

Food and Beverage Manager of the Year

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Richard Ellison

Old Course Hotel, Golf Resort & Spa, St Andrews

Richard Ellison has been at the Old Course Hotel for just over a year, during which time guest spend on food and beverage has risen by 10%. He was part of a major relaunch of the fine-dining Road Hole Grill in April after a four-month refurbishment. He has also led a new programme with the guest relations team, offering themed snacks to certain guests, known as the VIP Room Amenity Programme.

In addition, Ellison has brought a 33% increase in conference and events revenue, thanks to the introduction of tiered menus in the banqueting and fine-dining division.

He has sought to drive new business among families by leading a new children's food and beverage programme at the hotel. There are pizza-making days at Sands Restaurant, new mocktails for teenagers and complimentary milk for babies.

Overall Ellison is in charge of eight food and beverage outlets at the hotel, covering every option from light snacks to the three-AA-rosette Road Hole Grill.

Eight candidates coached by Ellison were put up for a Hospitality Industry Trust scholarship, and all won a placement that included a stage at the Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne in Switzerland as well as training at the Jumeirah Beach Resort in Dubai.

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Ellison also secured a two-week secondment for chef Paul Hart with two-Michelin-starred Andrew Fairlie, and recently completed a "Developing Management Potential" programme at Cranfield University in Bedfordshire.

Previously Ellison worked as general manager at Norwood Hall Hotel in Aberdeen, and spent five years at Gleneagles, rising to operations manager.

Judges were hugely impressed. According to Debrah Dhugga, a consultant with Greenacres, Ellison was, "a great candidate". She added: "He's part of a really good venue, and is leading some fantastic training programmes."

THE SHORTLIST

Richard Ellison
Old Course Hotel,
Golf Resort & Spa,
St Andrews
Steven Laine
Grosvenor House
Hotel, London
Jamie Stevens
Abode Hotel, Bath