

Technical Award in Hospitality & Catering

Frequently Asked Questions

What units are studied and how is the course assessed?

The course is made up of two units, one is the theory for the written exam, which focuses on Hospitality, and the other is a substantial piece of work which is a non-examination assessment, the NEA. The exam is worth 40% of the marks and the NEA is worth 60%. There are no optional units; the students need to study all of the course content. The NEA requires research, planning and food preparation and culminates in a practical exam.

Is there a substantial amount of practical within the course and how often will I cook?

The course does have a practical element but it also has a substantial theory content; it is more than cooking. It is estimated that you will cook at least once a fortnight but there will be occasions when it is more. There will also be the advice that it is beneficial for students to be able to cook and practise dishes at home. The dishes prepared are to develop students' skills in preparation but also to develop their knowledge in the function of ingredients.

What are the main considerations when selecting a food course to study?

The first consideration for choosing a food course is the career pathway that a student may wish to take. This course has been written for and aimed at students who would like to pursue a career in catering. The students need to be dedicated, organised and should not choose the course just because they like cooking. The other important consideration is the fact that students will be expected to have ingredients for practical lessons and they will cook approximately once a fortnight. The practical lessons are guided by the course and the skills the students need to develop.



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Do I need to buy any extra resources or equipment, other than ingredients?

No, the only thing we ask all students to have is an A4 ring binder with a set of subject dividers. The department will provide textbooks in lessons, however these can be purchased for revision purposes. We can also supply small amounts of store cupboard ingredients such as cooking oil, salt, pepper and some herbs and spices; this is for when a recipe requires a teaspoon or less.

Would work experience within the industry be beneficial?

Absolutely, in fact it is highly recommended that students try to gain some sort of experience within the food, nutrition, and catering based sectors. We do have some links with local companies and businesses, as well as City College. All being well, visiting speakers, visits and training may be set up. The more exposure a student has with any form of the food industry, the better their understanding will be.

Which food based course should my son/daughter take and what is the difference between them?

In short, it really depends on what direction a student wants to go in, what aspirations they have and where their strongest skills lie. The technical award, Hospitality & Catering, is much more aimed at students who want to pursue a career within the catering industry and want to develop their knowledge of the whole hospitality sector. This IS the course if a student wants to become a chef or work in the catering industry. The GCSE course is very science based and, whilst the students will cook, the emphasis is much more on food development, food science and nutrition. It is strongly recommended that students do not take both courses as there is a large overlap in content, especially on the cooking skills and practical sessions. This can add extra pressure, both in terms of time and financially.

