



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission**

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

Link Modules

Case Study 2011

SWEET DREAMS BY SARA

Sara Ryan was always interested in cooking and baking. From a young age she made cakes and desserts for family and friends. Following her Leaving Certificate she did a catering course in the local Institute of Technology and three years later qualified with a Degree in Culinary Arts. She moved to Dublin where she got a job as an assistant chef in a top city centre restaurant. She impressed the head chef with her technical skills and positive attitude. Sara loved experimenting with ingredients and impressed the restaurant's head chef with her exciting dessert recipes. She was quickly promoted to head pastry chef, with full responsibility for the dessert menu in the restaurant.

After four years working in Dublin she decided to move home. She got a job as the head chef in a local restaurant. As head chef she had responsibility for setting the menus, ordering in ingredients, negotiating prices with suppliers and managing two assistant chefs. She really enjoyed the decision-making power of being head chef. However, this restaurant only opened between the months of March and October. During the winter months Sara kept busy. She enrolled on a web design course so that she could upskill herself. She supported herself by baking cakes for birthdays, weddings, christenings and other occasions for friends and neighbours. When the local town council started a farmers' market on Saturday mornings Sara rented a stall where she sold a selection of baked goods. Her produce was hugely popular and she often sold everything within a few hours.

Sara is considering asking the restaurant owner for the use of the restaurant premises for the following winter. She has prepared a Business Plan and has decided this is feasible. Her aim is to run a café from the premises during the day and use the kitchen to bake the "special occasion" cakes in the evening. Sara believes that running a café during the winter months is a viable business idea. The town is the main shopping area for local people from the surrounding countryside. The local hotel 'Annerly Hall' is in the process of developing its spa facilities and is also planning a wedding fair in 2011. Besides the hotel there is no other place for local people to meet for lunch. She has also noticed that there is not much traditional tourism in the winter months. The area, like many others, is very popular with hiking and walking groups (see table). Sara is concerned that she does not have the relevant business experience to run the café and is considering approaching the local county enterprise board for support.

Table

Activities Engaged in by Domestic Holidaymakers (%)									
	National Parks	Water Sports	Houses Castles	Hiking Walking	Visits to Spas	Gardens	Heritage Interpretive Centres	Museums Art Galleries	Golf
2008	26	26	25	25	20	19	15	14	11
2009	23	27	24	21	24	20	21	14	10

Source: Fáilte Ireland 2009

