



# HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

Writer: JILL BARRETT, Careers Adviser, Dublin Institute of Technology

Revised for this edition: MARY EGAN, Careers Officer, Athlone Institute of Technology



The gradireland *Hospitality & Tourism* sector career guide is published by The Association of Graduate Careers Services in Ireland (AGCSI) and GTI Specialist Publishers Ltd (Ireland).

**Project managed** by AGCSI Careers Information Committee:

Paul Murphy, Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (chair)

Kendra Cassidy, NUI, Galway (secretary)

Colette Aungier, Trinity College Dublin

Cora Cregan, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

Seamus McConomy, University of Ulster

Catherine Lyster, Letterkenny Institute of Technology

Mary Egan, Athlone Institute of Technology

Geraldine Fay, Dublin City University

**Editor** Abigail Lewis

**Design & production** Maya Little

**Proofreader** Penny Kiley

**Publishers** Chris Phillips, Adrian Wood

GTI Ireland, 9–11 Upper Baggot Street, Dublin 4, Ireland

T +353 (0)1 660 3422 F +353 (0)1 660 6623

**Printer** Headley Brothers, Ashford, Kent, UK

© November 2006 The Association of Graduate Careers Services in Ireland (AGCSI) and GTI Specialist Publishers Ltd (Ireland). All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced by any means including, but not limited to, photocopying or stored in a retrieval system in any form without prior written consent of AGCSI. This is subject to the single exception of photocopying by AGCSI-member institutions. All items so used should be fully acknowledged. The views expressed in articles are those of the author and their publication does not necessarily imply that such views are shared by AGCSI and GTI. Whilst every care has been taken in the compilation of this publication, the author and publishers cannot accept responsibility for any inaccuracies, or for consequential loss arising from such inaccuracies, or for any other loss, direct or consequential, arising in connection with information in this publication.

## → CONTENTS

Opportunities in Ireland and Northern Ireland ..2	
The main areas of work.....4	
Hotels and other accommodation providers.....6	
Food service, pubs and clubs .....8	
Tourism and travel .....9	
Events .....10	
Leisure and entertainment .....11	
Training and career development.....12	
Getting a job .....14	
Work experience .....16	

## → TITLES IN THIS SERIES

Arts & Social Sciences	Law
Business Studies,	Languages
Commerce & Economics	Postgraduate Study & Awards
Computing & IT	Psychology
Construction	Science
Engineering	Social Work
Finance	Teaching & Education
Hospitality & Tourism	Work Experience
Journalism & Media	

# Opportunities in Ireland and Northern Ireland

Hospitality and tourism is a growth area, with a surprising number of opportunities for graduates to start a fulfilling career.

**T**he hospitality and tourism industry is one in which the attitudes, competence, enterprise, innovation, hospitality and friendliness of people working within it are integral. It is human capital that drives competitive advantage in hospitality and tourism.

## Facts and figures

The hospitality and tourism industry continues to thrive: in 2005, the Republic of Ireland welcomed almost 6.8 million overseas visitors and Fáilte Ireland reported that almost a quarter of a million people were employed in the industry. Approximately 199,000 of these work on a year-round basis and the rest in seasonal employment.

In the same year, the Northern Ireland tourist industry earned £500 million in revenue, of which £146 million was earned from domestic holiday spending. Visitor tourism reached 1.967 million. This was good news for the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB), which is currently implementing its 'Strategic Framework for Action' plan, 2004–2007.

## Trends

### Republic of Ireland

The increase in the provision of low-cost air travel has resulted in more tourists taking short breaks in Ireland, the main benefactors of this trend being Dublin and the larger urban centres. Domestic

growth in tourism and hospitality has increased by 2.5 per cent, with over seven million trips being taken within the Republic by Irish residents. An increase in disposable income has meant that we now spend more time and money dining out too. Hotel construction and expansion remains high. In the leisure sector growth remains strong. The objective of the National Sports Strategy, aimed at fostering healthy lifestyles and increasing sports tourism, has provided another developing area of employment, providing more opportunities for graduates of leisure and event management programmes in particular. The renovation of Lansdowne Road, and the use of Croke Park to host major rugby events while that project is underway, will increase the available capacity for sporting and musical events.

There are many challenges facing Irish tourism. A positive one for graduates is the fact that the labour market is tightening. In 2005 approximately 10,000 jobs in tourism remained unfilled, with 62 per cent of employers claiming a relatively low turnover rate. The decrease in the available Irish labour pool has been replaced by an increase in immigrant labour. However, as these potential employees often hold a different skills set and come from a different academic background, the competences of graduates of Irish programmes are still very much in demand.

The Tourism Policy Review Group has made recommendations for a National Recruitment Plan. This plan is being implemented by Fáilte Ireland, which established a Tourism Careers Promotions Group. One of the Group's aims is to encourage employers to develop HR practices that foster the ideal of work/life balance for all employees. Competition for skilled staff, particularly at management level, is high, meaning that graduates are in a better bargaining position than ever when it comes to issues such as pay, conditions, hours of work and so on.

Threats to the development of tourism and hospitality include exchange rate variance and national economic factors. These have impacted significantly on the price competitiveness of the tourism 'product'. Environmental issues also threaten the sustainability of growth.

Furthermore, the market continues to experience the fallout from a number of events including terrorist attacks in London and the USA, the after-effects of the invasion of Iraq and the consequent reluctance of Americans to travel abroad. However, the smoking ban – initially strongly resisted by the sector – is now thought to have had a positive effect within the industry and many tourists have chosen Ireland as a destination specifically because of it. Innovative owners of licensed premises have created new jobs through provision of food services in a move to replace custom lost through the ban. The figures for 2006 are looking positive with overseas visitors for the first quarter up eight per cent on the same period last year.

### **Northern Ireland**

Over 50,000 people are employed in the tourism, leisure and hospitality sector in Northern Ireland, and tourism there is looking very good. The NITB reported an overall increase of 13 per cent in earned

out-of-state revenue for 2005, £354 million in total. A further £146 million was earned from domestic spending. Visitor tourism reached 1.967 million with 'visitor nights' attracting almost 10 million people. In the leisure sector, what the NITB defines as 'activity product providers' continue to be important contributors to the tourism industry.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, like its counterparts in the Republic of Ireland, has sought to implement a strategic plan to develop sport and physical activity throughout Northern Ireland. This Strategic Framework for Action is entering its third year. Significant progress has been made in developing its flagship signature projects, such as 'Titanic/Belfast Maritime Heritage' and the Causeway Coast and Antrim Glens. Work is also ongoing on 'winning themes' such as the production of cultural events and activity tourism. This has the potential to further deliver international acclaim for Northern Ireland as a tourist destination.

The department has also committed itself to ensuring an adequate skills supply for cultural and heritage attractions. The Strategic Framework's aim to 'deliver memorable experiences' will, among other things, involve nurturing people through providing opportunities for career development and training. The NITB has also recently been discussing the need for an integrated approach to skills development with key partners including the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL), the Tourism Training Trust (TTT) and the sector skills council, People 1st. All of these developments are encouraging for graduates. The increasing appeal of Northern Ireland and Belfast as a conference, entertainment and event venue is evident from a growth in business tourism. While Northern Ireland is facing the same challenges as the Republic in its development of the industry, the future looks promising.

# The main areas of work

You can choose from a huge range of employers in this sector.

**G**raduates of tourism and hospitality courses find work across a vast range of employer types: hotels; restaurants; pubs; leisure centres; entertainment venues; hospitals; event management companies; heritage sites; tour operators; travel agents; airlines; national and regional tourism organisations; and local authorities.

The majority of recruiters in Ireland are small indigenous operations, with a number of larger international organisations operating in the hospitality and travel sectors. Depending on the academic programme that you complete, and the level of employment experience that you have gained, your first career destination may be into an operational position or into a supervisory or management position. If you have completed postgraduate study you may have more opportunities to enter at a more senior level of employment and at a higher salary level, again depending on the amount of experience gained and the organisation you enter.

## Management training programmes

Management training programmes are a popular choice for many graduates who have their sights set on a career in senior management. These are usually 18 months to two years in duration and, depending on the organisation, may be quite

operational in nature, at least initially, or be designed to fast-track you to senior management. Selection processes can be very intensive, involving application forms, psychometric testing, multiple types and levels of interview, assessment centres and social events. Recruiters for such programmes are often seeking graduates with a broad skills set. While most specialist programmes will give preference to those with a related discipline, many will hire graduates from other disciplines. As places tend to be limited, competition for places can be very fierce.

## Opportunities for graduates

The following pages describe potential career areas. However, you should be aware that job titles can vary considerably from one organisation to another. This means that the responsibilities in one job you have held can be different to another of the same title. When applying for any position you should always ask for a detailed job description and, if necessary, do further research to establish clearly what responsibilities are involved.

Remember that, alongside the industry-specific roles mentioned below, every tourism and hospitality organisation offers you a range of business-focused career options to consider. These include sales, marketing, finance, human resource management, information technology

management, training, purchasing and public relations. If the academic or training programmes you completed and the work experience you gained did not provide you with enough of the skills to work in these areas, further study may be necessary. Depending on the size of the organisation, each of these functions might be managed by different people or by a team, while a sole operator might have responsibility for all of them. You may also find work in career areas such as teaching, research, consultancy, new product/service development and journalism where your in-depth industry knowledge and experience will be highly valued.

Tourism and hospitality careers are attractive to graduates from a variety of disciplines. Although most employers may choose specialist experience over that of a graduate who is neither qualified nor experienced in the industry, many positions on offer require a broad range of skills that many graduates can demonstrate. In recent years one Dublin hotel made headlines when it appointed an IT specialist with no hospitality experience to a general management position.

At the graduate level, competition can be very intense for some jobs. Management positions, particularly jobs in tourism and travel, are much sought after. Taking an entry-level position (that might also be offered to an applicant without any qualification) may seem like a backward move. However, graduates with vision will see this as a stepping stone to higher levels within the organisation. Once you have learned the ropes and you have demonstrated your personal competences and potential you will be in a better position to access higher-level positions and negotiate more responsibility and experience. If you have gained relevant employment experience through your internships and part-time work you

are more likely to enter an organisation at a position higher up the hierarchical chain.

Finally, if you would like to learn more about the first types of jobs, employers, salaries and further study choices of previous graduates of your course, contact your Careers Service and ask to see the First Destination Reports for your programme of study.



# Hotels and other accommodation providers

Working in hotels has an unrivalled buzz.

**H**ospitality is a significant business in Ireland. Throughout the island of Ireland you will find every type of accommodation from hostels and B&B's to budget hotels, university residences and luxury five-star spa resort properties. It is a 24-hour, seven days a week business. Those who work in it and enjoy it describe 'the buzz' that they get from it as unrivalled to any other profession. While many functions operate 'back-of-house', the majority of staff are employed in front-line positions, requiring constant interaction with the customer and with other team members. A high level of stamina and

excellent interpersonal skills are essential for this career area, which is one of Ireland's greatest employment providers.

Graduate positions include: waiter/waitress; bar person; accommodation assistant; receptionist; reservations agent; conference and banqueting co-ordinator; duty manager; supervisor; departmental manager – front office/reservations/food and beverage/accommodation/conference and banqueting/kitchen (head/executive chef); general manager; chef; leisure centre manager; and fitness instructor.



## → MANAGING MANAGERS



**NAME** Karl de Lacy, 29  
**JOB TITLE** Director of Rooms Operations  
**EMPLOYER** Marriott Druids Glen Hotel & Country Club  
**EDUCATION** BA Hospitality Business Management (1999)

### Starting out

I now oversee eight managers and supervisors and their teams, but starting out I worked in a front desk position. In the summer before my final year at university, I worked for a hotel in Barcelona. This gave me the travel bug so I applied for a position in Atlanta. Over three years, I learned the ropes with stints in front-of-house roles such as receptionist and bellman and progressed to managing the front desk and training others. Following this, I became part of a specialist task force in St Louis as Director of Housekeeping.

### My current role

Two years later, I decided to come home. I'm now responsible for the operation of: the front desk, the concierge service, housekeeping and the spa. My role involves ensuring guests have positive experiences, managing costs and generating revenue. As part of the executive team, I run my department as if it were my own business and so I need financial acumen and an innovative mindset as well as good people skills.

### Best and worst

Hours can notch up when there are problems to resolve, but I love standing in the lobby knowing from off-the-cuff feedback that guests have enjoyed themselves. Working in the US boosted my career – it encouraged me to prove my worth – and showed me you can advance quickly if you work hard; I plan to be a general manager of a hotel one day.

### Top tip

If you have the opportunity to work abroad, I'd recommend you take it to broaden your experiences.

## → A JOB WITH A DIFFERENCE



**NAME** Claire Shortt, 23  
**JOB TITLE** Events Co-ordinator  
**EMPLOYER** The Westin, Dublin  
**EDUCATION** Business and Event Management (2006)

### Starting out

Hospitality has been the only career sector that has ever interested me; I started working in a B & B when I was 16 and haven't looked back. Before going to college, I worked with my current employer, first within Conference and Banqueting, then Food and Beverage and finally Reception. Event management for hotels interested me at this point so I decided to return to college to gain the qualifications to progress far in this area.

### My current role

I now work with my team to manage events, which covers everything from the initial enquiry to drawing up a proposal to the follow-up call after the event. I work closely with appropriate departments, including Conference and Banqueting, to ensure the event runs smoothly.

Working in a hotel is different to working elsewhere: this is an office job with a real difference! The skills I have learned are valuable throughout the hotel industry and everyday life. The ability to connect with people so that you can understand their perspective is key to producing the best work.

### Best and worst

The extent of the work can be a little daunting but I love the buzz that working in hospitality, especially Events, can create. My next goal is to continue cross-training with our Sales and Marketing departments so I can achieve a better understanding of the relationship between Sales and Events.

### Top tip

Working life is very different from college and so you should be able to use your own initiative.



# Food service, pubs and clubs

Catering offers employment in a range of environments.

This sector of the tourism and hospitality industry includes restaurants, bars, clubs, cafés, delicatessens, patisseries, fast food outlets and sandwich bars. In addition, you may find graduate employment with catering companies in location catering for events such as conferences, weddings, sports events, concerts and movie filming. Opportunities also exist in in-house catering operations including those in large corporate settings and with other private and public sector employers such as schools, prisons, hospitals, nursing homes and transport providers.

Graduate positions include: catering assistant; waiter/waitress; chef; catering officer; catering manager; regional manager; purchasing officer; bar person; bar manager; club manager; and entertainment co-ordinator.



## → HAVING PASSION FOR FOOD



<b>NAME</b> Gareth Mullins, 27
<b>JOB TITLE</b> Senior Sous Chef
<b>EMPLOYER</b> The Merrion Hotel
<b>EDUCATION</b> NTCB 1 & 2 (2000)

I was first introduced to the professional kitchen as a kitchen hand when I was 14 and knew that this was the career for me. I started at my current employer as a commis chef (essentially an apprentice) and began working my way up the structured kitchen hierarchy. After two years working abroad I rejoined The Merrion Hotel as a senior sous chef, responsible for the smooth running of the kitchen. This covers everything from team management and the rotas to food costs and health and hygiene. I also ensure my team are given structured training to make everything from a club sandwich to a Hollandaise sauce while maintaining a consistent high standard.

The best thing about my job is its creativity – you have input into menus, keep ahead of food fashions, and source the best produce. You need a real passion for food and the drive to achieve perfection. Always work in the best establishments because you'll learn from top professionals and work with the best produce. I get a real sense of achievement when I see how far I have already progressed and can see my future career.

# Tourism and travel

There are ways to get a foot in the door of this popular career area.

**T**his is a popular career area, with positions much sought after even by those who don't come from a relevant discipline. Employers include tour operators; travel agents; airlines and other transport providers; tourist information centres; interpretative centres; tourism co-operatives; heritage sites; local authorities; and national tourism bodies such as Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board. Staff turnover in many of these organisations tends to be low so you may have to take a position at a lower level and salary than you intended, with a view to getting a 'foot in the door'. Once in an organisation, more senior opportunities tend to be more readily accessible. If you are seeking a career in the promotion of Ireland, a region or a particular site as a destination, you will need to have excellent knowledge of the Irish 'tourism product' in order to be successful.

Graduate positions include: travel consultant; tourism officer; reservations agent; tour guide; Tourist Information Centre manager; tour operator; operations manager; and heritage officer.



## → BE FLEXIBLE

**NAME** Michelle O'Keeffe

**JOB TITLE** Marketing Manager

**EMPLOYER** e-bookers Ireland

**EDUCATION** BSc, Tourism Marketing (2002)

I knew I wanted to work for ebookers after graduation so while at college I approached them for a summer job. Following this job, I worked for them part time during college and also completed a marketing placement there. After graduating, my aim was to work in the marketing department. I first worked as a Product Executive until a position as a Marketing Executive became available. A year later, when the Marketing Manager relocated, I realised that I should let the management team know that it was something I aspired to so I submitted my CV and after an internal interview was offered the job. I am responsible for print advertising, press releases and product launches. I also produce a quarterly travel magazine, and we are planning a street and radio promotion. A large part of my job is related to online advertising, and the website needs permanent updating with special offers. Every day is a challenge and of course there are the travel perks! Don't expect to walk into the job you want straight away. Be flexible, particularly if it is a company that you would really like to work for. If you impress them with your skills, other doors will open up.

# Events

Event management includes sport, the arts and business.

Careers in this area will involve the planning, organisation, co-ordination and total management of every detail needed to ensure that the whole operation runs smoothly from concept through to final execution. The event could be in sport, the arts or the wider business arena including events such as conferences, exhibitions and festivals. Graduates may find work with an event management company or consultant, organising events for clients who establish accounts with that organisation. Alternatively, positions might be in-house in corporate settings, museums, theatre companies, hospitality organisations, music venues or sports stadia. Often, graduates may find work on a project-management or administration basis, running or helping to co-ordinate annual events such as the Bloomsday Festival or one-off events such as the Special Olympics World Games.

Graduate positions include: account executive; event administrator; event co-ordinator; arts officer; museum manager; and event manager.



## → ORGANISING THE OPEN



**NAME** Lorna O'Riordan, 31

**JOB TITLE** Member and Guest Relations Manager

**EMPLOYER** Adare Manor Hotel and Golf Resort

**EDUCATION** PGDip Hotel Management (1997)

I've wanted to work in hospitality since working in a local hotel part time while at school. I studied a course with a structured work placement so I could gain experience. I broadened this when I worked with a premier hotel group in America and dealt with VIP guests. I returned to Ireland two years ago and found my current position. I manage golf membership sales and golf reservations and am responsible for all golfing events. These can be bespoke golfing days for club members or for corporations and their clients or guests. This involves confirming initial enquiries, working with clients on their specific requirements and organising everything on the course and at the resort. I liaise with our internal teams, such as food and beverage, guest relations and event management so need strong administrative, organisational and skills. Excellent guest care and sales skills are also essential. I do need to know a lot about golf – something that our golf experts on the resort help me with. It's just been announced that we'll host the 'Irish Open' for the next three years and I'm involved in the planning for this event.

# Leisure and entertainment

Leisure and sports provision has increased rapidly.

**T**here are career opportunities for graduates in leisure and sports complexes and clubs, hotels, local authorities, golf courses, aquatic centres, cultural organisations, cinemas, parks, music venues and all recreation-related developments.

The number and variety of leisure and sports centres in particular has increased rapidly in recent years, with huge diversity in the types of services provided. Smaller facilities may offer little more than a gym and changing room whereas bigger operations may provide an entire suite of sports and leisure activities and equipment, treatment rooms, classes, training courses, catering facilities and so on.

As the government seeks to increase the level of participation in sport, and to promote healthier lifestyles, this will be a significant growth area in the years to come. Additionally, consumer appetite for a wide choice of entertainment options will remain steady as long as disposable incomes remain high.

Graduate positions include fitness instructor; fitness consultant; leisure centre administrator; centre/sports manager; coach; personal trainer; sports co-ordinator; sports officer; sports development officer; cinema manager; theme park manager; and entertainment co-ordinator.

## → DO YOUR RESEARCH



**NAME** Gillian Costelloe, 26

**JOB TITLE** Programme Officer, Anti-Doping Unit

**EMPLOYER** Irish Sports Council

**EDUCATION** BSc, Leisure Management (2001)

I came across an advertisement on the internet for an administrator in the Anti-Doping Unit of the Irish Sports Council (ISC). I wasn't sure what it entailed so I did some research on the website and found that it involved assisting with the testing process. It sounded interesting so I applied and got the job.

### My job

I now administer the Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) System. I look after athletes who need to take banned medications for medical purposes. My work is very varied and I love researching illnesses and medical conditions. I am currently studying at night school for a Diploma in Sports Psychology.

### Tips for students

- Use the internet as a research tool.
- Get as much work experience as you can – even if you have to volunteer for a few weeks. Employers always look for previous work experience.
- Register with employment agencies – you can temp until you find something relevant.

# Training and career development

Your education does not stop with your degree.

**T**he benefits of working in the industry are numerous, as cited by the many graduates who have gone on to enjoy dynamic career paths within it. These include:

- confidence about getting a job
- potential for constant social interaction
- variety of work
- positive nature of the working environment
- lifetime mobility of your qualification in a worldwide market
- opportunities to progress quickly upwards through many organisations
- a high level of job satisfaction.

In a recent industry survey, job satisfaction was found to be greatest among those who had continued to a high level of educational attainment before entering the workforce.

Historically, the industry was seen as one that featured long hours and low pay but salaries and conditions have improved considerably in a number of career areas. Many employers provide meals, accommodation, pension schemes, uniforms, free or discounted leisure centre membership and free or discounted rates in travel, accommodation and entertainment. This ensures that, from an economic perspective, the sector can provide opportunities to rival other sectors. One of the most important factors to consider, however, is whether an organisation will actively help you to

progress upwards and reach your true potential. This is explored in this article.

## How your career might progress

Depending on the programme of study that you have pursued, you may enter the graduate workforce at either operational level or a position higher up the hierarchical chain. However, the current trend for organisational structures is to become flatter so, no matter what level you are employed at, you are increasingly expected to take on as much responsibility as you can handle.

## Qualifications and courses

The hospitality industry in Ireland is not one that has traditionally been seen to recognise the value of a third-level qualification – in particular, any beyond your undergraduate qualification. However, this trend is changing. Even long-established managers who have ‘worked their way to the top’ are beginning to embrace the spirit of continuing professional development (CPD) and to appreciate the wide range of skills that engaging in any third-level programme can provide.

The number and variety of programmes of study has expanded rapidly in recent years to reflect the changing nature of the industry. The variety and scope of programmes in tourism, hospitality and leisure provide excellent

opportunities for graduates to progress all the way to doctoral level should they meet the minimum criteria required. In addition, the skills developed within the sector – both through academic work and practical work experience – ensure that, as a graduate of any tourism or hospitality-related course, you are a marketable entity in any business sector.

Fáilte Ireland and the Irish Hotel and Catering Institute (IHCI) have placed particular emphasis in recent years on CPD for all those working in the hospitality industry. For example, they have developed short courses in finance, human resource management and marketing.

Similar short courses to help graduates entering the workplace to further develop their skills and competences are provided in-house, and by a variety of educational institutions across Ireland. The Skillnet Programme, set up by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in 1999, aims to support groups of enterprises to come together to decide on training needs requirements and how these will be addressed. The Hotel Management Skillnet programme, for example, outlined a range of competences that it deemed essential for managers operating in a hospitality environment. (See page 14 for a list of general competences for the hospitality and tourism industry.)

### Postgraduate study

Final-year degree students considering a postgraduate course should check out [postgradireland.com](http://postgradireland.com) for a full list of postgraduate options available in Ireland. The current range of options in tourism, hospitality and related areas includes:

- MA in International Tourism
- MBS (Co-operative and Social Enterprise)

Even long-established managers who have ‘worked their way up’ appreciate the skills that a third-level programme can provide and are beginning to embrace the spirit of continuous professional development. The number of courses are expanding rapidly.

- Postgraduate Diploma/MSc in Hospitality Management
- Postgraduate Diploma/MSc in Tourism Management
- Postgraduate Diploma/Diploma/MA in Cultural Management
- Postgraduate Diploma in Event Management.

Some of the most important questions to ask in deciding upon your postgraduate study option are:

- Have I researched the programme enough to be sure that it interests me?
- If I intend to use it to progress my career path, is there a good chance it will do this?

The annual postgradireland fair is attended by numerous educational institutions from Ireland and overseas. Attendance is highly recommended as this event gives you a great opportunity to discuss each option you are considering on a one-to-one basis with representatives of the course providers. Remember, choosing your postgraduate programme may be the first opportunity you’ve had to make a sole career decision, without the influence of others. Such programmes can be very costly so it pays to research your options as you would any serious financial investment. If you are already in employment, ask your employer if they would consider sponsoring you or at least subsidising your study.

# Getting a job

You need to know where and how organisations recruit.

## How organisations recruit

### Events

Employers visit campuses throughout the academic year. Check with your Careers Service for a schedule of events.

### The Milkround

Only a limited number of hospitality and tourism organisations recruit through the Milkround system but it is worth checking out those who do. Some companies will make presentations often followed by an informal gathering. Attending such events will enable you to find out about companies' activities, cultures, policies and recruitment practices. Employers generally hold first interviews on campus.

### Recruitment fairs

Recruitment fairs usually have jobs on offer for the right candidates. These events offer you a great opportunity to talk to current employees who may often be recent graduates. Bring your CV along to present to employers recruiting on the day.

### Careers seminars/guest lectures

If your college has organised such events for you it is worthwhile bringing your CV along to give to the speakers, should you wish to target their organisation for employment in the future. Even if

you do not decide to pass on a CV, these are excellent opportunities to network with people in industry and to make valuable contacts.

### Other methods

There are many other conventional methods of finding a job. These include: checking the jobs section of newspapers; registering with recruitment agencies; surfing jobs and graduate careers websites; and sending out CVs on a speculative basis. Your Careers Service should have up-to-date company lists.

If registering with recruitment agencies, ensure that they are reputable firms with a track record of placing graduates from your field of study. Don't rely on them to chase you up as agencies will often receive hundreds of CVs every month. As such they are most likely to find jobs for those who make an effort to keep in touch with them (and who meet the required criteria for each post).

## THE SKILLS YOU WILL NEED

- Teamworking
- Communication
- Organisational/planning ability
- Problem solving/analytical skills
- Time management
- Entrepreneurialism
- Enthusiasm/motivation
- Willingness to learn

## Where to find vacancies

### Newspapers and publications

- *The Irish Times* (Friday edition)
- *The Irish Examiner* (Friday edition)
- *The Irish Independent* (Thursday edition)
- *The Sunday Independent*
- *The Sunday Business Post*
- *The Sunday Tribune*
- *The Belfast Telegraph*
- *The Belfast Post*
- *The Irish News*
- *The News Letter*
- *The Irish Hotel and Catering Review*

### Websites

As well as the companies who may visit your campus, there are a large number who recruit graduates through your Careers Service website. Also check out [gradireland.com](http://gradireland.com) for a list of job opportunities and forthcoming events.

### Ireland

- National Tourism Development Authority [www.failteireland.ie](http://www.failteireland.ie)
- Irish Tourism [www.irishtourism.com](http://www.irishtourism.com)
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board [www.nitb.com](http://www.nitb.com)
- Irish Hotels Federation [www.ihf.ie](http://www.ihf.ie)
- Irish Hospitality Institute [www.ihl.ie](http://www.ihl.ie)
- Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association of Ireland [www.hsmi.ie](http://www.hsmi.ie)
- Restaurants Association of Ireland [www.rai.ie](http://www.rai.ie)
- Food and Drink Industry Ireland [www.fdi.ie](http://www.fdi.ie)
- Vintners' Federation of Ireland [www.vfi.ie](http://www.vfi.ie)
- Licensed Vintners Association [www.lva.ie](http://www.lva.ie)
- Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management [www.ilamireland.ie](http://www.ilamireland.ie)
- Irish Travel Agents Association [www.itaa.ie](http://www.itaa.ie)
- Irish Tour Operators Association [www.itoa-ireland.com](http://www.itoa-ireland.com)

- Barkeeper – A Resource for Hospitality Professionals [www.barkeeper.ie](http://www.barkeeper.ie)

### Recruitment sites (Ireland)

- [www.hotelkeeper.ie](http://www.hotelkeeper.ie)
- [www.actionrecruitment.ie](http://www.actionrecruitment.ie)
- [www.thefirm.ie](http://www.thefirm.ie)

### Northern Ireland/UK

- Hospitality, Catering and International Management Association (UK) [www.hcima.org.uk](http://www.hcima.org.uk)
- Visit Britain (UK) [www.visitbritain.com](http://www.visitbritain.com)
- Central Council of Physical Recreation (UK) [www.ccp.org.uk](http://www.ccp.org.uk)
- Sports Institute Northern Ireland [www.sini.co.uk](http://www.sini.co.uk)
- Guide to Internet Resources in Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism (UK) [www.altis.ac.uk](http://www.altis.ac.uk)
- Association of Event Organisers (UK) [www.aeo.org.uk](http://www.aeo.org.uk)
- Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau [www.belfastconventionbureau.com](http://www.belfastconventionbureau.com)
- Licensed Retail Professional Body (UK) [www.bii.org](http://www.bii.org)
- Springboard UK Limited [www.springboarduk.org.uk](http://www.springboarduk.org.uk)

### International

- CatererSearch [www.caterersearch.com](http://www.caterersearch.com)
- Recruitment website [www.hospitalitycareernet.com](http://www.hospitalitycareernet.com)
- Worldwide recruitment website [www.catererglobal.com](http://www.catererglobal.com)



# Work experience

Work experience can help you get that first job.

**T**he amount of work experience you have is key in deciding your first job and starting salary. You will have the advantage if you use part-time work, holiday work and placements/internships to gain wider experience of more senior positions while completing your college programme.

Hospitality and tourism graduates demonstrate some of the highest levels of work-based learning experience of any graduates entering employment. It pays to have invested some time early on in finding out what type of experience the top recruiters will be seeking. Some international hotel groups, for example, will only recruit graduates having fluency in at least one additional language, while others will only recruit those who have worked in four/five-star properties. Some leisure centres will only recruit graduates who have gained a lifesaving qualification, and so on.



## → LEARNING TEAMWORKING



<b>NAME</b> Francesca Forghieri, 28
<b>JOB TITLE</b> Operations/ Supply Chain Trainee
<b>EMPLOYER</b> Musgrave Foodservices
<b>EDUCATION</b> BA, Culinary Arts (2004)

During my four years in college I carried out three different work placements. The first was a six-month placement in the Davenport Hotel in Dublin, working as a chef as part of the team in a busy kitchen. The second placement was six weeks in the Superquinn support office, working as an assistant to the nutritionist. My last placement was for five months and I carried it out in the Dunne & Crescenzi restaurant in Dublin. I was responsible for designing and preparing the hot dishes of the day, monitoring food safety management systems, stock control, and training junior staff. In all my placements I've learned the importance of working as part of a team and of communication. In the hospitality industry especially, teamwork has always been crucial. I developed problem-solving skills and learned the importance of time planning and meeting deadlines. I've broadened my culinary knowledge and familiarised myself with the health and safety issues and legislation which are a big part of the food industry. I also had the chance to manage people, learning how to deal with different types of personalities.

## TITLES IN THIS SERIES

Arts & Social Sciences  
Business Studies, Commerce & Economics  
Computing & IT  
Construction  
Engineering  
Finance  
Hospitality & Tourism  
Journalism & Media  
Law  
Languages  
Postgraduate Study & Awards  
Psychology  
Science  
Social Work  
Teaching & Education  
Work Experience

Written by careers advisers and available to download at [gradireland.com/publications](http://gradireland.com/publications)



The Association of Graduate Careers Services in Ireland (AGCSI) is the professional association for careers services in higher education in Ireland, north and south. It fosters co-operation among the individual careers services, producing a range of careers publications for students and graduates.



GTI Ireland is a division of GTI Specialist Publishers, one of the leading graduate careers publishers in Europe, publishing over 100 careers magazines and directories each year as well as [targetcareers.co.uk](http://targetcareers.co.uk) and [doctorjob.com](http://doctorjob.com).

GTI Ireland, 9–11 Upper Baggot Street, Dublin 4, Ireland