

## **Further information**

### **General studies (such as mathematics, IT, Finnish language, English etc.)**

The purpose of the general studies is to provide skills and information which are closely related to a cook's profession. The holder of the certificate is entitled to apply for further studies, usually to the Degree Program at the Universities of Applied Studies where these more academic skills are required. One very important part of the studies are Finnish lessons which prepare students for working in Finnish-speaking environments in Finland.

### **Customer care (such as waiting on tables, hotel service etc.)**

Basic skills in customer service are one part of the studies because hospitality industry requires employees to have wide professional skills. For example, in small restaurants and during rush hours cooks are expected to work as customer servants, too. Some students even choose to work on the service side after graduation.

### **Cooking and food production**

(food production in restaurant, menu planning, meal entities, nutrition etc.)

During the first year basic cooking skills are studied in the training kitchen, as well as the use of machines and utensils, ingredients, hygiene, nutrition etc. During the second and third year food production is mainly studied at the school's training restaurant and/or in real-life banquet functions.

### **On-the-job learning**

Every student will complete on-the-job learning periods during their studies. On-the-job learning means working in an institutional kitchen, restaurant kitchen or in a hotel as an additional member of the staff. Instead of studying in the school students get to apply into practise their theoretical skills, e.g. knowledge of different ingredients, measuring and recipes, cutting and slicing and other learnt practical skills. The students' work is done under the guidance and support of their supervisors and they are given an excellent opportunity to learning-by-doing in everyday working life.

On-the-job learning enables students to see what the real working life within the hospitality industry is like.

The duration of the on-the-job-learning period is two-four months per year and it is, in most cases, done without salary.

On-the-job-learning periods are carried out within the hospitality industry primarily in the capital area (Helsinki, Vantaa, Espoo) due to the fact that good co-operation has been established between Vantaa Vocational College Varia and different working places around the capital area.

Usually the alternatives for the workplace depend on the student's skills (first year, second year or third year student), the student's personal interest (institutional kitchen, fine dining, ethnic cuisine etc.) and the student's motivation level and situation in life (ambitious single person, single parent of two etc.). In the end of the on-the-job learning period a thorough evaluation is done on student's performance in the workplace by the designated supervisor in that particular workplace.

All in all, the on-the-job learning periods are expected with joy and excitement on the students' behalf and the experiences gained from that time are valued highly and are in most cases positive ones.