

Hospitality hiring rebounds but sector's growth at risk as applicant numbers tumble

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- Vacancies across hospitality up 77% month-on-month in April
- Application numbers fall, with an 82% decline in people applying for work annually

Rumours around the easing of restrictions for hospitality boosted recruitment in the sector in April, but application numbers have fallen sharply as workers turn their back on the sector in favour of more secure job opportunities. That's according to the latest real-time statistics from the world's largest network of job boards, Broadbean Technology.

Hospitality hiring rebounds

According to Broadbean's data, vacancies in hospitality spiked 77% month-on-month in April as the feasibility of Covid-restrictions being eased began to be realised. This marked the highest level of hospitality recruitment since the pandemic began in March 2020, with last month's vacancy numbers up 22% when compared to the spike noted in September as the initial re-opening of the hospitality sector began.

However, the statistics show that the sector still has a long way to go to reach pre-Covid levels, with job vacancies down 48% for April 2021 when compared to February 2020.

Application numbers dwindle as hospitality faces staffing shortages

Broadbean's data also suggest the sector could be facing a shortage of staff, with application numbers down significantly for April. Month-on-month, the number of applicants per vacancy (APV) fell 62% for hospitality roles, with an average of 19 applications submitted for each role last month.

The year-on-year figures show a significant decline, with the number of applications dropping 82% when compared to April 2020. When compared with pre-pandemic levels, APV numbers dropped 57% between February 2020 and April 2021. This is indicative of the hospitality arena not only losing workers to other, more stable, sectors in the last year, but also the impact of Brexit on hospitality, with fewer international staff choosing to remain in or travel to the UK.

Alex Fourlis, Managing Director at Broadbean Technology commented:

"Hospitality has been one of the hardest hit sectors during the pandemic and this spike in vacancies is an encouraging sign that the UK is gradually begin to return to 'normal'. With the Prime Minister announcing plans to further ease restrictions from May 17th we are forecasting even higher job numbers in May. The decline in application numbers is, however, a concern and could hinder the growth of the hospitality sector in the immediate future. Understandably, a number of individuals have chosen to exit the sector as work dried up and businesses now face the challenge of enticing them back. Perhaps more concerningly, though, this drop in applications follows the UK's exit from the EU and potentially suggests that Brexit has had a long-lasting impact on hospitality."

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