

the BookCellar

Come for the books, stay for the wine

ASSISTANT MANAGER, FOOD AND DRINK

Job Description

About The Role

There's nothing better than a good book with a good glass of wine. At the BookCellar, we're building a space where that simple pleasure is at the heart of everything we do. This is an independent bookshop in Stokes Croft, Bristol, with an integrated reading room serving wine, coffee, and light food throughout the day and evening. We have approximately twenty-five covers on the shop floor and meeting rooms for up to twenty-four people — multiple spaces for customers to linger, discover, and enjoy.

As Assistant Manager for Food and Drink, you are first and foremost a bookseller. You love books, you love helping customers find the right title, and you're as comfortable talking about what you've been reading as you are about what you've been drinking. Alongside that, you'll take the lead on our hospitality offer — a deliberately simple, elegant, and premium selection of wines, filter coffees, and light foods, all curated to pair with our books. Everything is prepared and served front of house by our booksellers. There is no back of house, no kitchen, no separate hospitality team. That simplicity is a core part of what makes us different, and you'll be responsible for making it work beautifully.

Key Responsibilities

Bookselling

- Work on the shop floor, welcoming customers and creating a warm, engaging atmosphere
- Help customers find the right books through conversation and recommendation
- Contribute to stock management, including receiving, shelving, and stock-taking
- Support the book and wine pairing concept across the whole team

Food and Drink Operations

- Curate and manage our wine, coffee, and food selection — three reds, three whites, a rosé, and a sparkling by the glass, plus a small by-the-bottle retail selection and a monthly wine pairing
- Build and maintain relationships with wine merchants, coffee roasters, and food suppliers
- Manage stock ordering, rotation, and storage to maintain quality and minimise waste
- Ensure the food and drink offer remains simple, elegant, and executable by all booksellers without specialist equipment or back-of-house support

- Take day-to-day responsibility for food hygiene and safety procedures
- Ensure compliance with licensing requirements and our premises licence obligations
- Train and support the team on food safety, alcohol service, and licensing requirements
- Maintain required records and documentation
- Support food and drink service for events in our meeting rooms
- Serve as a key holder and duty manager at times, with responsibility for opening, closing, and licensing compliance during shifts

What We're Looking For

- Genuine passion for books and knowledge across both fiction and non-fiction genres
- Enthusiasm for hand-selling and recommending titles
- Proven experience in hospitality — bar, restaurant, or similar environment
- A passion for wine, food, and the concept of pairing them with books
- The ability to keep things simple, elegant, and premium — resisting unnecessary complexity
- Strong supplier and relationship-building skills
- A methodical approach to compliance and food safety
- Confidence to train and guide colleagues on the food and drink offer
- Reliability and willingness to muck in across everything
- Personal Licence and Food Hygiene Certificate highly desirable — we'll train and certify if needed

Development and Growth

You'll be part of a team building something different. Stokes Croft is our first outlet, but we're establishing a repeatable model that we plan to scale nationally. As we expand, there are real opportunities for you to develop expertise in your specialism and to take on increasing responsibility and leadership as we grow to new locations.

As an Assistant Manager, you'll also have direct access to the publishing community - authors, publishers, and suppliers - building connections that are rare in retail and genuinely valuable if books are your passion. We're building a business where our team are active participants in the book world, not just booksellers.

We want our whole team to grow with us.

Terms and Benefits

This is a salaried role at £28,000 pro-rata. We are looking for candidates available between 30 and 40 hours per week (including some evenings and weekends), and we will agree a schedule that works for both parties. As with all roles at the BookCellar, the expectation is that you are first and foremost a bookseller, with your managerial responsibilities picked up during quieter periods on the shop floor.

- Salary: £28,000 pro-rata
- Hours: 30–40 hours per week
- Holiday: 28 days per year pro-rata
- Pension: statutory auto-enrolment
- Staff discount: 40% on books, food, and drink

How to Apply

To apply, please send your CV and a cover letter to contact@bookcellar.uk by 3rd April 2026. We will be reviewing applications as they arrive and reserve the right to close the window early, so we'd encourage you to apply promptly.

In your cover letter, please include a recommendation for a book you have read and loved recently, not just the title, but why it moved you, stayed with you, or why you'd press it into someone's hands and, if you're feeling brave, what drink you would pair it with.