

**Current Student / Graduate / Early Leavers Focus Groups**  
**[Name of Program]**  
**[Duration / Date / Number of Participants]**  
**Facilitated by: [Name of Consultant]**

**Introduction (5 minutes)**

*Thank you for agreeing to participate in this feedback process for the \_\_\_\_\_ program. The program is in the process of a Program Renewal and the purpose of this focus group is to gather information from current students / graduates / students who left the program early in order to improve the program. Your feedback today will be most helpful in identifying both areas of strength and areas that need attention. [The other focus groups] will be asked to respond to similar questions. A summary of feedback from each group will be reported back to faculty and administration for consideration in the renewal process.*

*The focus group will take about 75 minutes. The session will be recorded so that I don't miss any of your comments. I may take some notes during the session but cannot possibly write fast enough, while listening actively, to get it all down. No one else will hear the recording. I will prepare a summary of the feedback before erasing the recording and your name will not be associated with any of the responses.*

*The focus is on the program and I will cut off any comments about specific individuals. Please keep in mind that you can choose not to answer any question and to leave the group at any time.*

*Do you have any questions before we begin?*

---

**Marketing / Information / Application Process (10 minutes)**

1. Why did you choose Red River College for your \_\_\_\_\_ education?
  - a. Who or what influenced your decision to take the program?
  
2. How did Red River College help you determine if the program (and career) would be a good fit for you? What additional information that would have been helpful?
  
3. How aware were you, before starting the program, of:
  - a. Demands of the program
    - i. Theory
    - ii. Practical skills to be developed
    - iii. Working at PGI restaurants in the evenings
    - iv. Co-op placement
  
  - b. Working conditions/expectations in this field
    - i. Hours
    - ii. Physical demands
    - iii. Pace
    - iv. Pressure
    - v. Service orientation (demanding customers)
    - vi. Teamwork
    - vii. Chain of command

**Program Effectiveness (40 minutes)**

4. What parts of the program have been most effective in preparing you for the industry? Why?
5. What parts of the program have been least effective in preparing you for the industry? Why?

The following probes may be introduced for items 4 and 5:

- Curriculum
  - Specific courses
  - Specific technical skills
  - Non-technical skills (employability skills)
- Practical, co-op work terms
- Instruction
  - Assignments, projects, written tests, practical tests
  - Lectures, group work, instructor feedback
  - Materials
- Delivery
  - Part-time vs full-time
  - Online vs face-to-face
  - Day vs evenings / weekends
- Relationships
  - Networking with others
  - Instructor support
- Culture
  - Diversity
  - Realities of the industry
- Facilities and equipment

**Early Leaving (10 minutes)**

6. Have you ever considered leaving the program prior to completion? Why? Why did you decide to stay?

Probes for item 6

- Homesick
- Didn't fit in / relationship issues
- Educational burnout
  - Academic issues (level of difficulty, academic unpreparedness)
- Personal or family issues / commitments
- Medical or health issues
- Financial constraints
- Employment opportunity
- No longer interested in field
- No guidance, mentors or personalized attention

**General / Comments (10 minutes)**

7. Is there anything that you would like to comment on that you were not asked?