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Title of Research Project: Evolving Perceptions of Professionalism in Culinary Arts: Experiences of Part-time Undergraduate Students in Industry and Academia in Ireland



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Brief Overview of the Research Topic: The purpose of the research is to explore the evolving perceptions of professionalism from the perspective of students who have completed a part-time culinary arts degree programme, in Ireland. Professionalism, in the context of the research, can be defined as the requisite skills, values and behaviours required in the applied industry practice and academic discipline of culinary arts. The research will explore the participants' lived experiences of professionalism related to a significant context: the potentially transformative effect of higher education on those who are working full-time in the industry and studying part-time in academia. Whilst other researchers have sought the views of culinary arts educators and practitioners, the student voice remains unexplored. The perspective of students who are studying part-time is considered unique since they, as a group, navigate between the worlds of industry and academia. The purpose of the research is to explore the participants' meanings which are unique and individual, as well as those which are shared and intersubjective. Guided by interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA), participants will be asked to partake in a series of interviews which will explore their perceptions of professionalism during a transformative time in their lives. The research will be of importance to those who teach, work in or study culinary arts. It intends to provide an additional perspective on evolving professionalism in the academic discipline and professional practice. The research may also be of interest to other emerging academic disciplines where professionalism is underexplored.