE) program. DI programs could choose to require a master's degree for admission to their program, but are not required to under the *2017 Accreditation Standards*.

**Question:** *What impact does the CDR requirement for a master's degree after January 1, 2024 have on the knowledge requirements (KRDNs) for DPD programs or the competencies (CRDNs) required of CP and DI programs?*

**ACEND Response:** The CDR change in registration eligibility requirements to take the examination to become an RDN will have no impact on the knowledge requirements (KRDNs) that DPD programs are expected to cover or the CRDNs covered by CP and DI programs. The *2017 Accreditation Standards* detail the KRDNs and CRDNs that are expected to be addressed by programs accredited under these standards.

**Question:** *Will ACEND require that CP, DPD and/or DI programs add a new metric to track how many students complete the master's degree as part of program completion?*

**ACEND Response:** ACEND does not have any plans to add a new metric for programs to track completion of a master's degree by their students. The *2017 Accreditation Standards* detail the program outcome objectives (i.e. completion rates, employment/internship placement, registration exam pass rate) that programs need to track. Each program sets their requirements for program completion and the issuance of the verification statement of completion. If a program requires completion of the master's degree as a requirement for completion of the program and issuance of the verification statement, then the program's completion rate would include those students who completed a master's degree. If the program does not require completion of a master's degree, the program's completion rate would not include the completion of the master's degree and these programs would not be expected to track this metric separately.

## **Future Education Model Accreditation Standards Questions**

**Question: Will the Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway (ISPP) be an option for programs accredited under the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards?**

**ACEND Response:** The ISPPs will not be an option for programs accredited under the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards* as programs accredited under these standards will need to provide both the didactic and supervised experiential learning in one program. The ISPPs do continue under the *2017 Accreditation Standards*. Accredited CP, DPD and DI programs will continue to be able to offer an ISPP.

**Question: Can graduates of programs accredited under the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for both Associate and Bachelor's Degree Programs take the CDR examination to become an NDTR?**

**ACEND Response:** Only graduates of programs accredited under the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Bachelor's Degree Programs* will be eligible to take the CDR examination to become an NDTR; graduates of programs accredited under the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Associate Degree Programs* will not be eligible to take the CDR examination to become an NDTR.

**Question: Do CP and DI programs that currently offer a master's degree under the 2017 Accreditation Standards need to move to the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Graduate Degree Programs?**

**ACEND Response:** CP and DI programs that currently offer/require a master's degree under the *2017 Accreditation Standards* are not required to move to the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Graduate Degree Programs*. The programs can remain accredited as CP or DI programs under the *2017 Accreditation Standards*.

**Question: Many states require a minimum of 900 hours of supervised practice to be eligible for state licensure as an RDN. How will this requirement impact the supervised experiential learning required in future education model graduate programs?**

**ACEND Response:** The *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards for Graduate Degree Programs* indicate in RE 1.5 that the program must "determine its length after taking into consideration didactic learning and required supervised experiential learning needed by students to demonstrate the required competencies and mandates from the program's administration or state legislation". Having a state legislative mandate for a minimum number of supervised practice hours would be something the program would need to take into consideration when determining its length.

**Question: What is the difference between a partnership agreement referenced in Standard 1 and the affiliation agreements referenced in Standard 7 of the Future Education Model Accreditation Standards? When is each needed?**

**ACEND Response:** Partnership agreements, discussed in Standard 1 of the *Future Education Model Accreditation Standards*, are needed when more than one organization is serving as a sponsor for a future education model program. The partnership agreement must detail the responsibilities of each sponsoring organization and the resources being provided by each. Affiliation agreements, discussed in Standard 7, are needed when one organization is sponsoring the program but has students doing supervised learning experiences at other sites. Affiliation agreements must delineate the responsibilities of both the program and the affiliating institutions/agencies.

**Question: Will graduates of the future education model bachelor's degree programs be eligible to apply for DI programs?**

**ACEND Response:** Graduates of the future education model bachelor's degree programs will not be eligible to apply for a dietetic internship, because their competencies differ from those of DPD graduates. Graduates of the future education model bachelor's degree programs should be able to apply for future education model graduate degree programs, if they desire to become an RDN.

## **Demonstration Program Questions**

**Question:** *How many demonstration programs have applied already?*

**ACEND Response:** The deadline for applications for the first cohort of demonstration programs is not until 11 am CT on October 9, 2017. To date, ACEND has not yet received any completed applications. Information about the application process to become a demonstration program is available at [www.eatright.org/FutureModel](http://www.eatright.org/FutureModel).

**Question:** *When will the first cohort of demonstration programs be decided? Will ACEND share the program names?*

**ACEND Response:** ACEND plans to notify programs of their selection as a demonstration program by December 1, 2017. ACEND will share the names of selected programs after the programs have been notified.

## **CDR Credentialing Exam Questions**

**Question:** *How will the registration exam to become an RDN change in 2024 because of the master's degree requirement?*

**ACEND Response:** CDR bases the content of the registration examination on data gathered in practice audits of entry-level practice, which it conducts every five years. The content of the exam will not change specifically because of the master's degree requirement but will change as entry-level practice changes.