

## **Q Hotels supporting schools and colleges in Northamptonshire**

### **About Q Hotels**

Hellidon Lakes Golf and Spa Hotel, Northamptonshire is a Q Hotel with 120 employees in a rural location working with 3 local colleges: Rugby College, Oxford and Cherwell Valley Colleges. They are also working with Northamptonshire secondary schools and colleges.

### **Why did Q Hotels get involved in supporting education?**

Q Hotels has recently trained thirty Diploma Employer Champions and through this the management of the hotel became aware of the Diploma scheme. It was identified as huge opportunity to get more young people interested in a career in hospitality and also to change the perception of the industry. Many young people think of the hotel business as being defined by long hours and low pay, rather than a career with extensive development opportunities, longevity and a variety of options. In the short term the business also saw the diploma as a way to develop their younger supervisors, building management and leadership skills through working with young people.

### **How are Q hotels supporting schools and colleges?**

At the start of placements, the HR Manager goes into the school or college to introduce the work of the hotel. Students are encouraged to come into the hotel and teachers are offered opportunities to work shadow managers. Hotel supervisors work directly with young people on the recruitment challenge in the Diploma.

For each module of the diploma, the hotel works with the college to identify the best way of supporting students. This could be visits by staff to the school, placements in the hotel for students, roleplay with supervisors.

Although the hotel's involvement is still in its infancy, managers are already seeing the value of their college partnerships. The colleges report that the students look forward to staff visits – offering a different perspective and the sense of working in the 'real world' - that the students find motivating. The hotel supervisors involved in the programme are already demonstrating increased confidence and look forward to the college visits. The HR manager sees the benefits as a 'double whammy' – staff development for the hotel and learning opportunities for the young people. It does take staff time but it's an investment that is worthwhile in business terms, to provide inexperienced supervisor/managers with invaluable development.