MAJOR INNOVATIONS IN DUTCH EDUCATION IN NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

Alie Schreurs  
HAN University (Hogeschool van Arnhem en Nijmegen), Faculty of Health and Social Studies, Netherlands

The requirements for the profession of dietician have been renewed in 2003 by the Dutch Dietetic Association of Dieticians (NVD). It states attitude, activities and competences of the paramedic dietician. The professional practice that the study programmes aims for is broader than that of practising paramedical dietician.

For this reason the professional universities involved in education nutrition and dietetics in the Netherlands, have set up a task force for drawing up a nation-wide competence profile covering the full breadth of the professional field and indicating on which points the activities and competences from NVD – profile need to be supplemented.

In this national competence-profile have been laid down the competences that bachelor graduates nutritionist and Dietician need to possess. Our graduates, having mastered the whole set of competences, we feel are competent to perform well both in the paramedics and the non-paramedic professional field.

The competence profile is to be the steering and frame-setting for the training of all the departments in the Netherlands. That explains the designation “nutritionist and dietician”.

Each university accounts in their own documents for the way they concretise theses competencies into exit qualifications and concretise the learning in their curricula, in connection with their own professional-field orientation, view of bachelor programmes and didactic concept.

The new didactic concept underlying this change in perspective is a university – wide based paradigm shift towards student-based learning (called: HAN education flexibility HOF). The core themes of this innovation involve a shift from supply-led to demand – led education. The consequences are more profession oriented and practice oriented education by focusing on competences. This means also a great organisational change.

The student role has been changed from class-dependence to self – guidance. Students are responsible for their own learning-process, learning route
and learning sources. Each student will draw up a personal developing program (PDP/study contract) and will collect evidence of competence development in his portfolio. The student will be tested in competences assessments by separate judges twice a year.

The lecturer role has also been changed. Lecturer is occasionally teacher, developer, but foremost become study career coach, consultant, internship supervisor, assessor and researcher.

To date, a project group is preparing an education framework for the 2de, 3th and 4th year of Nutritionist and Dietician. In this framework competence profile for the study program Nutrition and Dietetics will be linked to the didactic concept HOF.

In September 2005 we have started in the first year of course with this new curriculum.

At the conference I will present more details and my first experience with the new curriculum.

Literature: