

## BTEC ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN NUTRITION & HEALTH COACHING

### Course Outline and Summary of Units

*This is a part-time course with two study options:*

**Blended Learning:** Up to 10 weekend days in class: Sept – May only.

**Online Interactive:** Sept – May, & Mar – Sept.

The IINH learning platform is accessible 24/7 for all course materials and other resources, including audio & video classroom and tutorial recordings, and topic podcasts. Interactive online tutorials are held frequently during the course on weekday evenings (7-9pm), with recordings available to download.

*Each of the seven course units addresses practical areas of nutrition & health that are - or should be - important concerns for 'everyone who eats'. The broad range of issues covered will allow the Nutrition & Health Coach, once qualified, to assist people with a diversity of goals and concerns around diet, lifestyle and wellness.*

This BTEC Advanced Diploma in Nutrition & Health Coaching award (level 3 UK, 400 learning hours) is a vocational qualification, so student assessment is conducted using a wide variety of practically-oriented assignments. Through these, the student develops skills they will need to safely and effectively educate, guide and empower future clients towards healthier eating habits and other aspects of lifestyle behaviour.

*Assignments are submitted online and assessed as 'Passed' or 'Referred'. They are not graded. If an assignment is 'Referred', it is returned to the learner for resubmission. The learner resubmits after making changes. There is no formal exam.*

### Unit 1: Principles of Nutrition

**Big Issues:** The course begins with a broad review of the major issues and challenges we face - globally, locally and personally - around food, health and disease.

**Essentials of Nutrition:** To help people understand why and how to improve their diet and eating habits, we first need familiarity with some basic knowledge and concepts in nutrition science.

- 'Essential' nutrients, food groups, food composition data & resources, nutrient density, impacts of refining and processing, dietary guidelines (pyramids, food plates), reference values.
- Proteins, Carbohydrates (sugars, starch, fibre, GI/GL), Fats & Oils, Vitamins, Minerals, Antioxidants. All explored in sufficient, practical detail, and related to health and disease issues.
- The digestive system is explored in some detail, including common digestive complaints.

## Unit 2: Nutrition in Health and Disease

**Life Stages:** The focus here is on known nutrition-related concerns that can result in significant health challenges at different stages of the lifespan, from pre-conception and pregnancy, right through to old-age. Along with obesity and diabetes (see next section) we look at the role of nutrition in autoimmune and other inflammatory conditions, heart disease, cancer and Alzheimer's disease, among others. We explore ways of educating and empowering people to nurture themselves and help avoid problems so they can enjoy good health throughout their lives.

**Metabolic Flexibility:** A key health mission worldwide in the coming years is reversing the pandemic of obesity and diabetes caused largely by diets overburdened with sugar and refined starchy foods. In this vital element of the course, health coach students learn about *insulin resistance*, and how *nutritional ketosis* may help individuals gain *metabolic flexibility* and thus the ability to thrive with optimal health on a diet based on whole foods with plenty of good quality fats and oils. *Intermittent fasting* is also examined, for its power to help restore metabolic flexibility and support health generally.

**Cholesterol & Heart Health:** Evidence linking saturated fats and cholesterol with heart disease is now recognised as flawed, so it is important that Nutrition & Health Coaches are able to reassure people, backed by up-to-date scientific findings, that wholesome fats are a vital component of healthy diets.

**Stress:** The unrelenting stresses of modern life can have a huge impact on both physical and mental health. Clients often need guidance to find ways of reducing or managing stress levels.

**Allergies, Intolerances, Sensitivities:** More people than ever are experiencing negative reactions to food, but often remain unclear about the specific item(s) responsible. Students learn the 'elimination/challenge' approach that allows people to identify 'culprit' foods or ingredients, and then how to help them adjust their diet in a healthful way.

## Unit 3: Nutrition, Exercise and Sports

There's more to wellness than good nutrition! Bodies are designed to move, and many people simply don't do enough exercise to stay healthy. This unit explores the powerful potential of appropriate exercise to maintain health and prevent – even reverse – a range of physical and mental health conditions. Clients often need help to find and implement a suitable exercise plan.

**Sports performance:** Understanding of the role of nutrition in sports performance is evolving rapidly. With the help of experts in this area, Unit 3 explores the latest developments, including foods, macros, hydration, electrolytes, supplements and other practical topics useful for individuals active in sports.

## Unit 4: Farm to Fork

How food is produced, processed, transported, marketed – and wasted – embraces a broad range of topics and concerns. We take a look at some of the most pressing impacts of the food chain on human health, animal welfare and the environment, including global warming. We also discuss the evidence for shifting towards more plant-based diets.

**Reading food labels:** This is an important skill. Much of what most people eat comes from supermarket shelves, so we need to know what's in these products. In this unit we spend practical time – in class and online during tutorials – examining and comparing the ingredient and nutrition labels of a wide variety of items. We contrast the marketing hype of individual products with the 'reality' listed under *Ingredients* and *Nutrition Data*. When comparing products, a few key 'decoding' tips can help us make smarter, healthier choices with ease.

## Unit 5: Practitioner Development

**Coaching skills:** Adopting diet and lifestyle changes - and making them stick - can be a real struggle. To achieve meaningful and sustainable behavioural change with clients, the Nutrition & Health Coach needs a number of skills and tools at their disposal. This unit, tutored by a highly experienced NLP trainer & Master Practitioner - herself a Nutrition & Health Coach - covers, among others: SMART goal-setting and OUTCOME questions, Active Listening, Questioning/Language skills, Pacing, Meta mirroring, Rapport, Feedback, Motivation strategies and Conversational Intelligence. One course weekend is devoted to a coaching skills workshop which is recorded and accessible to all students.

## Unit 6: Nutrition and Lifestyle Coaching

**Case Studies:** This unit puts Nutrition & Health Coaching into practice within a safe, supported framework. Learners apply their new nutrition knowledge, plus insights, tools and tips from Practitioner Development (above), to address the needs of 'real' case study 'clients'. These are volunteers (without serious illness) who have asked the learner for assistance. The process starts with a structured interview, followed by an action plan, negotiations, follow-up meetings and a detailed report. This unit spreads over the latter part of the course and is supported throughout by a supervisor (in class & online tutorials), a personal mentor (online), and moderated online forums. Detailed feedback is provided on all case study reports.

## Unit 7: Setting up to Practise and Delivering Presentations

**Presentations:** Naturally enough, qualified Nutrition & Health Coaches are often asked to give talks, so students learn about creating and delivering successful presentations. The assignment requires learners to research, prepare and deliver a 15-minute presentation (in class or online) on a health-related topic of their choice.

The final part of the course covers issues related to practising as a Nutrition & Health Coach. These include job opportunities, essential admin, insurance, planning and promoting one's business via website, social media, networking, etc.

## Extra: Cooking Demonstration Classes and Resources

Two days of cooking demonstration classes are offered to Blended format students in our purpose-built Taste Health kitchen in South Dublin. Dozens of delicious dishes are prepared (and consumed!). Students receive a pack of recipes, plus a wealth of other resources on foods, products and ingredients that will come in useful for clients. Students and graduates have permanent access to a resource library of recipes, ebooks, cooking videos and other resources prepared by Maggie Lynch, Director of Cooking. ([www.iinh.net/taste-health-cooking-school/](http://www.iinh.net/taste-health-cooking-school/))