

Introduction

The brand that best fits this concept and aligns well with the university environment is **Nando's**. Nando's has a strong reputation among students and a rich culture built from its unique history and background. The company has also adopted modern digital and interactive systems that have helped improve its performance and customer experience. These factors attract many young adults, making students one of Nando's largest customer groups. Because of its popularity, strong brand image, and ability to adapt to new technologies, Nando's is the ideal brand for the proposed Nando's Express concept on campus.

This report introduces the concept of **Nando's Express** within a university environment by applying principles of **Design Thinking** and **Innovation**. The purpose of this project is to explore the operational feasibility, financial viability, and marketing opportunities of bringing a new Nando's concept onto campus.

The idea behind Nando's Express is to offer students affordable, healthy, and convenient meals while making use of digital technologies that are already becoming part of everyday life. Students are increasingly using food delivery apps, mobile payments, and online ordering systems, creating a demand for food services that are both accessible and technologically advanced.

This report will analyse how the Nando's Express concept could meet the needs of university students while also being a sustainable and profitable business opportunity. It will also examine how this concept could positively influence students' lifestyles and digital consumption habits.

Background Information: Restaurant and Campus

Nando's is a restaurant chain that was founded in **Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1987** by **Fernando Duarte** and **Robert Brozin**. The idea came after the two friends visited a restaurant called **Chicken land**, where they tasted flame-grilled chicken prepared with Peri-Peri sauce made from African Bird's Eye chillies. They enjoyed the food so much that they decided to purchase the restaurant and develop the brand that later became known as Nando's.

The company expanded internationally and entered the United Kingdom in **1992**, opening its first British restaurant in **Ealing, West London**. Today, Nando's operates in more than **30 countries** with over **1,200 restaurants worldwide**.

Nando's mainly targets young adults, students, and young professionals between the ages of **18 and 35**. The company appeals to people who want healthier alternatives to traditional fast food, as well as customers who enjoy social dining experiences.

The menu focuses primarily on flame-grilled chicken and includes products such as burgers, wraps, pitas, chicken butterflies, half chickens, whole chickens, and sharing platters. Customers can also choose from side dishes including spicy rice, macho peas, coleslaw, garlic bread, and peri-salted chips. One of the company's biggest strengths is the variety of Peri-Peri sauces available and its strong customer-focused dining experience.

The **University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD)** has approximately **15,000 students** across its campuses in **Carmarthen, Lampeter, and Swansea**. The university offers undergraduate, postgraduate, and postgraduate research programmes through both full-time and flexible learning modes.

Its academic structure includes:

- Institute of Management and Health
- Institute of Education and Humanities
- Wales Institute of Science and Art
- Institute of Inner-City Learning

Most full-time students attend classes throughout the day, usually starting around 9am and finishing between 5pm and 6pm. During these long study periods, students often need quick and convenient food options during breaks.

Research shows that many people choose fast meals because they have limited time available during breaks. Food delivery apps are also widely used by university students, demonstrating a growing preference for convenience and digital ordering systems. Students are constantly balancing studies, work, and social life, making quick and affordable food options increasingly important.

Another important factor is the social behaviour of younger generations. Many Gen Z students enjoy eating together and view mealtimes as opportunities to meet new people and socialise. Because of this, restaurants are not only places to eat but also important social spaces.

The location of the university is an important factor when it comes to food costs. The university is in an area where many shops and restaurants charge higher prices due to increased overhead costs such as rent, utilities, and operating expenses. This creates a great opportunity for the university to develop new food concepts that can retain students on campus instead of encouraging them to buy food elsewhere. By introducing a concept such as **Nando's Express**, students would have access to affordable and convenient meals without needing to leave campus, benefiting both the students and the university community.

Causal Mapping Analysis

Strong Brand Recognition



Higher Student Interest



More Customer Visits



Increased Sales Revenue



Business Success

Affordable Student Pricing



Higher Student Satisfaction



Repeat Purchases



Increased Sales Revenue



Fast Digital Ordering



Reduced Waiting Time



Better Customer Experience



Student Loyalty



Repeat Purchases

↓
Increased Sales Revenue
↓
Business Success

Healthy Food Options
↓
Health-Conscious Students
↓
Increased Demand
↓
More Customer Visits
↓
Increased Sales Revenue

Social Dining Environment
↓
Student Social Interaction
↓
Greater Campus Popularity
↓
More Customer Visits
↓
Business Success

University Partnership
↓
Lower Rental Costs
↓
Reduced Operating Costs
↓
Higher Profitability
↓
Business Success

The causal map demonstrates that affordability, convenience, and brand recognition are the primary drivers of student adoption. Operational efficiency and digital ordering systems further strengthen customer satisfaction and repeat purchases.

One of the main reasons why students are attracted to Nando's is that it combines elements of both fast food and casual dining. It provides food that is relatively quick while still offering a comfortable environment where people can sit down, relax, and socialise.

Several factors contribute to student demand for Nando's:

- Student discounts
- Affordable meal options
- Strong brand reputation
- Popular culture influence
- Relaxed dining atmosphere
- Healthy food alternatives
- Opportunities for social interaction

Price plays an important role in influencing demand. When food prices are lower, students are more likely to purchase meals more frequently. When prices increase, demand generally falls because university students often have limited budgets.

Nando's has also been making significant investments in digital technology. The company now focuses heavily on a digital-first customer experience by using mobile applications, cloud systems, and data infrastructure. These technologies help improve efficiency, reduce waiting times, and create a smoother experience for customers.

The digital systems also help build customer loyalty by making it easier for people to order food and interact with the brand. Higher customer satisfaction often leads to repeat purchases, which is one of the reasons why Nando's continues to perform strongly in competitive markets.

These factors support the introduction of **Nando's Express**; a smaller and more affordable version of Nando's designed specifically for university campuses.

Desirability, Viability and Feasibility

Desirability

Nando's is highly desirable because it occupies a unique position in the market. Many customers see it as an affordable luxury that combines the speed of fast food with the atmosphere of a restaurant.

The company has also built a strong brand image through marketing campaigns, social media presence, and initiatives such as the Black Card and High Five programmes. These strategies have helped make Nando's a popular and recognisable brand among young people.

Students are attracted not only by the food but also by the overall experience. Nando's has successfully created an environment that feels welcoming, comfortable, and social. Many customers see it as a place to spend time with friends rather than simply somewhere to eat.

Food Option	Estimated Cost
Tesco Meal Deal	£4-£5
Campus Cafeteria Meal	£5-£8
McDonald's Meal	£6-£8
Standard Nando's Meal	£18-£24
Proposed Nando's Campus Express Meal	£6.99-£8.99

The comparison highlights that a traditional Nando's restaurant may struggle to attract regular student purchases due to price differences. However, the proposed Campus Express model narrows the affordability gap while offering greater food quality, healthier menu choices, and brand appeal.

For this reason, Nando's Express would be an attractive option on campus because it would combine:

- Affordable pricing
- Quick service
- Healthy food choices
- Digital convenience

- A social atmosphere

Although standard Nando's meals can sometimes be expensive for students, Nando's Express would solve this issue by introducing a simplified menu focused on lower-cost products. The concept would remove some of the more expensive menu items while keeping the most popular and affordable options.

Students would also benefit from existing Nando's digital systems, including:

- Online pre-ordering
- Google Pay
- Apple Pay
- QR code payments
- Gift cards and vouchers

These systems would save time during short lunch breaks and improve overall convenience.

Critical Analysis

One of the biggest strengths of Nando's Express is the strong reputation of the Nando's brand. Students are already familiar with the company, meaning the concept would benefit from existing customer trust.

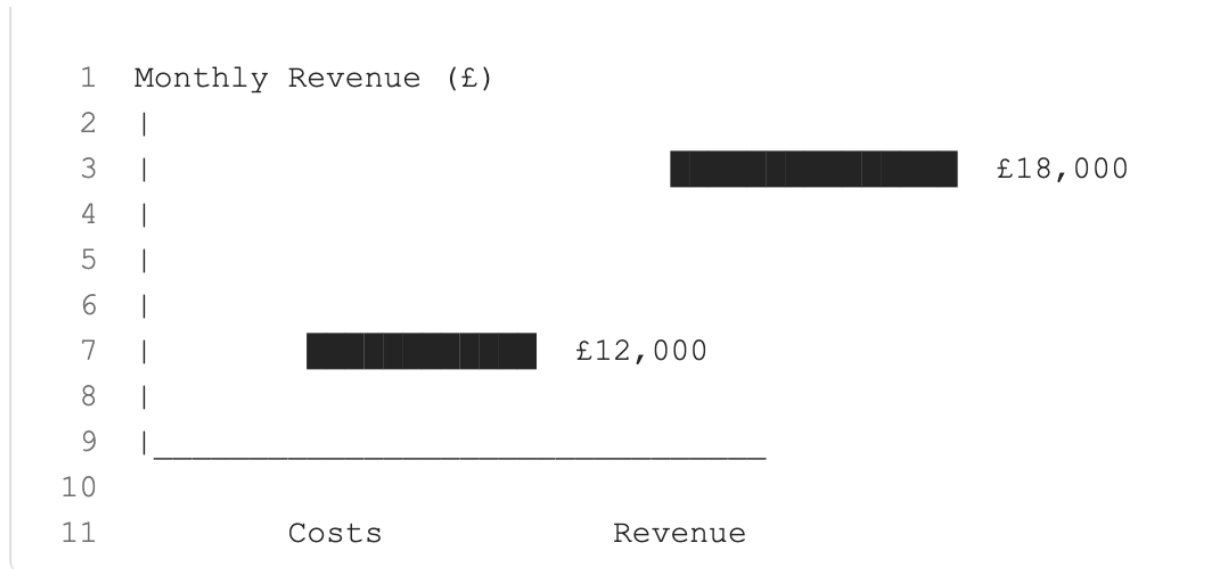
Another major strength is the sharing platter concept. Sharing meals allows students to split costs while enjoying food with friends, making the experience more affordable and social.

However, there are also some weaknesses. Students may not choose Nando's every day because they have limited budgets and many food alternatives available on campus. This could also affect the new concept financially, especially during off-season periods when student numbers on campus are lower. With fewer students around, customer demand may decrease, which could lead to lower sales and reduced revenue. For this reason, Nando's Express would need to carefully manage its costs and develop strategies to attract customers throughout the year.

Another thing that we can look at is Nando's variety when it comes to vegan and vegetarian customers. Although Nando's already offers some vegetarian options, the company could develop more plant-based meals so that customers have a wider range of choices. This would make the Nando's Express concept more inclusive and attractive to different types of students on campus. By expanding its plant-based menu, Nando's could reach a larger customer base and better respond to the growing demand for vegan and vegetarian food.

Viability

The financial outlook for Nando's Express appears positive.



The graphic demonstrates that the proposed Nando's Campus Express is expected to generate monthly revenue of approximately £18,000 against operating costs of £12,000, resulting in an estimated operating surplus of £6,000. This suggests that the concept has the potential to be financially viable if sufficient student demand is achieved.

Several factors improve financial viability:

- Simplified menu structure
- Reduced food waste
- Lower staffing requirements
- Faster food preparation
- Reduced rental costs through partnerships with the university

Student discounts may reduce profit margins slightly, but this could be offset by higher customer volumes and long-term customer loyalty. For long-term success, Nando's Express would need effective cost management and continuous monitoring of demand and operational performance.

Option	Price (£)
Tesco Meal Deal	4.50
Campus Cafeteria	6.00
McDonald's Meal	7.50
Nando's Campus Express	7.99
Standard Nando's Meal	18.00

The chart indicates that the proposed Campus Express meals are competitively priced compared to existing student food options and significantly cheaper than a traditional Nando's meal. Therefore, the innovation improves affordability while maintaining brand value.

Cost Area	Standard Nando's	Campus Express
Staff Costs	High	Moderate
Menu Complexity	High	Low
Food Waste	Higher	Lower
Preparation Time	Longer	Shorter

By implementing a simplified menu, the Campus Express model can reduce food waste, staff requirements, and preparation times. These efficiencies contribute positively to the viability of the proposal by lowering operational costs.

The viability analysis indicates that the proposed Nando's Campus Express has strong potential for financial sustainability due to the restaurant's established brand reputation and access to a large student customer base. Revenue can be generated through student meal bundles, drinks, sides, and loyalty programmes, while digital ordering can improve operational efficiency. However, challenges such as discounted pricing, rising operating costs, and seasonal fluctuations in student demand may affect profitability. To address these challenges, a simplified menu, cost-effective operations, and targeted student promotions are recommended. Overall, the concept appears commercially viable if costs are effectively managed and sufficient sales volumes are achieved.

BUSINESS MODEL CANVAS

Customer Segments

- Students
- Staff
- Visitors

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Value Proposition

- Affordable Student (6.99 – 8.99)
- Fast Service
- Digital Ordering
- Quality Food

↑

Revenue Streams

- Food Sales
- Drinks
- Delivery
- Promotions

Key Partners Cost Structure

- University - Rent
- Suppliers - Staff Wages
- Delivery Firms - Ingredients
- Technology Providers - Utilities
- Marketing

The Business Model Canvas demonstrates that the proposed Nando's Campus Express possesses several characteristics that support financial viability. The concept delivers a strong value proposition to students through affordable meal options, convenient digital ordering, and a trusted brand. Revenue is generated through multiple streams, while partnerships with the university and suppliers support operations. Nevertheless, profitability will depend on effective cost management and maintaining sufficient customer demand throughout the academic year.

Feasibility

From an operational perspective, Nando's already possesses many of the technologies required to support the Nando's Express concept.

The proposed Nando's Campus Express appears feasible because it would operate on a smaller scale than a traditional Nando's restaurant. Most university campuses already provide retail and catering spaces that could accommodate a compact restaurant format. The restaurant could be strategically located near lecture halls, libraries, or student social areas to maximise accessibility and customer footfall.

From an operational perspective, feasibility is enhanced through the introduction of a simplified menu consisting of popular items such as chicken wraps, quarter chicken meals, chips, and drinks. A reduced menu would require fewer ingredients, less kitchen space, and lower staffing requirements while maintaining the core Nando's brand experience. This approach would also reduce food preparation times and improve service efficiency during peak periods.

Technology plays an important role in the feasibility of the proposal. The integration of mobile ordering, QR-code payments, contactless transactions, and self-service kiosks would simplify operations while supporting the digital preferences of modern students. These systems would reduce waiting times and improve overall customer experience.

However, there are several limitations associated with feasibility. The project would require initial investment in kitchen equipment, technology infrastructure, staff recruitment, and training. Compliance with food safety regulations, health and safety requirements, and university policies could increase implementation complexity. In addition, supply chain disruptions or rising ingredient costs could affect operational efficiency.

To improve feasibility, partnerships could be established between Nando's and the university. This collaboration could provide access to suitable retail space and support campus-wide marketing activities. Furthermore, the project could initially be launched as a pilot programme to test demand before full expansion.

Overall, the Nando's Campus Express concept is considered feasible due to the availability of suitable campus facilities, digital technologies, and operational expertise. While implementation challenges exist, they can be managed through careful planning, phased deployment, and effective resource allocation.

These technologies include:

- NFC mobile payments
- Mobile ordering systems

- Omnichannel ordering platforms
- Virtual queue technology
- Cloud-based infrastructure

Nando's has also modernised its data systems by moving from a traditional centralised database to a Data Mesh architecture. This allows different departments such as marketing, finance, and supply chain management to operate more efficiently.

Automated data pipelines also help the company process and share information more quickly, reducing integration times and allowing faster responses to customer demand.

These technologies would help Nando's Express operate efficiently within a university environment by improving speed, accuracy, and customer service.

However, there are challenges that must be considered, including:

- Rising operating costs
- Technology investment costs
- Equipment upgrades
- Staff training requirements

Although the Nando's Express concept is feasible, there are several challenges that need to be considered.

One challenge is dealing with large numbers of students during busy periods. Universities often have short break times between classes, meaning many students may want to buy food at the same time. This could create long queues and put pressure on staff and operations. To overcome this issue, Nando's Express could use digital ordering systems and self-service kiosks to make the process faster.

Another challenge is the seasonal nature of university campuses. During summer holidays, Christmas breaks, and other vacation periods, the number of students on campus decreases significantly. This can affect the business financially because there would be fewer customers and lower sales during these periods.

There may also be infrastructure challenges. Some university buildings are older and may not have the ideal facilities for a restaurant. This could require additional investment in kitchen equipment, ventilation systems, or electrical upgrades before the concept can be fully implemented.

The business would also need to comply with food safety regulations, health and safety requirements, and university policies. Meeting all these requirements could increase costs and make implementation more complex.

From a financial perspective, affordability is another important factor. Students generally have limited budgets, so meal prices need to remain low enough to attract customers while still allowing the business to make a profit. Nando's Express would need to find the right balance between affordability and profitability.

Another issue could be the costs associated with operating on campus. Depending on the agreement with the university, the business may have to pay rent, commission fees, or other charges, which could reduce profit margins.

When looking at customer needs, Nando's must also consider the variety of dietary requirements found within a university environment. Students come from different cultures and backgrounds, and many have specific dietary preferences. Another thing that we can look at is Nando's variety when it comes to vegan and vegetarian customers. Nando's could develop more plant-based meals, so customers have a wider range of options. This would make Nando's Express more inclusive and attract a larger number of students.

Another challenge is keeping the menu interesting. Some students may eat on campus every day, so introducing seasonal products or limited time offers could help prevent menu fatigue and keep customers engaged.

Sustainability is becoming increasingly important for universities and students. Nando's Express would have to consider environmentally friendly packaging, waste reduction, and responsible sourcing practices to meet these expectations.

While there are several operational, financial, and customer-related challenges, most of these issues can be managed through careful planning, effective use of technology, and strong collaboration with the university.

Despite these challenges, the existing infrastructure already used by Nando's provides a strong foundation for successfully implementing the Nando's Express concept.

Overall, the Nando's Express concept has strong potential to succeed within a university environment. Students are increasingly looking for affordable food, quick service, and digital convenience, which are all areas where Nando's already performs well.

The concept is desirable because students recognise and trust the Nando's brand. It is financially viable because a simplified menu and lower operating costs could generate sustainable profits. It is also feasible because Nando's already has the digital infrastructure and operational systems needed to support the concept.

Although challenges such as rising costs and maintaining profit margins exist, these can be managed through careful planning and effective cost control. Therefore, Nando's Express represents an innovative opportunity that could improve student life, support social interaction, and meet the changing digital consumption habits of modern university students.

Factor	Rating
Campus Location	● High
Technology Availability	● High
Brand Recognition	● High
Start-up Cost	● Medium
Competition	● Medium
Supply Chain Risk	● Low/Concern

The traffic-light analysis indicates that most operational requirements are achievable. The main challenges relate to initial investment costs and supply chain management.

Brainstorming Ideas for Nando's express

During the brainstorming process, me and my friend came up with different ideas that could help Nando's Express become more popular among students.

One of the first ideas was to create short videos for platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and X. We thought this was a good idea because short videos are very popular nowadays. Students spend a lot of time on social media and when they watch a short and interesting video, they become curious and want to know more. This could encourage them to search for Nando's Express and eventually visit the restaurant. We believed this idea could help increase awareness and attract new customers.

Another idea was the Student Wednesday Deal. Every Wednesday, students showing their student ID would receive a meal deal for £7.99, a free refill of soft drinks, and loyalty points through the Nando's app. One of the main benefits of this idea is that it could increase sales during the middle of the week when business is usually slower. It would also attract students who are careful with their money and always look for good value offers. The loyalty points would encourage repeat purchases and help build a stronger relationship between students and the Nando's Express brand.

The idea that stood out the most was the creation of a Nando's Festival. Me and my friend thought this concept had the most potential because it brings people together while promoting the brand at the same time. The festival could include food, music, quizzes, games, and other interactive activities where students could socialise and enjoy themselves in a comfortable and welcoming environment.

The brainstorming process involved only me and my friend. We generated many different ideas and then analysed them carefully to see which ones would fit best with the Nando's Express concept. We used a technique called Brain writing, where each person writes down an idea and then shares it with the other person. Because there were only two of us, we gave ourselves enough time to think properly about each idea before discussing and improving it.

We also thought about creating quizzes and interactive activities. This would be a good way to grab students' attention and create more interaction between the company and its customers. Instead of only promoting food, Nando's Express could engage directly with students and make them feel more connected to the brand. This interaction could help create customer loyalty and a stronger student community.

Although we came up with several good ideas, the Nando's Festival was the one we decided to focus on the most. We believe it has the strongest long-term potential because it does more than just promote food. It creates an experience where

students can meet people, socialise, and enjoy themselves while interacting with the Nando's brand.

We also felt that this idea could continue growing over time and become something much bigger in the future. If successful, it could expand to different universities and attract a large fan base. This could help create loyal customers and increase profits for the company in the long term.

When comparing it with the other ideas, we felt that the festival had more long-term impact. The short video idea was still a strong idea because it could attract attention online and bring in new customers. However, Nando's already uses social media marketing, so we wanted to focus on something that felt more unique and different. In conclusion, we chose the Nando's Festival as our main idea because we believe it has the greatest potential to contribute to the long-term success of Nando's Express. This does not mean that the other ideas should not be used. Student discounts, quizzes, and social media content could still be implemented alongside the festival. However, we believe the festival should be the focus because it has the strongest potential to build customer loyalty, strengthen the Nando's community, and make Nando's Express stand out from its competitors.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This portfolio looked at the idea of bringing **Nando's Express** to a university campus by using Design Thinking and Innovation. After analysing the university environment and student habits, students are looking for food that is affordable, quick, convenient, and still good quality. Because students have busy schedules and limited budgets, there is a strong demand for a service like Nando's Express.

The causal mapping showed that factors such as affordable prices, the strong Nando's brand, customer satisfaction, digital ordering, and fast service all play an important role in the success of the concept. If students can get good food at a reasonable price and without waiting too long, they are more likely to come back and become loyal customers.

The desirability analysis showed that students are likely to be interested in Nando's Express because Nando's is already a well-known brand with a good reputation. Students enjoy the food, the healthier options compared to traditional fast food, and the social atmosphere that the brand offers. However, price is still an important factor for students, which is why the Nando's Express concept focuses on affordable meal deals and student-friendly offers.

The viability analysis showed that the concept has the potential to be profitable. Revenue could come from food and drink sales, loyalty programmes, and digital ordering systems. While discounts and operating costs could reduce profit margins, these challenges can be managed if enough students use the service regularly.

The feasibility analysis also showed that the concept is realistic. Universities already have spaces that could be used for a smaller restaurant, and Nando's already uses technology such as mobile ordering and contactless payments. These systems would help improve efficiency and make the service more convenient for students.

Overall, I believe that **Nando's Express** is a strong concept with good potential for success. It gives students affordable and convenient food while also creating a place where they can meet friends and socialise. If managed properly, the concept could benefit both students and Nando's, creating a sustainable business that could continue growing in the future.

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Nando's Express

Marketing Ideas

Digital Marketing

During the brainstorming process, me and my friend came up with different ideas that could help Nando's Express become more popular among students.

One of the first ideas was to create short videos for platforms: **TikTok, Instagram, YouTube,**

Student rewards and loyalty

Another idea was the Student Wednesday Deal. Every Wednesday, students showing their student ID would receive a meal deal for £7.99, a free refill of soft drinks, and loyalty points through the Nando's app. The loyalty points would encourage repeat purchases and help build a stronger relationship between students and the Nando's Express brand.

Innovation for sustainability

The idea that stood out the most was the creation of a Nando's Festival.

Me and my friend thought this concept had the most potential because it brings people together while promoting the brand at the same time.

The festival could include food, music, quizzes, games, and other interactive activities where students could socialise and enjoy themselves in a comfortable and welcoming environment.

We also thought about creating quizzes and interactive activities.

This would be a good way to grab students' attention and create more interaction between the company and its customers. Instead of only promoting food, Nando's Express could engage directly with students and make them feel more connected to the brand. This interaction could help create customer loyalty and a stronger student community.

Student Experience

It creates an experience where students can meet people, socialise, and enjoy themselves while interacting with the Nando's brand.

We also felt that this idea could continue growing over time and become something much bigger in the future. If successful, it could expand to different universities and attract a large fan base. This could help create loyal customers and increase profits for the company in the long term.

Key takeaway

When comparing it with the other ideas, we felt that the festival had more long-term impact. The short video idea was still a strong idea because it could attract attention online and bring in new customers. However, Nando's already uses social media marketing, so we wanted to focus on something that felt more unique and different.