

Frequently Asked Questions

Preferred Travel Agency Program & Recertification

- 1) **Q: What is the Preferred Travel Agency program?**
A: Marriott's Preferred Travel Agency (PTA) program provides accredited travel agencies with a Preferred (10%) commission level for all transient commissionable bookings made across Marriott's portfolio of brands worldwide. This program was instituted in 1999 and has two criteria. The first criterion is that an agency owner or manager must electronically accept the terms of being a Preferred Travel Agency. The second criterion requires that one consultant within an IATA/ARC/IATAN/TIDS location completes the Hotel Excellence! training program and annual continuing education requirements. Agencies not fulfilling both of these criteria will be a Standard Travel Agency with Marriott and will be paid an 8% commission on all transient commissionable bookings. The Preferred Travel Agency does not apply to The Ritz-Carlton Hotels. Travel Agencies can access their Preferred Travel Agency status by visiting <https://hotelexcellence.marriott.com>.

- 2) **Q: Why is Marriott requiring agencies to recertify?**
A: The Hotel Excellence! training was designed to provide top quality education enabling travel consultants to more confidently, efficiently, and therefore, more profitably sell hotel rooms. Since the launch of Hotel Excellence! and the Preferred Travel Agency program in 1999, Marriott has never required additional action on the part of agencies or the more than 215,000 certified consultants around the world, but now wants to ensure their continued engagement, education and preference for our powerful portfolio of brands. In 2014, Marriott launched Hotel Excellence! on a new platform and is asking consultants to refresh their knowledge of the industry and Marriott's ground-breaking innovations and expanded portfolio of brands. Specifically, the training includes information about the transformation of the flagship Marriott Hotels brand, as well as details on the company's newest hotel brands –the Autograph Collection, AC Hotels by Marriott, Moxy Hotels and Protea Hotels. Agency owners are simply being asked to annually re-commit to the terms of the Preferred Travel Agency designation.

- 3) **Q: What do I need to do to maintain my Preferred Travel Agency status?**
A: In order for agencies to maintain their Preferred Travel Agency status in 2015, an agency owner or manager must: 1) recertify by electronically accepting the terms of being a Preferred Travel Agency; and 2) have one consultant within their agency complete Marriott's redesigned Hotel Excellence! training. Travel Agencies can view their Preferred Travel Agency status by visiting <https://hotelexcellence.marriott.com>. Agencies must ensure they have met the above criteria prior to **January 31, 2015**, or the agency will default to Standard Travel Agency status on February 1, 2015.

- 4) **Q: What is the duration of my Preferred Travel Agency status?**
A: Agencies will be required to recertify each year in order to maintain their Preferred Travel Agency status for that calendar year. Agencies must meet the Preferred Travel Agency criteria outlined in Question #3 above by **January 31, 2015**. Once the criteria are met, an agency will maintain their Preferred Travel Agency status through December 31, 2015. Annual recertification requirements thereafter will be communicated via the email provided by the agency owner/manager in sufficient time for the criteria to be met for the upcoming calendar year.

- 5) **Q: What is my agency committing to when we sign the Preferred Travel Agency form?**
A: The PTA program was created to recognize and support agencies that demonstrate a commitment towards Marriott's Hotel Excellence! program by having at least one consultant within each agency ARC/IATA/IATAN/TIDS location successfully complete the Hotel Excellence! training and annual continuing education requirement. In addition, we ask PTAs to treat Marriott at the point of sale at least as favorably as any other hotel chain for which each ARC/IATA/IATAN/TIDS location makes reservations.
- 6) **Q: What happens if I my agency doesn't fulfill the criteria?**
A: Agencies have until **January 31, 2015** to meet the Preferred Travel Agency criteria for 2015. If an agency does not fulfill the criteria by that time, they will be designated a Standard Travel Agency and receive the Standard commission level of 8% on all transient commissionable bookings until such time as the criteria has been met.
- 7) **Q: What happens if my agency doesn't meet the Preferred Travel Agency requirements and recertify by January 31, 2015? Will I still be able to fulfill the requirements after that deadline?**
A: If the cutoff is missed, agencies and consultants can recertify at any time. However, any lapse in your agency's qualifications or in agreement to the PTA terms will result in your agency becoming a Standard Travel Agency, and your agency will receive 8% commissions on transient commissionable bookings. Once the PTA criteria has been met, Marriott will elevate your agency to Preferred Travel Agency status, and 10% commissions will be paid from that point forward on all transient commissionable bookings through December 31, 2015.
- 8) **Q: Will I receive reminders about the annual recertification requirements?**
A: Marriott will send two email reminders per year to the email address on file before the current year's recertification expiration date.
- 9) **Q: How should I ensure that Marriott has my agency's email address so that I receive notifications?**
A: Agency owners/managers should register (if they have not done so already) at <https://hotelexcellence.marriott.com> and provide a valid email address. A confirmation email will be sent asking you to confirm receipt. Once that is complete, all communications to the agency owner/manager will be sent to the provided email address.
- 10) **Q: I have multiple ARC/IATA/IATAN/TIDS locations within my organization. How do I commit to the PTA terms collectively for them?**
A: You will need to register at <https://hotelexcellence.marriott.com> for each ARC/IATA/IATAN/TIDS location on whose behalf you are making the commitment to the PTA terms. Each ARC/IATA/IATAN/TIDS location will need to fulfill the PTA requirements as outlined in Question #3.
- 11) **Q: Will my preferred commission levels apply to group business I place with Marriott International?**
A: No. The Preferred Travel Agency program applies to commissionable transient bookings only. Group commissions will be paid in accordance with the signed Group Sales Agreement.

Hotel Excellence! Training & Required Recertification

- 1) **Q: What is the Hotel Excellence! program?**
A: Hotel Excellence! (HE!) is an online training program for professional travel consultants. The training is designed to help travel consultants navigate the ever-changing travel industry landscape, and help their clients choose hotels that best suit their needs and style. The training features interactive scenarios and streamlined tutorials suitable for all levels, ranging from novice to seasoned consultants and is accessible on a new multi-device platform designed to bring useful information to travel consultants with maximum flexibility and convenience. Consultants who previously completed Hotel Excellence! will need to recertify by completing the redesigned and updated training in order to maintain their Fam-Tastic benefits.

- 2) **Q: What has changed with the new Hotel Excellence! training?**
A: Hotel Excellence! has been redesigned to bring you more value. This updated training is designed to provide a robust overview on selling the right hotel based on customer needs and style, while also highlighting groundbreaking innovations from Marriott, information on the transformation of the flagship Marriott Hotels brand, and Marriott's newest hotel brands – Autograph Collection, AC Hotels by Marriott, Moxy Hotels and Protea Hotels. The training is accessible on a new platform bringing you useful information with maximum flexibility and convenience for your busy schedule. You will now have the ability to learn at your own pace by stopping and restarting the training seamlessly. You may choose to begin the training on your tablet while enjoying your morning coffee, switch to your smart phone while on the train to work and then switch back to your tablet during your lunch break. All of these changes were designed with your convenience in mind.

- 3) **Q: Why do I need to re-take the Hotel Excellence! training?**
A: When HE! first launched in 1999, Marriott had eight brands and 1,900 lodging properties across 56 countries and territories. Since that time, not only has Marriott evolved and grown, but so has the industry. Today, Marriott is proud to have expanded to 18 brands and more than 4,000 properties in 78 countries and territories. Re-completing the training will refresh your knowledge of the industry as well as update and enhance your knowledge of Marriott's expansive portfolio of brands and industry-leading programs.

- 4) **Q: I just recently completed the Hotel Excellence! training and became a graduate. Do I have to do it over again now?**
A: Consultants who completed the core Hotel Excellence! training on or after August 1, 2013, will be deferred from taking the new training until fall, 2015. However, these consultants must still go to <https://hotelexcellence.marriott.com> to verify their profile information in order to receive 2015 Fam-Tastic certificates. (See Fam-Tastic FAQs.)

- 5) **Q: How will Hotel Excellence! benefit me as a travel consultant?**
A: In addition to the robust knowledge provided within Hotel Excellence!, qualified graduates gain exclusive access to Marriott's industry-leading Fam-Tastic familiarization rate program, offering discounted rates at the majority of Marriott's 4,000 hotels worldwide. (See the Fam-Tastic topic for more details on this exclusive program.)

- 6) **Q: How will Hotel Excellence! benefit my agency?**
A: We see this training as a great value to your agency, as the training will help your consultants work more efficiently and close more sales, which ultimately benefits your bottom line. This is of particular importance as the travel and tourism landscape changes and customers book travel in new ways. It is more important than ever for travel agencies to demonstrate their value and expertise. We see this program as a smart investment for your agency. Not only is this continuing education program available at no cost to you, but it also gives agencies the opportunity to earn Preferred Travel Agency status.
- 7) **Q: Can I take the training on my mobile device or tablet (not just on my computer)?**
A: Yes. The training is accessible from most web-enabled devices and browsers. See Question #8 below for the complete list. You will now have the ability to learn at your own pace by stopping and restarting the training seamlessly. You may choose to begin the training on your tablet while enjoying your morning coffee, switch to your smart phone while on the train to work and then switch back to your tablet during your lunch break.
- 8) **Q: Is there an app I need to download?**
A: No. The updated Hotel Excellence! training is accessible on the following browsers and devices. This website requires JavaScript and cookies to be enabled and is optimized for the following:
Desktop: Google Chrome (Win 7/Mac OSX); Microsoft Internet Explorer 8 (Win XP), 9-10 (Win 7); Mozilla Firefox (Win 7/Mac OSX).
Mobile: Google Chrome on Android devices, IOS 5+ on iPhone® and iPad® except the iPad® Mini
- 9) **Q: Will my Hotel Sales Specialist (HSS) ID number remain the same?**
A: Yes. Your previous graduate information, including your registration log-in, will be retained in the new system. Make sure to keep your HSS ID in a convenient location as you will need it in order to book your Fam-Tastic rates.
- 10) **Q: I've already started some of the modules but haven't completed them. Will I have to re-take them all?**
A: If you've completed some, but not all, of the HE! training, you will need to start over in the updated training program. However, you will find that much of the content is similar and you should be able to quickly redo those modules previously completed.
- 11) **Q: How long will the new training take for me to complete?**
A: HE! allows you to learn at your own pace. Experienced travel consultants may be able to complete the interactive real-life scenarios in less than two hours. Less experienced or new consultants can choose to review the in-depth tutorials before completing the scenarios and complete the training in 2-5 hours.

Fam-Tastic & Recertification

- 1) **Q: If a consultant does not re-take the core HE training, does this mean they will not receive 2015 Fam-Tastic certificates?**
A: Effective immediately, only consultants who fulfill the annual continuing education requirement are eligible for Fam-Tastic certificates. For 2015, the requirement is to re-complete the core Hotel Excellence! training in order to qualify for 2015 Fam-Tastic certificates, unless you completed the training on or after August 1, 2013, then you just need to visit <https://hotelexcellence.marriott.com> to verify your profile information.

- 2) **Q: Will I still receive the same amount of Fam-Tastic certificates?**
A: We are committed to maintaining the same benefits for our existing graduates. Therefore, consultants who currently receive six or seven certificates as a result of previously completing the “Selling to Demographic Niche Markets,” “Selling to Psychographic Niche Markets,” “Marriott’s International Presence” or “Marriott’s International Resorts and Spas” modules, you will continue to receive six or seven Fam-Tastic certificates upon completing the updated core Hotel Excellence! training. However, new graduates of the Hotel Excellence! training will receive five Fam-Tastic certificates. The following modules are currently unavailable: “Selling to Demographic Niche Markets,” “Selling to Psychographic Niche Markets,” “Marriott’s International Presence” and “Marriott’s International Resorts and Spas.”
- 3) **Q: Does the new annual recertification process take the place of the annual update/verify process for Fam-Tastic certificates?**
A: Yes, for all consultants except those that completed the training on or after August 1, 2013. Those consultants must log on to <https://hotelexcellence.marriott.com> and verify their profile information in order to receive 2015 Fam-Tastic certificates.
- 4) **Q: When should I complete the training to be assured that my 2015 Fam-Tastic certificates will be mailed in time for me to use in early January?**
A: The new training is available now! The sooner you complete it, the faster we can provide you with your 2015 Fam-Tastic certificates and the quicker you can take advantage of the benefits!
- 5) **Q: If I wait until early next year to complete the training, will I still get my Fam-Tastic certificates?**
A: Absolutely! Your 2015 Fam-Tastic certificates will be mailed to you within 4-6 weeks of your graduation date.
- 6) **Q: Marriott is so environmentally-conscious, and yet my Fam-Tastic certificates are paper. Do you have any plans to move to a paperless model?**
A: Yes, Marriott is always looking for ways to go paperless. We are exploring the investment in our technology infrastructure to move to a paperless model in the future. Updates will be communicated through our Reserved For You e-Newsletter sent exclusively to Hotel Excellence! graduates.
- 7) **Q: I have an existing reservation for 2015 on Fam-Tastic rates. Will I need to recertify to take advantage of this rate for this particular stay?**
A: Yes, you will need to recertify in order to receive your 2015 Fam-Tastic certificates, which you are required to present at check-in. (Note: Graduates who completed the training on or after August 1, 2013, will need to ensure they have validated their profile information.)
- 8) **Q: Once I graduate, how can I book the Fam-Tastic rate?**
A: Please visit our website at www.marriott.com/travelagents. You will be asked to provide your IATA number and HSS ID number to check availability and book Fam-Tastic rates. (Be sure to keep your HSS ID number in a convenient location!) Fam-Tastic rates are not bookable via the GDS.

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