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| UNIT TITLE: MAINTAIN GUESTS' FINANCIAL RECORDS | | NOMINAL HOURS: 30 |
| UNIT NUMBER: D1.HFO.CL2.04 | | |
| UNIT DESCRIPTOR: This unit deals with skills and knowledge required to create, maintain and present in-house guest accounts in a front office context | | |
| ELEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA | UNIT VARIABLE AND ASSESSMENT GUIDE | |
| <p>Element 1: Determine the context of guest financial records</p> <p>1.1 Identify the <i>financial documentation involved</i></p> <p>1.2 Identify the <i>goods and services</i> that require record maintenance</p> <p>1.3 Identify the <i>accounting process</i> for the establishment</p> <p>1.4 Identify the <i>types of transaction</i> processed as part of maintaining guest financial records</p> <p>1.5 Identify the <i>deposit and advance payment requirements</i> for the organisation</p> <p>1.6 Identify the <i>room rates</i> that apply to the property</p> <p>1.7 Identify the <i>guest record keeping system</i></p> <p>1.8 Identify the <i>personnel responsible for guest financial records</i></p> | <p>Unit Variables</p> <p>The Unit Variables provide advice to interpret the scope and context of this unit of competence, allowing for differences between enterprises and workplaces. It relates to the unit as a whole and facilitates holistic assessment</p> <p>This unit applies to all industry sectors that generate and update folios for in-house guests within the labour divisions of the hotel and travel industries and may include:</p> <p>1. Front Office</p> <p><i>Financial documentation involved</i> may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest accounts/folios • Master folios • Non-guest folios • City ledgers • Statement of account • Receipts • Advance deposit requests • Credit notes | |

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| <p>1.9 Identify the <i>limitations and restrictions that apply to guest financial transactions with the property</i></p> <p>1.10 Identify the procedures for dealing with <i>problem account situations</i></p> <p>1.11 Identify the <i>payment options</i> for guests</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest credit report • Refund documentation • Documentation supporting non-cash transactions • Paid out vouchers for disbursements • Vouchers for payment of/in lieu of payment |
| <p>Element 2: Establish guest financial record</p> <p>2.1 <i>Open guest account in accordance with organisational requirements</i></p> <p>2.2 Obtain and record <i>payment from guests on arrival, where appropriate</i></p> <p>2.3 <i>Notify revenue centres regarding status of individual accounts/guests</i></p> <p>2.4 <i>Update guest account on arrival of guest</i></p> <p>2.5 <i>Check guest history</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit card imprints • Guest charge dockets, reflecting charges made by guests to their account • Cash register audits rolls/tapes. <p><i>Goods and services may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation • Food • Beverage |
| <p>Element 3: Maintain guest financial record</p> <p>3.1 <i>Update charges to guest account</i></p> <p>3.2 <i>Update payments made on guest account</i></p> <p>3.3 <i>Monitor house limits on guest accounts</i></p> <p>3.4 <i>File supporting documentation for charges and products and services rendered</i></p> <p>3.5 <i>Reconcile guest accounts</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-room services, including room service, video hire and extra services • Laundry and linen room services • Disbursements • Hire and/or use of facilities • Functions • Purchases made at establishment retail outlets. |

3.6 *Notify revenue centres regarding changes to guest status, as required*

3.7 *Make refunds, where appropriate*

3.8 *Contribute towards night audit functions*

3.9 *Prepare account for payment*

Element 4: Finalise guest financial record

4.1 *Present account to guest for payment*

4.2 *Explain charges as required*

4.3 *Accept payment*

4.4 *Record payment*

4.5 *Process finalised guest account*

4.6 *Deal with late charges*

The accounting process should relate to:

- Analysing transactions that occur as part of the accounting process
- Identifying the documentation that attaches to each stage of the accounting process
- Posting debits and credits to guest accounts
- Auditing the accounting process
- Settling the account.

Types of transaction may be related to:

- Cash transaction
- Non-cash transaction
- Account receivable transaction
- Account payable transaction
- Cash payout transaction
- Posting charges
- Auditing accounts
- Account settlement.

Deposit and advance payment requirements should include:

- Amount of deposit required for a range of different booking types
- Timelines that attach to the requirement for deposits and advance payment
- Effect that not paying a deposit by the required time has on the status of the reservation
- Ways in which deposits may be paid.

Room rates should relate to:

- All the different rates the establishment posts as legitimate room only charges, including designated food, beverage and other items as appropriate to a package deal
- Discount rates available, including definition of eligibility for discounts and the amount of discount applicable.

Guest record keeping system may include:

- Paper-based
- Electronic
- Integrated with a computerised reservation system.

Personnel responsible for guest financial records may include:

- Room clerks
- Night auditors
- Billing/posting clerk
- Cashier.

Limitations and restrictions that apply to guest financial transactions with the property may include:

- Credit card floor and establishment limits
- Advancement payment requirements
- Policies relating to cancelling, guaranteeing, confirming, refusing, or regretting bookings
- Methods of payment accepted by the business

- Legal claim over guest property for non-payment of account
- Identifying goods and services that can and cannot be charged to accounts under negotiated arrangements with clients.

Problem account situations may include:

- Skippers
- Bad debts
- Late charges
- Dishonoured checks
- Refused credit cards
- Charges that fall outside the range of acceptable charges that can be posted to an account.

Payment options may include:

- Cash
- Debit and credit cards
- Traveller's checks
- Foreign currency
- Accounts signed by guests and forwarded to head office, employer or other organisation.

Open guest account in accordance with organisational requirements may include:

- Integrating the creation of a folio with room allocation

- Entering known guest details onto the folio, including data from guest history files, where applicable, plus data from reservation slips
- Listing payment received as part of the booking process
- Filing folio in date of arrival order, where required.

Payment from guests on arrival may include:

- Walk-ins
- Guests with bookings for which no deposit or advance payment has been made
- Previous bad debt guests.

Notify revenue centres regarding status may include:

- Updating internal system with guest details
- Informing others regarding the types of charges that can be accepted/posted to the account which may include denial of charge facilities to guests who pay cash in advance for their room
- Advising others regarding monetary limits that apply to charges
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- Advising revenue centres of cash only status of relevant guests who may include walk-ins, previous non-payers, identified credit risks.

Update guest account may include:

- Recording payment made, if any
- Capturing and recording credit card imprint
- Re-locating guest account to reflect arrived status of guest.

Check guest history must include:

- Previous spending history of guest
- Previous payment problems with guest
- Determining house limits for individual guests.

Update charges may include:

- Seeking charges for posting to guest accounts from revenue centres
- Posting charges to guest accounts
- Obtaining supporting documentary evidence to support all charges
- Verifying the accuracy of supporting documentation
- Classifying charges according to their correct type
- Maintaining accurate and current running account balance
- Adhering to double-entry accounting principles
- Applying appropriate codes
- Resolving variances between guest accounts and department balances.

Update payments may include:

- Posting payments received to guest accounts
- Issuing receipts for money received
- Noting the method of payment used by the guest
- Remitting payment to the appropriate internal location

- Maintaining accurate and current running account balance
- Adhering to double-entry accounting principles.

Monitor house limits may include:

- Ensuring accounts do not exceed the designated limit for individual guests
- Seeking payment from guests when the house limit is reached
- Taking appropriate action if payment is not received, including cessation of credit/charge facilities and removal of guest from the premises
- Recording payments received and processing same in accordance with house procedures.

File supporting documentation may include:

- Obtaining and checking/verifying point-of-sale vouchers and docketts, including room service documentation
- Placing copies of documents signed by the guest as evidence of purchase into guest folio
- Ensuring correct documentation is attached to the appropriate room/guest.

Reconcile guest accounts may include:

- Validating charges
- Ensuring charges have been posted to the correct room/guest
- Balancing revenue and charges against sales
- Detecting errors
- Investigating and rectifying errors
- Proving balances.

Notify revenue centres regarding changes to guest status may include:

- Changing guest status from credit to cash only
- Notifying house limit has been reached/exceeded.

Make refunds may include:

- Making payments to guests in alignment with house policies on refunds and cancellations
- Offering discount to guests in response to complaint, problem or provision of sub-standard service.

Night audit functions may include:

- Verifying all relevant financial transactions have been posted
- Validating transactions and charges made
- Posting late charges
- Posting daily accommodation charges
- Reconciling transactions
- Identifying and resolving discrepancies
- Implementing requirements of internal financial systems and controls.

Prepare account for payment may include:

- Ensuring all legitimate charges have been posted
- Ensuring all payments received have been recorded
- Ensuring all supporting documentation is available, if required.

Present account to guest for payment may include:

- Presenting guest with hard copy account on departure/at check-out
- Providing express check-out facilities and account
- Forwarding account to nominated address for payment, as arranged.

Explain charges may include:

- Explaining the coding system relating to charges made
- Providing supporting documentation to prove a charge
- Using discretionary authority to remove contested charges from the account with apology.

Accept payment may include:

- Taking payment only in the authorised means
- Verifying authority for guest to sign for goods and services received
- Following in-house protocols where payment is made by check
- Thanking the guest
- Performing normal cashier duties.

Record payment may include:

- Issuing receipt
- Processing the guest account
- Updating required balances
- Ensuring the final total reads zero where full payment has been made.

Process finalised guest account may include:

- Processing payment according to in-house procedures
- Forwarding payment to nominated location
- Forwarding accompanying documentation to nominated location
- Updating required internal boards to reflect guest departure.

Deal with late charges may include:

- Processing charges against obtained credit card details
- Forwarding account for payment, including explanatory letter and copy of supporting evidence of purchase
- Processing charges deemed as write offs.

Assessment Guide

The following skills and knowledge must be assessed as part of this unit:

- The enterprise's policies and procedures in regard to record and account keeping for in-house guests including cancellations and advance payments and deposits
- Principles of front office operations, including reservations, room allocations, reservation processing, check-in and check-out procedures for dealing with individual guests as well as group bookings
- Ability to use standard accounting techniques and principles
- Ability to use the reservation and account keeping system of the host enterprise
- Ability to negotiate with guests, conflict and complaint resolution skills, literacy and numeracy skills and cash handling skills

- Understanding all documents and files used within the manual or electronic front office system that is in operation in the host enterprise
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- Understanding all reception records and reports that need to be created, amended, produced, updated and distributed
- Product knowledge of all the products and services provided by the host enterprise
- Accuracy in the reviewing, checking, posting and analysis of trading data, statistics and guest charges
- Knowledge of the role of night auditing in the overall operational and financial management of the property.

Linkages To Other Units

- Access and retrieve computer-based data
- Perform clerical procedures
- Maintain financial standards and records
- Receive and resolve customer complaints
- Provide accommodation services
- Process a financial sale transaction
- Operate a computerised reservation system
- Maintain quality customer/guest service
- Maintain a paper-based filing and retrieval system

- Prepare business documents
- Use common business tools and technology
- Work cooperatively in a general administration environment
- Prepare financial statements
- Design, prepare and present various types of reports.

Critical Aspects of Assessment

Evidence of the following is essential:

- Understanding of host enterprise policies and procedures in regard to record and account keeping for in-house guests, including cancellations and advance payments and deposits
- Demonstrated ability to accurately establish, maintain and present at least six actual or simulated guest accounts reflecting a diverse and extensive range of representative goods and services provided by a real or simulated industry accommodation property.

Context of Assessment

This unit may be assessed on or off the job

- Assessment should include practical demonstration either in the workplace or through a simulation activity, supported by a range of methods to assess underpinning knowledge
- Assessment must relate to the individual's work area or area of responsibility.

Resource Implications

Training and assessment to include access to a real or simulated workplace; and access to workplace standards, procedures, policies, guidelines, tools and equipment.

Assessment Methods

The following methods may be used to assess competency for this unit:

- Case studies
- Observation of practical candidate performance
- Oral and written questions
- Analysis of a portfolio of evidence including guest accounts, supporting evidence, vouchers, updated folios and proof of reconciliation
- Problem solving to address variances in balancing procedures
- Third party reports completed by a supervisor
- Project and assignment work.

Key Competencies in this Unit

Level 1 = competence to undertake tasks effectively

Level 2 = competence to manage tasks

Level 3 = competence to use concepts for evaluating

| Key Competencies | Level | Examples |
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| Collecting, organising and analysing information | 3 | Undertake reconciliations |
| Communicating ideas and information | 2 | Explain charges to guests |
| Planning and organising activities | 3 | Schedule account keeping activities |

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| | Working with others and in teams | 2 | Resolve discrepancies with charges |
| | Using mathematical ideas and techniques | 3 | Ensure postings to guest account are accurate |
| | Solving problems | 2 | Manage guest queries at check-out |
| | Using technology | 3 | Use the computerised system to process guest accounts and reconcile postings and payments |