

BMGM4003- Customer experience & service skills placement LEVEL 4 – Reflective portfolio (1500 words)

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You are required to complete a reflective portfolio to capture the learning experience and knowledge you have acquired within your culinary skills experience. You need to complete four sections as set out in this document, each section must contain 325 words and so your writing must be relevant as to allow you to display the knowledge that you have gained.

In each section reflect on:

What **new skills / knowledge** you have acquired

How will you **apply your knowledge in the future?**

What are your **personal reflections** on the subject?

Why is this **topic important within the industry?**

Provide **evidence of further reading**. Include a minimum of 3 references per section.

This is the placement development record and is designed for the student to reflect on (not describe) their learning experience to critically review their development.

Students should focus upon their:

- Vocational Development
- Self-Development
- Academic Development

The Development Record Should Include:

A brief generic overview of the overall placement. This should review the experience in terms of the placement objectives and the student's own learning outcomes. Students may wish to provide evidence of achievement of the aims put forward in their action plan and learning agreement. Particular attention should be paid to issues regarding self, vocational and academic development as well as highlighting 'lost' opportunities.

The portfolio aims to provide a self-reflection of your progress and to review the work that you have undertaken, applying evidence of developing the following key skills criteria:

- Self-management and development
- Task management
- Applying initiative in workplace problems
- Communication
- Application of knowledge Assessment Criteria

Students will be assessed upon their ability to critically evaluate their personal performance and development as well as their reflective analysis of the overall learning experience, outcome achievements, key skills development, application of theory in practice, identification of lost opportunities and future career development/skills application.

This record should not be descriptive in nature but reflective, analytical, and critical. Your placement module lecturer will meet with you bi-weekly to review your progress and regularly meet with your kitchen supervisor to ensure you are progressing through your tasks and acquiring the support you need to be successful in the department rotation.

Upon completion of your placement, you will be required to upload your completed portfolio to the Turnitin link provided in Moodle. Timely submission will be expected as per university guidelines and the required dates will be posted in the Turnitin Link.

Generic overview of overall placement

After working as a waiter at La Braseria restaurant, I have gained invaluable insight into the secrets of providing a positive customer experience. From taking orders to ensuring that the food is served in a timely manner, I have come to understand the importance of customer service in the restaurant industry. In this portfolio report, I will discuss my experience working at La Braseria, the skills I have developed, and how I have contributed to a positive customer experience. I will also share how to deal with customer feedback to make better service.

Section 1

- Give examples of how you have contributed to a positive customer experience.

Positive customer service means meeting customers' needs in a timely manner, being polite, and being willing to go the extra mile (Heath, 2022). A positive customer experience at a restaurant can be achieved by providing excellent

service, offering unique menu items, and ensuring that guests are satisfied with their meals. Having a positive customer experience is essential for any restaurant. It is the foundation of a successful business, as it encourages customers to return and recommend the restaurant to others (Andrews, 2022). A positive customer experience is created through a combination of factors, such as excellent customer service, quality food, and a pleasant atmosphere. Excellent customer service should include friendly greetings, attentive waitstaff, and helpful advice (Justine, 2019). The food should be fresh, cooked to order, and served in a timely manner. At La Braseria restaurant, providing excellent service is my top priority. I always strive to be friendly and accommodating to all customers, no matter how busy the restaurant is. I greet each customer with a smile and take the time to answer any questions they may have about the menu or the restaurant. Additionally, I make sure that all orders are taken accurately and that all food is served promptly and at the correct temperature. I also strive to go above and beyond for our customers. For example, if a customer has a special request or dietary restriction, I always make sure to accommodate them in any way I can. I also take the time to check in with customers to make sure that they are satisfied with their experience. If there is ever an issue with their order, I make sure to address it quickly and efficiently. I believe that my skillset should be used in the future not only at La Braseria but also elsewhere where customer satisfaction is of utmost importance. My goal is to continue providing exemplary service through proactive problem-solving and always striving for perfection in every aspect of my work.

Reference list (minimum of 3 please) – please use Harvard refencing system

Andrews, R. (2022) 10 restaurant customer service ideas that increase loyal guests in 2022, Eat App - Online Reservation System for Modern Restaurants. Available at: <https://restaurant.eatapp.co/blog/restaurant-customer-service> (Accessed: December 13, 2022).

Heath, C. (2022) 10 ways to deliver consistently Great Customer Service - Help Scout, Help Scout: Shared Inbox, Help Center, & Live Chat Software. Available at: <https://www.helpscout.com/blog/good-customer-service/> (Accessed: December 13, 2022).

Justine (2019) *5 ways to deliver excellent customer service at your restaurant*, Restaurant Engine. Restaurant Engine. Available at: <https://restaurantengine.com/deliver-excellent-customer-service/> (Accessed: December 13, 2022).

Section 2

- Give examples of how you have received guest feedback and dealt with this.

Feedback collected from customers about their dining experiences can be very helpful in understanding what keeps them happy (Sarkar, 2018). As a waiter at La Braseria restaurant, I have had the opportunity to interact with many guests and receive feedback from them. This feedback has been invaluable in helping me to improve my customer service skills and ensure that guests have a positive experience when dining at our restaurant. Feedback is essential for connecting with guests and ensuring that they are happy with their experience at restaurant (Bingage, 2020). It's also important to be able to deal effectively with negative situations. It can help to build confidence, and it can also lead to an increased workload due to the demand for good service. It is essential for a waiter to have a good handle on how to deal with customer complaints (Mealey, 2019). When guests have complaints about their experience at La Braseria restaurant, it is my responsibility to listen to their concerns and take appropriate action. One example of this was when a guest complained that their steak was overcooked. I apologized for the mistake and offered to replace the steak with a new one. I also offered the guest a complimentary dessert as an apology. This allowed me to show the guest that I

was taking their complaint seriously and that I was willing to do whatever it took to make sure they had a positive experience. Another example of how I have received guest feedback and dealt with it while practicing as a waiter at La Braseria restaurant is by taking suggestions. On one occasion, a guest suggested that we add more vegetarian options to our menu. I thanked the guest for their suggestion and informed them that we would be adding more vegetarian options in the near future. The guest was pleased to hear this and thanked me for listening to their suggestion. By continuing this approach throughout my career as a waiter, I will be able to handle any situation in an effective manner while maintaining customer satisfaction ratings high.

Reference list (minimum of 3 please) – please use Harvard refencing system

Bingage (2020) *Why gathering customer feedback is beneficial for the long-time growth of your restaurant?*. Available at: <https://bingage.com/blog/customer-feedback-important-for-restaurants/> (Accessed: December 13, 2022).

Mealey, L. (2019) *Practical ways to handle complaining customers in your restaurant*, LiveAbout. LiveAbout. Available at: <https://www.liveabout.com/how-to-handle-customer-complaints-2888421> (Accessed: December 13, 2022).

Sarkar, A. (2018) *Restaurant feedback: 7 reasons why you should be collecting it*, LimeTray's Restaurant Management & Marketing Blog. Available at: <https://limetray.com/blog/restaurant-feedback-importance/> (Accessed: December 13, 2022).

Section 3

- Describe the range of service skills you have developed – how did meeting guests make you feel? What did you learn from colleagues and diners alike?

Working as a waiter at La Braseria restaurant has been an invaluable experience for me. I have developed a wide range of service skills, such as customer service, problem-solving, and communication. Meeting guests has also been a rewarding experience, as it has allowed to build relationships with customers. As a waiter, I have learned how to greet guests warmly, take their orders accurately, and provide them with timely service. It is important for a waiter to use a polite and friendly tone of voice when speaking to guests according to the time (Dennis, 2020). I also make sure to check in with customers throughout their meals to ensure that they are satisfied with their experience. Problem-solving is another important skill for me as a waiter. It involves being able to quickly identify and resolve any issues that may arise during a guest's visit (Herrity, 2020). I have had to deal with a variety of issues, such as incorrect orders, long wait times, and customer complaints. I have learned how to remain calm and professional in these situations and work with the customer to find a satisfactory solution. I also make sure to communicate any changes or delays to the customer in a timely manner. Communication is an essential part of being a waiter. It involves being able to effectively communicate with customers, as well as other staff members (Doyle, 2022). I have learned how to listen carefully to customers' orders and relay them accurately to the kitchen staff. I also make sure to communicate any changes or delays to the customer in a timely manner. From my colleagues, I learned the importance of teamwork and communication. Working in a restaurant requires a team effort in order to ensure that all tasks are completed efficiently and effectively. From the diners, I learned the importance of customer service and the value of a positive attitude.

These lessons have helped me to become a better waiter and have also been invaluable in my personal life.

Reference list (minimum of 3 please) – please use Harvard refencing system

Doyle, A. (2022) *Skills needed to succeed as a food server*, *LiveAbout*. LiveAbout. Available at: <https://www.liveabout.com/food-server-skills-list-2062480> (Accessed: December 13, 2022).

Dennis (2020) *How to greet guests at the restaurant?*, *DenTheMan24.com*. Available at: <https://dentheman24.com/how-to-greet-guests-at-the-restaurant/> (Accessed: December 13, 2022).

Herrity, J. (2020) *Top 10 resume skills for waitstaff (with examples) | indeed.com*. Available at: <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/waitstaff-skills> (Accessed: December 13, 2022).

Section 4

- How did you make service better- what would you need to develop to make your service excellent?

It is important for the waiter to be encouraged and trained to think about customer care (Posist, 2022). As a waiter at La Braseria restaurant, I strived to provide excellent service and ensure that each customer had a pleasant and enjoyable experience. My goal was to make sure that each customer left feeling satisfied and happy with their experience. People who are happy with their dining experience are more likely to leave positive feedback for the restaurant (Indeed, 2021). In order to do this, I implemented several strategies to make the service better. I always made sure to greet each customer with a smile and a friendly hello. I was also quick to respond to any requests they had, such as refills or extra condiments. I was always sure to check on customers throughout their meals to make sure that they were satisfied and had everything they needed. This made them feel more at ease and created a more pleasant atmosphere. Another aspect of providing excellent service is communication. I worked hard to ensure that I was always communicating effectively with customers. I made sure to be friendly and approachable, and I was always willing to answer any questions customers had. I also made sure to be clear and concise when taking orders, and I always double-checked orders to make sure they were correct. I was always available to provide refills or additional items as needed. By doing this, I was able to ensure that customers had a positive experience and that their needs were met in a timely and efficient manner. I have to be more knowledgeable about menu in order to provide excellent service to customers. Having a strong knowledge of the menu is essential for providing excellent service as a waiter (Fanawala, 2021). It is important to be able to answer any questions customers may have about the dishes, such as ingredients, preparation methods, and dietary restrictions. Being knowledgeable about the menu and wine list will also give me an edge over other waiters. Being able to recommend dishes that suit each customer's taste is another skill worth having.

Reference list (minimum of 3 please) – please use Harvard refencing system

Fanawala, M. (2021) *Top qualities of a great restaurant waiter!*, *eZee Optimus*. Available at: <https://www.ezeeoptimus.com/blog/top-qualities-of-a-great-restaurant-waiter/#:~:text=Profound%20knowledge%20of%20menu%3A&text=A%20guest%20favourite%20waiter%20will,restaurant%20in%20a%20true%20sense>. (Accessed: December 13, 2022).

Indeed (2021) *9 examples of good restaurant customer service*. Available at: <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/examples-of-good-customer-service-in-restaurant> (Accessed: December 13, 2022).

Posist (2022) Effective strategies to improve your restaurant service and provide a stellar guest experience - a 2022 guide. Available at: <https://www.posist.com/restaurant-times/restro-gyaan/ways-to-improve-restaurant-service.html#:~:text=Encourage%20and%20train%20them%20to,glasses%20and%20keeping%20extra%20napkins>. (Accessed: December 13, 2022).