



HOSPITALITY AND CATERING

Around five million passengers pass through East Midlands Airport. Around 5,000 members of staff work on the airport site. Many will buy food on site.

Some passengers and staff will stay overnight before or after their flight so there are many opportunities to work in Hospitality or Catering, from Fast Food Service Assistant to Hotel Manager.

Jobs in this area are great for getting and improving 'transferable' skills, skills that will be useful as you progress in your career. For most of these roles you'll need good customer service skills, communication skills, the ability to work under pressure, problem solve, go the extra mile... All of this, whilst keeping a smile on your face.

Fast Food Service Assistant

Passengers often want food on the go, so you'll be spoilt for choice if you are looking to work in a Fast Food outlet. You'll wear a uniform, so will be the 'face' of the company. You'll take orders, assemble food, keep an eye on stock levels, refill stocks, make sure the processing, serving and eating areas are clean and tidy. You'll be part of a team. You will also be trained in the company's way of working and may even gain some cooking skills.

You'll handle payments too. The companies expect high standards of personal hygiene. Working in a fast food outlet can be hectic and demanding at times. A good sense of humour and a smile are essential.

Chef

There are lots of opportunities for Chefs at the airport, at all levels. Chefs may work in a kitchen or for an outside catering company. As a Chef, you'll be passionate about food and you'll be responsible for supervising food preparation. Chefs are responsible for everything in the kitchen from planning menus, the quality of the food, ordering and checking food deliveries. They may even, at Executive Chef level, create new dishes. They also have to manage budgets. A busy kitchen can be a very pressurised environment so you'll learn to manage a lot of tasks at once. Chefs have to maintain high standards and are in high demand at the airport.

Restaurant Catering Manager

Where a Chef is responsible for everything behind the scenes in the kitchen, a Restaurant or Catering Manager is very much 'front of house', in direct contact with customers. Restaurant or Catering Managers, like Chefs, have a lot to manage but they have to keep the appearance, at least, of being calm and in control at all times.

They have to maintain the highest standards of service, making sure that for customers, everything is running smoothly.

Restaurant and Catering Managers will have a passion for food and will use their knowledge to create menus and plan and prepare food. There can be an element of theatre in this role too.

As a Restaurant and Catering Manager, you'll be able to manage a lot of different tasks, in the public eye. You'll make decisions quickly. People management skills are key here, in terms of managing both staff and customers.

Managers are responsible for recruiting and training staff, organising staff rotas and shift patterns to make sure there are enough staff on site at all times.

Hotel Receptionist

As a Hotel Receptionist's, you'll provide the crucial first impression of a hotel as you welcome guests. You can set the tone for the guest's stay.

Hotel Receptionists deal with room reservations, they check guests in and out of the hotel. They provide bills or receipts when guests leave.

Hotel Receptionists also deal with enquiries, requests and complaints from guests throughout their stay. They can provide information about the local area, where to visit, what to do.

As a Hotel Receptionist, you'll wear a uniform, be polite and have a professional manner at all times. You will have excellent communication skills and the ability to stay calm at stressful times (for example when a coach load of guests check in at the same time).

Like a Restaurant Manager, a Hotel Receptionist has an eye for detail, making sure the hotel reception looks clean, tidy and welcoming at all times.

Hotel Manager

A Hotel Manager is responsible for every aspect of a hotel. They are responsible for the strategic and day to day management of the hotel.

The strategic management means: deciding how to market the hotel to

customers, setting and managing budgets, overseeing and maintaining standards, setting and meeting targets, recruiting staff and meeting all legal requirements such as health and safety.

On a day to day basis as a Hotel Manager, you may oversee staff, ensure their work is to the required level and that customers are receiving the best quality experience.

There are lots of different types of hotels; small independent hotels, large national or international chains. All will be slightly different, but the areas of responsibility will be similar although on a different scale.

TO WORK IN HOSPITALITY AND CATERING

You'll be

- Physical fit
- Have good communication skills
- Be able to manage people
- Be able to manage operations
- Have a lot of patience, resilience and a good sense of humour
- Be good at problem solving.

You'll need

- You won't necessarily need any qualifications at all. There are no minimum entry requirements for some roles. Many people start out working in Fast Food or as waiting staff but then progress on to other roles.
- Some may choose to work and study at the same time; others may go down a more academic route.
- There are many different qualifications (NVQs or SVQs, T Levels) in Hospitality and Catering. Often these will include some work experience.

- IT skills will be useful if you are involved at a more strategic or management level.

You'll earn

A starting salary for most of these roles will be in the region of £11,000 to £14,000 but can increase dramatically. A Catering Manager may earn £40,000 and a top Hotel Manager in excess of £100,000. And, of course, with some roles salaries may be boosted by tips too.