

RESEARCH ABSTRACT

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A COORDINATED APPROACH TO THE PROMOTION AND DELIVERY OF THE GENERAL NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (GNVQ) IN HOSPITALITY AND CATERING

The research was carried out by Frances Bickerstaff, formerly of the Belfast Institute of Further & Higher Education (BIFHE) and Ian Bickerstaff of the Northern Ireland Hotel and Catering College.

The research was commissioned in 1997 to investigate the feasibility of delivering the General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) in Hospitality and Catering through partnership arrangements between schools and Further Education (FE) colleges in such a way as to:

- raise awareness at the schools level of opportunities in the Hospitality & Catering Industry
- increase participation in programmes leading to career opportunities in a growth industry
- improve the image of the Hospitality & Catering industry through increased knowledge

Some of the key findings of the report are as follows:

Knowledge of GNVQs in general

Although most schools claimed familiarity with GNVQs there was a low level of understanding of, involvement in, training for and acceptance of GNVQs across the grammar schools.

While about two thirds of secondary school and FE college/institute respondents believed that GNVQ had equal status with the General Certificate of Education (GCE) and the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), only one third of grammar schools had the same belief.

GNVQs in Hospitality & Catering

The involvement of secondary schools in GNVQs is presently mainly restricted to Business and Health & Social Care, with no respondents indicating involvement in Hospitality & Catering.

There was an overall recognition of reasonable or good opportunities in a growth industry, but across the schools there was little specific career promotion in this area

About 50% of schools were already linked in varying degrees with FE colleges. Of those secondary schools which had no general links to FE colleges 46% were willing to consider partnership for the delivery of GNVQ Hospitality & Catering. Of the grammar schools who did not have an existing relationship with FE, only 16% indicated an initial willingness to consider partnership, and this declined to zero when follow-up interviews were held to discuss partnership issues.

All FE college/institute respondents indicated that they had the resources to offer GNVQ Hospitality & Catering, although there was a very strong feeling that the physical resources in most cases were in need of updating. Only a very small percentage of schools felt they had the physical resources to offer a GNVQ in Hospitality & catering independently.

Partnership Issues

After the initial postal questionnaire, face-to-face interviews were held with selected individuals to gather more in-depth views on partnerships.

Schools, colleges and industry representatives interviewed felt there would be benefits to pupils, schools, colleges and industry through the development of partnership arrangements, but that extensive preliminary preparation work would be necessary.

46% of secondary and all FE and industry respondents indicated an interest in partnership arrangements.

The most popular level for partnership was Intermediate GNVQ.

Recommendations

Processes should be developed to:

Improve awareness levels of the industry and the careers it offers, particularly in the grammar sector.

Inform those in schools who may not achieve the 4 GCSEs required for direct entry to GNVQ Advanced Hospitality & catering of an alternative career progression route - the GNVQ Intermediate Hospitality & Catering

Draw up a framework model for partnership which uses the strengths of the partners, with all practical elements being delivered by the FE colleges/institutes and use this to develop a pilot study.

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. The research project was commissioned in 1997 by the (then) Department of Education Northern Ireland at a cost of £7,320
2. All secondary level schools and FE colleges/institutes were circulated with an initial questionnaire which sought to ascertain knowledge of, and attitudes to, GNVQs in general and the GNVQ in Hospitality & Catering in particular. It also looked at the level of promotion of Hospitality & Catering as a career and aspects of forming partnership arrangements to deliver the GNVQ in Hospitality & Catering.
3. A second questionnaire to schools and colleges followed up a sample of those who had been positive about partnership arrangements and sought further information on this. Selected employers from industry were also interviewed about their familiarity with GNVQs and their views on partnerships.

This document is a summary of the full research report, and as such any views it contains are not necessarily those of DEL.

Full Report

Copies of the report entitled 'A COORDINATED APPROACH TO THE PROMOTION AND DELIVERY OF THE GENERAL NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (GNVQ) IN HOSPITALITY AND CATERING', Frances and Ian Bickerstaff is available from Department for Employment and Learning priced £5.

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