

Deakin University

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Year graduated from Deakin: 2006
Course name: Bachelor Nutrition & Dietetics
Campus: Burwood



What is your current job and what does it entail?

I work as an Accredited Sports Dietitian mainly as a sports nutrition consultant. My week is made up of two days at the Victorian Institute of Sport (VIS), a day at Sports Dietitians Australia (SDA), generally a day at the St Kilda football club and a day in private practice. My role at VIS involves managing around 200 athletes from a variety of sports including swimming, hockey, water polo, golf, and athletes with disabilities. At SDA, I work coordinating and editing nutrition fact sheets, providing an education service through public online newsletters, responding to nutrition-related enquiries and creating work opportunities for SDA members. At the football club, I work with another Accredited Sports Dietitian and together we help with player nutrition education, catering around training and travel. We assist with cooking and life skills and attend games to monitor their nutrition and hydration practices.

What are the things you enjoy most about your job and what have been your career highlights to date?

I enjoy the diversity of my job and derive pleasure from working with athletes in reaching their full potential through the application of sports nutrition. It is an amazing feeling to watch them compete and even more so when they achieve their goals. I love it when athletes come back to me glowing and excited because they feel better in training and see visible and measureable improvements in the gym and/or in their training drills. A recent career highlight was when a swimmer with a disability recently swam around Phillip Island in four days to raise money and draw awareness to the long-overdue local hospital. We planned her entire food and fluid intake to support her as she swam the distance.

Are there any difficulties that you have encountered with this chosen career path? And if so, what are they?

While I love my job, there are some things to consider before getting carried away in the 'glamour' of working in sport. Number one is that there are many moments where it isn't so glamorous. For example having to face 30 foam cups of urine on an athletics camp for hydration testing! The second consideration is the business hours. Athletes train at all hours of the day, from early in the morning to late at night and working with them often means working to their schedule. Weekends and public holidays are also seen as workdays and it can often be difficult to achieve a healthy work-life balance. The other consideration is a financial one – there is not a lot of money in sports nutrition and full-time work in this field is extremely rare, so be prepared to pursue other elements of nutrition at times to make up a full week.

What do you intend to do in the future?

I hope to continue working in sports nutrition as a consultant whilst also building my local networks in private practice. I am also studying to be a lactation consultant to further my knowledge and interest in women's health. It also gives me other options later down the track.

How do you feel your Deakin course has helped your career – both in obtaining your current position, and in the future development of your career?

My experience at Deakin was a positive one where I learnt some key principles to developing and furthering my career.

- Volunteer your time as a student. This will serve you well on your resume and start your networks and connections with the workforce.
- Attend professional education events wherever possible.
- Be open, ready and willing to learn even after you have graduated.