

# STUDYING HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW





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# Introduction

**Are you interested in a career in the hospitality industry? If so, a specialised hospitality degree could be the best option for you, allowing you to gain detailed knowledge of this diverse industry, ready to commence your career in hospitality.**

Hospitality management schools can be a great alternative to traditional business schools, as you will learn many of the skills taught on a business degree, such as finance, operations management, and marketing, but with a more customer-centric focus.

In fact, hospitality management is such a versatile degree that it can adequately prepare you for almost any customer-facing industry, or give you the grounding to start out as an entrepreneur. At EHL - Hospitality Business School, half of their graduates go on to work outside of hospitality.

Most hospitality management degrees are truly immersive in their delivery, with students undertaking numerous field trips, practical classes, placements, internships and real-life consultancy projects.

Now more than ever, in the wake of the global coronavirus crisis, the hospitality industry is facing a shake-up, with traditional ways of doing things being adapted to the 'new normal'. Whilst this might be an intimidating prospect for some, hospitality and tourism has always been an adaptable and innovative industry, so pursuing a degree in the subject now or in the near future is bound to be exciting.

In this guide, we will discuss what a hospitality management degree entails, the best universities to study the subject, what key skills you will need to succeed in the industry, and the countless career options available to you with a degree in the subject.

**Read on to start your journey to hospitality leadership...**

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# What is a hospitality management degree?



**Most undergraduates will start their hospitality careers through Bachelor of Hospitality Management courses, in which you will be introduced the world of hospitality, learning about how the industry works and the managerial and customer-oriented skills you will need to succeed.**

The structure and content of your course will vary depending on both your university and the specialisations you choose. You're likely to start with a selection of course modules introducing you to different aspects of the industry and providing an overview of different hospitality careers. As you progress, you should have opportunities to specialize in one or more of these, leading up to a final project or dissertation in your final year.

To prepare for your career in hospitality, it may be especially valuable to choose a hospitality degree which includes an internship, allowing you to gain real-world experience of the industry while studying. For example, EHL – Hospitality Business School offers two six-month internships as part of its four-year hospitality management degree, one in operations and one in administration.

Course lengths vary between countries, but undergraduate degrees are generally around three to four years. Degrees which include internships may be longer than the norm, especially if the work experience is a full year – known in some countries as a 'placement year' or 'sandwich year'.

To apply for a hospitality degree, you will typically need to have attained a high school diploma or the equivalent. For undergraduate-level hospitality degrees, it's unlikely that you'll be expected to have studied specific subjects beforehand, though some universities may have academic grade requirements.

It will help your application if you have previous work experience in a hospitality-related role, and you will need to demonstrate a strong passion and determination to succeed in the service industry. You may have the chance to discuss this in an interview, and/or by submitting an application essay or personal statement.

There are also numerous postgraduate study options for hospitality management, either a more generalised overview for newcomers to the field, or specialised courses to allow existing hospitality graduates to develop their skills in their area of interest.



# Where can you study hospitality management?

There are many fantastic schools worldwide where you can study hospitality management, however, Switzerland is seen as the world-leader in hospitality management education. As you can see in the table below, seven out of the top 10 universities offering hospitality management across the globe are located in the country:



### Top 10 University and Leisure Management Schools in the World Based on the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2021

Rank	Institution	Location
1	EHL – Hospitality Business School	Switzerland
2	University of Nevada – Las Vegas	United States
3	Glion Institute of Higher Education	Switzerland
4 =	Les Roches Global Hospitality Education	Switzerland
4 =	SHMS – Swiss Hotel Management School	Switzerland
6	Hotel School The Hague	Netherlands
7	Hotel Institute Montreux	Switzerland
8	César Ritz Colleges Switzerland	Switzerland
9	Culinary Arts Academy Switzerland	Switzerland
10	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Hong Kong SAR



# EHL – Hospitality Business School

First in the table is EHL – Hospitality Business School. Founded in 1893, EHL is recognized as the best university of hospitality management in the world.

*It boasts a 96% employment rate among recent graduates.*

EHL's hospitality management courses blend real-world experience and applied management techniques with academic rigour and a people-led approach. It connects students with industry leaders and an expert faculty to explore best practices, conduct research and implement innovation. Throughout this education, students are encouraged to consider the human side of the industry at every turn, instructing them in an empathetic managerial approach.


It has an average of 120 student nationalities for around 3,400 students. The school has two campuses in Switzerland, and a new campus in Singapore, which allows bachelor's degree students to explore Southeast Asia and enjoy Singapore's big-city vibe, cultural melting pot and high-tech innovation. EHL has two intakes per year, allowing you to start your degree in either February or September.

EHL graduates join a powerful global network of 30,000 professionals in 150 countries, and they rise quickly to success in many sectors. In fact, nearly half of all EHL alumni work outside of hospitality and tourism and 50% of them are CEOs, owners, and executive managers. Every year, top international companies such as Apple, LVMH, L'Oréal, Proctor & Gamble, Nestlé, Tesla, and many others, actively recruit EHL graduates.

EHL offer the following hospitality and leisure management degree courses:

- Bachelor of Science in International Hospitality Management
- Swiss Professional Degree in Hotel & Restaurant Management (HF)
- Master (MSc) in Global Hospitality Business
- Master (MSc) in Wine & Hospitality
- MBA in Hospitality (80% Online)
- Executive MBA
- Hospitality Executive MBA (in China, with CEIBS)
- Online Hotel Management Courses
- Culinary & Restaurant Management Certificate
- EHL Junior Academy (Pre-University Program)
- Certificates (Short Courses)





# University of Nevada – Las Vegas

**Second is the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, is the only US school to feature in the hospitality management top 10, and the highest-ranked non-Swiss school in the index.**

The city of Las Vegas is legendary for tourism and hospitality, with the highest density of hotel rooms in the world, and the largest concentration of casinos in the US.

The William F. Harrah College of Hospitality at the University of Nevada offers the following degree programs:

- B.S. in Hospitality Management
- M.H.A. or Master of Hospitality Administration
- M.S. in Hotel Administration
- Dual MBA/MS in Hotel Administration/  
Business Administration
- Ph.D. in Hospitality Administration



# Glion Institute of Higher Education

**Rounding out the top three hospitality management schools in the world is Glion Institute of Higher Education, also in Switzerland.**

The university offers one undergraduate degree (Bachelor's in International Hospitality Business) as well as four postgraduate options:

- MSc International Hospitality Business
- MSc Hospitality, Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- MSc Real Estate, Finance and Hotel Development
- MSc Luxury Management and Guest Experience



# What key skills will you need?

# The hospitality industry is fast paced, naturally requiring individuals who are adaptable, resilient, and able to use their initiative.

Working in hospitality is, of course, both a team-orientated and customer-facing role, where lines of communication should always be clear, positive, and professional, with enthusiasm always sky high.

Although your technical skills can get you noticed, it's your soft skills that will be relied on

time after time should you want to succeed. In fact, these soft skills are prized by recruiters in all sectors, so a hospitality management degree can actually set you up to make the difference in a wide range of industries.

**Read on to discover the essential skills for getting ahead in hospitality and tourism...**





## Know what you want to specialize in

There are two sides to working in the hospitality industry – the operational side and the corporate side.

With such enormous scope and opportunities galore for progression, the sooner you know which niche area you want to specialize in, the better.

So, whether you aspire to manage a five-star hotel resort or run your own team in a Michelin-star restaurant, you might also want to consider getting some experience to help you get ahead. Speaking of which...



## Undertake an industry-specific internship

Having relevant industry experience is key and especially helpful if you have a specialist area in mind. Even if you don't, it's a great way of establishing what you do enjoy (and what you don't), while picking up vital skills and expertise you can carry with you into the world of work after graduating.

During your internship, make sure you're given access to all areas of the business and show your enthusiasm as you go. An employer who sees an enthusiastic and willing to learn employee is likely to reward them with increased responsibilities, which will only bode well for you later down the line.



## Learn how to network

No matter which industry you aspire to work in, building your network is vital as your connections have the potential to take you far and wide. Although it may be a challenge to start with, the only way to improve is to get yourself out there and start practicing!

Networking can be done practically anywhere. Whether it's during class with your peers, while undertaking an internship, or attending events, such as career fairs and education tours.

As much as networking is about building valuable contacts which can help you access other opportunities, you can also learn from them and further your knowledge of the industry.



## Empathy and emotional intelligence

It goes without saying that digital transformation carries the future of the hospitality and tourism industry, but this does not mean the industry will become depersonalised. On the contrary, investing in human capital is key to finding innovative solutions in an ever-changing scenario.

People determine the success of an organisation and it is even more important for service-based industries like hospitality and tourism.



## Teamwork

Among specific qualifications demanded by a wide range of companies, the ability to integrate into the existing team is often considered essential when choosing a candidate.

Thankfully, teamwork is woven into hospitality management degrees, with group projects and internships relying on you showing your teamwork skills to succeed. You can also use previous experience, such as participation in a sports team, to prove your ability to work in a team.



## Stress and time management

Working in hospitality means often having to work on several things at once, managing a heavy workload at a fast pace. It's easy to let your emotions run wild when you are asked to do several things at once over a short time span and forced to deal with unexpected problems, but for careers in hospitality and tourism, you need to be prepared to multi-task and remain cool and collected if you are to achieve greater efficiency and customer satisfaction.



## Problem-solving

Whether you're dealing with a difficult client or faced with internal issues, the ability to think on your feet and suggest feasible solutions to problems is one of the most valued soft skills for careers in hospitality and tourism, and certainly a determining factor when it comes to professional success.

Whatever your specialty, you will need to learn how to manage a crisis, from identifying the problem to evaluating how well you did and what could be improved in future.



## Strategy and innovation


Hospitality and tourism HR managers tend to favour candidates who are allergic to the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" mantra and will go the extra mile to innovate. A 'going beyond borders' attitude is essential: the ability to keep looking for new opportunities and solutions even if there are established procedures.





# What careers can you do with a degree in hospitality management?





# The industry supports 319 million jobs around the world, making up 10 percent of global employment in 2018

With the opportunity to travel and work worldwide, it's no wonder the travel and tourism industry is an attractive career path for today's graduates. Plus, there are plenty of career opportunities. The industry supports 319 million jobs around the world, making up 10 percent of global employment in 2018, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council.

This booming and dynamic industry has fruitful career opportunities in abundance, from working in hotels and restaurants, to creating your own startup or joining a global luxury brand, the possibilities are endless.

**Below are some of the most popular careers undertaken by graduates from hospitality management degrees to give you some inspiration:**





## Hotel Manager

Specific roles and responsibilities of hotel managers can vary according to the size of the hotel. However, most typical duties as a hotel manager include:

- Being responsible for the planning, organizing and smooth-running of all hotel services, including accommodation, catering, events and conferences
- Ensuring guests have a positive experience and pleasant stay

There is a lot of responsibility and hard work involved in hotel management – but it's considered to be an extremely rewarding career.

### Key skills

Being a hotel manager requires:

- Excellent people and time management skills
- Interpersonal and communication skills are especially important when it comes to client interactions and customer service
- Language skills can also come in useful if you work in a hotel where guests come to stay from all over the world
- Depending on the size of the hotel, numeracy skills may be desirable for hotel managers who have more office-based and finance-related roles



## Guest relations manager

Guest relation managers work closely with the hotel manager and are the main point of contact for guests. A guest relations manager's typical roles and responsibilities include:

- Offering warm welcomes to guests and delivering a flawless and memorable experience for them
- Overseeing and coordinating the check in and departures of guests
- Providing assistance to guests throughout their stay including offering information about local amenities and hotel services
- Being willing to go the extra mile to ensure guests are satisfied and comfortable
- Having a positive attitude when dealing with difficult situations
- Addressing guests' requests and complaints promptly and following up to ensure they have been resolved
- Regularly reviewing guest feedback in order to improve services, facilities and business strategies

### Key skills

Guest relations managers need a healthy mix of hard and soft skills, such as:

- Good working knowledge of hospitality management best practices and regulations
- Excellent communication, problem-solving and multitasking skills
- The ability to lead and motivate your team is essential
- Being reliable and resilient



## Business development manager

A hotel business development manager's primary job is to improve and grow the business. Their main duties involve:

- Identifying, targeting and developing strategic business growth opportunities
- Maximizing the hotel's revenue
- Establishing and forging long-term relationships with the hotel's suppliers, partners and clients
- Working collaboratively with every department and team in the hotel to ensure an integrated approach towards delivery of a high-quality service for guests

### Key skills

Business development managers need:

- Strong commercial awareness, business acumen and knowledge of current industry trends
- Excellent strategic-thinking, negotiation, communication, and numeracy skills
- Flair for thinking outside the box and coming up with innovative solutions



## Revenue manager

Revenue managers work behind the scenes to help drive the hotel's business plan and maximize its revenue. Their main roles and responsibilities include:

- Developing and implementing pricing strategies including rates for rooms and packages as well as determining discounts and specialty rates while anticipating and spotting peaks and troughs in the market
- Evaluating trends in the economy and hospitality industry in order to conduct competition analyses
- Tracking and forecasting revenue all while identifying potentially new revenue opportunities based on demand market trends
- Liaising and collaborating with the hotel sales' team and hotel manager to create promotional plans and business plans

### Key skills

Revenue managers require a wide range of both soft and hard skills, including:

- Business acumen and sales awareness
- Ability to motivate and manage a team while simultaneously driving to achieve goals and objectives
- Excellent analytical, numeracy, and computer literacy skills
- Communication – both verbal and written
- Organizational skills, including excellent time management and ability to meet pressing deadlines



*“The need for a new generation of hospitality managers who are driven, motivated and qualified to navigate and steer business through such climates has never been more important”*

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The hospitality industry has been one of the hardest hit industries as a result of the pandemic, and so there will inevitably be challenges ahead. However, the need for a new generation of hospitality managers who are driven, motivated and qualified to navigate and steer business through such climates has never been more important – as is having an up-to-date awareness of industry and market trends.

Even the likes of Apple and UBS among other luxury retailers and global companies have been hiring fresh hospitality graduates over the last year, thanks to their transferable skillsets, demonstrated qualities and positive mindsets which are very much needed across all industries and sectors.

You could also become your own boss – whether it’s opening your own boutique hotel or starting up a gourmet chocolate factory. No matter what your ambitions are, you’ll be equipped with the knowledge and skills that come with studying a hospitality management degree.