



Start here

If you are between 16 and 20 years old

GENERAL

The information following is for students between the ages of 16 and 20. You do need to plan to become a Flight Attendant. It is not as serious as wanting to become a doctor or engineer, but during this course we will equip you with tools that will surely contribute to your career choice.

BASIC CRITERIA

When you think about a Flight Attendant, a very clear picture comes to mind. We have all seen them in movies, books, magazines and in real life. They are friendly, kind and professional people dressed in tailor-made uniforms.

Airlines have very clear specifications for their Flight Attendants. The crew member, being a very important part of the company, portrays the image of the airline he or she works for and therefore plays a significant role in how the public perceive that airline.

The Basic Criteria may differ between airlines, but the following aspects are very important:

- You have to be able to speak English fluently
- A Grade 12 certificate or equivalent qualification
- You have to be able to swim (can be taught)
- You have to be a South African citizen/foreigners may apply, but have less options
- You have to be 18 years and older
- You have to be 1,50m (preferably between 1,58m and 1,83m)

The reasons for the above criteria will now be explained in more detail:

- English is the language of the world. Not having the ability to communicate fluently in English will jeopardize your opportunity to be selected. The pronunciation of words as well as the formulation of sentences is extremely important during interviews.

If you do have difficulty in the above and you know that this is one of your weaknesses, read and speak English as often as you can. The more you practice the easier it becomes.

- A Grade 12 certificate is essential. No airline will accept candidates without a matric or Grade 12 certificate or equivalent qualification. They need to know that you will be able to study hard and pass the daily tests and examinations.
- Candidates often find it amusing that swimming is on the list of basic criteria. Very few aircraft will ever land on water ('ditching' is the term used for an aircraft landing on water), you may ask. This is true, but you could be one of the 0,0001% that will participate in this life-threatening emergency procedure and then you **MUST** be able to save yourself and/or a passenger.

Learning to swim is the same as learning to ride a bicycle. Once you have mastered it, you will never forget how. As a Flight Attendant you will practice your ditching skills every three years at the airline you work for. Swimming lessons are given by all Virgin Active Clubs. We promote a

personal trainer, Heidi, should you live in Boksburg. Please contact her at 072 206 9963. She is friendly, helpful and very patient and will offer you the best training and advice.

- Many domestic airlines recruit and employ candidates that were born in South Africa (South African citizens). South African citizens have a much better chance in securing a position with domestic airlines and a few international airlines.

- Certain domestic airlines will select candidates at age 18, although most airlines (domestic and international) require you to be 20 or 21 years old. As a 21 year old, you have gained more life-experience through studying and/or working. No specific tertiary courses are compulsory. Although I personally believe that obtaining a certificate, diploma or degree in Tourism will enhance your chances as you have a better understanding of the global market and the service industry as a whole.

- Height is another aspect of the basic criteria. In small aircraft with low baggage compartments a tall person will battle to stand upright. The same principle applies in a large aircraft with high overhead stowages. A short Flight Attendant will have difficulty in placing passengers' bags into these stowages.

Each airline has its own height restrictions following the above explanation. You should be honest when asked (telephonically) what your height is. If your height is over or under the specific height required by the airline, you will be sent home at your very first interview.

Your weight must be in good relation with your height.

LET'S START AT THE BEGINNING

There are no compulsory subjects necessary for the above career. The airline will look at your English mark for Grade 12. This gives them a very good indication of your ability to read, write and speak the English language.

Other subjects that can enhance your understanding of the career include Travel and Tourism, Geography and Life Orientation. Make a point of really understanding these subjects as it can give you so much insight into the global environment.

A Flight Attendant do travel, do see and experience (firsthand) all cultures and nationalities. Your understanding of basic concepts regarding flights, passengers, destinations, bookings, weather, countries and continents will be to your advantage when selecting this career.

TAKE NOTE

After your matric examination and holidays, many candidates go off in search of their dream. We have seen this so many times, where girls and boys immediately register for the 6 week external training programme to achieve the CAA license.

Yes, it is compulsory for Flight Attendants to be in possession of a CAA license. CAA stands for The Civil Aviation Authority. This license gives you the right to work onboard an aircraft. It is similar to obtaining a driver's license – you will write examinations and do practical activities. The pass mark is 90%. Do not stress! This can be achieved if you put your mind to it.

Remember, you are now joining the business environment and studying towards what you want to become. Every subject contains interesting, need-to-know facts that is vital to the career.

UNDERSTAND THE INDUSTRY FIRST



There are approximately 6 to 8 external aviation training schools in South Africa. Many are around OR Tambo airport with 1 or 2 in Cape Town.

We do not discredit any of these schools as many of them have high standards, but we want to make you aware of what happens after you have finished the course.

First of all, you will be spending between R9,000.00 and R18,000.00 for this 6-week course. You will receive the CAA license afterwards together with a short 1- or 2-page CV that will be sent to airlines with which the training school has an agreement.

Take note, that there is **NO GUARANTEE** that you will be invited to attend an interview at an airline. The fact is that airlines make their own choice when recruiting and selecting Cabin Crew, irrespective of any input or CV's they receive from outside sources.

Think a moment... You are a brilliant student. Pass all your subjects with 90%. You are the right height, **BUT** you have a very negative attitude. Do you think the airline would like to have you on their team? Of course not, because you will drag everyone else down with you.

Another example. You are still brilliant and pass all your subjects with 100%. You have a wonderful positive attitude and you are a

team player, **BUT** your face is covered with scars and 4 of your front teeth are made out of gold. Even though selecting crew is not a beauty pageant, airlines can be very strict when choosing their Flight Attendants.

So you see, even though you are a brilliant and strong candidate, it still does not guarantee anything.

No external school or course can promise you the position!

SO WHAT NOW?

Plan, plan, plan! We often visit schools. Young candidates come to us and say they only want to fly for a year. Unfortunately, it is not that easy.

Very few airlines employ candidates that are 18 years of age, making it almost impossible to start a flying career immediately after school and/or after your training. The reason for this is that airlines choose candidates with more life and customer experience.

Further on, we will show you the list of airlines and the age requirements.



Very few Flight Attendants fly up to the age of 60. The average amount of years Cabin Crew stay as an employee of an airline is 5.

Let's discuss a few scenarios:

1. At 18, you enroll in the 6-weeks training course. After the course you send your CV to all airlines. You wait, but no airlines contact you. What do you do in the mean time?

Find yourself a temporary job. It can be anything which includes working with customers. Examples are:

- Waiter/waitress at a Coffee Shop/Restaurant
- Call Centre Operator
- Customer Care Attendant

To 'au pair' for a family is not necessarily an appropriate position as many questions during interviews relate to your relationship with other employees. Children do not give you the same feedback as adults.

2. You decide to study for 1, 2 or 3 years at a college, technikon or university. This will immediately be to your advantage as you will now have more exposure to the outside world and students often participate in team projects during their studies.

Should you decide to do the CAA license after year 1, you already have gained more knowledge than the average potential candidate. Your chances will be slightly better when you apply at an airline.

Should you decide to do the CAA license after year 2, you become a much stronger candidate for the position and chances are the Human Resource Departments of many airlines will take note of your CV.

After year 3, it is definitely not necessary to do the CAA license as the airlines that recruit and select at this stage, will offer you the 6-weeks training course for free.



It is very important to note that experience, may it be during studying and/or working, is vital to the success of your interview. You will be able to understand intricate questions better and formulate your answers appropriately.

Remember when we wrote earlier that the average amount of years Flight Attendants work for an airline is 5 years. If you have studied, you will always have another career to fall back on. Even though you do not think about this now, someday you will want to get married and have children. It is not easy to work as a Flight Attendant when you have children, except if you have a very good support system.

AN EXAMPLE OF A FORMAL CV:

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Surname	:	MYENI
First name(s)	:	Thandi
Physical address	:	353 Sunflower Street SUNNYSIDE, 0001
Telephone number	:	012-345 6789
Date of birth	:	23 December 1977
Age	:	32
Gender	:	Female
Nationality	:	South African citizen
Marital status	:	Single
Dependants	:	None
Health	:	Excellent

Home language : Zulu

Other languages : English (speak, read, write)
Afrikaans (speak, read, write)

Identity number : 771223 0000 000

Religion : Dutch Reformed

Driver's license : 08

Height : 1,67m

2. FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS

2.1 BCom degree, University of Pretoria, 1998

Subjects : Business Management
Economics
Accounting
Labour Law
Industrial Psychology
English

2.2 National Senior Certificate, Sunflower High School,
Pretoria, 1995

Subjects : Zulu
English
Afrikaans
German
Biology
Mathematics
Typing

3. WORKING EXPERIENCE (only if you do have part-
time/full-time working experience)

3.1 Name of institution : ABC Promotions
126 Church Street
PRETORIA
0001

Position : Administration Clerk
Duration of employment: April 2005 to present

Duties : Answering the telephone
Administration tasks
Filing
Bookkeeping

4. OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

4.1 CAA license : Aviation Training School
March to April 2007 (6 weeks)

5. TESTIMONIALS

5.1 Mrs Sarah Clark
The Manager
ABC Promotions
126 Church Street
PRETORIA
0001
Telephone number: 012-234 5678

5.2 Mrs JS Sibanda
Aviation Training School
PO Box 234
PRETORIA
0001
Telephone number: 012-123 4567

6. ADDENDUMS

- 6.1 A certified copy of ID
- 6.2 A certified copy of Matric/Grade 12 certificate
- 6.3 One full length photograph
- 6.4 One head-and-shoulder photograph

DECLARATION

I declare that the particulars furnished are true and correct.

T MYENI (Ms)
2009

Date: 1 May

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Please note that photographs taken by a professional photographer will be to your advantage.

Airlines do not mind if you scan your photos on clear A4 white paper. Keep the real photographs on file until the next time you need them.

Tips for photographs:



Dress/skirt : Cover the knees

Shirt (ladies) : With collar (a scarf is optional)
A conservative look (no cleavage showing)



Ladies - **PLEASE REMEMBER** - you have to wear make-up, hair must be tied back, wear small earrings and your nails must be clean and well-groomed.

Pants (men) : Never jeans

HOW TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION

Airlines make use of internal and external recruitment sources. Internal sources refer to candidates who are already employed by the airline, such as Ground Staff or Call Centre personnel. This is a fast and less expensive way for the company to recruit and they already have information of the candidate's performance in his/her personnel records.

The most common way for airlines to reach the public is through advertising in the newspaper. Many candidates looking for employment at airlines turn to the 'job offer' pages of daily and weekly newspapers.

If you log onto our website www.cabincrew.co.za you will find a button 'Airlines seeking Cabin Crew'. This is an added service we offer to inform you about all the vacant Flight Attendants positions at the airlines. Please make use of this offer as it will save you time and money.

Now that you know about the advertisement and the basic criteria necessary to apply for the position, the following step will be to work on your CV. Remember that only information relevant to



the position must be presented in your CV. For the Flight Attendant position, you need a 2 to 3 page CV (proper layout, no spelling mistakes), 1 x full length photograph, 1 x head-and-shoulder photo, 1 x certified copy of your ID and 1 x certified copy of your Matric/Grade 12 certificate. If you do have a CAA license then add that as another certified copy to your CV.

Airlines receive hundreds of CV's after every advertisement placed in the newspaper. It is frustrating for the human resource manager and his/her assistants to have to read many pages of inappropriate information in your CV.

You should wait patiently. Becoming a Flight Attendant is often a long-term goal. It is a process that can take up to 8 weeks, sometimes longer.

It is also impossible for the airline to phone every applicant to tell them they were not successful. They will spend more time on the telephone than going through CV's. (Please do understand this as many candidates ask why the airlines do not come back to them.) To emphasize this point, I will give you an example:

I had a one-on-one session with a pretty young lady a few weeks ago. She attended an Open Day with Qatar Airways. For those of you who know, Open Days are for everyone. This was exactly such a day as 1 000 potential candidates turned up for the event.

She said this was daunting as there were only 2 representatives from Qatar. I can imagine how frustrating that must have been for everyone. At the end of the 4 hour session, everybody was send home with the explanation that they would be phoned before 21h00 that evening. Needless to say, she is still waiting for the call.

Think about the bigger picture here - 2 representatives and 1 000 applicants. It would have been impossible for them to have phoned each individual. Do you not think so? On the other hand they should not have made that promise. They should rather have said that they will only phone the successful candidates.

If, after 8 weeks, you have not heard from the airline, the reasons can be that:

- you do not meet the requirements as stated on the advertisement or
- the HR department have received enough applications and cannot process more - there is a cut-off date for this.

AIRLINES

Airlines can be categorized into 3 groups. They are commercial airlines, charter airlines and corporate flying.

COMMERCIAL AIRLINES

Commercial airlines are the well-known airlines that carry large numbers of passengers within and over the borders of countries.

The following airlines are included in this group (remember that we only discuss airlines which employ people within South Africa):

- ❖ South African Airways (domestic, regional and international)
- ❖ Comair Ltd (is the holding company for the following 2 airlines* * *)
 - * * * British Airways domestic and Kulula.com (domestic and regional)
- ❖ 1time (domestic)
- ❖ Mango (domestic)
- ❖ SA Express (domestic and regional)

- ❖ Airlink (domestic and regional)
- ❖ Emirates Airlines (international)
- ❖ Etihad Airlines (international)
- ❖ Qatar Airlines (international)

CHARTER AIRLINES

Charter airlines are most often smaller companies that rent their aircraft out to other companies, institutions and tour operators. They will fly tourists to specific destinations. As an incentive for their hard work, large companies will send their employees to luxury destinations and these flights are operated by charter airlines.

The flight deck and cabin crew stay with the passengers for the duration of the trip.

CORPORATE FLYING

Many large companies have their own aircraft. These aircraft carry shareholders and top management of the company to their meeting places. The flight deck and cabin crew will stay for the duration of the meeting (often less than a day) and return the executives to their office.

SAA

Being the national carrier of our country, South African Airways is the biggest airline operator in SA. The company is based in Johannesburg, but operates from OR Tambo as well as Cape Town. This means that employees (Flight Attendants included) can live in and around Johannesburg and Cape Town.

South African Airways have a large pool of Flight Attendants. Currently the number of Flight Attendants vary between 1 800 and 2 200. To be able to work for this company is many potential candidates' dreams. It is similar to having your bread buttered on all sides. You are based in your home country, yet work on domestic as well as overseas routes.

Nowadays, South African Airways recruit and select making use of the Quest Recruitment Company.

The advertisements for recruiting potential Flight Attendants are placed in The Star and The Sunday Times. (*Under the 'Airlines seeking Cabin Crew' button on our website, you will find how we can assist you with the above*).

The basic criteria may differ from advertisement to advertisement as the airline sees it fit. Sometimes the airline decides to select candidates with CAA licenses and at other times one may apply for the position without the CAA license. Make sure that you

comply with the criteria asked on the advertisement (be honest), otherwise you will be wasting your time.

Prepare yourself beforehand if you decide to apply at an airline. It has never been this easy to search for information. Each airline's website will provide you with the company's history, its CEO, the aircraft they make use of, etc.

Comair Ltd

Comair Ltd is the holding company for British Airways domestic and Kulula.com. Comair Ltd has grown tremendously in the last 10 years. Kulula.com was the first low-cost airline established in South Africa. This brought about a huge change in the airline environment as many people who could not never afford to fly, now have the opportunity to. The market, being very competitive, gave rise to more low-cost airlines being established.

Kulula.com operated their very first flight in August 2001 to Cape Town and have since become very successful, capturing a high percentage of the South African travel market. This airline is extremely innovative and their creativity is exciting, funky and they are keeping up (and exceeding) current trends in the industry.

When the question about the routes of British Airways is asked in an interview, many interviewees make the mistake of thinking that British Airways (in South Africa) operates flights into London and



New York. Please note that British Airways domestic IS NOT British Airways Mainline which is based in London. Therefore, once again, make sure you know the history of the airline when you are invited for an interview.

Comair Ltd has less Flight Attendants than South African Airways. British Airways have approximately 380 cabin crew and Kulula.com about 200. Kulula.com started with only 16 crew members and 1 aircraft in 2001.

Comair Ltd recruits by making use of internal as well as external recruitment sources. This method offers current employees the opportunity to apply for the position. External sources will be selected by making use of newspaper advertisements in The Star and The Sunday Times. Basic criteria and procedures for sending in your application are stipulated in the advertisement. Follow these procedures correctly to avoid wasting your own as well as the Human Resource Department's valuable time.

Comair Ltd will only employ candidates from age 21 with or without the CAA license. At age 21, you have had the time or opportunity to have worked for three years, or to have studied for three years or a combination of both. Even if you are older than 21, you still need the 3 years working and/or studying experience.

The airline offers internal training. This means that the company will, after recruitment and selection, first offer you employment and then start with the 6-week training programme.

Need to know information (questions that could be asked) consists of:

- This company has 2 CEO's sharing the position. Who are they?
- The type of aircraft used by BA and Kulula.com?
- The travelling destinations – domestic and regional?
- In which year was BA domestic established?

1time

1time opened its (cabin) doors in 2004, grabbing the opportunity of becoming the 2nd low-cost airline to operate its aircraft in South Africa. It was born out of a unique opportunity to launch South Africa's first GENIUNE low-fare airline. 1time differentiates itself from other airlines by 3 well-known facts. The one being the only airline that offers comfortable legroom in the cabin, the 2nd fact that the airport taxes and additional costs to travelling are included in the price making the process of purchasing tickets, easy to understand, and lastly that its advertised airfares are

offered on every seat, every flight and every day – irrespective of the time or day that the reservation is being made.

Although 1time stands under the umbrella of low-cost airlines, it has decided from the beginning not to save on their Flight Attendants' uniforms. This also differentiated the airline from other low-cost airlines. 1time had a formal uniform and has already had their first change of uniform in 2008.

Mango

Mango airline operates from OR Tambo International airport. Their operation's building is inside the domestic terminal of the airport. The airline is owned by South African Airways. Their project to launch a new low-cost airline was originally given the code name TULCA (The Ultimate Low Cost Airline).

They launched in October 2006 and operations began on the 15th of November 2006. Currently the airline leases 4 Boeing 737-800's from SAA, but plans to introduce more aircraft soon. The CEO of the company is Mr Nico Bezuidenhout. The airline is proud about their Mango TV and in-flight entertainment offered on every flight.

Airlink

SA Airlink is privately owned. It was restyled in 1995 from a history book dating back to the formation of Midlands Aviation in

1967. Its aim is to link smaller towns, regional centers and hubs throughout South Africa.

In 1997, Airlink joined SAA and SA Express in a powerful strategic alliance which led to the establishment of a leading aviation network in Africa.

About 65 000 passengers travel with this airline on a monthly basis. They make use of the following aircraft: The Jetstream 41, the ERJ 135 jet aircraft, the BAe 146-200 and BAe 146-RJ85 aircraft.

SA Express

SA Express was established on the 24th of April 1994. It is the fastest growing regional airline in Africa. The airline's head office is at OR Tambo International Airport.

The company's core values are:

- Safety First
- Service before self
- Getting the message across
- Self-development
- Integrity is key

- Accountability

The above information was taken from each airline's website.

EXTRA INFORMATION

The names and contact detail of External Training Schools:

1. Big Sky Aviation Training Academy
Hanger number 11B
Wonderboom Airport (near Pretoria)
Telephone number: 012-543 3683
E-mail address: daphnedebeer@yahoo.co.uk
2. Cranfield
90 4th Road, Chartwell
Fourways
Telephone number: 011-708 2598 or 011-708 2588
Fax number: 011-708 1352
E-mail address: info@cranfield.co.za
3. Flitedux
33 Kelly Road
Jet Park
Telephone number: 011-397 8428
E-mail address: admin@flitedux.co.za

4. QAS

92 Howard Avenue

Benoni

1500

Telephone number: 011-421 4183

E-mail address: qasinfo@abcskills.co.za

5. Future Flyers

106 Loper Street

Unit 3

Spartan

Telephone number: 011-974 4303

E-mail address: hannelize@futureflyers.co.za

6. Damelin College

Centurion Campus

Telephone number: 012-665 4824

Damelin College Centurion offers a complete 1 or 2 year course in Cabin Crew Training. The course fee for the year is approximately R30 000 and registration closes middle December and re-opens in January. The College only registers 25 candidates per year.

