

Customer Sales Assistant Application Pack

HELLO FROM THE EXECUTIVE TEAM

Hi there,

We know what it feels like to be where you are: reading an application pack, full of excitement and nerves about what could be, trying to imagine yourself in a new place, in a new job, working with new people.

Natalie has been at Northern Stage since November 2020, moving cities and jobs in the middle of a pandemic to take up her post. Our newly appointed Chief Executive is Michael Slavin, bringing with him a wealth of experience in theatre leadership, commercial operations and hospitality. Michael's arrival signals a new leadership structure, with the creation of his role to work in close partnership with Natalie.

Together, they will steer the organisation through its next stage of development, strengthening its role as a beacon for creativity, community and cultural life in the North East.

We work with a company of brilliant people, some of whom know Northern Stage inside out, and others who are just starting to put down roots. They're all passionate about what we do and together are one of the friendliest teams in theatre.

You'll be joining Northern Stage at an exciting time. We have a refreshed strategy that reflects who we are and how we can be of true service to the audiences and communities of the North East.

So take the leap. Come on the ride with us. We can't wait to meet you.

Michael Slavin, Chief Executive
Natalie Ibu, Artistic Director

GET TO KNOW US

Northern Stage is the largest producing theatre in the North East of England, at the heart of a rich and diverse creative community stretching from Tweed to Tyne and Tees. We support artists, writers, makers, young people and communities, digital creators and businesses who exist for more than just profit.

Based in the heart of Newcastle Upon Tyne on the edge of Newcastle University's city centre campus, we have three stages that enable us to work with an ever-expanding network of artists to share the most entertaining, surprising and imaginative stories from around the world. Our passion

for developing northern talent is key to what makes Northern Stage an inspirational and creative place where everyone is welcome.

THE ROLE

Responsible to: Front of House Manager

Purpose of the role: Responsible for supporting the delivery of Northern Stage welcome, focusing on achieving exceptional customer service, safety and driving ancillary sales through ushering and café bar duties throughout Northern Stage Front of House spaces.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CUSTOMER SALES ASSISTANT

Typical shift for front of house:

Our Front of House team (often called FOH or ushering) usually arrive ready to start

their shift 1hr to 1hr 30 mins before show time. At the beginning of every shift, the Duty Manager will give you a briefing in the staff room. This includes sharing the running times of the show, how many audiences we're expecting, if there are large groups (like schools) or any customers needing extra support. You'll be told about any sensitive content that the audience might ask about, whether photos are allowed, at what point in the show we can bring in customers who may arrive late, or if there are any merchandise or programmes on sale. There are often other activities happening in the building which you'll be told about, such as shows in our other two stages, young people's groups, or hire events. We're a busy place! There might also be updates about the café bar and our food service, or internal news to

share. The Duty Manager will assign you a position in the auditorium where you'll be based during the show. This position has a fire exit door assigned to it, as front of house are an important part of our emergency response.

After the briefing, you'll collect your radio and ticket scanner, and perhaps a card machine and cash float if you're selling programmes and ice creams. The Duty Manager will make sure everyone's radios are working, so that we can all communicate. You'll next check your fire exit route is clear and have a quick look in on the toilets.

Now you're ready to meet and greet our wonderful audience! Here you will be answering questions or giving guidance when required. We welcome all sorts of

people and want to make each person's visit special. You may support a customer who uses a wheelchair or our infra-red hearing loop, or someone who speaks English as a second language. You'll likely see the same faces as our Members and Supporters visit frequently.

Before the house is open - which is when we open the doors for the audience to take their seats - we always run a fire drill so that we know how to evacuate in the event of an emergency! The auditorium is usually open about 30 mins before a show is due to start.

It will be your job to scan patron's tickets and guide them towards their seats. Once everyone is in their seats, you will take your position inside the auditorium and await clearance from Duty Manager. (Clearance

is when the Duty Manager tells backstage technicians that the audience is in their seats). The show now begins! You'll keep watch over the audience, receive late comers, look out for filming/photography and assist where needed. The Duty Manager is always available on the radio to support FOH in the auditorium.

If a show has an interval, FOH will sell ice creams and be a point of assistance for patrons. Once a show is finished FOH will open the doors for the audience to leave, thanking them for coming and often handing out relevant leaflets to encourage customers to come back again.

After the last customer has left the auditorium, FOH will then do a clear up of the auditorium and collect any lost property. The duty manager will then

debrief FOH, where they log lost property and ask about how the show and audience were. You'll be dismissed and can head home.

Typical shift for café bar:

CSAs will arrive to start their shift about an hour before opening time. You may also be called to start when the bar is already open as we move from a daytime shift into the evening. There is always a CSS (Customer Sales Supervisor) working on the bar with the CSAs. In the morning, you'd work together to open the bar. This involves turning on the coffee machine, checking stock levels in the fridges, and making sure all food items are ready and on display. You will ensure the café bar area is clean; cutlery and menus are placed on all tables.

Once we are ready, you'll open the doors to the public!

Daytime service typically consists of taking food and drinks orders through our tills.

There will be cash handling as well as taking payment by cards. You'll also deliver orders from our lunch menu to customers' tables. Just like for a FOH shift, we have lots of returning customers who we want to make feel welcome and appreciated. After all, the income we make on the bar goes straight back into the amazing work

Northern Stage does through our Communities and Young People's programmes as well as the shows we put on our stages!

By contrast, if you're working on the bar for an evening shift, you'll typically be serving drinks including alcohol (beers, wines and spirits) and serving food from our evening

pre-theatre dining menu to tables. It gets busy as we approach a show's start time and again at the interval. You'll need to work quickly and efficiently with the bar team, whilst keeping a smile on your face. It's great to know about our products and help our customers choose something they'll enjoy.

Sometimes you may have to help and resolve feedback from a customer. Our training covers these situations and there's always the Supervisor and Duty Manager to help, too.

After the interval, you and the bar team close and clean down the bar, washing all our re-usable plastic wear, taking out our bins, stocking up for tomorrow, and generally ensuring the working environment is ready for the following day. The Duty

Manager will check in with you and dismiss you on a job well done.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

SALARY: £13.45 an hour

CONTRACT: Casual

WORKING HOURS: During the week and on weekends at varying times e.g. day shifts and evening shifts, as well as bank holidays.

You must be available to work unsociable hours and outside of University term times

LOCATION: Northern Stage, Barras Bridge, Newcastle NE1 7RH

OTHER BENEFITS

- Complimentary or discounted tickets to selected shows (non-transferable and subject to availability)
- Employee Assistance Programme which includes online and face-to-face counselling
- Flu Jab
- Free Eye Test

HOW TO APPLY

Please send a copy of your CV and cover letter, outlining your interest in this role and what skills and experience you would bring to Northern Stage. Your cover letter should not exceed two sides of A4.

Your application should be addressed to Helen McDonnell (Operations Manager Visitor Experience). Along with completing

your CV, please also complete this [Equality Monitoring Form](#).

Please send your application by email to
hr@northernstage.co.uk

(Email subject - Customer Sales Assistant)

Alternatively, you can apply by sending a short video or audio file, telling us about you and your experience.

If you need any support to help you apply or have any questions about the role, please don't hesitate to get in touch and we will do our best to meet your needs. We particularly welcome applications from people of the Global Majority, people who are disabled, neurodivergent and people who are currently underrepresented in our industry.

Receipt of your application will be confirmed by email.

Deadline for applications: Mon 24 Aug

Interview date: Tue 1 Sep, 4-7:30PM

Must be available on Thu 3 Sep 4-7:30PM and Tue 8 Sep 4-7:30PM for training

LIFE AT NORTHERN STAGE

Northern Stage is made up of people from all walks of life, who are passionate about delivering the best possible experience for our visitors.

Our flexible working policies mean that staff can balance work and life to avoid burnout and prioritise wellbeing.

Many of our roles can be worked via a hybrid model, meaning we all have the opportunity to connect with colleagues in

the building on office days, and those who wish to can work from home when required.

We're big on chat at Northern Stage and encourage staff to attend weekly Tea Thursdays in our Café Bar for a chance to take a pause and catch up with friends across departments.

Our recently created book club Northern Page meets once a month to engage in lively discussion about books from all kinds of genres over a cuppa and a slice of cake.

We understand the importance of CPD and encourage staff to keep learning. For example, our communications team enjoy weekly Marketing 101 sessions to keep up to date on best practice and brainstorm new ideas to keep our audiences coming back.

OUR WORK

Our performance programme is a curated mix of self-produced and presented work from visiting theatre companies.

Each year we produce or co-produce four to six shows, including the annual Christmas production for over 5s in the 'Epic Space' of Stages 1 & 2 together. We work with partners at all scales, from independent theatre companies through to large-scale commercial producers, and tour our work across the UK.

We have a strong history of artistically excellent productions and a reputation for bold, visual shows which capture the imaginations of our audiences. These range from Red Ellen to The White Card and the global success of The Last Ship. Alongside

these productions, we deliver a diverse programme of visiting work from companies including ETT, Rifco, National Theatre of Scotland, Northern Ballet, Gecko, Theatre Ad Infinitum, MILK Presents and Deafinitely Theatre.

Increasingly, we are working in association with smaller and independent artists to put the resources of Northern Stage into the support of new work, enabling those artists to leverage additional funds, partners and profile.

SOME OF THE FACTS

Our annual turnover is £4 million. In 2025 we produced/co-produced 4 productions.

Recently, we have been nominated for 15 awards and we won 7 of them. They include:

Trustee Board of the Year at the North East Charity Awards; Excellence in Touring for I, Daniel Blake at the UK Theatre Awards ; Best Family Arts Activity for Best Summer Ever at the Fantastic for Families Awards; Most Inspiring Employer (small business) at the North East Chamber of Commerce's Inspiring Female Awards ;Best Performing Arts Theatre 2023 at the Northern Enterprise Awards; Performing Artist of the Year, David Nellist in I, Daniel Blake at the North East Culture Awards ; Writer of the Year, Dave Johns for I, Daniel Blake at the North East Culture Awards.

PARTICIPATION

We believe that everyone is entitled to the transformative impact theatre can bring. So learning, engagement and co-creation are

central to our work. Current initiatives include:

TECHNICAL SKILLS

We're addressing the skills shortage in technical professions through a range of programmes, from work experience and a weekly tech club for young people, to collaboration with Newcastle College to deliver skills bootcamps for adults.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Our young people's programmes enable young people to learn about the many creative and backstage roles involved in theatre making.

BYKER

This famous inner-city area of Newcastle is home to our rehearsal studios at Raby Street. Our rehearsal presence in Byker has been a catalyst to a more embedded

programme of activity in the local community.

A strong belief in inclusion, equality, tolerance and respect shapes the way that Northern Stage works - it's non-negotiable.

Through all strands of activity, we want to make work that is popular, accessible, politically relevant and culturally diverse. Across our annual season we try to create a balanced programme that is innovative, inspirational and financially sustainable.

We are committed to gender balanced, inclusive and diverse casting and work proactively to ensure representation both on and off stage.

MOST INSPIRING EMPLOYER, NORTH EAST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE INSPIRING FEMALES AWARDS

In 2023, Northern Stage won the Most Inspiring Employer Award, recognising our person-centred, family-friendly work policies. We believe in creating a culture and environment that recognises the pressures on life beyond work, and supporting people to help manage them - regardless of gender.

OUR VISION AND STRATEGIES

MISSION

Our mission is to be a theatre that welcomes everyone. We make and present contemporary theatre, live performance

and creative programmes that spark connections, provoke curiosity and joy and explore new ways of seeing the world.

VISION

Our vision is for Northern Stage to be a leading force in making the North East a great place to create, watch and take part in theatre.

We will be informed and transformed by a dynamic and diverse community of theatre-makers, audiences, participants and collaborators who will have more opportunities to shape and participate in the cultural life of our city and our region.

Together our work will enrich the cultural life of the North East, celebrating difference, advancing inclusion, strengthening communities, and using

theatre as a force for positive change in the world.

VALUES

We work with energy, passion and optimism because we believe theatre has the power to bring people together in extraordinary ways to imagine, explore and shape the future collaboratively.

We act with care and integrity and listen to the people we work with and serve, building relationships grounded in trust and honesty, learning from our experiences, and celebrating differences.

We are serious about inclusion and will question ourselves on our decisions, systems and processes and take action to advance our work with people who have

been under- represented too often and for too long.

NEWCASTLE AND THE NORTH EAST

Newcastle upon Tyne is regularly hailed as one of the best and most popular cities in the UK. It's partly due to the city's compactness, which makes it large enough to be vibrant and exciting whilst small enough to feel like home.

Famous for its nightlife, sport and the warmth and generous spirit of its communities, Newcastle has two universities and a stunning Georgian city centre. It is the gateway to Northumberland and some of the most beautiful countryside in England, while the beaches of North and South Tyneside are only a 15 minute drive or 30 minute metro journey from the city centre.

Over the last 25 years the city has developed a remarkable cultural sector, heralded by Anthony Gormley's Angel of the North and spearheaded by a series of major capital projects that created iconic new cultural spaces like The Glasshouse International Centre for Music and BALTIC Art Gallery, as well as refurbished and extended existing assets such as Live Theatre, Dance City, Tyneside Cinema and Northern Stage itself.

Today the city has a vibrant creative ecology across all art forms. Northern Stage is a core member of Newcastle Gateshead Cultural Venues (NGCV), a consortium of ten cultural organisations, operating 22 venues across visual arts, performing arts, music, dance, film, writing

and literature, heritage, science archives
and museums in Tyne and Wear.

THANKYOU

We look forward to receiving your
application.