



Unit 18: Conferencing and Banqueting

Delivery guidance

In this unit, learners will explore and develop their knowledge of planning and running a function in a hospitality industry setting with a view to putting this knowledge into practice. Business and private customers will call on hospitality organisations to help them organise and host conferences and banquets. This unit will help learners to gain an insight into the processes involved in running different types of conferences and banquets and to consider the planning, budgeting and practical aspects of these functions.

Learners will develop essential transferable skills that employers look for by developing their research, problem-solving and vital communication skills.

You are likely to use a broad range of different teaching, learning and delivery methods in this unit, such as:

- trips and visits – one of the most effective ways of developing learners' knowledge and understanding of the industry is for them to visit different types of hospitality conference and banqueting departments
- case studies – use these to illustrate the positive and negative impacts of different types of conferences and banqueting
- individual or group presentations – these allow learners to explore a range of different conference and banqueting functions and the planning required to make them a success
- employer engagement – industry experts (such as conference and banqueting managers or supervisors) could share their approach to organising functions, as well as sharing examples of planning materials, promotional literature and pictures of previous events
- work experience – learners could undertake work placements at hotels or venues that host small-scale or large-scale conferences and banquets and then share their experiences with others
- discussions – class and small group discussions help learners to explore topics, such as different functions that learners have experienced or emerging trends for different customer types.

Remember that group work is a useful and acceptable form of delivery and formative assessment, but you must ensure that each learner independently produces their own evidence containing sufficient depth and detail for summative assessment.

Approaching the unit

For learning aim A, learners need to investigate characteristics of functions in hospitality and how these are supervised. This learning aim introduces learners to function planning and helps them to understand what is involved in organising a function in conference and banqueting. Encourage your learners to talk about the functions that they have been to (for example, meetings or banquets) and to identify the elements that they thought were well-organised and those which were not.

Depending on the function, the staff running it either need to be highly visible or need to operate in the background. Learners must understand the roles and responsibilities of those involved in conference and banqueting, from the initial planning stages through to the hosting of the function. Cover the role of supervisor and the skills needed to be a successful supervisor. Learners need to know the purpose of the function and the factors that they need to consider, including choice of room, staffing, budget, special requirements and requests.

In developing your learners' evaluation skills, you could use learner-devised review forms to keep records of meetings with 'clients' or supervisors. When attending a function, learners could use these forms to record their opinions of the factors they consider important when planning and running a function. Learners could then use this material to highlight any problems that occurred and to provide the basis for suggested alternatives. Throughout, learners will evaluate the documents used in planning and running a function to understand their individual importance to the successful running of a function.

For learning aim B, learners need to develop the skills to plan and organise a function in conference and banqueting according to a business specification. As part of their preparation, learners could work in groups and prepare a poster to illustrate the main purpose of specific functions, then prepare a list of questions that they would ask before planning a function. A guest speaker could give a presentation, then learners could plan and organise different functions. They could work in teams to produce a monitoring schedule.

Learners could shadow an industry professional who is preparing for, planning and/or organising a specific function. They could use a diary or log to record what they see and hear. In different groups, learners could research or discuss elements of hospitality (such as the use of specific accommodation settings, staffing, food, beverages and customer service). In pairs, learners could role play being a client and a conference and banqueting supervisor. They could develop the questions they would need to ask to ensure that they will be able to organise the details of a function to a customer's requirements. Using the poster or a leaflet prepared for learning aim A, learners could prepare a set of safe working practices, a timetable for a function, a log of contacts with a supervisor, a comment sheet, a checklist for a meeting and a function (including the stated requirements) or the plan for a function. Using all of this knowledge gained so far, learners should practise the skills needed to set up for a function through either work experience or role play.

For learning aim C, learners must develop the skills needed to run and clear down a conference and banqueting function according to a business specification. They could show that they can run a function by using the checklists and other documentation prepared for learning aim B to review their performance and the function as a whole. Learners' practical participation in running the function and clearing down could be explored through group discussion. You could use role play and simulation to develop their confidence and skills before they run the function. These activities could be documented or videoed. Use discussion and reflection to improve learners' skills and to help them improve their functions in the future. Learners could also keep diaries or logs and share their experiences. Learners could inspect records (such as a comment sheet or questionnaires) when considering the factors that made their function successful and this could lead to discussions relating to the



opportunities for change. Some learners could use their work experience log or real work diary signed by a supervisor.

When making decisions about how learners perform internally managed functions the use of observation records, together with diary or log entries, could help to inform your decision-making. Learners could complete forms or review video or photographic evidence in their self-reflection and their participation in group reflection. This evidence could be generated during the function itself or by using the plan or checklist for the function. In groups, learners could review comment cards and you could help them to develop recommendations and to conduct a debrief. As this is an internally assessed unit, you need to ensure that learners have the opportunity to experience all aspects of the unit's learning aims by planning interesting activities.

Assessment model

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Investigate the types, characteristics and supervision of conferences and banquets	A1 Conference and banqueting characteristics A2 Job roles and supervision A3 Documents used to aid supervision of the planning and running of functions	Written documentation or project investigating the key content areas.
B Plan and set up for a function in conferencing and banqueting	B1 Function planning B2 Budgeting for the function B3 Set up of functions in conferencing and banqueting	Produce a function plan including budget. Practical observation of set up of the function following the plan.
C Carry out a function in conferencing and banqueting	C1 Running of function C2 Clearing up and repurposing of venue	Practical observation of running a function and clearing up a venue. Written evidence covering the review and evaluation stage of the function.

Assessment guidance

This unit is internally assessed through assignments and observations. All learners must independently generate individual evidence that can be authenticated. The recommended assessment of this unit is through three internally assessed assignments.

The first assignment covers learning aim A and requires learners to write a report investigating the range of functions in conference and banqueting that individuals working in the hospitality industry are involved with. It should also cover the characteristics of functions as well as current trends and factors that make a function successful. In order to achieve the assessment and grading criteria, learners need to select and research different functions in hospitality. Ensure that the examples selected by learners provide sufficient scope for them to fully complete the assessments.

The second assignment covers learning aim B. First of all, learners need to create and deliver a function plan from a business specification either from work experience or set by the tutor, that details the stages (before, during and after), skills, methods and processes required to plan and manage one function. Learners must produce a detailed plan, including financial costing, for a function that follows and meets the business specification. For the setup of a function, the assessment can take the form of a realistic or real working environment, which could be a work experience placement. The assessment should consist of an observation of a function set up, which follows the plan prepared earlier. In this scenario, a video could also be used to document the assessment. This task will require learners to complete planning documentation to a professional standard. Assessors should complete observation records, while people such as work colleagues can complete witness statements. Observation records



alone are not sufficient sources of learner evidence: the original learner-generated evidence must support them.

For learning aim C, the assessment should take the form of either a realistic or a real working environment, which could be a work experience placement. The assessment should consist of an observation of a function being run and cleared down following the plan created in learning aim B. This will require learners to complete the documentation used in functions to a professional standard. Record this assessment where possible (by either videoing or documenting it) and complete a record of activity for each individual learner. Assessors should complete observation records, while people such as work colleagues can complete witness statements. Observation records alone are not sufficient sources of learner evidence: the original learner-generated evidence must support them. For the final part of this assignment, learners must write a review evaluating the success of the function.

Factor in time to assess learners within the guided learning hours (GLH). It is essential that you allow learners to individually select their own examples of businesses to investigate as well as the research evidence to include in their work, if they are to show the individual creativity required to achieve the universal distinction criterion.

Getting started

This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based on the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Unit 18: Conferencing and Banqueting

Introduction

Most learners are likely to have experienced a function in conferencing and banqueting hospitality. They could have been to a wedding, a festival, a themed function or a conference. You could start the unit by asking learners to discuss their hospitality experiences and then begin to explore the wide range and styles of functions in conferencing and banqueting.

Learning aim A: Investigate the structure, requirements and supervision of front office operations

- Once they have shared their conference and banqueting experiences, ask learners to work in pairs to list all the functions that they can think of that could take place in conferencing and banqueting, including examples. Ask them to try to categorise these functions into groups. Bring together the categories for the functions to create a categorisation system that the whole class agrees with. To build on this, split learners into groups to continue to research a given category of function, looking for industry examples and data and statistics to highlight the differences between different categories. Learners could create a short presentation to explain their category and its characteristics to the rest of the class.
- Ask learners to investigate the examples of functions used in the previous activity. Ask them to create a table and add in the information they have found using headings such as:
 - type of function
 - purpose of the function
 - promotion methods
 - estimated numbers and guest profiles
 - types of rooms and equipment required
 - health, safety and security requirements.
- Pick a function in conferencing and banqueting to use as a case study and start a discussion about the planning required for a function of this kind. Ask learners to discuss as many potential considerations as they can think of and how they could plan for them.
- Show your learners a number of promotional materials from different types of functions. Ask them what they think the message to customers is and then rate the success of the design and content in conveying this message. Once this has been completed ask the students write up an evaluation or comparison of a number of the materials to practise report writing.
- Arrange for learners to shadow someone involved in the planning and running of functions for a hospitality business or a conference and banqueting supervisor.
- After the shadowing experience, work with learners to draw an organisational chart for the conference and banqueting venue(s). Show them at least two different types of contrasting businesses and ask them to identify how the businesses differ and why.
- Review the job roles in conference and banqueting. Give learners a list of job titles, including a short description of each role, and a set of cards with skills and responsibilities printed on them.



Ask learners to match the skills and responsibilities to the job roles, explaining why the skills are needed for each role.

- In small groups, learners identify a range of tasks likely to be carried out by a conference and banqueting supervisor. Each group then feeds their thoughts back to the rest of the class in order to contribute to a definitive list of tasks.
- Invite a supervisor or manager in conferencing and banqueting to give a talk on their role, responsibilities and skills. Before the guest speaker session, help learners to write some questions that they would like answered. Emphasise content and questions on the supervisor's role, responsibility and skills. The speaker could come from the local area, such as from a local hospitality business.
- Following the guest speaker's visit, discuss the supervisor's role in conferencing and banqueting and the skills needed to be an effective supervisor. Learners could produce a mind map or a job description showing all the skills and responsibilities required.
- Learners could write a personal skills audit and compare it with the supervisor job description that they created in the previous activity, highlighting any areas they would need to develop in order to fulfil the role.
- Set learners an activity on organisational and management skills, such as creating a staff rota for a function.
- Give a presentation on the use of different documents used in conferencing and banqueting. Ask learners to identify which documents they have seen used when shadowing a hospitality professional and which documents they have identified through research. Once they have identified some documents, ask them how these can be used to aid the supervisor, the customer and the hospitality business
- Ask learners to look through some exemplar documents, compare them and discuss them as a class. Are they easy to use and understand? Do they give the information that would be needed for the business specification? Ask learners to fill out some template documents. After this, go through the completed documents as a class, highlighting the importance of accurate information to the successful running of functions in conference and banqueting. Ask other learners to give peer feedback on the forms they have filled out and to write a short report on the forms using the feedback.
- Ensure that learners are prepared for assessment before giving them the assignment brief.

Learning aim B: Plan and set up for a function in conferencing and banqueting

- Invite guest speakers from different hotels to give a presentation about how they plan and organise functions. Ask learners to take notes and then create a presentation comparing and contrasting how different types of functions are planned and organised.
- Learners could work in teams to shadow individuals who are planning and organising a specific function. Different groups could study the elements of different hospitality areas, such as the use of specific accommodation and table settings, the choice of food and beverages or specific customer service needs.
- Assign learners to small groups. Ideally, these groups should contain no more than six learners in total. Each group discusses a business specification for a function and how they can plan a successful function. Ask each group to create a rough plan based on a case study.
- Ask each group to carry out research into a number of similar successful functions and identify the common success factors. This will enable learners to justify their choices when planning.

- Each group prepares and delivers a presentation to the rest of the whole class, outlining their planning, the purpose of their function and their aims and objectives. Using feedback from the class, each group may reconsider and adjust their plans for the function.
- Once learners have decided on their final function plan, each group should discuss and identify the constraints that could prevent it from being successful. They also need to consider how they will measure its success. Examples of success criteria could include the number of attendees or the amount of money made.
- Explain how Gantt charts are used and how to produce a critical path analysis. Follow this with a discussion of the benefits of online planning tools.
- In their groups, learners decide on the appropriate planning tool or tools to use, then start to create their plan. In groups, learners could produce a mind map to show that they have considered all the appropriate factors they need to include in their plan.
- Learners need to understand the benefits of contingency planning, and you could lead a discussion to help them at this point. Learners sometimes confuse contingency planning with risk assessment, so make the differences clear. Following this discussion, learners should produce their own contingency plan.
- So that learners get used to being observed, ask them to role play the set up for an event and ask other learners to observe them and give written feedback. This feedback could then be used for the evaluation stage.
- Learners need to understand the correlation between a successful function and budgeting. Give learners some simple budgeting tasks to increase their awareness of what is required. Using their plans and the business specification, learners then create a simple budget for their function to add to the overall planning documentation.
- Individually, learners should produce a final planning document that covers all stages of the function.
- You could teach learners the set-up of functions using demonstrations and practical activities, ensuring that preliminary checks are completed, such as for staffing and equipment. Ensure that learners have looked at the different styles of layouts for different functions and that the uses, advantages and disadvantages of each are discussed.
- Work experience and a visit are recommended to show learners different set ups, as well as the importance of timekeeping and following the business specification.
- Ensure that learners are prepared for assessment before giving them the assignment brief.

Learning aim C: Carry out a function in conferencing and banqueting

- Hold a function that can be used as a practice or conduct a role play exercise. Ask your learners to run the function and then to clear up and repurpose the venue. Assign tasks to them and get them to create a checklist for what they need to do, then ask the other learners to give feedback on the checklist. Learners can then add this checklist to the plans already created throughout the previous learning aims.
- Ask learners to write a procedure for clearing up after a function and how to repurpose the venue efficiently. What skills are needed? What information is needed? Differentiate using different scenarios, some of which are straightforward and some of which are more complex to suit learners.



- As a class, learners discuss the supervisor's role in running the function. Put together a mind map for learners so that they are aware of what they need to know when they do their final assessment.
- In groups, learners should produce questionnaires to enable function participants to feed back on their experience of the function.
- Lead a discussion about how learners are going to judge the success of the function. What factors are they going to use to measure their success?
- Split learners into small groups and assign each group an area to run and clear up. It is advisable to add in a repurposing of the room with a timed element to keep this as realistic as possible. Get half of the class to role play customers. Once each side has completed their duties, ask learners to give feedback, then swap the roles and repeat the role play. You could assign the supervisors in some areas to review the skills of others.
- Ask learners to review the function using comment cards, a plan or a checklist. Half of the class could look at the strengths of the function and half of the class could look at its weaknesses. They could then highlight three strengths and three weaknesses in specific areas (such as planning, timings, use of skills, quality and appearance of food and beverages, working methods and customer service, all compared against the brief for the function).
- Working in small groups, ask learners to develop recommendations based on their views and the views of others (such as you, their parents, clients/customers from industry, the work supervisor or team leader). A chart or a list could be used to record the findings.
- Learners could write an evaluation of the success of the function, highlighting any recommendations for change and justifying these recommendations with evidence gathered during the task.
- Ensure that learners are prepared for assessment before giving them the assignment brief.

Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

This unit links to:

- Unit 15: Front Office Operations
- Unit 16: Accommodation Operations.

Resources

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson-endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the BTEC International in Hospitality. Check the Pearson website (<http://qualifications.pearson.com/endorsed-resources>) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

Textbooks

Shone, A. and Parry, B., *Successful Event Management: A Practical Handbook* (Fifth Edition), Cengage Learning, 2019, ISBN: 9781473759114

A comprehensive guide to all aspects of planning successful events, including set up, the event itself and clear down. Suitable for all learners.

Rogers, T., *Conferences and Conventions: A Global Industry* (Third Edition), Routledge, 2013, ISBN: 9780415526692

An in-depth guide to conference and conventions on a global scale, giving a background to the industry. Suitable for tutor research.

Pearson is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites. It is essential for tutors to preview each website before using it in class so as to ensure that the URL is still accurate, relevant and appropriate. We suggest that tutors bookmark useful websites and consider enabling students to access them through the school/college intranet.