

## **Matthew Bennett**

### **Financial Controller, Derbyshire Hotel**

#### **Winner: Financial Management Stage Three, completed February 2017**

After completing his Degree in Accounting and Finance at Lincoln University in 2011, Matthew joined the Derbyshire Hotel team in the November as an Accounts Assistant. It was his first real insight into the everyday tasks completed in finance within the hospitality industry.



Matthew found that, whilst his degree gave him a basic understanding of accounts as a whole, he found that the processes in the hospitality industry varied slightly. The opportunity to study the HOSPA Financial Management Programme, specifically tailored to hospitality, was a fantastic opportunity to increase his knowledge and he knew it would be very beneficial to his career.

*Left: Matthew receiving his award from HOSPA President, Harry Murray*

Matthew says “It is one of the best things I have done and was definitely worth it. The course tutors were fantastic and I would definitely recommend it to anyone wanting to progress in hospitality finance. The course was a huge help in fully understanding the many different processes within the Finance Department, tailoring them to the hospitality sector. This included many things such as forecasting techniques, the budget process, understanding KPI’s and ratio analysis to name but a few. All of which were extremely important and the knowledge learned is used on a frequent basis. The course explains not just in a way for you to understand but also gives you the knowledge to explain things to non-financial colleagues in ways that they understand, which is a huge benefit to the hotel as a whole so that they can understand the importance of decisions and relevance it has to the business.”

The course has helped Matthew develop in his career too. Having completed the HOSPA programme in March 2017 he has quickly progressed within the hotel. He was promoted to Assistant Financial Controller in February 2017, and was then sent to a sister hotel, Ettington Chase Hotel in Stratford, where he fulfilled the role of Acting Financial Controller to cover sickness. This period of cover lasted for six months which greatly helped his development curve. Matthew returned to the Derbyshire Hotel; which had been sold by Principal Hotels to private investors, and is now under the management of Countrywide Hotels; and was offered the role of Financial Controller.

Matthew says “None of this would have been possible without my HOSPA qualification as without it I wouldn’t have had the knowledge or the confidence to achieve what I have. My hope is to continue progressing within the industry for many years to come.”