# Unit 7: Hospitality [AS Level, optional, internally assessed]

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# 1 OVERVIEW OF THIS UNIT

This is an AS optional unit in which the main focus is hospitality within the travel and tourism industry. Hospitality can be defined as the provision of accommodation, food and drink services away from home. The hospitality industry provides customers with this accommodation, food and drink. Hospitality consists of a mixture of tangible and intangible elements of both products and services. The product is the food, drink and accommodation, and the service the atmosphere and image that surrounds them.

In this unit the welcome people receive when participating in hospitality is vitally important.

# 2 WHEN TO TEACH THE UNIT AND SUBMIT FOR MODERATION

It would be advisable for candidates to have completed their study of Unit 2: *Customer service in travel and tourism* as they need a full awareness and understanding of quality customer service provision in order to meet the assessment requirements of AO3. They should also have an understanding of the hospitality industry within the wider travel and tourism industry, which would imply that Unit 1: *Introducing travel and tourism* had been studied, even if the examination had not been taken. There are also links with Unit 3: *Travel destinations* and the types of accommodation, food and drink available in the two destinations studied. If it is not possible for Unit 1: *Hospitality* to be studied after the mandatory units have been covered, then the work could be undertaken alongside so that relevant areas of each can be related to the work for this unit. This will enable candidates to see the inter-relationship of the various units within the specification. It is recommended that the work for moderation is submitted for the summer examination session.

If the AS programme is being operated over two years, then this unit would fall within the second year of the programme.

# 3 SUGGESTED DELIVERY PLAN

It is possible for the unit to be broken up into discrete programmes of study, based on the different AOs.

AO1 would logically form the introduction to the unit. Much of the research and investigation needed for this would enhance Unit 1 and negate the need to teach the sections in unit 1 relating to accommodation, catering and accommodation grading schemes which is part of the WYNTL section on 'Agencies delivering travel and tourism products and services'.

AO2 involves the investigation of **two** organisations in hospitality, one which provides the full range of hospitality services (accommodation and food and drink) and the second is a review of a corporate hospitality package. It may be tempting to use the same organisation to cover both aspects of this AO, but this is inadvisable as the banner states an investigation should be made into **two** organisations.

AO3 requires the customer service provision of **one** hospitality provider to be investigated. It will be difficult to fully meet the requirements of this assessment objective by desk based research, as recommendations for improvements to the

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customer provision are needed. This could therefore be built around a residential trip or work placement within the industry.

AO4 requires an analysis of the current provision of hospitality within a chosen locality. The locality can be the area local to the centre (this may therefore complement the work undertaken for AO1 of the investigation into hospitality locally) or it could be another area of focus, one perhaps based on a case study or a residential experience. There is a need to recommend any improvements to the provision, or developments in the provision in the locality, relating these to trends in that particular area of hospitality.

# 4 DELIVERY STRATEGIES

# 4.1 Evidence required for AO1

From the <u>assessment evidence grid</u>: candidates need to produce the results of their investigation into the scale of the industry and the types of hospitality providers (with recognised grading systems), with examples at both national and local levels, and including a description of corporate hospitality.

See 'Sectors delivering hospitality and the effects of seasonality, tangibility and perishability in the industry' (<u>What You Need to Learn section 7.2.1</u>) and 'Types of corporate hospitality' (<u>WYNTL section 7.2.2</u>).

## Accomodation

It is important that candidates know the distinction between **serviced** and **non-serviced** types.

**Serviced** means that staff are available on the premises to provide some services such as cleaning, meals, bar and room service. The availability of such services, even if they are not used by the customer, is included in the price charged.

**Non-serviced** means that sleeping accommodation is provided on a rental basis, normally for a unit comprising several beds. While services for the provision of meals, bars, shops and cleaning may be available on a separate commercial basis they are not included in the price charged for the accommodation.

It would be expected that a range of serviced and non-serviced accommodation is studied in the assignment evidence.

## Hotels, inns and guest houses

A **hotel** is defined as an accommodation outlet with a minimum of six letting bedrooms, of which at least half must have ensuite or private bathroom facilities. A hotel would normally have a drinks licence (which may be a restricted licence) and will serve breakfast and dinner.

International hotels are owned by large chain companies operating around the world. Services are offered to exactly the same high standard in each hotel, depending on the corporate image. Customers therefore receive consistency, security and dependability. There are usually many additional services. Commercial and leisure hotels are sited in large towns and cities and are used predominantly by business customers from Mondays to Thursdays and by the shortbreak market from Fridays to Sundays. These hotels offer a wide range of facilities to accommodate the needs of both types of customer, they will have a reputation for high standards and efficient service, combined with a relaxed atmosphere and customerorientated staff.

Resort hotels are mainly aimed at customers for pleasure on a long stay basis (four nights or more). The accommodation ranges from simple unlicensed bed and breakfast establishments to licensed premises offering food and drink throughout the day. This type of hotel aims to give the customer the intangible aspects of hospitality, rather than a wide range of products and facilities, the emphasis being on the friendly atmosphere. Repeat business is important to these hotels.

Transient hotels and motels are often budget hotels. These may be found at motorway service areas, near motorway junctions and on major road routes. All offer a basic standard of accommodation with few facilities, to provide for the needs of the on-road business traveller.

B&B accommodation is provided within a traditional **inn** or pub environment with a restaurant and bar.

A guesthouse B&B accommodation is usually run by only two or three people, who are sole traders. Most have fewer than three bookable rooms and most B&Bs aim at tourists. Breakfast will be available and maybe an evening meal.

Candidates need to research examples of the range of accommodation types nationally and locally. This covers a vast content. It will be necessary to restrict the research into to ensure that the candidates do not include too much information, as the assessment evidence required is only a summary. It is strongly suggested that this section is taught fully alongside the Accommodation section within Unit 1, as candidates will need to know the different types of accommodation for the examination in that unit.

#### Holiday camps and resort complexes

**Holiday camps** offer entertainment as part of the package, besides accommodation and catering. Butlin's or a similar sort of holiday camp should be investigated (<u>www.butlins.co.uk</u>, <u>www.pontins.com</u>).

**Holiday villages** are different from holiday camps as there is limited entertainment. Research into Park Resorts (<u>www.park-resorts.com</u>), Haven Holidays (<u>www.havenholidays.com</u>), British Holidays (<u>www.british-holidays.co.uk</u>), Hoseasons (<u>www.hoseseasons.co.uk</u>) and Blakes (<u>www.blakes.co.uk</u>).

<u>www.centerparcs.co.uk</u> provides information about other types of resort complex, as does <u>www.altontowers.com</u> which has the facilities on offer at the resort hotels of the Alton Towers and Splash Landings Hotels.

#### Public houses and cafes

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## Activity:

Compare and contrast pubs in your local area using these criteria:

- Name of pub
- Name of brewer or chain
- Type of pub (local, food ,family ,venue etc.)
- Facilities available (private rooms, garden, play area, games room, car park)
- Range of drinks available (alcoholic, non-alcoholic, hot and cold)
- Range of food available (full meals, bar snacks)

Candidates should also be aware of national chains of pubs, Wetherspoons (<u>www.jdwetherspoon.co.uk</u>) is an example.

Café bars are hospitality establishments that offer meals as well as drinks, and are usually themed.

## Restaurants (including cafes and fast food outlets

There are many different types of establishment which sell food for consumption on or off the premises. Restaurants may provide a waiter/waitress table service, and/or a take away service.

Candidates should research national chains of restaurants (fast food establishments have many resources) as well as local examples.

## Contract catering at event venues

**Contract catering** (also known as the food service management industry) services that sector of the industry where the provision of food and drink is not the main activity. It is therefore provided at events which can be considered tourist attractions, such as major sporting activities such as the Olympic Games and Royal Ascot.

Candidates need to be fully aware of the range of hospitality available at event venues e.g. major sporting events such as the British Grand Prix at Silverstone, or mass entertainment events such as Glastonbury.

Compass (<u>www.compass-group.co.uk</u>) is a major company providing catering through its sports and leisure division, All Leisure, for high profile events such as Wimbledon, England rugby matches at Twickenham, the Hampton Court Flower Show, Glyndebourne opera and Cheltenham Gold Cup.

## Leisure outlets

Hospitality provision within leisure outlets can be studied on a national scale. A visit to a theme park will provide information on the catering outlets available and the types of food and drink. Alton Towers also has two themed hotels and many theme parks offer conference facilities in their out of season times. See <u>www.wicksteedpark.co.uk</u> for examples of the type of facilities available.

At a local level it is more likely to be the provision of food and drink, and sometimes accommodation within a sports leisure facility. For example Overstone Park

(<u>www.overstonepark.com</u>) is a golf course, leisure centre and accommodation provider; Megabowls generally have Wimpy fast food restaurants and bars etc.

This is an area easy to research by candidates visiting a leisure facility to investigate the hospitality provided.

### En-route and on-board transport services (road, rail, air, sea)

Candidates need to research the food, and accommodation, if applicable, on-board transport. There is information available on websites, and also in magazines produced by the transport providers.

It may obviously be difficult for candidates to undertake first hand research for the onboard services, so secondary research will need to be used on the whole.

En-route hospitality is more easily accessible to candidates. Primary research can be undertaken into the accommodation, food and drink provided at motorway service stations, or at major road junctions.

Most providers are national chains, but locally the mobile cafe in the lay-by of a road could provide a good example.

### Different needs of business and leisure customers

Leisure customers are generally those on holiday, business customers those using hospitality for work purposes.

A concluding piece of work that looks at the different needs of these customers will be appropriate. The needs should relate to the provision of accommodation, accommodation services and the service of food and drink.

## Grading criteria

**Categorisation** refers to the separation of accommodation by type, i.e. distinguishing between hotels, motels, boarding houses, B&Bs etc.

**Classification** distinguishes accommodation on the basis of certain physical features, such as the number of rooms with private bath or shower etc.

**Grading** identifies accommodation according to certain verifiable objective features of the service offered, such as the number of courses served at meals, whether there is 24 hour room service etc.

Provision was made under the Development of Tourism Act 1969 for the compulsory classification and grading of hotel accommodation in Britain, but this was widely resisted by the industry itself and the BTA made no attempt to enforce it. A voluntary registration system was first introduced in 1975. The separate NTBs were left to devise their own individual schemes.

The system remains a voluntary one, but hotels taking part receive regular checks from inspectors, and could only display the grading or advertise in RTB publications once they have been approved. Because it remains voluntary only a very small proportion of the total accommodation sector in Britain is registered.

Details of the ratings are available in destination brochures and on the NTB web sites.

Tour operators have devised their own systems of assessing properties used on package holidays abroad to meet the needs of their own clients. Thomson Holidays, for example, uses a 'T rating', based in part on their own customers' assessment of the accommodation. Cosmos (www.cosmosholidays.co.uk) allocate diamond ratings. This is based on a scale of two to five (five being the highest) and reflects Cosmos' overall opinion of the facilities, service, food, comfort and location of each property. Properties with a 'plus' rating are those which have that little something extra that stands them apart.

## Scale of the industry

The hospitality industry is one of the main areas of growth in the UK economy. It has demonstrated year on year growth since 1996 and contributes some £21.5 billion annually to the treasury through direct and indirect taxation. In total, the industry employs over 1.8 million people in the UK working in around 300,000 establishments. Forecasts over the next couple of years are for sustained growth and it is predicted that a further 170,000 jobs will be needed in the industry by the end of 2005. Total catering and accommodation expenditure by domestic and overseas tourists in the UK amounts to 59% of total tourist spending.

The scale of the industry nationally can be researched using statistics available from <u>www.ons.gov.uk</u> and <u>www.caterer-online.com</u>. This needs to look at the total number of establishments, the numbers employed and the turnover or occupancy rate, or other relevant measure of the success of the hospitality provider.

At a local level, local authorities produce figures on employment in different sectors, and the number of establishments can be researched using the Yellow Pages or <u>www.yell.com</u>. It may be more difficult to get firm statistics of local measures of success, but anecdotal evidence can suffice.

## **Employment characteristics**

Case studies can be found on the website <u>www.prospects.ac.uk</u> (if this link does not work, follow the links 'explore job sectors', 'hospitality' and 'case studies' from the home page).

Recruitment and retention of staff and a shortage of skills is one of the main issues in employment in hospitality. This is because the impression is of low pay, long hours of work and poor conditions. Government statistics show that the hospitality industry has four of the top ten lowest paid occupations: kitchen porters, bar staff, catering assistants and waiting staff. Labour turnover is high, many jobs are part time and shift work is common in the industry. It is a customer-focused industry, with plenty of chance for rapid advancement.

Advantages can include food and accommodation which is often provided to employees.

The main characteristics of employment should be summarised at both a national and a local level.

### Range of jobs

Case studies can be found on the website <u>www.prospects.ac.uk</u> (if this link does not work, follow the links 'explore job sectors', 'hospitality' and 'case studies' from the home page).

A good starting point for this at a local level is the local newspaper jobs section. Candidates could search for jobs in all areas of hospitality, and this should show a range of jobs in different hospitality outlets that illustrate the employment characteristics such as shift work, part time, seasonality etc.

There are many websites dedicated to jobs in hospitality nationally – again a snapshot of the range of jobs could be gathered.

The careers section of libraries has valuable information; <u>www.hctc.co.uk</u> has a wealth of information on jobs in hospitality that can be researched by the candidates. They also produce magazines such as 'At Your Service' which is a guide to employment training in hospitality.

#### **Trends in different sectors**

Trends in the chosen locality are the focus of AO4, so if the local area is used this section could be fully covered in the assessment evidence for AO4.

**Hotels:** Budget hotels represent the fastest growing segment. Although hotels have the highest percentage of full-time workers (60%), this proportion has been falling over recent years and the number of part-timers is therefore expected to increase.

**Restaurants**: This includes take away food outlets, fine dining, ethnic restaurants and coffee bars, the latter of which is the fastest growing. There has also been significant growth in branded restaurants. More people are employed in restaurants than in any other sub-sector of the industry with employment forecast to grow by 21%. Restaurants also account for the largest percentage of establishments in the UK. The vast majority are small, micro businesses with owner-operators.

**Pubs, clubs and bars:** The second largest sub-sector in terms of total numbers of establishments and workforce employing 15.5% of all employees in the industry. Labour turn over is high mainly due to the large number of candidates employed.

Trends can be established from the statistics (web addresses given above), but a local newspaper watch could also be a useful way of surveying the candidate's own locality. Reports of newly opened pubs and restaurants are often included, as well as closures of long running establishments.

## Types of customer

There is a variety of different customer types served by hospitality providers. They may be regarded as **regular**, **occasional** or **chance**. If you wish then to return, all must be treated with respect and courtesy. The hospitality industry provides a service to its customers; every customer is special and will require some slightly different service and have a different perceived need. **Individual** customers are generally fairly easy to look after. Their needs do not put any strain on the resources of the organisation and they are often well satisfied with the service they receive. **Groups** 

bring substantial income to many hospitality providers, and therefore should be given special consideration regarding their requirements. Special arrangements are generally made to greet groups on arrival. **Business** customers are usually travelling at their company's expense and out of necessity rather than pleasure. Time will be important; therefore quick, efficient service is required.

Candidates need to demonstrate an understanding of the different types of customers in different type of hospitality outlet.

### Effect of, and trends in, length of stay

The trend has been for stays in UK hotels for leisure purposes to change from a two week holiday period to short breaks. These can be in the countryside or UK cities.

Short breaks, such as long weekends, are a growth area. UK short breaks tend to be booked at the last minute (about two weeks in advance) and stretch from a Friday afternoon to a Sunday evening; short breaks to the continent are planned weeks in advance and span Thursday night to Monday morning on the whole. London is the number one short break destination in the UK. Two night family fun packages are available, which include accommodation, a London Pass, a Thames river cruise and a family meal at Planet Hollywood. Theatre breaks are fuelling the growth in London.

The second city for short breaks is Edinburgh, followed by York.

What impact does this trend have on hospitality outlets?

The way in which the length of stay is affected by seasonality, perishability and tangibility need to be looked at.

## **Corporate hospitality**

The corporate sector is the most significant in terms of size. Revenue in this sector is not only generated from room nights but also from the usage of facilities, including conference and meeting rooms. Many of the major hotel groups have established separate brands for this market. However, the corporate sector was adversely affected by international events, such as the events of 11th September 2001 in the US, the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) virus, the war in Iraq and a downturn in some global economies, such as in the US and Japan.

Candidates need to be able to give a description of corporate hospitality (this is defined later in this document).

#### AO1 assessment evidence

The banner and the mark bands in the <u>assessment evidence grid</u> clearly describe what a candidate needs to do in order to meet the requirements of this assessment objective.

It can be seen as an overarching study of the hospitality industry at a local and a national level, and there may be a temptation to include too much information in the evidence. All three mark bands state that this should be a **summary** of the hospitality industry.

In order to focus the candidates on the evidence needed a scenario may be used, e.g.:

You are writing an article for *Holiday Which?* **or** your local paper **or** a magazine on the hospitality industry. (For examples of the ways in which articles can be laid out in the style of *Holiday Which?* visit <u>www.which.net/holidaywhich</u>)

## 4.2 Evidence required for AO2

From the assessment evidence grid: candidates need to produce an investigation into **two** organisations in the sector, **one** which provides hospitality services and **one** which provides a corporate hospitality package.

Although the research to meet this assessment objective may be undertaken as a group, it is necessary for each candidate to produce an individual assignment.

Work placement, part time jobs, residential experiences (which need not be for the GCE in Travel and Tourism course, but to a related area of study e.g. a Geography or Biology field trip, a team building residential or DoE experience) can all be used. Trips and visits can be made to accommodation outlets and sports facilities which provide corporate hospitality. Many have dedicated staff who are only too willing to help.

The organisation studied **must** provide accommodation and food and drink services in order to meet the requirements of the assessment objective.

It is possible for this to be desk-based research, either around a website for a particular hotel, or for brochures produced by an individual hotel. Many organisations are also more than wiling to show groups of candidates around their facilities.

Other methods of investigation can of course be used. A work placement in an accommodation provider (can be an inn, motel, guest house, holiday park, and youth hostel – not just a hotel) will provide the candidate with first hand information.

A residential experience will also provide valuable information – if the residential is abroad the hospitality outlet could be based on the accommodation stayed in.

See 'What You Need to Learn' <u>section 7.2.3</u>: 'Types of accommodation and accommodation services'.

## Sleeping accommodation (bedroom and bathroom)

Candidates need to explain the number of bedrooms and the type of room i.e. twin, single, double, en-suite etc. The facilities and services available in the rooms should be researched – this can easily be done as most hotel rooms in large chain hotels have a guest services brochure that explains how to use the TV, ironing or pressing services available etc.

#### Eating accommodation (restaurants and bars)

This should consist of a description of the facilities available in which food and drink is served (see service of food and drink below).

Circulation accommodation (halls, lobbies, lifts and stairs)

Investigation into the public areas of the accommodation outlet, and the way in which the guests can move around should be undertaken.

### Conference/meeting/event accommodation (function rooms)

Brochures on conference and meeting facilities are often produced by individual accommodation outlets or by chains of hotels, information will include details on rooms available and their layouts. The types of events catered for are also explained – from weddings to meeting facilities which allow video conferencing etc.

### Recreational

This section needs to include details of any leisure facilities available, this may range form golf courses to a pool table! Most large accommodation outlets allow free use of such facilities for residents, and many leisure complexes in hotels also have membership schemes for those who live in the surrounding area. Details about restrictions of use are normally provided by the hotel (many do not allow unaccompanied children to use the facilities).

### **Cleaning and maintenance**

It will be more difficult for this section to be covered from purely desk based research, as there is often not much mention in promotional material produced by the hotel. Cleaning is generally undertaken by the housekeeping department of big accommodation providers, and arranging an interview with one of the housekeeping staff or the HOD may be arranged. It is often in this department that most work experience opportunities and part time positions are available.

## Valeting

Guest services will have this information available (if applicable). If the accommodation outlet does not provide a valeting service, candidates should be able to state the reason why (the type or size of the provider will often be the reason).

## Linen and laundry services

Again details will be located by guest services – candidates are not expected to state how the main laundry of the accommodation outlet is done, but the services available for guests e.g. suit pressing, availability of washing machines etc.

## Service of food and drink

Investigation into the range of food provided, which should include room service if applicable. This will not be insertion of menus, but a description of the range of foods and styles of service available.

(See the section on food and drink below for more content detail.)

#### **Conference and function services**

Brochures on conference and meeting facilities are often produced by individual hotels or by chains. Information will include details on:

- Prices, packages and equipment
- Dedicated packages for banquets, weddings etc.

It is the services provided that need to be looked at; for example what is provided as part of an 8 or 24 hour delegate package.

### Health and safety

All accommodation outlets will have fire instructions in the rooms, there will also be a set time for the testing of fire alarms. Fire fighting equipment, fire exits and instructions should be summarized. No smoking areas within the accommodation are also part of health and safety.

If leisure facilities are available, there will also be separate instructions relating to the use of gym equipment, swimming pools etc.

Security of room (the method by which the door is secured), safe keeping of valuables (safe in room or in reception), and monitoring of car parking should all be investigated as part of this section.

Some accommodation outlets, e.g. holiday camps, have quite extensive security arrangements with 'cells' available for over enthusiastic guests!

#### Services for business guests

Many large hotels have business facilities. These may include secretarial support with typing, faxing etc. facilities. Many now have modem points in bedrooms, and wireless connections available in conference areas. Again this is easy to research from published materials about accommodation providers.

#### Food and drink services

The following sections relate to <u>section 7.2.4</u> of 'What You Need to Learn': 'Types of food and drink services'.

There are many different types of food and drink services, which need to be examined in a variety of contexts so that the candidates can fully demonstrate the knowledge and understanding required to meet the requirements of the assessment objective.

This would require some background work to be undertaken on the different ways in which food and drink services are provided.

Good sources for this are documentary or fly on the wall TV series. BBC's *Back to the Floor* has had a couple of episodes based on food and drink – Burger King and Belgo have both been case studies.

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## Types of service

Candidates need to know the difference between the type of service:

- **Silver service**: Dishes are sent from the kitchen on large dishes, or flats, which are then served by the waiting staff using a spoon and fork
- **Silver/Plate service**: The main items, such as the meat, are plated and served by the waiting staff, the rest of the meal, such as vegetables, are silver served.
- **French service**: All food is offered by the waiting staff to customers to help themselves
- **Gueridon service**: Dishes are prepared, cooked or flamed at the table in front of the customer.
- **Nouvelle cuisine**: Dishes are decorated and arranged on a plate and served to the customer.
- **Plate service**: The meal is presented on a plate to the customer.
- Family service: Dishes are placed on the table for customers to help themselves.
- **Counter cafeteria service**: A customer queues and selects their meal from a counter or servery.
- Fast food: The customer is served quickly from a counter.
- **Carvery**: The main course is collected by the customer from a carvery.

## Types of food

Description of the types of food available, the different variety or types of meals:

- Full meals
- À la carte (a menu from which customers select from a range of items)
- Table d'hôte (a menu with a fixed price for a specified number of courses)
- Buffets
- Snacks
- Fast food

## Types of drink

Alcoholic, a huge range including:

- Beers
- Spirits
- Wines

Non-alcoholic, mainly minerals and soft drinks.

## Hot and cold drinks

Where is this provided? Are there facilities in the rooms? (Tea/coffee making, minibar, room service etc.)

What other ways can guests get different types of drink in the accommodation provider?

#### Assessment guidance

Once the above areas have been researched by the candidate it will be time to undertake the assessment activity.

A simple report on the chosen hospitality provider will suffice, but centres may wish to look at other assessment methods, perhaps to met the requirements of Communications Key Skills such as:

- Presentation
- Display

For the upper mark bands, the values and attitudes of the hospitality provider should be included in the assessment.

#### **Corporate hospitality**

For the following sections see also <u>section 7.2.2</u> of 'What You Need to Learn': 'Types of corporate hospitality'.

### Corporate hospitality package

Again this can be desk based research. This does need to be a **different** organisation from the hospitality outlet studied for the first part of the assessment objective. If the first part has been the study of a hospitality outlet which offers conference packages, it will be more interesting for the candidate to study the type of hospitality provided at major events rather than general business tourism.

Again many organisations are more than willing to show candidates around their facilities and explain the packages on offer. Most also have websites and produce brochures which explain the packages on offer.

Corporate hospitality falls into two categories:

- Services and/or facilities provided for business people within all types of hospitality providers, e.g. hotel room with work space, modem point, 24-hour room service, corporate room rate, express check-out; on-board transport services such as executive lounges, business class cabin on aircraft, first class provision on trains
- Organisations that invite existing clients or potential new customers to attend a prestigious event (usually sporting or cultural), or those which organise events, exhibitions and conferences for existing or new customers (to stimulate new business, inform on current/new developments, training of personnel etc.).

Corporate hospitality should be defined so that candidates know what this is referring to. This is the opportunity for candidates to investigate a package more fully. It should include an introduction to the type of corporate hospitality being studied and the facility in which it is taking place. The review should explain how the corporate hospitality is organised and made available to the corporate hospitality market (i.e. the way it is advertised – by brochure, web site, direct marketing etc.).

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The review of the package on offer needs to look at:

- private boxes (or other unit of hospitality accommodation);
- reserved car parking;
- pre-event documentation (e.g. entrance badge, hospitality pass, locational maps, complimentary official programmes, etc.);
- reserved seating;
- food and beverage package (e.g. private bar etc.);
- customised furnishings;
- closed-circuit TV;
- access to all standard event/venue facilities;
- visitor and delegate reception procedures

Candidates need to produce a review of **one** corporate hospitality package including the components of the package, how it is organised and made available to the corporate hospitality market.

## Assessment guidance

Once the above areas have been researched by the candidate it will be time to undertake the assessment activity.

A simple report on the chosen corporate hospitality will suffice, but centres may wish to look at other assessment methods, perhaps to met the requirements of Communications Key Skills such as Presentation.

## 4.3 Evidence required for AO3

From the assessment evidence grid: candidates need to produce relevant research and analysis when assessing the customer-service provision of their chosen hospitality provider, with recommendations for improvement or development.

## Introduction to AO3

As an introduction to this section, it would be useful to reiterate the principles of excellent customer service.

The article 'Tarred with Basil's Brush' (see  $\underline{TT}$  unit7 appendix1.pdf, in the folder 'TT unit7 appendix') gives an insight into customer service issues in hospitality. This could be used to raise some discussion points such as:

- Why is accommodation in the UK deemed to be expensive?
- What has this to do with the quality of customer service provided?
- Why is the inconsistency of service standards in hospitality a major issue?
- What should be done to ensure high standards throughout the industry?
- What are the limitations of the accommodation grading system in respect of customer service provision (the one to five star system)?

*Travel Weekly's* mystery shopper visited four London hotels (in the section entitled 'Cutting the Mustard'). Discuss the different standards in service in the hotels. What improvements would you suggest?

## Assessment guidance

It is possible that the travel and tourism organisation chosen for the case study of customer service Unit 2: *Customer service in travel and tourism*, if a hospitality provider, can be the one used in order to complete this assessment objective. Care would need to be taken to ensure that aspects of both units were fully covered if the same organisation were to be used.

For this section there is really no substitute to actual primary research in an accommodation outlet. Major hotel chains do produce training materials for their staff, which is based on the provision of customer service, and these could be used for desk based research.

The customer service practices and procedures that need to be researched are clearly laid out in  $\frac{\text{section 7.2.5}}{\text{section 7.2.5}}$  of the WYNTL.

The content of the report will vary considerably depending on the hospitality outlet studied. Again it is recommended that it should be an **accommodation** outlet, as this will allow candidates to cover all areas of the WYNTL, but a large enough catering establishment could be used (as long as reservations could be made – rule out MacDonald's – and follow-up is used). It would restrict the candidates in discussing inhouse services such as room service, house keeping, health and leisure services etc.

The customer service practices and procedures in the hospitality provider should be investigated and analysed. These will vary considerable depending on the provider studied. Generally they will relate to the provision of customer service at the various stages of the guest cycle i.e.:

- Enquiry
- Reservation
- Registration
- Check-in
- In residence (services here will include room service, customer relations, portering service, housekeeping service, health and leisure services, message services and information services)
- Check out
- Follow up

The way in which the customer service is delivered at each stage needs to be investigated, so this will include the whole range of departments within a large accommodation outlet, or just a few staff in a small B&B or guest house.

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As part of the analysis of customer service, a discussion of the skills required by employees will be included. These skills include:

- Practical skills (serving, menu knowledge, clearing and maintenance)
- Personal skills (communication ICT, social skills)
- Organisational skills (ordering, planning team working etc.)

Stress the importance of ICT skills to candidates, as this should be included in the assignment and linked to the developments in ICT within the hospitality industry.

Technology has had a huge impact on hospitality. For example, the Internet has allowed customers to search for hotels and make comparisons on price and service and then to book on-line. More tourists, whether from home or abroad, are booking independently. The way the sector does business is changing. The hotel sub-sector is increasingly dependent on information technology. This is used for a variety of functions to facilitate business operations from reservations to cook chill processes. Many hotels now offer e-mail, Internet and video conferencing facilities to guests. Latest developments include broadband and wireless networking available in rooms for suitably equipped lap-tops.

It is important that candidates fully understand the use and development of ICT in hospitality.

Recommendations for improvements, developments, further training in the hospitality provider is necessary.

### Assignment scenario

It may be appropriate for candidates to write a report as a mystery customer in the hospitality provider – many travel supplements have reports of such experiences in the accommodation and catering sectors that can be used as guidance as to the ways in which this can be produced. A 'Hospitality from Hell' type of scenario could also be used as a different means of assessment.

#### Support materials for AO3

See the folder '<u>TT unit 7 appendix</u>' on this CD-ROM, which contains the following materials.

## Examples of materials from the Moat House

Information is also available on <u>www.moathousehotels.com</u>, which also has a virtual tour of the hotel.

<u>TT unit7 appendix2.pdf</u> is a general promotional leaflet for Northampton Moat House that will provide the basics on the facilities and services provided.

Northampton Moat House has produced its own mission statement:

'to be recognised as a first choice hotel in central England in the mid-priced market, achieving high levels of profitability by offering first class hotel, conference and training facilities; renowned banqueting; and attentive service given by friendly, efficient, trained staff'

The mission statement is then expanded to each department within the hotel:

- Accounts: 'let's go back to basics to be the best'
- **Front of house**: 'checking-in, checking–out, smiling, efficient and friendly, that's what reception is about'
- Housekeeping: 'your first stay is never your last'
- Maintenance: 'a safe and well maintained environment'
- Food and beverage department: 'let us entertain you by serving up a smile'
- Kitchen: 'quality is an empty plate'
- Events: 'repeat business means success'
- Revenue office: 'premier venue for business and pleasure'
- Work base/business services: 'nothing's a problem'
- Club moativation (leisure centre): 'keeping life fit and stress free'

<u>TT\_unit7\_appendix3.pdf</u> is a flyer for the training scheme for Moat House staff 'MAD – Making A Difference'.

TT unit7 appendix4.pdf is a customer feedback form.

#### **Customer service at Hilton Hotels**

Hilton operates 77 four and five star hotels within the UK and Ireland.

Hilton UK launched the Esprit Club in March 2002, seeking to create a culture of motivation and achievement within the organisation, and currently has 14,000 members. Esprit is a motivational tool designed to make work more enjoyable and more rewarding.

StarPoints can be earned through Hilton as rewards for achievement and guest services. Using StarPoints, colleagues can redeem a choice of benefits at a discount. Benefits include discounted hotel accommodation and food and beverage, health club membership, special rates on flights and car rental, a discount on beds, mobile phones and wines and spirits. Colleagues also have the option of donating their StarPoints to the Hilton charity, the Hilton in the Community Foundation.

Elevator is Hilton's fast track programme, which over the course of 18 months put individuals through intensive training in different departments. Upon completion of the course, graduates move onto senior positions in Hilton hotels all around the world.

Premier Class is a nine month management development programme for senior managers in the business, which focuses on developing key management skills needed to drive personnel and business performance in their hotel. The programme covers a variety of topics including managing people and improving quality.

General manager (Hilton hotels): The average age of general managers (GM) in the Hilton organisation is 49, and an average of 180 employees work in a Hilton Hotel. A GM requires the following competencies:

• **Planning for action**: setting challenging long, medium and short term plans for the hotel, devising a hotel business plan which includes timescales, sufficient details, priorities and measurements. Continually reviewing the action plan against agreed measurements, making necessary changes as appropriate. Manages their own personal time effectively within tight schedules and is able to quickly juggle priorities when required.

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- Active intelligence: quickly understands and draws correct inferences from a wide range of business related written and numerical information and recognises trends in data. To be able to seek out relevant information, identify key aspects and draw logical conclusions and be able to explain the rational for suggestions. Must make sound decisions by taking all relevant factors into account and shows the ability to think creatively, not always sticking to the tried and tested.
- Managing and developing others: manages colleagues consultatively and maintains morale and motivation. Proactively pays attention to the development of skills and the taking of responsibility. Achieves empowerment through effective coaching and delegation. Agrees individual and team objectives, monitors progress regularly offering encouragement, feedback and recognition.
- **Embracing change**: accepts the need for change and embraces a changing business environment. Initiates and manages appropriate change processes and takes personal responsibility for their own development, reviewing own performance to ensure continuous learning is taking place.
- **Developing relationships:** network with colleagues, customers and owners and other stakeholders in order to build useful business relationships. Offers personal help and reassurance when needed. Diplomatic in difficult situations and able to build trust, is approachable and shows empathy towards colleagues and customers. Is aware of cultural differences and adapts style accordingly.
- Business development: a clear vision is developed through an understanding of • Hilton UK's Business Plan. Understands their marketplace, Hilton's market position and competitor activity. Sets appropriate commercial strategies in order to achieve balanced targets and takes appropriate action to ensure these targets are achieved.
- Influence and impact: persuasive and assertive, showing confidence in dealing • with others and has the ability to win people around using appropriate styles. Wiling to take a stand in the face of opposition and able to present logical arguments in a constructive, professional manner. Remains calm and focused under pressure and communicates clearly, concisely and with self confidence (both orally and in writing).
- Drive and tenacity: takes ownership for making things happen and is driven to achieve targets. Takes calculated risks and commits to making difficult decisions. Continuously reviews courses of action to ensure targets are met and does not give up when faced with setbacks.

GMs receive the following benefits: Health care for themselves and family, pension, 25 days holiday a year, car/ car allowance and fuel card, Hilton Share option scheme, up to 30% of annual salary as a bonus and a mobile phone. Discounted rates on the following products: hotel rates for colleagues and friends and family, golf weekends, food and beverage for colleagues when staying in a hotel, membership rates for Livingwell Health Clubs, and partnership benefits with other organisations including British Airways and BBC magazine subscriptions.

## **ICT Case Study**

Hilton Hotels offers US and Canadian residents the ability to search for hotel information, book hotel reservations and access guest loyalty programme information through Internet-capable, wireless devices (Palm top or WAP enabled mobile phone). There is no additional charge to use the wireless application above and beyond Internet airtime charges from the wireless service provider.

If you are on holiday at the Hilton Hawaii Village on Waikiki Beach the concierges and customer service representatives are outfitted with wireless and wearable computers in hope of bringing check-in, check-out and other hotel services to where they're most convenient for the guest. It is all part of Hilton's goal to maximise guest loyalty and satisfaction through technology by providing innovative options to how and where guest services are delivered. It is hoped that by providing access to critical data when and where team members need it, without being tethered to a fixed workstation, will enhance both customer service and other hotel operations. The wearable computer is equipped with touch screen enabled flat panel display, body worn printer, mobile credit card processing equipment, a room key encoder and direct integration with the property management system. If a queue at a registration desk starts to form and all traditional workstations are staffed, additional front desk agents can walk out from behind the desk to assist customers in the lobby. Also by evaluating arrival and departure logistics, the hotel staff can bring services direct to the customer anywhere – in lift lobbies, conference or meeting facilities, or in the restaurant.

# 4.4 Evidence required for AO4

From the <u>assessment evidence grid</u>: candidates need to provide an analysis of the current provision of hospitality within their chosen locality and make any recommendations for improvements or developments of that provision to meet trends in the sector.

It is recommended that the locality studied is the same one used for AO1, as candidates will have investigated the range of hospitality providers in order to meet the requirements of the assessment objective.

This assessment objective requires analysis of the hospitality provided in a chosen locality. The locality need not be the local area of the centre, but could be based on an area that has useful resources relating to hospitality trends, or one in which a residential is taking place.

The analysis of the current provision of hospitality in the chosen locality must look at the full range of hospitality, i.e. accommodation providers, food and drink service providers and providers of corporate hospitality.

The conclusion should suggest realistic improvements or developments in the provision in the area, to meet the needs of the customers and trends in the hospitality industry. Examples of exercises to assist in this are provided below.

## Trends in different sectors of hospitality

<u>www.caterer-online.com</u> produces trends in all hospitality outlets (examples for fast food restaurants and pubs are given below).

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## • Fast food restaurants

Year	Number of outlets	Millions of meals	Food sales £m
1996	29,677	1,930	6,178
1997	29,244	1,908	6,164
1998	28,253	1,924	6,254
1999	28,527	1,908	6,256
2000	28,694	1,909	6,126
2001	29,050	1,874	6,324
2002	29,384	1,946	6,393
2003	29,451	1,959	6,381

Source: www.caterer-online.com

NB the figures above include only fast food outlets and not full service restaurant figures.

The UK restaurants market, which includes fast-food outlets as well as eat-in restaurants, achieved a 4.3% increase in sales in 2002, raising the total value of the market to £16.2bn. Following strong year-on-year growth in the late 1990s, annual sales rose at a slower rate in 2001 and 2002 for a number of reasons, including fears of a recession, a drop in the number of tourists from overseas, and increased competition between too many similar brands.

Key sectors in the restaurants market are burger chains, pub restaurants, pizza and pasta outlets, roadside restaurants, chicken outlets and a range of miscellaneous restaurants, many of which are independent and/or family owned. In the fast food sector, the burger sector remains relatively weak, as consumers switch to healthier alternatives, a trend which has benefited both chicken restaurants and pizza outlets.

The largest `other' sector includes a broad variety of restaurant types, from those serving ethnic cuisines to informal dining concepts and premium outlets. The sector has few branded outlets and most operators are independent. Sales growth was relatively strong in 2002, helped by the continued popularity of sandwich sales. The weaker segments in this sector are informal dining and ethnic food outlets, although the Mexican and Japanese segments are growing.

Steady year-on-year increases in personal disposable income (PDI) have encouraged more discretionary spending on eating out in recent years and this, in turn, has persuaded more new business start-ups in the restaurant market. While restaurant numbers have been growing every year in the past decade, consumer loyalty to many brands is low, making this a high-risk market with regular business failures and outlet closures. Brand rationalisation has been a feature of the market during 2002/2003, with the focus on core brands and major players disposing of underperforming brands. The market leaders are now concentrating investment and expansion on their core remaining brands.

The popularity of eating out is high and research shows that almost three-guarters of all adults had eaten in a major branded restaurant chain during the previous year. This increases to over 95% for adults under 25.

The restaurant market should experience improved growth in 2003, but sales growth over the 5 years from 2003 to 2007 is forecast to be slower than the previous 5 years (1998 to 2003) as a reduction in consumer discretionary spending affects sales. Parts of the fast-food and pub restaurants sectors will come close to saturation point by 2006.

The trends in fast food restaurants show that the number of outlets in 2003 has fallen since 1996, but it has not been a steady decrease. Recent years have shown a gradual increase - how is this reflected in the locality studied in terms of the number of fast food establishments?

The number of meals sold rose slightly over the period in the table - this could be that establishments are getting bigger and individual restaurants are serving more people, or that individuals are eating more fast food.

The value of food sales has risen over the whole period, but there was a drop between 2002 and 2003, this may reflect issues such as healthy eating etc.

Candidates could use these figures, and others that they have researched, to look at their locality. What is the likely growth or decline in fast food restaurants? In which specific locations is this likely to occur? The different types of fast food restaurant could also be looked at.

Year	Number of outlets	Millions of meals	Food sales £m
1996	57,404	1,036	3,112
1997	55,874	1,053	3,282
1998	54,450	1,085	3,357
1999	53,261	1,139	3,434
2000	52,356	1,107	3,337
2001	51,565	1,062	3,186
2002	51,506	1,070	3,327
2003	51,352	1,081	3,355

Pubs

Source: www.caterer-online.com

The trends in pubs show there has been a substantial decline in the number of pubs since 1996. It should be noted that for the purposes of these figures any pub that obtains more than half its turnover from food ceases to be defined as a pub and is classed as full service. Numbers of pubs move in this direction each year. This does not explain all of the observed decline, but is a trend that should be taken into account.

The number of meals and the value of these food sales in pubs have risen slightly over the whole period, but this has not been a steady rise.

Candidates could use these figures, and others that they have researched, to look at their locality. Is the decline in the number of pubs reflected in the area? What types of pubs are closing, what type of pubs are being developed?

## 5 SAMPLE ASSIGNMENT

This assignment will meet the following requirements of Unit 1: Hospitality:

- AO2 an investigation into one organisation which provides hospitality services
- AO3 assessing the customer service provision of a chosen hospitality provider with recommendations for improvement

## **AO2 Checklist for research**

- Name and type of accommodation outlet
- Name or owners/chain/organisation
- Location of accommodation outlet (a map would be useful here)
- Official grading of accommodation provider

#### Sleeping accommodation (bedroom & bathroom)

- Number of rooms
- Type of rooms
- Facilities and equipment available in the rooms
- Price of rooms

### Eating accommodation (restaurant & bars)

- Facilities provided
- Food and drink available
- Prices of food and drink

#### Circulation accommodation (halls, lobbies, lifts and stairs)

- Description of areas
- Facilities available in these areas

#### Conference accommodation (function & meeting rooms)

- Available rooms for hire
- Price of hire
- Facilities available in conference accommodation

#### Recreational accommodation (lounges, games rooms & fitness rooms)

- Facilities available
- Furnishing of the area
- Equipment available

#### Accommodation services available

- Cleaning and maintenance
- Find out how cleaning and maintenance of the accommodation outlet takes place

#### Valeting

• Is a valeting service available?

#### Linen & laundry services

- What linen is provided?
- What facilities are available for laundry?

#### Service of food & drink

- Explain the type of food service(s) available i.e. table/silver service/tray/counter/ take-away/vending/room service
- Describe the type of food available i.e. full meals (a la carte, table d'hote etc.)/ buffets/snacks/fast food
- Describe the type of drink available i.e. alcoholic/non-alcoholic/hot/cold

#### Conference services

- Are there any specific staff with responsibilities for this?
- What is their role?
- What conference packages are available?

#### Health and safety

- Where are the fire regulations?
- What do they tell guests?
- Is there a regular fire drill; if so when is this?
- Are there smoke detectors, alarmed fire exits etc.?
- Who checks the health and safety of the accommodation outlet?
- What regulations regarding health and safety need to be adhered to by the accommodation provider?

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## Conclusion

You need to show understanding of the values and attitudes of the chosen hospitality provider.

State how you carried out the investigation

**AO3 Customer service**This assignment is based on a residential experience staying at a youth hostel.

The experiences of staying at the youth hostel should mean that you can easily complete this section of work, but you must talk to the staff to find out more information.

#### Introduction

Explain the importance of customer service to all accommodation outlets.

Describe the types of customers that use the youth hostel.

#### The guest cycle

#### Enquiry

How do potential customers find out about the youth hostel? Visit <u>www.yha.org.uk</u> to research details of how to make enquiries and bookings at the youth hostel.

Are there different prices according to customer types?

#### Reservation

How are reservations made for the youth hostel? Are reservations always necessary?

#### Registration

What is the registration process of guests at the youth hostel?

#### Check in

How does check in at the youth hostel operate? Are there specific times only?

#### In residence

This will be the main section of your report.

What customer service is provided at the youth hostel for the time a guest stays there? You need to look at:

- Customer relations
- Housekeeping services
- Leisure activities

Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations

- Message services
- Information services

### Check-out

How does check-out at the youth hostel operate? Are there specific times?

Follow up

Does the youth hostel contact past guests for their thoughts? Is there a customer satisfaction survey available at the youth hostel?

### Skills needed to provide quality of service

Describe and explain these skills demonstrated at the youth hostel:

- Practical skills (e.g. serving, menu knowledge, clearing, maintenance etc.)
- Personal skills (e.g. communication, ICT and social skills)
- Organisational skills (e.g. ordering, planning, team work etc.)

### Practices & procedures

Welcome Host makes suggestions about good customer service:

- Putting the customer first and at the centre of all that is done
- Finding out what is required and making sure it is delivered
- Making sure the customer recommend the provider
- Getting details right first and every time
- Exceed customers' expectations

Explain the ways in which the customer service at the youth hostel meets, or doesn't meet these.

## Training

Do the staff at the youth hostel participate in training programmes relating to customer service provision? What training takes place?

#### Conclusion

Provide clear evidence of independent, comprehensive research from a wide range of sources.

Use this research to recommend improvements or developments in customer service provision at the youth hostel.

# 6 **RESOURCES**

## Books

A text book specifically for the OCR course is available:

GCE AS Double Award for OCR Travel and Tourism Hilary Blackman, Ann Rowe, John Smith, Sue Stewart, pub. Heinemann.

## Periodicals

Travel Weekly and the Travel Trade Gazette are of value to centres.

Holiday Which? provides relevant reports and articles.

Catering magazines and those produced in-house by hospitality providers are useful resources.

### **Newspapers**

The travel sections of weekend newspapers and articles in daily and local papers are of great use.

## Leaflets and brochures

Totally invaluable resources.

These can be used for desk based research into an accommodation outlet and corporate hospitality package for AO2.

### Videos etc.

Pre produced resources are available from TV Choice and other companies.

Taped from TV resources, 'Back to the Floor 'type documentaries, as well a many of the fly on the documentaries are of use.

## Web resources

There is a range of useful websites, many are already indicated above or in the unit specification. Others include:

#### Self catering holiday let websites:

www.ruralretreats.co.uk

www.hoseasons.co.uk

www.english-country-cottages.co.uk

www.country-holidays.co.uk

www.welcomecottages.com

www.hideaways.co.uk

www.dalesholcot.com

www.scottish-country-

cottages.co.uk

www.recommended-cottages.co.uk

www.welsh-cottages.co.uk

www.forestholidays.co.uk

Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations

#### **Cruise websites:**

www.tussockcruising.com www.royalcaribbean.co.uk www.oceanvillageholidays.co.uk www.FredOlsenCruises.co.uk www.celebritycruises.co.uk www.cunard.co.uk www.cruisecolection.com www.exclusive-cruises.com www.norwegiancoastalvoyages.com www.norwegiancoastalvoyages.com www.orientlines.co.uk www.orientlines.co.uk hotel websites: www.corushotels.com www.warnerbreaks.co.uk Pub websites (with accommodation)

www.shepherdneame.co.uk

www.jdwetherspoonlodges.co.uk

Pub websites:

www.jdwetherspoon.co.uk

www.LloydsNo1.co.uk

Inland waterway accommodation:

www.rose-narrowboats.co.uk

www.hoseasons.co.uk

www.travelrenaissance.com

www.uk-waterways.com

www.blakes.co.uk

www.newhorizonhols.com

Holiday complexes:

www.centerparcs.co.uk

www.park-resorts.com

#### Organisations

Springboard UK www.springboard.org.uk

The Academy of Food and Wine Services www.acfws.org

The Beer and Pub Association www.beerandpub.com

British Hospitality Association www.bha-online.org.uk

The British Institute of Innkeeping Wessex House 80 Park Street Camberley Surrey GU15 3PT 01276 684449

International Hotel and Restaurant Association www.ih-ra.com

Hotel and Catering Training Company www.hctc.co.uk

The Wines and Spirits Association Five Kings House 1 Queen Street Place London EC4R 1XX 020 7248 5377

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