

Area of Study

Enterprise – engage students in various aspects of the food sector with practical application and real life processes. The agri-tourism industry plays a significant role in the economic landscape of the country and this unit aims to educate and inform future generations.

Overview

This transition unit is designed to introduce students to the food industry in Ireland. In the first instance students will learn the basic skills and knowledge essential to setting up a small company. The unit then introduces entrepreneurship and innovation and explains how these essential tools have helped the artisan sector grow and serve the food industry in Ireland. In addition the unit will give students real life experiences through meeting and working with food producers or planning the development and production of a new food product.

Related Learning

Junior Certificate Home Economics & Leaving Certificate Home Economics
Junior Certificate Business Studies & Leaving Certificate Home Economics

Summary outline of the unit

Teaching materials to support this unit are listed in the resources section

The unit is divided into four sections.

Section 1

1. Setting up a mini company

Students will engage with the theory associated with setting up a mini company. This will be relevant later in the unit and for general life skills.

Section 2

2. Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the food sector

Students will engage with both the theory and case studies that exemplifies entrepreneurship and innovation in the Irish food sector paying particular attention to the evolution and ongoing developments with artisan food producers. Following theory sessions the students will meet with

some regional producers and culinary professionals. This can be organised for one day in the unit calendar and will provide students with their first opportunity to engage with those working in the industry.

Section 3

3. Food Project

Students will now form a company and may choose one of two food projects – ‘Product Development’ or ‘Connecting with the Producers’.

Once their company structure is agreed and in place the team can develop a project plan and begin the project. A teacher resource pack has been developed for this unit. In addition a student toolkit has been developed and these resources include all material teachers and students need including student’s individual learning logs. Both toolkits will provide invaluable advice, guidance and direction to the student and teacher to assist with developing this part of the unit. In addition these resources also include access to Bord Bia market insight research online.

The purpose of participating and managing this project is to allow students an opportunity to better understand the artisan sector of the food industry and also positively engage with this sector. In addition these students, by now, will have developed an understanding of key business focuses in the food industry; this project allows them a ‘real life’ opportunity to demonstrate understanding and awareness of how artisan food better serves our communities and country.

Finally, from a non-commercial viewpoint, both projects will allow students an opportunity to recognise the social role this sector plays in serving communities throughout regions.

Section 4

4. Evaluation of the process

Following the project completion an evaluation of the process must be undertaken as learning will continue to evolve. The group will evaluate a number of factors including:

- Company set up and structures put in place to support the project
- Original idea, fit with market needs and relevance to the overall area of study
- Organisation of teams prior, during and after the event
- Customer Feedback (depending on project undertaken but this would come from either the producer the student group worked with or the new product developed and sold)

Breakdown of the unit

This unit works very well if timetabled for the January term. This unit will work best if it is scheduled for one morning or one afternoon for three periods.

Class contact time	28 hours
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Real time Project Meeting (with producer or IOT)	3 hours
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Independent research	5 hours
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Event Preparation and participation	6 hours
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Evaluation (takes place in last class) 3 hours

Total 45 hours

Aims

This transition unit aims to:

Provide students with an opportunity to actively engage with aspects of the food sector.

Assist students to develop an understanding of the contribution the food production and agri-tourism industry makes to Ireland's economic platform.

Allow students an opportunity to engage with local producers or food professionals to explore and develop real life skills in food production

Further develop and enhance students key skills

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit students should be able to:

1. Explain the various stages involved in setting up a mini company
2. Describe the role of communication in company structures and how it can influence leaders and their leadership style.
3. Discuss the role of entrepreneurship and innovation in relation to the food sector.
4. Consider the role of agriculture and the farming industry and how this industry interacts with the food sector.
5. Describe the food industry in Ireland with specific reference to artisan Irish producers
6. Design, plan and manage a food project using the toolkits provided.
7. Evaluate feedback from the project and analyse the results.
8. Take responsibility for completing a variety of tasks within an agreed timeframe.
9. Work independently through research tasks
10. Demonstrate improved communication and presentation skills.

Key Skills

How Evidenced

information processing

This will be evidenced throughout the unit through the gathering of information, the management and organisation of an event and finally the evaluation of the experience and the various processes involved.

critical and creative thinking

Students will be required to become both critical and creative in their thinking especially when they plan their event.

communicating	Section one focuses on the development of communication as a key skill which is then built upon further throughout the module. In section one students are encouraged to examine methods of communication and how they can be effectively adjusted to suit a variety of situations. As students engage with the unit they will have many opportunities to communicate with internal and external stakeholders via email, face to face meetings, company meetings and all opportunities will support the further development of this key skill. Finally students will have an opportunity to present their work at the end of the unit applying learnt communication skills
working with others	The 'company' members' will have to work as a team and individually when undertaking this unit. Clear channels of communication are vital in order to ensure everyone understands their role. Irrespective of which project students choose they will meet and work with industry professionals. This provides the project with an essential sense of 'realism'.
being personally effective	Students will develop an understanding of food entrepreneurship and innovation. In addition students will develop confidence in their ability to talk and engage with others outside of the classroom. Through organising and managing an event students will develop additional skills around decision making, meeting targets and deadlines and being able to reflect on their work and evaluate the success of the project.

Teaching approaches

This unit is mainly based in the classroom with visits from local contact (depending on which project students choose to undertake) and at least one field visit.

Web based interaction using various tools for research purposes. Some interaction with industry professionals may be via VC link, Bord Bia web based research or other web based tools.

Research through independent learning

Team work – teams and individual tasks. Making cross curricular links from previous learning in Junior cycle subjects. This will be a key activity when brain storming for new product concepts and concept developments.

Company meetings

Visits to relevant companies or other support groups e.g. culinary professionals in the Institutes of Technology.

Digital media

Field Trips

Assessment approaches

A combination of assessment methods (formative and summative) will be used to assess the unit however the primary focus will be summative assessment.

Formative assessment will feature where students use a learning journal and will record their role in the weekly company activities. Weekly records from students would include learning that took place during the week and a learning plan for the following week. This would demonstrate an understanding of what has happened and a sense of readiness for the week ahead. In addition this document provides documented evidence for each participant of their role in the 'company' and their contribution to the project. In addition this experience can be included in all future CV's.

Following completion of the food project students will be responsible for evaluating their project and reviewing the outcomes of their work.

At the end of the unit each 'student group' within the mini company would present their work over the period of the unit and discuss their challenges and successes during the term.

Evaluation

The unit can be evaluated by the student group using their student reflections. Weekly updates in their student journal can assist the student in evaluation the experience and how this has helped them develop a better understanding of the unit content.

Teacher feedback will also assist in the weekly learning for all students.

Resources

Note to teachers: if you decide to offer this unit The Taste Council of Ireland have developed a number of resources to assist you and students. To access these resources please visit the Taste Council website at www.tastecouncilofireland.com/schools-ty-unit

Teachers resource pack

Student Learning pack

National database of artisan producers and culinary professionals willing to engage and support the project as developed by the Taste Council of Ireland – please contact Claudia.Nolan@bordbia.ie for access to this.

On-line web based Bord Bia research.

Websites that may prove useful include:

www.bordbia.ie

www.euro-toques.ie

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www.slowfoodireland.com

www.organictrust.org

www.gmfreeireland.org

www.goodfoodireland.ie

www.failteireland.ie