

HOSPITALITY & CATERING:

Pastry Chef

There are many pathways into this career. If you are between 16–19 years-old you can enrol in your local college and choose a “Food and Beverage Service” qualification. Studying full-time in a college will ensure you understand and learn the skills and qualities needed to start your career. Colleges always start new, full-time courses in September. They will start advertising and enrolling early, so we’d encourage you to speak with someone at the college to get all your questions answered. Not sure what schools near you have these courses? You can find out which colleges in your area offer VTCT qualifications through our website: <https://www.vtct.org.uk/find-a-centre/>

Find a college in your area that offers VTCT qualifications:
www.vtct.org.uk/find-a-centre

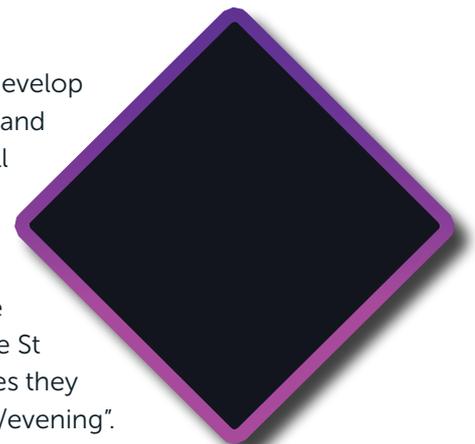
Another possibility is becoming an Apprentice in a hotel or catering organisation. If you contact your local college, or Apprenticeship Provider, they can help you find the right apprenticeship position for you. Apprenticeships give you the opportunity to earn a wage and a qualification while gaining valuable industry experience.

You could also look for advertised jobs for waiting staff and start your career by working your way up through the organisation. This might take more time, but if you worked at a business where they offered funding towards training and development, you could get your schooling paid for by your employer. This is often easier to accomplish in a larger hotel/restaurant where there are opportunities for progression and clear career pathways. If you decided to go this route, we recommend you speak to potential employers about opportunities *before* starting the job.

What will you study at college?

You will likely be expected to do a minimum 2 years of study. You will do a Level 2 in the first year and Level 3 in the second year. If you study a VTCT course, you will study many interesting things. In that first year, your Level 2 will include topics like customer service, handling payments and how to serve food and drinks professionally and safely. You will also improve your product knowledge and learn about beverage and food legislation. You will get the opportunity to develop practical skills by working in a real working environment. Many colleges have modern restaurants open to the public; this creates an amazing space for learning.

In your second year you will progress your understanding by learning how to develop working relationships with colleagues, contribute to the control of resources and maintain health, hygiene, safety and security of the working environment. You’ll also know the importance of leading your team while striving to improve customer service. Many colleges take part in competitions where you can showcase your skills, and most colleges have great industry links where you can gain work experience and make amazing contacts. Some learners have gained full time positions in Nathan Outlaws at St Enodoc, Rick Steins and the St Moritz Hotel. Speak to your college about what work experience opportunities they provide when you visit with them on the phone or in person on an “open day/evening”.



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When you finish college, what are your next steps?

You will have many options when you finish college, as they say 'the world is your oyster.' You can choose to find work in a local hotel or restaurant, or you can look further away perhaps even going abroad. If you were to work in a hotel restaurant, some hotels often offer accommodation to new staff. This could be a great way to get started and alleviate some worry about costs of living.

It's important to recognise you probably won't start straight away as a restaurant supervisor, especially without work experience. It's more likely you will start somewhere else and then progress on to a supervisory/assistant manager role and then finally up to restaurant/general manager. If you show the right skills and qualities this can be quite quick, so don't worry. Of course all of this will depend on the size and nature of your employer so make sure you have a good CV! Your college will likely help you with this as well as prepare you for interviews.

If you have loved your courses and want to continue your studies, you can apply to university to do a Hospitality Management degree or HND. There are many universities in the UK that offer these types of degrees.

Should you study full-time or part-time?

You can study full-time or part-time. Some colleges and training providers may offer part-time/evening courses that will allow you to maximize your course load. This is something we recommend investigating to see what is offered in your local area, and at your local college.

Should you work while studying?

A lot of people manage to work part-time and study, but we would suggest to never take on more than you can handle. If it is necessary for you to work, we recommend getting experience in this same area you are studying. You will be able to add it to your CV as well as it being an opportunity to learn even more about the industry you want to enter. Look for positions in a hotel or local cafe where you can get a lot of experience in the food and beverage service.

Gain as much industry experience as you can while studying, but never take on more than you can handle.

Is there government funding available to help pay for school?

If you are between the ages of 16 – 19 then you could apply for a bursary from the government to help with education related costs such as clothing, books and transportation. If you are over 19, you can apply for an advanced learner loan but you will need to check with your college or training provider to see if the course is eligible. If you take out a loan, you have to pay it back but only when you earn over £25,000. You will repay 9% of any income you earn over £25,000.