

Case Study

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My career in food and drink

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COCOA OOZE
the creative chocolatier

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Q: How did you get started in your career in food and drink?

A: I have always had a keen passion for baking and cooking and have many happy childhood memories with my nana and mum in the kitchen. I started in the industry at the age of 13, helping my friend's grandparents in their pub at the weekend. I was fascinated by the kitchen and how it operated on a commercial level. When I left school I studied catering as I knew this was where my passion lay.

Q: What was your route to get to this job and what are the entry qualifications?

A: Setting up my own business wasn't the plan, whilst training at a 5-star hotel in Aberdeen I realised there was a gap in the market for chocolate. I decided to take the plunge and create a brand with point of difference that wasn't "just another chocolate company".

You don't need a specific qualification to set up a company but I had on the job training and had completed various training courses at college. I recently completed a Masters at Abertay in

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Food and Drink Innovation, which lead me to pursue another position as Business Development Manager at Robert Gordon University (RGU).

Q: What did you study at school and how relevant were the subjects?

A: I studied the core subjects and also studied creative subjects such as home economics and technical. These subjects gave me a good grounding and knowledge that could be transferred.



Q: What does your job involve and what are your main responsibilities?

A: My role at Cocoa Ooze involves managing the day to day running of the company and employees, along with finding new business to keep the company growing. My role at RGU sits within the commercial department. I work with

businesses locally and nationally to understand their challenges and how we can help them solve these. One of my areas of focus is working with food and drink businesses and helping them grow through a variety of options from training, consultancy, research and a wide range of part funded initiatives.

Q: What is the best thing and the worst thing about your job?

A: The best thing is the creative side of the business, along with working with a talented team and our great customers. The worst thing I would say if I have to pick one, would be the amount of paperwork and new regulations. But I love my job so I get on with it and do what needs to be done!

Q: Would you encourage others to consider a career in food and drink?

A: People think the food and drink industry is about waiting on tables or being on a production line packing products. It is so much more than that. The industry is so diverse and the food and drink industry is one that is growing, so there are lots of opportunities. If you are willing to work hard, you will be able to grow your career in food and drink. Come and join an industry that becomes part of your life for all the right reasons.