Frequently asked Questions

Placing an order

➢ Why has the minimum number of days for placing orders changed from 2 days for all orders to 2 days for bookings 49 or less attendees and 5 days for 50 and more attendees?

- Larger bookings require greater staff cover. In order to provide the best standard of service, 5 days’ notice allows the Hospitality Services Team to plan and rota their staffing levels in the most efficient and cost effective way. This applies especially to evening and weekend events.
- Late bookings for large numbers also impact the production team and the supply chain. Suppliers aim to be supportive and flexible but last minute large orders cannot always be met with subsequent disappointment to the customer.
- Amendments to numbers and dietary requirements can be made up to 2 working days before the event.

➢ How far in advance can I place my order? What happens if I need to reduce or increase the numbers but don’t know the final numbers until 2 days before? Am I not best to just wait until I have all of the final information and place the order then?

Orders can be placed up to 18 months before your event. We understand that details won’t be finalised until closer to the date which is why we don’t require final numbers and dietary information until at least 2 working days before the booking.
Advance notice to orders also allows the Hospitality team to ensure that they have time to review your order and discuss any queries or savings opportunities with you in advance of your meeting/event.

➢ Is there anywhere that Hospitality Services cannot deliver to?

Hospitality services will deliver wherever our customers require, including non-University buildings. We often deliver to Newport, The Bay and Llandough. Locations further afield may incur a mileage charge, which is detailed in our customer promise; www.xxx

➢ We are using an external venue, can we still use Cardiff University Hospitality to service our event at this location?

So long as the venue doesn’t have any restrictions to you using caterers other than their own, we can cater to any location.

➢ Why can’t I raise my weekend order directly online?

Currently weekends fall outside of University core working hours, however Hospitality Services are operational and will deliver and service your meetings/events.
Weekend ordering currently remains off line so that we can ensure that all details are correct and the booking is able to be taken.

➢ What is the ‘notes’ section for? Is there specific information that I should be including?

This section is for you to ensure we have all information that you feel is relevant and helpful to us to ensure we deliver the best service to you.
It is really helpful if you include a contact name and telephone number for on the day, incase there are any queries or issues and also the finish time of your meeting/event so that the collection can be effectively scheduled.
It also allows you to give further detail about any dietary or allergen requirements which may not be covered in the drop down box. Names for these delegates/guests with dietary requirements is also helpful as we will then label their individual plate with their name.
How do I select the location for delivery? Not all locations are on the system. If the location is not available from the drop down box, the Notes section is there for you to give any specific location or building access information for the Hospitality delivery team.

What if our catering is delivered and we realise that we forgot to order drinks, what do we do? If you are in a building which has a Cardiff University Food and Drink outlet you could purchase drinks from there and they can issue you with a receipt to claim the expense. Alternatively you can contact the Hospitality administration team; and they can advise if there is an opportunity for us to deliver drinks to you and the timescale for this.

Our department has moved to a new building and we haven’t ordered to this location previously, is there anything we should do in advance of placing our first order with Hospitality Services? All buildings where Hospitality Services delivers require a risk assessment to be undertaken by the Hospitality Manager. Please contact catering@cardiff.ac.uk at least 30 days before your first booking so that this can be undertaken and any steps that we need to take can be implemented for our delivery team.

We have an event coming up and the catering requires a bespoke menu to meet the delegates requirements. Whilst the Hospitality menus are very diverse, can you provide a bespoke menu to meet the needs of our event? Absolutely, this isn’t a problem for us to do. It may be that we can easily adapt an existing menu or we can start from scratch and design bespoke. This is something we have done for our delegates on many occasions, most recently for guests visiting from Germany and China.

We have School Taster Days and require a menu which is bespoke to the age group attending. You used to have School Visit menu on your menus but it’s not there anymore, do you not offer these anymore? These are still available for School Visits and Taster Days. They can be ordered by contacting Hospitality administration team who will forward the menu options and take your order by email.

We have placed our catering order on the web system but we also need AV equipment and portering to support our event, can you help us with this? For these requirements please contact our colleagues in the Conference and Events team, conference@cardiff.ac.uk. They can support and facilitate the full spectrum of your conference or event and can also support with your catering requirements as part of your enquiry.

We want a dance floor and disco for our event, can you organise this? For these requirements please contact our colleagues in the Conference and Events team, conference@cardiff.ac.uk. They will be able to support and facilitate the full spectrum of your event, ensuring portering and security have also been arranged.

I haven’t used web-catering system before, how do I do it? There is a really useful link that gives guidance through the system and how to arrange to be registered to raise orders on Cardiff University webpages; https://intranet.cardiff.ac.uk/staff/applications/help/catering-ordering-system

Our department is external to Cardiff University so I can’t access the order system, how do I place my order? Place your order via email to catering@cardiff.ac.uk including the full name (individuals) or company name and address where the invoice is to be sent.

I didn’t receive a confirmation email for my booking, should I have received one? Yes, all bookings receive a confirmation email, which we encourage customers to check to ensure everything is correct.
The email will be sent to the person who raised the order, this is not always the organiser of the meeting/event. If after checking with the person who raised the order, if the email has not been received please contact catering@cardiff.ac.uk with the date of booking, location and event name. The Hospitality administration team will then be able to resend the confirmation email to you.

➢ How can I make changes to my order?
Contact catering@cardiff.ac.uk with the booking reference number, date of booking, location and event name. Then detail the changes required to be made to this booking. A new confirmation email will be sent. Please ensure this email is checked to ensure everything is correct. If there are any items which need further amendment please do not hesitate to contact us further.

➢ If I cancel my catering order will I be charged?
There are cancellation terms. In the unfortunate event of a full or partial cancellation of a confirmed booking, the following cancellation charges will apply:
• More than 2 working days prior to event – no charge.
• Less than 2 working days prior to the event – 50% of expected income based on numbers.
• Less than 1 working days’ notice – the full cost will be incurred.

➢ What do I do if I want to give feedback on the Hospitality Service provision?
All feedback is welcome, good and not so good. It is your feedback that ensures Hospitality Services continues to develop both its menus, ways of working and service levels. Many of the changes on our updated menus are designed around your feedback.

When your order is delivered there will be a feedback card left with your catering, the reverse side is the food safety information. This can be completed and returned to the address detailed on the card. Alternatively you can email; catering@cardiff.ac.uk, or go on to our webpages and complete the online feedback card; https://cardiff.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/delivered-hospitality-event-catering https://cardiff.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/darparaeth-y-letwygarwch-ar-arlwyeth-ar-arfyfer-y-digwyddiad

➢ The restaurants are no longer serving full breakfasts, does this mean that if we have a residential conference or event we cannot get breakfast for our delegates/guests?
Breakfast continues to be available for residential conferences and events. The Conference and Events team will be able to advise and guide you through the full offer of residential and conference/event catering available for your booking. This includes, breakfast, lunch, dinner (both formal and informal) and everything in between.

Late Orders
➢ Why when we place a late order we cannot always have the items which we have requested?
The Hospitality production team will do their best to meet your menu request, however when orders are placed within 2 working days of the meeting/event, when can be provided becomes dependent on our supply chain. Cardiff University Hospitality services uses many small local businesses who either do not deliver daily or require 48hours notice of orders. This is why we have the two working days timeline.

➢ Why is there a charge for late orders? Sometimes smaller meetings are organised only the day before or on the morning of the meeting and we can’t forward plan. Other providers wouldn’t charge extra for it being late.
Hospitality Services appreciates that sometimes late notice for orders cannot be avoided. When orders are only placed on the day or within two working days of the meeting/event this impacts on the Hospitality team staffing levels, resulting in re-prioritising tasks for both the administrative team and the service teams. Additional staff may be required to be booked at short notice or a member of the team
needs to start/finish later, or be required to work an additional day if a late weekend booking. This unfortunately comes at unavoidable additional or enhanced salary payments.

Minimum Spend
➢ Why is there a minimum spend of £15?
To provide competitively priced menus the service costs; administration team, kitchen team, Hospitality drivers and support team are based on a minimum spend for each order.

➢ Why is there a charge for not clearing at the end of our meeting/event?
The service provided by Hospitality Services is based on customers who have not requested a service team agreeing to clear and pack up the catering after their meeting/event. The impact on the Hospitality drivers time and schedule when they collect and have to clear the room, negatively impacts on their daily schedule and will result in them running late for deliveries which are scheduled to take place over the peak periods being late. To negate this Hospitality logistics team will look to re-route other drivers to assist and where this isn’t possible request later drivers to start earlier or have to move other collections to later in the day and schedule a driver to work overtime.

➢ Why has the ‘non clearing’ charge increased to £30?
Hospitality Services has costed the impact of customers not clearing, reviewing each area of the team and this cost is a truer figure of the impact of meetings/events not being cleared and the process time to manage the Hospitality team clearing areas with no prior notice given.

➢ We have multiple orders for under the minimum spend being delivered at different times to different locations. The combined cost is greater than £15, why are we still charged the minimum spend on each order?
Each order/location involves a delivery and collection, in line with our customer promise minimum spend for each delivery is £15. The only exception to this would be a booking which has requested an Hospitality Services team to serve and clear the catering at your event/conference.

➢ Our weekend order is £14 and we are being charged £1 minimum spend and in addition £20 weekend delivery, is this correct?
Each order/location involves a delivery and collection, in line with our customer promise minimum spend

Minimum Numbers
➢ Why are there minimum numbers of 5 on the buffets? I am organising a small meeting for 4 people and therefore can’t order any food.
Buffet menus are minimum number of 5 and Sharing Platters are designed in quantities of 8. However, you can still place orders for meetings less than 5. Options for these sized meetings include; Refreshments, Sweet Treats and Cakes, High Protein, Low Carb Salad Pots, Ready to Go Sandwich or Wrap Lunch, Packed Meal.

➢ What if we need to book day delegate but our numbers are less than 30?
Contact the Hospitality administration team; catering@cardiff.ac.uk who will be able to discuss your numbers and how we can accommodate your booking.
The two options which are frequently implemented in this situation are either a member of the Hospitality service team will set up the refreshments and clear away the previous catering break when they come to set this up, but do not stay to serve the refreshments and lunch. Or, a staffing surcharge can be implemented, this varies dependent on the level of Hospitality service support the event organiser requires.

➢ Why can we not order just teas and coffees at lunchtime?
Delivery and service levels between 11.30am and 2pm are the peak time for our customers requiring Hospitality lunch orders to be delivered and set-up. These orders take longer for the Hospitality drivers to deliver and set up, this impacts on the number of orders we can take within this time period. To ensure best service and efficient delivery we need to prioritise orders. If just refreshments are required during this time period, they could be ordered for delivery pre-11.30am and they can be delivered in advance. The thermal posts which hot/cold drinks are delivered in maintain the liquids temperature for up to 3 hours.

Hospitality service, delivery and collection

➢ Why has the hourly charge for catering staff dropped from £20 per hour to £15?
At the start of 2020 Cardiff University Catering restricted its team. This resulted in building a more resilient Hospitality team, which reflect how Hospitality Service has developed and changed. The new team is now able to plan in advance its weekly rota with an established team and the reliance on temporary staff has significantly reduced. This subsequently has created a saving in the costs which we are passing on to our customers.

➢ Our event is a being held in Welsh, can you provide Welsh speaking service team?
Absolutely yes! We have many members of our team who can speak Welsh and others who are attending Cardiff University Welsh language programme. Please contact our Hospitality administration team who can arrange this for you, as well as any requirements for menus to be in Welsh; catering@cardiff.ac.uk

➢ Why when you know that the drivers are running late with deliveries do you not advise us so that we can delay the refreshment break by running a later seminar session earlier so our event isn’t put behind schedule?
We endeavour to contact our customers to advise them of any issues with delivery. Unfortunately not all orders are raised by the person attending the meeting/event, often a member of the Schools finance team. We encourage customers to include contact name and mobile number/email for the organiser on the day in the ‘notes’ section of the system when placing orders. If this isn’t known at the time of booking then it can be added closer to the event by emailing catering@cardiff.ac.uk including booking reference number, date of meeting/event and event name. An updated confirmation email will be sent to the person who originally raised the order on web-catering.

➢ Why do high profile areas have to have service?
These areas are often in constant use with many visitors to Cardiff University passing through the areas. In providing an Hospitality service team, this ensures that the areas are always clean and clear throughout the event, ensuring good impression is bestowed on visitors.

➢ What if one of the high profile areas is in our department/School is, we are being penalised when it is our buildings event space, do we have to have a Hospitality service team?
Hospitality Services administration and management team are happy to discuss these bookings. Please contact catering@cardiff.ac.uk to arrange a meeting with the Hospitality Manager to discuss your bookings and to put a system in place where applicable to support this requirement.

➢ What do we do if the catering has not been cleared by 10.30am of the following day?
Please email catering@cardiff.ac.uk. To ensure effective and timely clearing of catering crates it is helpful if when placing the order an end time of the meeting/event is included in the ‘notes’ section. This ensures the Hospitality logistics team can plan collections. When we don’t know the times, collections are often scheduled for end of the day or early morning, some buildings or meeting rooms are not accessible at this time which results in missed-collections which aren’t rescheduled until after 8am the following morning and are then slotted in around the Hospitality drivers route schedule.
We have arrived at the room that we booked for our meeting and the food boxes from the previous meeting are still in the room. Why haven’t they been collected? Please email catering@cardiff.ac.uk.

If we have not been advised in the ‘notes’ section of the order at time of booking the finish time it makes it difficult for the Hospitality logistics team to know when to schedule the collection. Customers are also advised to leave the crates outside of the meeting room, which ensures when the Hospitality driver arrives they can collect without disturbing the meeting taking place in the room. Where we are advised that catering has been left in the room, Hospitality administration team will contact the organiser to remind them of the process for future bookings.

Weekend and Evening Bookings

Why is there a weekend surcharge?
There is additional staffing costs incurred for weekend bookings. We keep the surcharge as low as possible. Where a weekend booking has requested an Hospitality service team there is no weekend delivery surcharge.

There was a problem with our weekend delivery and we couldn’t contact anybody, what should we have done?
The confirmation email sent by catering@cardiff.ac.uk includes the out of hours mobile number; 07814 640 164. This will connect you with the driver or the logistics team who will be able to support you and respond to your enquiry.

Our weekend order was late and it was because the driver couldn’t get in to the building, how could this have been avoided?
Outside of the Hospitality Administration team office hours (Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm) telephone 07814 640 164. This will connect you with the driver or the logistics team who will be able to support you and respond to your enquiry.

We have a weekend event taking place and while we require access to food and drink for our attendees, it needs to be on a cash basis. How can we do this that the attendees are paying for the food and drink they require?
A Café or Restaurant can open outside of normal opening hours for an event. A minimum spend applies for this service. The minimum spend will vary depending on the Event, number of attendees, service times, etc. If the minimum spend is met then there is no additional cost to the Event, however if not achieved then a charge of the difference between the spend and the minimum spend will be charged to the Event.
Please contact catering@cardiff.ac.uk to discuss your requirements.

Menu amendments

Sometimes we have the same event taking place over several days with the same delegates attending. What if we want to change some items on the buffet menu so that it gives variety each day, can we do this?
The Hospitality menus have been redesigned to factor in customer requirement for a wider variety of menu options to accommodate multiple bookings for the same group, removing the need to make menu amendments. There is the option to add additional items from the Additional Items list. For bookings of 50 attendees or more, then a request for minor changes can be arranged. If the items being swapped are not like for like there may be a small cost surcharge to facilitate the change.
We like to mix up our buffets that we are ordering, so for example if we are ordering for 50 guests we want to order 25 of buffet A and 25 of buffet B. Why do you advise that we don’t do this?

From our customers feedback, often when customers have stated there wasn’t sufficient food it is orders where mixed orders have been placed. As an attendee to a meeting/event it is human nature to take a bit of everything. This results in instead of the catering order being sufficient for 50 people it is only sufficient for around 30 guests.

Menus have been designed to ensure variety and choice so the need to order multiple buffets/sharing platters is not necessary. Buffet menus also include the quantity of each item that is served per person to enable the event organiser to plan the quantity required, to ensure sufficient but not too much food is ordered. Hospitality administration team are happy to discuss your catering requirement and advise where required.

Conferences/Private Event

Why can’t we have a Hot Fork buffet in our building?

There are many factors which need to be considered when delivering hot food which can impact on whether we can safely delivery and serve hot food in all buildings, this includes; access to the room (stairs or lift), building and room layouts, space and access to water/drainage

Our formal dinner is for 35 people and we want to book Aberdare Hall dining room but have been told the minimum number is 60 during term time. On the menus it says minimum number 30, why is different?

Aberdare Hall is a hall of residence for Cardiff University students. During term time catering is provided for these students and this is the priority of the space. There are ways that Hospitality Services can support your requirement with numbers less than 60, this includes a later start time, use of the carpeted side of the room only. Please contact catering@cardiff.ac.uk to arrange a meeting with Hospitality Manager to discuss your requirement.

We want to book an evening event at Aberdare Hall in the restaurant but are unable to because of the residential students. Can they not be located to another location so our booking can be accommodated?

On a limited number of occasions during term-time Hospitality Services can arrange alternative dining location for the residential students. In the first instance Hospitality administration team will look to see if an alternative suitable venue is available for the Hospitality booking. Where this is not possible, the decision whether we can accommodate the booking is taken by the Hospitality Manager. It must be remembered that during term time at Aberdare Hall, the first priority is always our Cardiff University Residential students.

Why if we want to book a dinner in Hadyn Ellis exhibition foyer area there is an additional cost of £12 per person for equipment hire on top of the menu price?

Hadyn Ellis catering area and the exhibition foyer area are not equipped to facilitate a sit down service. Subject to Hadyn Ellis building approval, sit down menu/service are available but all equipment and furniture needs to be hired in. The £12 per head covers the cost of this, at cost to Hospitality Services.

Why do we have to have Hospitality service team at all bookings in Temple of Peace and no concessions can be made?
Temple of Peace is not solely a Cardiff University building and is used in partnership with the building occupants. It is a requirement of Temple of Peace management team that all bookings ordering catering require an Hospitality service team to clear everything off site as soon as the event has finished.

Alcohol

➢ Why do events with alcohol service require a responsible person to be designated if we don’t require service staff?

Cardiff University Hospitality Services holds the alcohol licenses across Cardiff University. It is the license holders responsibility to ensure that the service of alcohol is conducted in a manner which complies with licensing legislation. When a member of the Hospitality team is not required to be at events with alcohol purchased through Cardiff University Hospitality Services then the license holder needs to delegate the responsibility to a responsible adult.

➢ If we want a cash bar for an event how much does this cost?

A minimum spend applies for the provision of a bar at Events. The minimum spend will vary depending on the Event, number of attendees, service times, etc. If the minimum spend is met then there is no additional cost to the Event, however if not achieved then a charge of the difference between the spend and the minimum spend will be charged to the Event.

We may require 2 weeks notice to obtain the appropriate license for your event bar.

Please contact catering@cardiff.ac.uk to discuss your requirements.

Vouchers

➢ Does the minimum timescales apply to arranging vouchers to be redeemed in Cardiff University Food and Drink cafés and restaurants?

Yes, minimum number of days notice is 2 working days for 49 or less vouchers or 5 working days for 50 or more attendees. This ensures there is time for the vouchers to be arranged and sent to organiser and also for the café and restaurant team to increase orders for the relevant outlet for the number of vouchers being ordered.

➢ Do I get charged for the face value of the voucher or the value spent?

Vouchers are charged at face value. So if 10 vouchers at £5 each are ordered then a total of £50 will be charged.

catering@cardiff.ac.uk can discuss your voucher requirements to ensure that what is ordered is most relevant and cost effective for your event.

Allergens and Food Waste

➢ We have selected a menu which is vegan, does this mean that we don’t need to specify dietary requirements for a guest who has an intolerance to milk?

It is essential that allergen information is included on the booking information, even if a menu has been selected that states that that allergen is not present. Our kitchens and team handle many allergens during production and service, knowing that a delegate/guest has an allergy/intolerance ensures that all measures to prevent cross-contamination are implemented for that order.

➢ We find the labelling unhelpful, it’s not always present and when it is if somebody moves a buffet tray the label is no longer with it. Can you not improve your labelling system?

A new labelling system has been implemented (September 2020) and all allergen information can be found at www.xxx .

If you find that the new process for informing allergen information is not effective we welcome your feedback, please contact catering@cardiff.ac.uk who will arrange for the Hospitality Manager to contact you should further information be required.
➢ When the order was placed we detailed the allergen and special dietary requirements, however we have a guest who didn’t advise us in advance. What should we do in this situation, can Hospitality Services help at such short notice?

Telephone +44 (0)29 2087 4027 / 6612
Hospitality Services team will do everything we can to ensure that something is arranged. The more notice given assists the team to successfully arrange for a suitable alternative to be delivered. Should it not become apparent until at the time of the consuming, still contact Hospitality Services and if there is a way we can support we will, it may be that the menu items won’t arrive until closer to the end of the break. At times we may not be able to accommodate at such short notice, but the Hospitality team will always endeavour to provide something wherever possible.

➢ I put allergen information on to the order when I placed it but when it was delivered it wasn’t correct and the delegate couldn’t eat anything. Why was it wrong?

Hospitality Services takes food allergen seriously, however on a very few occasions there may be a mistake in the process of the order. Should the provision be incorrect please contact the Hospitality administration team. Telephone +44 (0)29 2087 4027 / 6612 and wherever possible this will be corrected at the time. Hospitality Services will investigate any mistakes in Hospitality provision and service. Please contact catering@cardiff.ac.uk will details of any errors and these will be fully investigated and the organiser will be updated on the outcome of the investigation.

➢ We always have lots of food left at the end of our event, can we donate this to charity rather than waste it?

Cardiff University Hospitality menus detail portion sizes for each of Hospitality menu items. These are included as a guide for planning quantity required for your meeting/event to minimise food wastage. Each order is delivered with a feedback and food safety card. This card details the time that your order was delivered. We request that customers do not leave food in open spaces and encourage others to consume unless the event organiser is committed to returning to clear it away within the 4 hours from delivery. Whilst we appreciate customers wish to minimise food waste, consideration to the safety and wellbeing of consumers is of the utmost importance.