

Top tips for making the most of your catering budget

Ordering catering doesn't need to be expensive, follow these tips to get best value.

- Think about the level of hospitality you want to provide and the budget you can spend. Then do a 'what if' to see if catering of a lower level could still meet expectations. Eg you would like to offer a sit down formal lunch but in fact a fork buffet or a finger food lunch would meet your guests expectations.
- Tell your guests what to expect. Specify 'light lunch' if you will be providing sandwiches or 'formal lunch' if you will be providing a sit down waited lunch.
- Send out invitations in plenty of time and ask guests to RSVP – this helps you order the right amount of food. If you regularly organise large events but cannot get RSVP's, keep a record of the numbers so that you can tailor catering accordingly. Review the numbers attending your event – ask invited guests to let you know whether they will definitely be attending. This may save you over or underestimating the amount of people attending and could help save on costs.
- Consider the timing of your events – late evenings and weekends may incur a surcharge and are generally more expensive.
- Set a limit for the amount of drinks you want to provide – this helps the event reach a natural conclusion as well as avoiding any unexpected added cost.
- Have a time schedule and stick to it. Food will be prepared and staff arrangements will have been made for the times that you advise so delays will affect quality and cost.
- For a lighter and cheaper option to a formal three-course lunch or dinner, consider having just one or two courses.
- As an alternative to a fork buffet or finger food consider having lunch in the Staff Dining Room with a reserved table and vouchers for your guests. For real economy and great value we can provide vouchers for lunch in the LSE Garrick or the 4th Floor restaurant.
- Ask for our very reasonably priced all inclusive reception packages. They start from under six pounds per person.
- A credit bar facility and snacks in the George IV pub or the 4th Floor Café Bar are a great option for small numbers or an informal occasion.
- Collect refreshments to save on cost - restrictions may apply (LSE staff and students only)
- If you're still not sure how to make the most of your budget, contact our Hospitality Co-ordinator (x 3732) for advice.