

# NUT361 Counselling and Communication Skills for Dietetics

**School:** School of Health - Nutrition and Dietetics

2025 | Semester 2

UniSC Sunshine Coast

**BLENDED  
LEARNING**

You can do this course without coming onto campus, unless your program has specified a mandatory onsite requirement.

*Please go to [usc.edu.au](https://usc.edu.au) for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.*

## 1. What is this course about?

### 1.1. Description

This course is designed to develop your ability to effectively manage individual clients in a nutrition and dietetics setting through providing you with a broad array of skills and knowledge related to health-related behaviour change, counselling and communication techniques and skills that are safe and culturally responsive. Emphasis will be placed on integrating theory into practice, and provide you with opportunities to develop your communication and counselling skills as part of the provision of nutrition therapy to an individual.

### 1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
<b>BLENDED LEARNING</b>			
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 1</b> – On-campus attendance.	2hrs	Week 1	13 times
<b>Learning materials</b> – Asynchronised pre-class activities.	2hrs	Week 1	13 times
<b>Fieldwork</b> – Dietetic clinic visit	2hrs	Week 1	Once Only

### 1.3. Course Topics

- Adult learning and behaviour modification theory
- Culturally appropriate and person-centred nutrition education and goal setting
- Effective and appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication skills to
- Nutrition counselling skills to facilitate eating behaviour change and support maintenance of eating behaviour change.
- The dietetic interview

## 2. What level is this course?

300 Level (Graduate)

Demonstrating coherence and breadth or depth of knowledge and skills. Independent application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts. Meeting professional requirements and AQF descriptors for the degree. May require pre-requisites where discipline specific introductory or developing knowledge or skills is necessary. Normally undertaken in the third or fourth full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

### 3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

### 4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES MAPPING	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD MAPPING *
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...	Dietitians Australia
1 Demonstrate culturally appropriate, safe and sensitive communication that facilitates trust and builds a respectful professional relationship with a client.	Empowered	1.5.2, 4.1
2 Analyse and apply the principles of adult learning theory and behaviour modification theory to facilitate lifestyle behaviour change whilst recognising determinants influencing health outcomes of an individual.	Empowered Sustainability-focussed	2.3.1
3 Apply knowledge of nutrition science, behavioural science, health and disease, and food preparation methods to construct tailored nutrition education and dietary strategies for an individual.	Creative and critical thinker	2.2
4 Demonstrate professional conduct and duty of care through delivery of relevant and appropriate care according to acceptable nutrition care protocols.	Creative and critical thinker Ethical Engaged	2.2

#### \* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
DIETITIANS AUSTRALIA	
1.5.2	Demonstrates cultural safety and responsiveness: Works respectfully with diverse clients in choosing culturally safe and responsive strategies to suit the goals, lived experiences and environment of clients
2.3.1	Influences food systems to improve the nutritional status of client: Applies an approach to practice that recognises the multi-factorial and interconnected determinants influencing nutrition and health
2.2	Expert Practice: Applies the nutrition care process based on the expectations and priorities of clients
4.1	Collaborative Practice: Communicates appropriately with people from various cultural, socioeconomic, organisational and professional backgrounds

### 5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [UniSC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

#### 5.1. Pre-requisites

NUT351 and enrolled in Program SC406 or SC302

#### 5.2. Co-requisites

NUT302

#### 5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

#### 5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Knowledge on the nutrition therapy of chronic disease

## 6. How am I going to be assessed?

### 6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

### 6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Early feedback on your progress will be provided in Week 4 through in-class peer feedback to your counselling and communication skills in preparation for Assessment Task 1 and 3. In class activities and role play throughout the semester will provide opportunity for feedback to implement in Tasks 2b and 3.

### 6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Artefact - Professional	Individual	20%	10 minutes	Week 5	Online Submission
All	2a	Activity Participation	Individual	0%	15 minute oral task.	Week 8	In Class
All	2b	Artefact - Creative, and Written Piece	Individual	30%	7-minute video and 1000 word written report	Week 10	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3a	Activity Participation	Individual	0%	2hr	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3b	Oral	Individual	50%	30 minute Oral dietetic interview.	Exam Period	In Class

#### All - Assessment Task 1: Nutrition education

<b>GOAL:</b>	To demonstrate your nutrition education skills through the delivery of a diet-disease relationship explanation to a peer.	
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Artefact - Professional	
<b>FORMAT:</b>	You will be required to deliver a diet-disease relationship explanation to a peer. Find task instructions on Canvas for more information.	
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Professional delivery of an accurate, evidence-based diet-disease relationship explanation. <span>3</span>
	2	A clear, understandable diet-disease relationship explanation is delivered. <span>1</span>
	3	An engaging diet-disease relationship explanation is delivered that is appropriate to the setting. <span>1</span>
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Collaboration	

**All - Assessment Task 2a:** Counselling skills

<b>GOAL:</b>	To demonstrate your counselling and communication skills to facilitate behaviour change.		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Activity Participation		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	You will demonstrate your communication and counselling skills in a class activity. During this activity you will be required to display active listening skills including paraphrasing and empathy. You will also have to demonstrate your ability to identify enablers and barriers to a nutrition-related behaviour.		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>		<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	You will need to demonstrate culturally responsive and effective counselling skills through establishing rapport, demonstrate active listening and paraphrasing skills, and works in partnership with a client/patient.	1
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication		

**All - Assessment Task 2b:** Behaviour modification plan

<b>GOAL:</b>	To demonstrate your ability to facilitate behaviour change through the use of counselling and communication skills and the application of relevant adult learning and behaviour modification theory.		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Artefact - Creative, and Written Piece		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	You will apply learnings from course content to a peer by analysing the individual's health behaviour information, needs and beliefs and develop an individualised behaviour modification plan using best evidence and theory.		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>		<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Formulate a lifestyle behaviour modification plan that appropriately applies the principles of adult learning and behaviour modification theory.	2
	2	Use effective counselling and communication skills to negotiate a relevant person-centred lifestyle goal.	4
	3	Professionally communicate thoughts clearly and fluently in both written and spoken form.	1
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving		

**All - Assessment Task 3a:** Dietetic clinic visit

<b>GOAL:</b>	To develop confidence in gathering nutrition assessment information from a real client.		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Activity Participation		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	You will attend the UniSC dietetic clinic and gather nutrition information from a real client as well as observe goal setting and development of SMART strategies with a real client.		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>		<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Demonstrate effective and appropriate interview and counselling skills	1
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Collaboration, Problem solving		

### All - Assessment Task 3b: Dietetic Interview

<b>GOAL:</b>	To demonstrate your ability to provide nutrition education and nutrition care using appropriate client-centred communication and counselling skills in a timely manner.		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Oral		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	You will conduct a simulated dietetic interview and demonstrate your nutrition education, goal setting, counselling and communication skills to provide appropriate client-centred nutrition care.		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>		<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Display critical judgement in the application of knowledge of nutrition science, health and disease, food and food preparation methods in the delivery of nutrition care.	3
	2	Demonstrates critical evaluation of nutrition assessment information to inform a targeted, evidence-based nutrition intervention in collaboration with a client.	4
	3	Use of tailored communication to enhance a client's understanding of the nutrition education provided whilst maintaining professional language.	3
	4	Demonstrate effective and culturally responsive communication skills to support behaviour change and negotiate an intervention plan in collaboration with a client.	1
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving		

## 7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

## 8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

### 8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

Please note that you need to have regular access to the resource(s) listed below. Resources may be required or recommended.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Required	Kathleen D. Bauer, Doreen Liou	2020	Nutrition Counseling and Education Skill Development	4	Cengage Learning

### 8.2. Specific requirements

Nil

## 9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

## 10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

### 10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

## 10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

### Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

- (a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
- (b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

## 10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:

- (a) One day: deduct 5%;
- (b) Two days: deduct 10%;
- (c) Three days: deduct 20%;
- (d) Four days: deduct 40%;
- (e) Five days: deduct 60%;
- (f) Six days: deduct 80%;
- (g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:

Less than 15 minutes: No penalty

From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty

More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

## 10.4. SafeUniSC

UniSC is committed to a culture of respect and providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. For immediate assistance on campus contact SafeUniSC by phone: [07 5430 1168](tel:0754301168) or using the [SafeZone](#) app. For general enquires contact the SafeUniSC team by phone [07 5456 3864](tel:0754563864) or email [safe@usc.edu.au](mailto:safe@usc.edu.au).

The SafeUniSC Specialist Service is a Student Wellbeing service that provides free and confidential support to students who may have experienced or observed behaviour that could cause fear, offence or trauma. To contact the service call [07 5430 1226](tel:0754301226) or email [studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au).

## 10.5. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the [Learning Advisers](#) web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or [studentcentral@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au).

## 10.6. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email [studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au) or call 07 5430 1226.

## 10.7. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, [AccessAbility Services](#) can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email [AccessAbility@usc.edu.au](mailto:AccessAbility@usc.edu.au) or call 07 5430 2890.

## 10.8. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

## 10.9. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

## 10.10. General Enquiries

### In person:

- **UniSC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **UniSC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **UniSC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **UniSC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **UniSC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **UniSC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

**Tel:** +61 7 5430 2890

**Email:** [studentcentral@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au)