

Stage 2 Workplace Practices – 2014

External Assessment Cover Sheet

Assessment Type 4: Investigation

SACE Registration Number:

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Student's industry focus for undertaking Workplace Practices:

Hospitality - Chef

Practical Investigation

Issues Investigation

Description

Competing at the
Chef' awards.

'Golden

word count

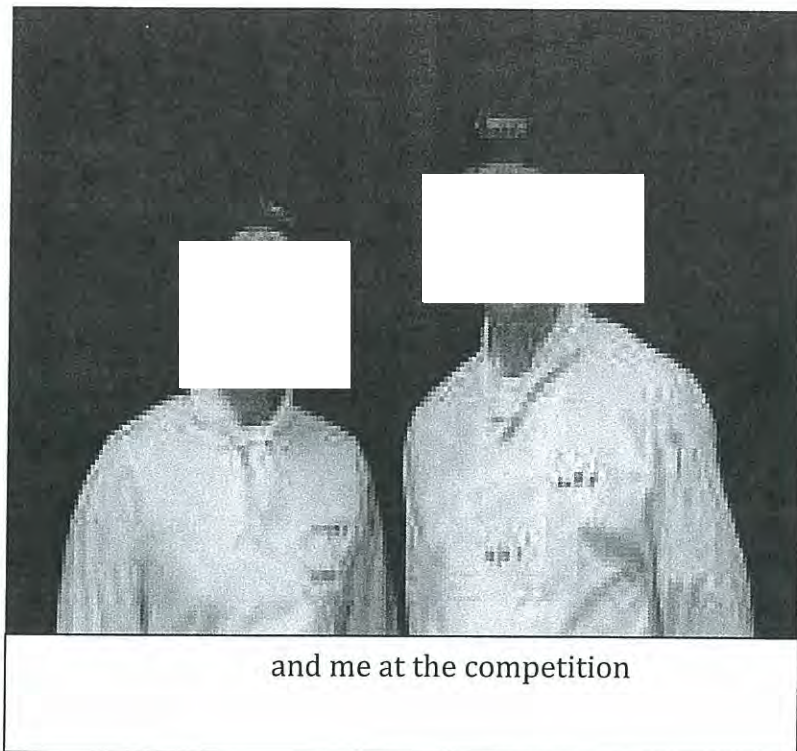
(for written only)

This investigation is assessed using the following specific features:

Knowledge and Understanding	Investigation and Analysis	Reflection and Evaluation
KU1	IA1	RE1
KU2	IA2	

Introduction:-

As part of my Stage Two Workplace Practises Practical task, I decided to focus it on my experience with the Nestle Golden Chef Awards. I discussed with my teacher my experience as part of the NGCA and he suggested I focus my study on it as it involves a lot of work, planning and skills in the execution. Also as I was given a lot of help from my boss at work (J. M) and other chefs at Restaurant. It also involved plenty of reflection. I applied for the competition as an apprentice at work had told me about competing last year and it sounded like something I was capable of doing with a partner. The competition involves entry with applications from both team members and then the preparation and submission of a three course menu using limited ingredients, in a limited time frame using 5 products (assuming our submission was accepted).



This experience with the Golden Chef awards directly tied into my work as it was an experience involving food and about food. M (my partner) and I worked out of work together and even came in to work to practise in a commercial kitchen. All stages of this involved some skills I would not have if I was not in my industry doing the work I do. Through this experience I gained more skills especially in teamwork, organization and working under pressure. From trying to crust shredded lamb and finally figuring out how to do a slow braise, my skills were furthered and I learnt new and exciting ways to enhance flavours. From work we took plates, feedback from my chef (see attached notes), recipes, ideas, boxes, serving utensils and a level of confidence that we did not see in other new competitors. Working directly with my head chef enabled us too create the best possible dishes while still using our own ideas and that was excellent.

Planning:-

I originally heard about this opportunity from a former peer at work, he competed last year and won the SA wide based competition, and came second in Australia; he told me about his experience and how he loved all of it. He also said he would love to go against me next year and I accepted. This offer in itself is enough competition to make me want to go for it but the fact there is an ultimate prize later as well also attracted me. M and I almost immediately applied and we received confirmation emails of our acceptance a few weeks later. Ever since then M and I tried to get together as much as we could to cook, practise; write menus and other competition related ideas. This competition has provided a great opportunity for M and I to show our head chefs and the culinary community what we are capable off.

In planning for the competition, once we came up with a range of ideas all sporting the five nestle products we chose to include n. and I took part in 5 big cook offs out of our own time. The

products we chose to use were, couverture dark chocolate, mousse, instant mash, tomato coulis and white chocolate. During these cook-offs we tried to do every course, attempting different technical methods every time. We attempted to make gratin, shredded lamb shoulder, roulades, remoulades and many, many other things; all of which we refined to our final menu.

The first step we undertook was to look at what we had available, the products and the amounts and try to work a dish out for entrée, main and dessert. After coming up with solid dishes for entrée and dessert fitting a Mediterranean theme, we had to then fit a main in as well, and to theme it that way was challenging. M and I researched and read books such as the French Laundry for inspiration. We chose this book especially because it is a book written by the best chefs in the world designed to inspire and educate other cooks.

Planning:-

M and I struggled severely with our main course. Trying to figure out how to treat the lamb shoulder was challenging but after many attempts we finally came to a conclusion; we would debone the whole shoulder, pan sear and dry roast it, then open it up and get a herb rub going 'allllll' over it and let that infuse until it was time to serve. It tasted pretty delicious but did not present well, despite the perfect cook on the meat. There is also the positive of the aromatics getting to you and hitting the nose, which will trigger mouth watering- making the judges want to eat it. We mainly decided not go with it as it was not only un-elegant and unattractive, but was not a great display of our skill as well.

The decision on the main was the final one we had to make as we knew pretty quickly how we were going to do entrée as we do a stuffed quail at work and we know how to do it; it's challenging but having spent a lot of time doing it, we can execute it perfectly. With dessert there was some debate as I designed a complex yet well flavoured and balanced pannacotta with juniper berries and madeira which was delicious, however J suggested (despite how delicious) I should aim for a less complex balance of flavours. J said the flavours may be delicious to us, but some people may not enjoy or understand the complexity in the dish, however this then encouraged me to change it to a take on a medley with the key features of berries, coffee and chocolate. It was a chocolate pannacotta with coffee mousse and crumb with berries two ways and salted chocolate.



Entrée: Quail with
sauce romesco

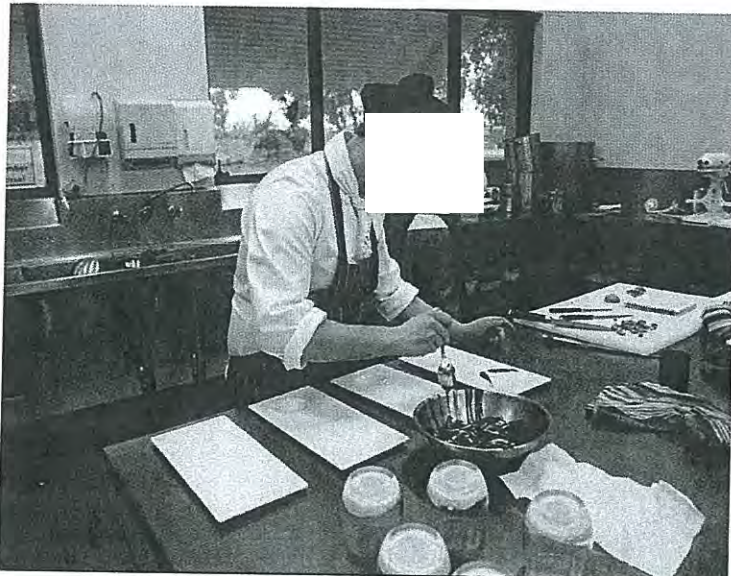
On the 15th of June, M and I went in to work and prepared all three final courses, dressed correctly, working correctly, under a time limit and serving four plates of food. J (Executive Chef of) and his wife L marked us on a scoring sheet they had acquired through connections in the industry. The couple gave us constructive criticism and marked us according to the sheet. This experience I believe prepared us well for the day; we were ready, calm and knew what we needed to do which is why I think we did so well. You can see attached (appendix One) all the feedback from J and L and you can see the menu we served to them and on appendix two you can see the final menu we went with, which is the best way to show how heavy their influences and feedback was. The major things we got out of the help from J was the change in dessert. He also told us that our romesco sauce was slightly too acidic and told us to put in some sugar to balance it and that we could braise our lamb instead of roasting it to keep it more tender.

Delivering:-

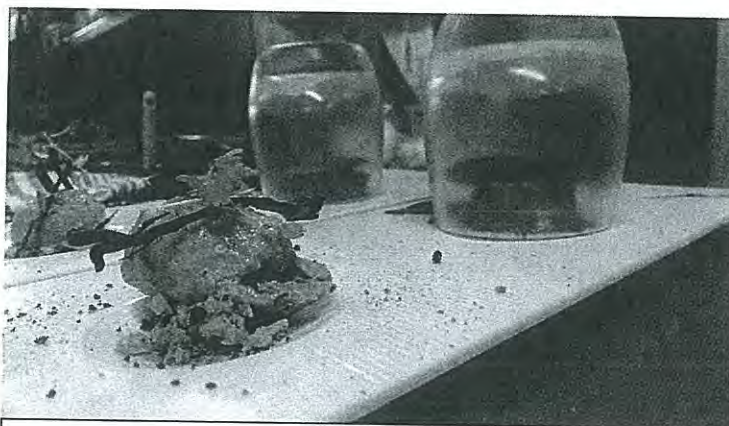
On the day of the competition M and I arrived ready and met everyone we were competing with, it was good fun and we got to meet other young passionate chefs. The process was a lot of meeting and sitting and having rules explained and brunch given. The cooking itself when the competition started was very pressured, judges walked around constantly looking, writing and tasting everything! M and I just remaining calm, tidy and very, very organized. Plating up was hard as we had very little room and as we knew we were actively going against the rules for plating the main course we were very nervous.

J told us to plate our main course on a board even though the most enforced rule is "STRICTLY WHITE CHINA PLATES ONLY"; he insisted making an impression was more important than following the rules. He could not have been more wrong, due to this we found out later we got disqualified; however when speaking to judges who loved the board and loved our food we discovered we would have been at least in the top three, and my dessert was the dessert of the day. A lot of judges who did not work for the and didn't believe so strongly in the rules loved our food and we even got offered a position at a competition at the SA Culinary Institute because the director enjoyed it so much.

One judge told us we were her favourite food for all courses out of all the teams and this was the best feedback we received over the two days.



Plating up at the competition



Me plating desserts mid competition

Evaluation:-

This experience has been very beneficial for me in the Industry, as it has been my first time (out of hopefully many) in a competition. I will not forget the blistering pressure and necessity of cleanliness and I can only progress from where I am now. Most apprentices spend the four years of their apprenticeship aiming to progress slowly each year. M and I nailed it and next year are aiming for gold. The experience also connects us with other young chefs passionate about food and we met some friends during our time in the competition. It also helped us to build connections with local suppliers and we got to meet some of the key people in food delivery and fresh produce in SA. I am excited for my competitive future in the culinary world and look forward to learning more and meeting new, inspiring people.

M and I worked very well together and we continue to do so at work together, we are almost inseparable and we can each follow one another's lead incredibly well. Individually I think I worked very well, I could not have done anything better; the only possible improvement I can think of would be to have greased the pannacotta moulds and to make sure in hindsight to follow the rules more actively. I remain impressed by the skill and commitment M and I put forward for this and look forward to do it again soon.

STAGE 2 WORKPLACE PRACTICES
ASSESSMENT TYPE 4: Investigation

Industry Focus: Hospitality

Assessment Design Criteria	Comments
KU1	The student has demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the knowledge and skills needed to compete in a culinary competition, including detailed knowledge of the competencies appropriate to such a task.
KU2	There is a definite perceptive understanding of the issues involved in competing in such a competition (such as the plating) and the students clearly learnt from and understood why there were disqualified. The student was also able to explain how such issues relate to competitions and could also be applied in a work situation.
IA1	Strong and occasionally perceptive analysis of the process undertaken to successfully compete in the competition and how these skills relate and contribute to the workplace.
IA2	Thorough and detailed investigation into a range of workplace tasks and how they support and aid in the development of workplace competencies. Specifically demonstrated through the investigation into the chosen meal, the resources used and process undertaken to perfect each section.
RE1	Some insightful reflection on the competition throughout the write-up – some perceptive understanding demonstrated in the introductory and concluding sections of the work. Some in-depth evaluation throughout – both of the process undertaken, of their learning (see section on main course selection) with the majority of the evaluation at the end being detailed without begin perceptive.

OVERALL GRADE: A- (25)

The student has demonstrated a high degree of work related knowledge and a detailed understanding of the competencies needed to succeed as a chef. There was evidence of meticulous investigation and planning utilising a range of well-considered resources. The student has reflected on and evaluated their work throughout.