

Your Chances in Tourism & Leisure

What jobs can I do in tourism and leisure?

There are many different types of jobs to explore in tourism and leisure. You could be working in adventure tourism, in a travel agency, on board a cruise ship or with a tour operator.

Alternatively you may decide to find employment in a hotel, a restaurant, a bar or in entertainment. The industry also offers opportunities in health and fitness, country parks, quick service retail, theme parks and visitor attractions.

Many jobs involve working face to face with the public so you will need to be friendly, helpful, well organised, flexible and able to work as part of a team. Hours of work vary and there's a good chance that you will be working when other people aren't, such as during weekends, evenings and bank holidays.

Pay

How much you earn depends on your employer and the type of job you are doing. If you begin an apprenticeship you can expect to earn £95 per week (from August '09).

What qualifications do I need?

It is possible to enter the tourism and leisure industry without any GCSE passes. However if you do have a relevant qualification it will show employers that you are committed and genuinely interested.

Many jobs require job related training so you could begin with either a full-time course or by working towards a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) on an apprenticeship programme.

Some jobs require particular exam based qualifications, for example a trainee travel agent may have to pass the Association of British Travel Agents' Certificate in Travel (Travel Agents). Relevant short courses are also available, e.g. in food hygiene, first aid, and health and safety.

If you want to progress to a management role you'll need to work towards a degree or a professional qualification.

A new qualification is being introduced into schools and colleges called a Diploma. From September 2009 you will be able to study for a Diploma in Hospitality. In September 2010 Travel and Tourism as well as Sport and Leisure will be on offer. To find out more, talk to your Connexions PA.

What's my chance of getting a job in Northumberland?

The leisure and tourism industry employs around 12,000 people in Northumberland of which 7,000 are women. Only 42% of the workforce is employed full-time so the majority of employees work on a part-time basis. Overall direct employment in tourism has risen by 11% between 2003 and 2007. Many jobs are seasonal offering opportunities from March to September. The majority of tourism and leisure jobs in Northumberland are in the Tynedale, Alnwick and Berwick areas.

Transport to work can be a problem in these rural areas especially if you're working shifts. Places such as Kielder, Alnwick Garden, Longhirst Hall and Matfen Hall operate mini-buses to ferry employees to work. Some jobs offer 'live-in' facilities to attract employees. If you are over 18 years of age and prepared to live away from home the industry offers better prospects and the chance to work abroad.



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How do I get experience and training in Northumberland?

You could train for an NVQ Level 2 through an Apprenticeship and possibly progress to NVQ level 3 through an Advanced Apprenticeship programme. Training is offered in different areas including activity leadership, sports development, customer service and hospitality supervision among others.

Local colleges offer a wide range of full and part-time courses at different levels including introductory diplomas, certificates, first diplomas and national diplomas.

e2e (Entry2Employment) can provide you with tasters in tourism and leisure whilst helping you get ready for an apprenticeship.

Useful contacts for more information

Connexions Northumberland Tel: (01670) 798 180

www.connexions-northumberland.org.uk

Northumberland College Tel: (01670) 841 200

www.northland.ac.uk

Newcastle College Tel: (0191) 200 4000

www.ncl-coll.ac.uk

Tyne Metropolitan College Tel: (0191) 229 5000

www.tynemet.ac.uk

The Northumberland Business Directory - good for lists of local employers www.inorthumberland.co.uk

Yell.com - good for lists of local employers.

www.yell.com

North Country Leisure - useful for local apprenticeship and job opportunities in sport and leisure

<http://www.northcountryleisure.org.uk>

Thomas Cook - useful information on travel and tourism apprenticeships www.thomascookapprentices.co.uk

TUI Travel plc - an international travel company offering job opportunities and apprenticeships

www.tuitraveljobs.co.uk

People First North East - the Sector Skills Council for Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism

How can I improve my chances of getting a job in Northumberland?

Work experience will give you a great opportunity to impress a potential employer. There are lots of part-time and seasonal jobs so it's possible to gain experience whilst still at school. Don't restrict your options because you can learn how to communicate, work in a team and manage your time in any sector of the industry.

Lots of vacancies aren't advertised so contacting local employers directly can really help. Use friends and family contacts to help you find work. Keep in mind that the holidays tend to be the busiest period for many organisations so get your application in early to avoid being disappointed.

Be prepared to work unsociable hours and take advantage of 'living in' opportunities. Make an effort to be versatile. In sport and leisure it's no longer enough just to have one type of coaching qualification and you will be expected to take on several responsibilities. Even if you have a degree in leisure management you will need to show that you are willing to do a basic job.

Where will I find vacancies?

Recent mergers between holiday companies have resulted in job losses so experienced travel agents can be searching for work as well as you. Contact travel agencies directly for information and to obtain application forms.

A good way to get your foot in the door of sport and leisure is to pass the National Pool Life Guard Qualification and then contact a leisure centre about job opportunities. Part-time opportunities are available and with further training may be the start of your career.

Hotel and catering may offer you job opportunities in rural areas. However, larger hotels have been laying people off while others are not recruiting due to the recession.

Keep an eye on local newspapers and notices that are displayed in windows. Your local Connexions Centre will also hold vacancies.