

CASE STUDY

# Online training underpins highest food safety and hygiene standards

A Virtual College Case Study

**LA STAZIONE**



“ Online learning can provide a flexible and cost effective solution, allowing staff to train at a time and pace which is convenient to them. ”

## The background

### Serving over 140,000 coffees a year, La Stazione is a bustling, friendly cafe bar.

It is located next to the railway station in the heart of Ilkley, a spa town in Yorkshire with a heritage and surrounding countryside which are conducive to its thriving tourist industry.

La Stazione was founded in 2008 by much travelled and experienced Italian, Enzo Piscicelli, and bears the hallmark of his many years serving up the Italian way of doing things.

Offering a wide range of drinks, traditional panini, homemade pastas, fresh sandwiches and salads, La Stazione operates in a highly competitive environment, and prides itself on its great service and high quality standards to help generate and maintain customer loyalty.

## The challenge

Food safety and hygiene are of paramount importance to all staff at La Stazione.

EU Regulation 852/2004 Hygiene for Foodstuffs requires food businesses to make sure that any member of staff handling food is supervised, instructed and trained in food hygiene in a way that is appropriate to the work they do.

Phil Jones, co-owner of La Stazione, commented: "Quite apart from the legal considerations, it is vital to our customers that we maintain the highest standards of food safety and hygiene.

"We just cannot afford to take any risks with food hygiene. It takes a long time to build a reputation but it can be lost in seconds."

Local authorities are responsible for enforcing food hygiene laws. To do this, enforcement officers may visit business premises without notice to inspect them.

"The food hygiene inspectors do rigorous checks so we need to ensure we are always on top of our game," said Phil.

"As we have a 5 out of 5 rating, their visits to La Stazione are probably less frequent than to some other food establishments."

La Stazione wanted to ensure their staff were not only trained in food safety and hygiene but that there was a means of testing their understanding and tracking and recording that the training had been undertaken.

Phil commented: "Our staff resources are limited so face to face training would create problems. It would mean losing staff from our busy café bar while they spend time in training and travelling to and from the training location."

## The solution

Coincidentally, Virtual College, is also located in Ilkley, just down the road from La Stazione.

Virtual College, with over 2.5million learners, is one of the UK's leading providers of online learning. With courses accredited by City & Guilds, it is also a specialist in food safety and hygiene training, having delivered over half a million online programmes, and has a wide range of courses for staff at different levels and with varied occupations within the food industry.

"Lots of Virtual College staff are our regular customers so we already knew about what they did," said Phil.

"It's good to be able to work with and support local businesses so we chose their Level 3 Food Safety and Hygiene for Supervisors course as the most appropriate for our needs and to ensure our management team are trained to the highest standards."

This is an online course which is studied via the Virtual College Learning Management System, Enable. The course is self-paced so learners can decide how fast or slow the training goes and can revisit the training material, even after the course has been completed.

Phil added: "Online learning can provide a flexible and cost effective solution, allowing staff to train at a time and pace which is convenient to them. "





# The results

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"Ilkley is highly competitive with an abundance of pubs, bars, restaurants and cafes and as an independent business, every penny counts," Phil explained.

"Although the cost of training is an important consideration and online learning helps us in this respect, nothing is more important than ensuring the highest standards of food hygiene are maintained.

"It's like taking a driving test. You don't just need to pass, you need to make sure that you are always delivering to the highest standards."

"We are proud to display our Virtual College training certificate. It's important to let our customers know that we take food hygiene seriously."

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Phone  
**01943 885085**



Email  
**replies@virtual-college.co.uk**



Web  
**www.virtual-college.co.uk**

## About Virtual College

With over 2.5 million online learners, Virtual College is one of the leading providers of e-learning in the UK. For over twenty years, we have provided online courses to individuals and companies across the world, breaking down the boundaries of traditional learning to deliver cost reducing, time efficient training. Unlike many other e-learning providers, our training extends to actual programme and qualification creation and delivery - resulting in a unique blended solution. The knowledge, experience and feedback that this delivery provides helps ensure that we strive to continually improve our solutions.

### Virtual College Ltd

Marsel House, Stephenson's Way  
Ilkley, West Yorkshire  
LS29 8DD, England