



SPORTS NUTRITION ASSOCIATION

SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Sports Nutrition Generally

Sports Nutrition is the non-medical practice of:

- ✓ Improving/changing body composition
- ✓ Managing and changing weight (loss/gain)
- ✓ Improving performance

Advice & Coaching vs Personalised Professional Service

When it comes to nutrition, the fitness industry has established a well-intentioned, albeit hazardous, trend in allowing professionals that aren't qualified dietitians, and are otherwise unqualified, unregulated and unregistered "nutrition professionals" to engage with clients.

This is something Sports Nutrition Association has aimed to combat through the establishment of a membership association that provides members an accreditation framework, ongoing training and professional development and the ability to obtain access to an insurance policy with coverage that specifically contemplates the unique issues that a Sports Nutritionist is required to deal with in working with both professional and aspiring athletes.

The goal of Sports Nutrition Association is to ensure that not only is the highest quality personalised professional service being provided to clients, but also that clients and the public generally can have confidence when they are engaging with a professional offering Sports Nutrition services.

In the health and fitness industry, there is an important distinction that must be recognised between simply providing 'coaching' and guidance', and providing a personalised and prescriptive nutrition service that is targeted towards assisting an athlete or client achieve a particular performance outcome.

Sound nutrition service must be personalised, this is what makes it effective for each individual client. Understanding this fundamental principle is paramount to any professional that wants a successful career within the nutrition industry.

Sports Nutrition Association specialises in equipping professionals with the skills required to enable them to provide expert and tailored services and ultimately succeed in a career in the nutrition industry.

This is not to say that there isn't an important place for general health tips.

For example:

Undergoing employment for a corporation or local government to present some healthy eating/ nutrition principles applicable to a large group of people.

However, this is a different focus, process and skillset from that of a Sports Nutritionist.

For example:

A Sports Nutritionist will provide an individual client or athlete with a tailored service that is designed to enable them to elicit a specific result through nutritional change.



Sports Nutrition Association Accreditation Levels

Accredited Sports Nutritionists

In any professional services industry, the level of qualification and experience that a practitioner has achieved influences the scope, quality and nature of service that they are able to competently provide to clients. The Sports Nutrition industry is no different in this respect.

Through the significant experience and expertise that Sports Nutrition Association has obtained through years of education, training and working with athletes, Sports Nutrition Association has developed a qualification level framework.

The intent of the framework is to standardise the nature of services that are provided by Sports Nutrition professionals that have achieved different levels of competency, again ensuring that clients can be confident in the quality of the personalised nutritional services they are receiving.

The Sports Nutrition Association framework defines three separate categories of Sports Nutrition professionals, as well the nature of the services that Sports Nutrition Association considers can be competently provided by a professional that has achieved each level of competency.

There are three core categories which we've outlined on the next page.

Provisional Sports Nutrition Practitioner:

The key competencies and practice scope for a Provisional Sports Nutrition Practitioner include:

- Engaging with clientele that are low-risk in respect of their nutritional requirements and the performance or other outcomes they are seeking to achieve.
- The engagement with moderate-risk clientele under supervision of a registered Australian Health Practitioner or Sports Nutrition Association Open Accredited Member.
- Refraining from engaging or providing information and instruction directly to high level amateur athletes or professional athletes, and from providing personalised nutritional services in respect of any “Specialty Category” (including weight cutting, body building or physique contest preparation).

Sports Nutrition Association Practitioner Open Qualification:

The key competencies and practice scope for a Sports Nutrition Association Open Qualification Practitioner include:

- Engaging directly with moderate risk clientele.
- Engaging directly with high level amateur and professional athletes.
- Except in circumstances where further specialised education has been undertaken, refraining from working with any class of athlete that is subject to ‘anti-doping’ testing.

Sports Nutrition Association Open Practitioner with Speciality:

A Sports Nutrition Association Open Practitioner with Speciality is qualified to provide all of the services that are contemplated in the Sports Nutrition Association ‘Provisional’ and ‘Open’ categories, however is also qualified to work directly with athletes in the following specialty disciplines:

- Weight cutting (regardless of sport).
- Bodybuilding & physique contest preparation.

Prohibited Areas of Practice For Accredited Sports Nutrition Association Sports Nutritionists

Notwithstanding the level of qualification that has been achieved within the Sports Nutrition Association framework, a Sports Nutrition Association professional (and any professional that is not an Australian Health Practitioner) should not engage in providing personalised professional service to clients in respect of health related issues falling within the scope of the following categories:

- Eating disorders
- Gut health
- Blood tests & panel interpretation/interventions
- Body image
- Treatment & management of any disease/medical contraindication (unless otherwise dually registered for medical intervention).



Good and bad examples:

	Provisional	Open	Open With Speciality
Within Scope	<p>General population client low-moderate* risk</p> <p>Low level amateur athlete wanting to compete in a local competition</p> <p>General population client with hypertension with clearance and dietary recommendations from a dietitian</p>	<p>Everything from provisional, plus the following:</p> <p>Working with high level amateur and elite athletes</p> <p>Working with youth and adolescent athletes</p> <p>Low risk acute weight cuts (low residue, CHO variation and short term fasting only)</p> <p>e.g. Powerlifter using low residue diets for an acute weight cut</p> <p>Working with tested athletes (ideally additional relevant anti doping certifications are completed for this)</p> <p>Can have additional practitioners & members under your brand</p> <p>Diagnosed ED BID - in conjunction with Food psych</p>	<p>Anything involving higher risk weight cut strategies. For example:</p> <p>Powerlifter doing a water load and deplete acute weight cut for a 2hr weigh in for event.</p> <p>Bodybuilding competition preparation</p> <p>Relationship with food/bodyimage/ED - Provided appropriate Dual-Rego</p>
Outside of Scope	<p>Working with high level amateur and elite athletes.</p> <p>Renting a dedicated space as a sports nutritionist.</p> <p>Working with youth athletes.</p> <p>Relationship with food/body image/ED.</p> <p>Diagnosed ED BID - in conjunction with Food psych.</p> <p>Having additional practitioners under your brand.</p> <p>Hormonal optimisation, gut health, autoimmune, inflammation etc. unless dually registered Dietitian, GP or Endocrinologist</p>	<p>Anything involving higher risk weight cut strategies, water manipulation, heat exposure, electrolyte manipulation</p> <p>e.g. Powerlifter doing a water load and deplete acute weight cut for a 2hr weigh in for event.</p> <p>- a fighter completing a cut with a 24-hour weigh-in</p> <p>Bodybuilding competition Preparation</p> <p>Relationship with food/bodyimage/ED</p> <p>Hormonal optimisation, gut health, autoimmune, inflammation etc. unless dually registered Dietitian, GP or Endocrinologist</p>	<p>Hormonal optimisation, gut health, autoimmune, inflammation etc. unless dually registered Dietitian, GP or Endocrinologist</p>

Accreditation Levels

Key Differences in Nutrition Qualifications

Qualification	Level	Focus	Scope of Practice	Client Interaction	Career Path
Cert III Sports Nutrition Coaching Assistant	3	Assisting & supporting senior practitioners	Basic nutrition education, food prep, data collection	Limited, under supervision	Entry-level, pathway to Cert IV or other health fields
Cert IV Sports Nutrition Coach	4	Non-prescriptive nutrition coaching & guidance	General nutrition education, coaching, progress monitoring	Direct interaction, general advice only	Pathway to Graduate Certificate or other sports-related roles
Diploma of Sports Nutrition	5	In-depth nutritional principles & application to sports performance	Non-prescriptive coaching, advanced dietary analysis	Independent, non-personalized advice	Stepping stone to a Bachelor's degree or specialized roles
Advanced Diploma of Nutritional Science	6	Comprehensive understanding of nutritional science & application	Evidence-based nutrition education & guidance, research	General nutrition education & support	Pathway to a Bachelor's degree or roles in public health, food science, or the food industry
Grad Cert in Applied Sports Nutrition	8	Personalized nutrition services for low-risk & supervised moderate-risk clients	Personalized plans, dietary analysis, lifestyle counseling	Direct interaction, supervision for moderate-risk	Pathway to Open Accreditation with further education & experience (min. 2.5 years combined)
Bachelor's in Applied Exercise/Nutrition Science	7	Personalized nutrition services, including high-level athlete	Comprehensive assessments, meal planning, supplement advice	Direct & independent interaction	Open Accreditation, further specialization through Grad Dip, leadership, research, consulting
Grad Dip in Applied Sports Nutrition	8	Advanced personalized services, including high-level athletes & specialized areas	All services of Open Accredited, plus specialization	Direct & independent interaction, specialized fields	Highest level of expertise, leadership roles