Hotel Receptionist

Introduction

Hotel receptionists welcome guests as they arrive at the hotel. Their duties include checking guests in and out, issuing keys, taking reservations by telephone or email, preparing bills and dealing with payments. They provide guests with information, answer their queries and deal with complaints.

Also known as

- Receptionist, Hotel

Work Activities

As a Hotel Receptionist, you will deal with enquiries and room reservations made on the telephone, online or by email. Receptionists greet guests on arrival at the hotel; it is important that you make a good first impression - a warm welcome and pleasant atmosphere in the reception area can help to get guests' stay off to the best start.

Receptionists check guests in and out, often using a computerised system. You issue keys to guests; either you provide guests with clear directions, or a Porter will show them to their accommodation. You keep accurate records of which guests have arrived at, or left, the hotel. You make sure that any necessary information goes to the housekeeping, restaurant, maintenance, and management departments.

You provide guests with information about local attractions and places of interest. You might provide additional services for the convenience of guests, such as ordering newspapers or taxis, storing valuables and taking messages. You make sure that guests receive their messages without delay, along with any mail that might arrive for them. Some Hotel Receptionists operate the hotel switchboard, directing incoming calls and helping guests to make external calls.

Hotel Receptionists prepare a customer's account when they leave the hotel. You put together the cost of additional items such as drinks, telephone calls and newspapers, and include them in the final bill. You take payment from the customer in cash, or by credit/debit card. Some Hotel Receptionists might also exchange foreign currency.

Guests might come to the Hotel Receptionist with any queries or complaints - not all of which will be easy to deal with.

Receptionists often need to use their sales skills to persuade guests to take a better and more expensive room, to stay longer, use hotel services such as the restaurant, spa, and leisure facilities, or take advantage of a special promotion to help to increase revenue for the hotel. You might also make reservations and appointments for these facilities.

In the event of an emergency, Hotel Receptionists might have responsibilities such as helping people as they evacuate the building, calling the emergency services, and checking that all guests have reached safety.

Sometimes, Hotel Receptionists might also live in the hotel where they work. In small hotels, you might have other duties such as serving in the bar or restaurant or helping with housekeeping. Some Hotel Receptionists wear a uniform.

Some Hotel Receptionists working a late shift might count up the money that has been taken that day and put it into the safe for the Duty Manager to take to the bank.

Being able to read, write and speak Welsh may be an advantage when you're looking for work in Wales.

Personal Qualities and Skills

To become a Hotel Receptionist, you'll need to have:

- clear speech
• a polite manner
• a high standard of personal presentation
• excellent verbal and written communication skills
• a good telephone manner
• customer service skills, patience and tact
• the ability to be calm and well organised, even when working under pressure
• IT skills; most hotel booking and billing systems are operated through specialist computer software
• the ability to handle cash, credit/debit cards and foreign currency
• some secretarial and keyboard skills; you will need to be accurate and should pay attention to detail
• the ability to operate standard office equipment such as photocopiers

The ability to speak a foreign language can be useful. You might need some sales skills to encourage guests to eat in the hotel restaurant or book extra services such as beauty treatments, for example.

Pay and Opportunities

Pay

The pay rates given below are approximate.

• Starting: £15,000 - £16,000
• With experience: £16,500 - £18,500
• Senior Hotel Receptionists earn £20,000 - £21,500

Hours of work

Most Hotel Receptionists work shifts covering seven days, often on a rota. You might work split shifts, nights, and at weekends and bank holidays. Full-time and part-time opportunities are available.

Where could I work?

Employers are hotels of all sizes.

Opportunities for Hotel Receptionists occur in hotels in towns and cities, and in rural and coastal areas, throughout the UK.

Where are vacancies advertised?

Vacancies are advertised in local/national newspapers, on job boards and hotel chain websites, on Find a Job, at Jobcentre Plus and on specialist recruitment sites such as caterer.com and uksp.co.uk.

Entry Routes and Training

Entry routes

If you are interested in being a hotel receptionist, there is no formal education needed. But employers may ask for GCSE passes in English and maths. Training in hospitality is also a smart move. It will give you an edge when you are looking for a job. Useful hospitality-based subjects include:

• hospitality and catering
• introduction to the hospitality industry
• travel and tourism
• reception services
• hospitality and catering principles (from of house reception)
Entry-level hotel receptionists get training on the job. Some larger hotels also provide formal training. You might be able to study for a hospitality-based qualification as you train.

An Intermediate or Advanced Level Apprenticeship is a great place to start. You may be able to take a vocational qualification, such as a NVQ, as part of your apprenticeship. Take a look at our information article 'Apprenticeships – How do I apply', for more details about applying for apprenticeship positions.

Foreign language skills are very useful for this career.

Employment 1st is a programme that prepares people for their first job in the hospitality industry. It includes core skills such as customer service, sales, communication, safety and IT.

Training

Hotels usually provide on-the-job training.

If you would like some training, you could study the NVQ certificate in hospitality services. This course has a range of units, which include:

- deal with arrival of customers
- prepare customer accounts and deal with departures
- resolve customer service problems
- store and retrieve information

Other courses could be available in your area.

Work Experience

Previous experience working in customer service, with administrative and/or secretarial skills would be really useful for this career.

Progression

Hotel Receptionists can progress to Team Leader, Supervisor and Manager posts after further training and experience.

Qualifications

Most employers require a good general education with some GCSEs at grade C/4 or above, including English and maths. However, entry requirements vary between employers.

To get onto an Intermediate or Advanced Level Apprenticeship, you'll usually need five GCSEs at grade C/4 or above, possibly including English and maths.

Employers usually accept equivalent work-related qualifications, such as a BTEC level 2 or level 3 in hospitality or travel and tourism.

Adult Opportunities

Age limits

It is illegal for any organisation to set age limits for entry to employment, education or training, unless they can show there is a real need to have these limits.

Entry

Some entrants have a relevant background in, for example, customer service, with administrative and/or secretarial skills.

You might be able to take an Intermediate Level Apprenticeship or an Advanced Level Apprenticeship in Hospitality and Catering.
Courses

Colleges will usually consider applications from adults who do not meet their usual entry requirements. You should check the admissions policy of individual colleges.

Statistics

- 57% of receptionists work part-time.
- 5% have flexible hours.
- 5% work on a temporary basis.

Further Information

Contacts

- **Apprenticeships: Get In. Go Far**
  National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)
  Tel: 0800 015 0400
  Email: nationalhelpdesk@findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk
  Website: [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

- **Skills Development Scotland - Modern Apprenticeships**
  Tel: 0800 9178000
  Email: info@skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk
  Website: [www.myworldofwork.co.uk/modernapprenticeships](http://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/modernapprenticeships)

- **Jobsite UK**
  Retail, fashion and hospitality industries
  Tel: 020 8340 3366
  Email: help@jobsite.co.uk
  Website: [www.theappointment.co.uk](http://www.theappointment.co.uk)

- **Hospitality Guild (People 1st)**
  Website: [www.hospitalityguild.co.uk](http://www.hospitalityguild.co.uk)

- **Springboard UK Ltd**
  Tel: 020 7529 8610
  Email: info@springboarduk.org.uk
  Website: [springboard.uk.net](http://springboard.uk.net)

- **British Hospitality Association (BHA)**
  Tel: 020 7404 7744
  Email: bha@bha.org.uk
  Website: [www.bha.org.uk](http://www.bha.org.uk)

- **The Caterer**
  Email: info@thecaterer.com
  Website: [www.caterersearch.com](http://www.caterersearch.com)

- **Caterer: Hospitality careers**
  Publisher: Totaljobs Group Ltd
  Website: [www.caterer.com/careers-advice](http://www.caterer.com/careers-advice)

- **Northern Ireland Hotels Federation (NIHF)**
  Northern Ireland Enquiries
  Address: The McCune Building, 1 Shore Road, Belfast BT15 3PG
  Tel: 028 9077 6635
  Email: office@nihf.co.uk
  Website: [www.nihf.co.uk](http://www.nihf.co.uk)

- **Careers Wales - Welsh Apprenticeships**
Related Careers

- Food Service Assistant
- Restaurant Manager
- Chef
- Hotel Manager
- Hotel Porter
- Hotel Room Attendant
- Kitchen Assistant
- Waiter/Waitress
- Sommelier
- Domestic Services Manager
- Bar Staff
- Cloakroom/Luggage Attendant
- Publican
- Restaurant Host/Hostess
- Barista
- Concierge