# EasyJet targets nearly 1,000 cabin crew for 2026 with taster days and ‘Returnship’ drive



EasyJet has launched a major recruitment push aimed at filling nearly 1,000 cabin‑crew roles for 2026, with a clear focus on encouraging young people — including those not in employment, education or training — to consider aviation as a career. According to the Independent’s coverage of the campaign, the airline is running free online information sessions and hands‑on taster events at its Gatwick training centre to challenge misconceptions about the job and to make entry routes more visible.

The drive follows research commissioned by the airline that polled 2,000 16‑ to 24‑year‑olds and found widespread confusion about the role and its entry requirements. The survey reportedly showed more than nine in ten respondents did not know there are no minimum academic qualifications to apply, while roughly two‑thirds felt they would be underqualified for training — a finding the airline says helps explain why almost nine in ten young people had never considered a career with an airline. These results underpin easyJet’s push to present cabin crew as a career with progression opportunities, rather than a short‑term job.

Practical outreach is central to the campaign. EasyJet is promoting taster days at its London Gatwick training centre and free online briefings, while stressing the formal training pathway that successful applicants can expect. The airline’s own training information describes a structured four‑week programme covering safety procedures, first aid, aviation security and customer service, with practical assessments — including a swimming element — and accommodation provided for trainees who travel in for the course. The company says graduates leave with their cabin‑crew “wings” and routes into wider roles across the business.

At the same time, easyJet has framed this recruitment effort more broadly through a “Returnship” initiative designed to attract older career‑changers and those over 50 who are considering a return to work or a change of direction. Broad coverage of the initiative in outlets such as the BBC and ITV notes free information sessions and the same hands‑on taster events, and easyJet’s careers pages highlight individual stories — from an opera singer to a chef and an ex‑radio presenter — intended to challenge stereotypes about who can be cabin crew. The airline says these measures are intended to widen the pool of applicants and reflect a deliberate attempt to value life experience.

Industry outlets and aviation analysts have framed the recruitment drive as a response to wider staffing pressures in the sector. CAPA — the aviation analytics group — and other commentators note that airlines have been seeking to broaden talent pipelines and increase hires among older cohorts as competition for experienced staff intensifies. EasyJet itself has publicised targets of hiring more than a thousand crew in the recruiting cycle and presents the campaign as part of an annual intake that supports network growth and operational resilience.

Michael Brown, easyJet’s director of cabin services, told the Independent the airline wanted to show young people that the role offered variety, teamwork and longer‑term opportunity, adding: “If you have enthusiasm, people skills and a willingness to learn something new, our taster sessions could be the perfect first step.” Aviation minister Mike Kane welcomed the initiative in remarks carried by the Independent, saying: “It’s fantastic to see British firm easyJet investing in our young people,” and linking the effort to government aims to broaden access to rewarding careers.

The campaign addresses a real barrier — perception — but its success will depend on converting interest into applications and completed training places. EasyJet’s research suggests ignorance about entry requirements is a significant hurdle, and taster events and Returnships may help shift that. Yet the target of nearly 1,000 hires for 2026 comes against a backdrop of fluctuating demand, evolving operational needs and intense competition for labour across the industry, meaning delivery of the ambitions set out by the airline will be watched closely by industry observers, recruiters and policymakers alike.

### 📌 Reference Map:

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/easyjet-cabin-crew-recruitment-drive-b2809238.html), [[2]](https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/easyjet-cabin-crew-recruitment-drive-b2809238.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/easyjet-cabin-crew-recruitment-drive-b2809238.html), [[5]](https://careers.easyjet.com/en/orange-spirit/easyjet-welcomes-career-changers-on-board)
* Paragraph 3 – [[6]](https://careers.easyjet.com/sitemap/career-areas/cabin-crew/cabin-crew-training), [[5]](https://careers.easyjet.com/en/orange-spirit/easyjet-welcomes-career-changers-on-board)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c9v8pe03gjeo), [[4]](https://www.itv.com/news/2024-08-07/cabin-crew-recruitment-drive-launched-by-easyjet), [[7]](https://centreforaviation.com/news/easyjet-launches-returnship-cabin-crew-recruitment-initiative-1275963), [[5]](https://careers.easyjet.com/en/orange-spirit/easyjet-welcomes-career-changers-on-board)
* Paragraph 5 – [[7]](https://centreforaviation.com/news/easyjet-launches-returnship-cabin-crew-recruitment-initiative-1275963), [[5]](https://careers.easyjet.com/en/orange-spirit/easyjet-welcomes-career-changers-on-board), [[6]](https://careers.easyjet.com/sitemap/career-areas/cabin-crew/cabin-crew-training)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/easyjet-cabin-crew-recruitment-drive-b2809238.html), [[3]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c9v8pe03gjeo)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/easyjet-cabin-crew-recruitment-drive-b2809238.html), [[3]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c9v8pe03gjeo), [[7]](https://centreforaviation.com/news/easyjet-launches-returnship-cabin-crew-recruitment-initiative-1275963)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/easyjet-cabin-crew-recruitment-drive-b2809238.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/easyjet-cabin-crew-recruitment-drive-b2809238.html> - EasyJet has started a cabin crew recruitment drive encouraging young people aged eighteen to twenty four, including those not in employment, education or training, to explore careers in aviation. The airline intends to recruit nearly one thousand cabin crew for 2026 and will run taster sessions at its Gatwick training centre. Research commissioned by easyJet of two thousand young people revealed misconceptions about the role; more than nine in ten were unaware no minimum educational qualifications are needed and two thirds felt under qualified. Michael Brown and aviation minister Mike Kane welcomed the initiative as a route to opportunity today.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c9v8pe03gjeo> - BBC News reported that easyJet launched a recruitment campaign called Returnships aimed at encouraging people aged over fifty and career changers to consider cabin crew roles. The story described free online information sessions and hands‑on taster events at the airline’s Gatwick training centre, and cited easyJet research showing proportions of over fifties contemplating new careers. Michael Brown, director of cabin services, was quoted saying being cabin crew is a job for anyone with the skills, regardless of age. The report highlighted how the initiative responds to industry staff shortages and seeks to challenge misconceptions around age and the profession today.
4. <https://www.itv.com/news/2024-08-07/cabin-crew-recruitment-drive-launched-by-easyjet> - ITV News covered easyJet’s Returnship recruitment drive, reporting the airline is targeting over fifties and career changers with the aim of broadening the pool of cabin crew applicants. The piece explained the campaign offers free online career information and in person taster sessions at the Gatwick training centre, and referenced research by easyJet showing many older people have considered changing careers. Michael Brown was quoted emphasising that cabin crew is a role for anyone with the right skills, and the report stated the initiative forms part of easyJet’s wider annual recruitment drive that will create hundreds of cabin crew vacancies.
5. <https://careers.easyjet.com/en/orange-spirit/easyjet-welcomes-career-changers-on-board> - EasyJet’s careers site describes a recruitment campaign showcasing career changers, including an opera singer, chef and ex‑radio presenter, to challenge stereotypes about cabin crew. The page states the airline aimed to recruit over one thousand new cabin crew in the year, highlights research polling two thousand British adults that revealed misconceptions about skills and training, and explains training takes four weeks to first flight. Michael Brown is quoted encouraging applicants from diverse backgrounds and noting life experience is valuable. The feature promotes early careers, work experience and taster events, and invites interested candidates to apply through easyJet’s careers portal today.
6. <https://careers.easyjet.com/sitemap/career-areas/cabin-crew/cabin-crew-training> - EasyJet’s cabin crew training page outlines the four week programme delivered at training centres in London Gatwick and Milan Malpensa, covering safety procedures, first aid, aviation security, customer service and cabin service standards. Prospective recruits are informed about pre‑course work, practical exercises including swimming assessment, and hotel accommodation during training for out of base trainees. The page stresses safety and customer care, notes trainees receive comprehensive assessment and will graduate with cabin crew ‘wings’, and promotes the role as varied with progression opportunities. It also links to application details and invites interested applicants to apply via the careers portal today.
7. <https://centreforaviation.com/news/easyjet-launches-returnship-cabin-crew-recruitment-initiative-1275963> - CAPA reported on easyJet’s Returnship initiative launched to encourage people over fifty, career changers and those wishing to ‘unretire’ to become cabin crew. The article summarises the airline’s survey of two thousand over fifties, which found many had considered new careers, and describes plans for free online career information sessions plus an in person taster at the Gatwick training centre. CAPA noted easyJet has increased hires among older cohorts and said the campaign was timed ahead of the carrier’s wider recruitment drive offering hundreds of cabin crew roles for the coming recruitment cycle to broaden talent pools.