



TEACHER'S PROFILE



Aqeel Ilyas

Aqeel is an ACCA member and holds a BSc Honours degree in Applied Accounting from Oxford Brookes University. With nearly 7 years' experience in hospitality finance, Aqeel has developed extensive knowledge and expertise in the hospitality industry while working for high end 5 star hotels, Michelin restaurants and international brands such as Intercontinental Hotels Group.

Aqeel's areas of expertise include critical evaluation of the performance of hospitality enterprises in the light of their business objectives, focusing on the financial wellbeing of the business and setting up procedures and systems to provide accurate and meaningful financial analysis to all stakeholders.

Aqeel will be sharing his knowledge and expertise with budding hospitality professionals at the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the UK.



Paul Berncastle

The Housekeeping Department is often regarded as the 'backbone' of the Hospitality Industry in hotels. After the investment in the building of the asset which is the hotel, the most profit and expense is commonly associated with the Rooms Division Department. Its proper management is vital to the business' ongoing success. Paul Berncastle is highly regarded within the field of housekeeping and is a member of the UK Housekeepers Association. A good communicator and presenter, Paul recognizes the importance of developing talented individuals interested in pursuing careers in hospitality. He has taken time out from his busy schedule to share his extensive knowledge and experience in the specialist fields of hospital housekeeping, commercial small hotel housekeeping and international hotel chain executive housekeeping at 3, 4 and 5-star hotels. Paul has worked in top international landmark properties for well known groups such as Le Meridien, Hilton, and Intercontinental Hotel Group as Executive Housekeeper or Head of Department and is looking to sharing his knowledge of housekeeping and rooms divisions management, hotel openings, refurbishment, restructuring and cost control.



Natalie O'Dalaigh

Natalie has 25 years experience in the hospitality industry and obtained a BSc in Hotel and Catering Management at Surrey University. For 15 years she specialized in HR in hotels, including as Human Resources Manager of DUKES LONDON, the 5 AA red star boutique hotel in St James's, London which was awarded the World's Leading Boutique Hotel. Prior to this she was HR Manager at One Aldwych hotel, Covent Garden and has also worked for international brands including Four Seasons and Radisson. Natalie is currently working full time in Learning and Development, delivering HR Procedure and service related training sessions and one on one coaching sessions to managers and team members in corporate guest services. Natalie has vast experience in employee relations, recruitment and training and is passionate about attracting and developing great people for the service industry. She has delivered motivational speeches at hospitality schools and colleges in the UK and Switzerland to assist those wishing to join the industry.



Kati Saarinen

Kati graduated in Finland with a Diploma in International Hospitality before relocating to London as a Tourist Guide for Scandinavian tour operators. With over 10 years experience in the hotel and hospitality trade Kati has worked through the ranks from Reception to Head of Department within Rooms Division. Her experience has been gained in some of the most established and well-known hotels in London. The major milestone in her career was being headhunted to join the pre-opening team, as Front of House Training Manager for the Cumberland Hotel. She was responsible for recruitment, training and development of the Front of House team as well as co-writing the standard operation procedure for a new brand. This major role in the opening of one of London's most exciting and glamorous hotels gave Kati the opportunity to unleash her passion for first class training and staff development. Kati's last position was a high-end corporate hotel in the City as Executive Front of House Manager. She is currently lecturing on Front of House Operations - through the guest cycle from arrival to departure and beyond. The sessions include learning and understanding your role on the Front of House 'stage', dealing with challenging situations with the guests and how to embrace and navigate in to the heart of the hotel.



Barbel Moehrle

As Hospitality and Conference Manager for Aramark, Baerbel is based at the University of Westminster. She is in charge of all hospitality and events for the 6 different sites of the university. With over nine years experience, she has a strong background in organising, planning and running of events. Prior to joining Aramark at the University of Westminster, Baerbel was heading the Events team at the luxurious central London hotels, Jumeirah Carlton Tower and Jumeirah Lowndes Hotel. Previous roles include Events Sales Manager at Park Plaza Victoria London, Senior Events Manager at Renaissance Chancery Court Hotel London and Events Coordinator at Hamburg Marriott Hotel Germany. Baerbel's career in hospitality began with a three-year internship at the Millennium Hotel Stuttgart, Germany, and completed with an Economics degree at the University of Cooperative Education (Ravensburg, Germany), specialised in Trade Fair, Congress and Event Management.



Biagio Gaeta

Biagio holds a degree in Economics from the University of Salerno with a major in International Trade. He started his international experience in the hospitality industry with Disney working as Italian cultural representative at the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida. He then moved to London to take part in the very first edition of the Master in Hospitality and Hotel Management organized by the Italian Chamber of Commerce. After the Master, he joined Millennium and Copthorne Hotels working first in the front office and then in the sales and marketing team at the Millennium Hotel in Knightsbridge. In October 2008 he joined Morgans Hotel Group as Regional Sales Coordinator where he managed the relationship with the Italian corporate accounts. In 2010 he joined Courthouse Doubletree by Hilton, while today he works for Four Seasons Hotel London at Park Lane as Catering Sales Manager.



Giorgio Abis

Giorgio is a qualified IT network engineer and remote support engineer, who transformed his passion for high quality food, wine and customer service in a career in the hospitality industry. He has over 15 years' experience in Restaurant and Hotel Management gained both in Italy and in the UK. However, Giorgio's main specialisation is in the management of fine dining restaurants such as the Italian Restaurant Zafferano in London, and of high profile Restaurant Groups. Since 2008 Giorgio has been Operations Director at London Fine Dining Group where he provides direction to the different departments to ensure a cross functional culture of continuous improvement as well as the team professional growth and development in order to offer to the clients always the best and highest quality in eating out.



Jarrod Agatanovic

If rooms are the bones of a hotel then Food and Beverage is its soul. It is where the most lasting impression will be felt and will play an enormous part in determining guests' overall experience. With a career in hospitality spanning over a decade, Jarrod brings a wealth of knowledge and practical experience to the course. Having both opened and re-launched numerous restaurants, and having managed many more as both stand-alone and as part of larger hotel properties, Jarrod is able to offer a unique insight and fully understands the dynamic and challenging nature of today's market. Using a pragmatic and entrepreneurial approach, he has achieved success in large branded environments for Hilton and Intercontinental, across a range of luxury and boutique properties.



Stefano Potortí

Stefano was born in the south of Italy and graduated in Economics with a major in Marketing and International Marketing from the University of Pisa. He then completed a specialist course in Marketing and Communication in the hospitality industry and Human Resources Management in Tourism. Stefano has always been passionate about food and restaurants. He started working in hospitality as a Sales and Marketing Manager, Trainer and General Manager. He has been working in London in management roles since 2003. From 2005 to 2009, he worked as a Managing Director for the then new restaurant chain, Obika Mozzarella Bar. In 2009, he decided to start his own business and created Sagitter One, a company that now comprises of seven people. Sagitter One is a boutique hospitality consultancy that has its core foundation in Restaurants, Coffee Shops, Bars, Pubs & Event Management. A team of professional consultants provides a full-service for start-up and grown up restaurant businesses from concept to completion, including branding, property finding, recruitment, PR and marketing. Passion, expertise and professionalism are their stand-out qualities. Stefano is also a Senior Consultant and board member for the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the UK in London. In addition, he is the co-founder of the UK delegation of the Federazione Italiana Cuochi, which since 1978 has brought together Italian chefs working both in Italy and abroad.



Francesco Bongarra

Francesco Bongarrà is the Parliamentary Chief Correspondent of the Italian National Newsagency ANSA, a news commentator for Italian National TV broadcaster RAI and for the BBC. He also writes op-eds and columns on Italian and international political for some Italian leading newspapers and magazines. For the past 20 years he covered the activities of the Italian Parliament and of the top people in the Italian institutions. He has a proven experience as Foreign Correspondent: he has been posted in London, Berlin, and Buenos Aires. Before joining ANSA, he was the Chief of the Press office of the City of Palermo, and covered Sicily for Reuters and The Times. He lectures Crisis Communication at the Imperial College MBA, Journalism and communication skills at the University of Messina (Sicily), Parliamentary journalism at the LUMSA University (Rome) and Media and lobbying techniques at the University of Tor Vergata (Rome). Since 2012 he is the non-resident Ambassador of the Republic of San Marino to Perù.



Chiara Cubuzio

Chiara is a people-focused, strategic, innovative and creative Learning and Development professional. She is a visionary thinker with meticulous organizational skills, data driven and attention to best practice. Chiara started her career in hospitality in 2014 when she moved to London and joined IHG as a Food and Beverage Team Member. In only three years, Chiara managed to collate six prestigious awards, be involved in two global marketing campaigns and get three significant job promotions. Chiara has quickly grown into a social, agile and dynamic HR professional. She also has a Bachelor's degree in Neurosciences. Chiara is now Multi-Property Learning and Development Officer at Marriott Hotels, Marriott International's flagship brand with more than 500 global locations, where her mission is to use her skills and imagination to innovate and reinvent the future of travel.