

HOSPITALITY AND EVENTS MANAGEMENT

Many of us have experience of working weekends in a pub or restaurant as a student or perhaps of a ski season before coming to university; a summer spent on the reception desk of a busy local hotel, or as a holiday rep for a travel company. Perhaps you help out with your family's B&B during the holidays? Or have organised a fundraising ball for a sports society? Any of these familiar entry-level, casual or part-time opportunities could be helping you build the all-important work experience and skills which will impress employers and lead to a satisfying graduate career in the hospitality or events management sector.

Hospitality

There is an enormous range of hospitality careers available in contract catering/food service management; hotels; leisure attractions; pubs, bars and nightclubs; restaurants and coffee shops; self-catering and holiday centres.

Companies in the hospitality sector also recruit to a range of head office functions such as finance, IT, HR, customer service, sales and marketing, property and legal and general management. Graduate schemes in hospitality are often focused on these roles.

Many more of the UK's hotels and restaurants are independently owned SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) and most pubs and bars are micro businesses employing fewer than ten people. Self-employment and running your own independent bar, pub or franchise may be a route you would like to consider in the future.

Events Management

Events management careers can cover conference management; corporate days out and product launches; entertainment and sporting events; fundraising; wedding and party planning, and exhibition management.

You could work for a company, a particular venue or an event supplier. Large companies such as hotel chains and contract caterers also recruit event managers, while some major charities have fundraising roles that involve some event planning.

As with hospitality careers, another option is to become self-employed as a freelancer in the events industry.

Gaining Work Experience

There are degrees available in events management and hospitality, as well as business and marketing, which will all be attractive to employers. Having a degree (of any discipline) will mean that you can apply directly for management positions and graduate schemes. However, in this sector it is much more usual to work your way up to management positions; it's much more important that you have extensive work experience in a similar role (a placement as part of your degree, part-time or casual work while studying, or volunteering – for example, helping to plan events for university clubs and societies). Apprenticeships are also widespread within the industry.

If you are not studying for a degree in hospitality, then work experience is all the more essential to show your commitment. You can make your own opportunities by joining a club or society at university and offering to plan and organise events. This will test your project management and people skills as well as making sure you keep everything on time and to budget.

More important than your degree subject are the skills you can bring to the job. Employers are typically looking for a people-centred approach and customer service skills, the ability to work in a team and think on your feet, flexibility, a willingness to work unsocial hours and stamina, confidence, a persuasive approach and organisational skills. A language is also useful if you are interested in an international career.

Finding Graduate Vacancies

Graduate schemes are available with the large employers, some of which are listed below. The vast majority of employers in the sectors are SMEs, so a speculative approach could be effective, or use local press, recruitment agencies and look out for opportunities on [MyJobsOnline](#). For event management use social media such as LinkedIn and speculative applications.

Key Resources

- [UKhospitality.org.uk](#) (the voice of the UK hospitality sector, promoting careers in hospitality)
- [Targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors/hospitality-leisure-and-travel](#)
- [Prospects.ac.uk Overview of the Hospitality and Events Management Sector in the UK](#)
- [The Institute of Event Management \(iem.institute\)](#)
- [Prospects.ac.uk Guide to Apprenticeships](#)
- [Oxfamblogs.org/oxjam](#) (volunteer to be a production, marketing or fundraising coordinator for your local Oxjam festival)

Hospitality

- [Compass-group.co.uk](#)
- [InterContinental Hotels Group \(earlycareers.ihg.com\)](#)
- [Greeneking.co.uk](#)
- [Hilton Hotels and Resorts \(jobs.hilton.com\)](#)
- [careers.jurysinns.com/pages/graduates](#)
- [universities.marriot.com](#)
- [Merlin Entertainments \(merlincareers.com\)](#)
- [Mitchells & Butlers \(mbcareersandjobs.com\)](#)
- [uk.sodexo.com/careers](#)
- [delticgroup.co.uk](#)
- [Travelodge.co.uk/careers/careerpaths](#)
- [Wetherspoon \(jdwetherspooncareers.co.uk\)](#)
- [Whitbread \(whitbreadcareers.com/graduates\)](#)

Event management

- [Clarionevents.com/careers](#)
- [Live Nation Entertainment \(lnejobs.com/career-areas\)](#)
- [London Business Conference Group \(lbcg.com/careers\)](#)
- [Reed Exhibitions \(reedexpo.jobs\)](#)
- [Themetraders.com](#)

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