

Ioannis S. Pantelidis PhD, FIH, FHEA
Chair of the Council for Hospitality Management Education

To:
Professor Alistair Fitt,
Vice-Chancellor Oxford Brookes University
medney@brookes.ac.uk

Dear Professor Alistair Fitt,

As Chair of the Council for Hospitality Management Education (CHME), the non-profit-making organisation representing the UK, European and International universities and colleges offering higher education programmes in the fields of hospitality, I am writing to you in relation to the consultation on the possible closure of the Brookes Restaurant.

At a time when external pressures such as Brexit, the declining number of 18-year-olds and the out workings of the Augur report have created the perfect storm for Higher Education institutions, it is understandable that efficiencies have to be made. However, the impact of these cuts would appear to be disproportionately affecting hospitality programmes across the UK. CHME would assert that this is short-sighted, ignoring the economic, social and cultural importance of the hospitality industry. Indeed, as the third-largest industry in the UK employing 3.2 million people (UK Hospitality, 2018), it offers a wealth of graduate opportunities.

More broadly, the UK Hospitality industry needs to source 200,000 new workers every year to replace, churn and support growth, and if restrictions around migration from Europe as a result of Brexit are introduced then another 60,000 workers would be added to this figure (British Hospitality Association, 2017). If these targets are matched against the ambitious growth plans of leading Hospitality brands in the UK and Europe then there must be a strong commitment by education providers in developing a successful cadre of future Hospitality leaders and operators.

Indeed, the consultation to close Brookes Restaurant comes at a time when the government has issued an unprecedented white paper (Tourism Sector Deal, 2019) that fully supports the tourism and hospitality industry, recognising its importance for the UK and committing to working more proactively with Universities through the Hospitality and Tourism Skills Board. At such, Universities should be showing leadership by supporting and enhancing hospitality education programmes.

Specifically, in terms of the value of training restaurants, relatively recent research (Alcott 2014) has highlighted that the experience gained in such facilities enhances students' ability to make a success of placement and graduate opportunities. It also noted that employers were more willing to offer placements to students who had such experience - not just for their technical skills and confidence but also for other key employability skills such as teamwork, leadership and the ability to work under pressure.

Whilst it is recognised that some training restaurants have not proven to be cost-efficient, there are excellent examples of successful operating models that deliver outstanding student experiences and equip students for leadership roles in the industry. For example, the Lakeside Restaurant at the University of Surrey and Ulster University's Academy restaurant or the University of Derby Devonshire restaurant. *Additionally, in an international context, there are several very successful training hotels such as the Hong Kong Polytechnic's ICON hotel and The Statler operated by Cornell University.* Nevertheless, it is concerning that management in some Universities consider teaching restaurants as profit centers whilst at the same time do not apply this profit requirement to science related laboratories.

Brookes Restaurant has received many accolades over the years and is well respected by the local community in Oxford and by industry and academia both nationally and internationally. CHME would urge you to explore alternative business models that would sustain its operation and permit it to continue to deliver an excellent learning experience for students. Such strategic leadership at Higher Education level is needed to ensure the continued development of the hospitality industry in the UK and we, as educators, have a responsibility to ensure that this happens and is sustainable.

CHME has recently commissioned research exploring the long-term trends impacting on the future of hospitality education and we would be happy to share the findings with you in Spring 2020. We would hope that any major decisions about Brookes and its hospitality programmes would be delayed until decision-makers have sight of these data to make an informed decision.

Yours sincerely

Ioannis

Dr Ioannis S. Pantelidis FIH
Chair - Council for Hospitality Management Education

This letter has the unanimous support of the CHME executive and is supported by the following individuals and representatives of hospitality organisations:

- Surinder Arora FIH, President Institute of Hospitality, Founder & Chairman Arora Group
- Professor Stephen Ball, CHME Fellow, Emeritus Professor Sheffield Hallam University
- Professor Paul Barron, CHME past Chair, Professor of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Edinburgh Napier University
- Nina Becket, CHME Fellow
- Dr Maureen E A Brookes, CHME Fellow, Member of the professional panel for the IOH, past president ICHRIE and Eurochrie, past hospitality liaison officer for the HLST
- Dr. Cathy Burgess, FHoSPA(Hon), FiH, CHME Fellow, HoSPA Professional Development Committee
- Tim Cookson FIH, Chairman, Litmus Partnership
- David Coughborough, Chairman of Trustees, The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts
- Peter Ducker FIH, Chief Executive Officer, Institute of Hospitality
- Paul Evans FIH, MD and Associate, CONSULTINC
- Crispin Fairbrother, CHME past chair
- Sam Goss FIH, General Manager, Moor Hall Hotel & Spa
- Andy Jones FIH, Chair, PSC100
- Ryan Hanson, Head of Catering & Retail, Royal Agricultural University

- Marianne Hood FIH, Hospitality Solutions, Chair of North Ireland IOH Branch
- Sandra Kelly, Director UK Skills and Policy, People 1st International
- Professor Paul Lynch, CHME past Chair, Professor of Critical Hospitality and Tourism, Edinburgh Napier University
- Layla Moran, Liberal Democrat MP for Oxford West and Abingdon
- Steve Munkley, Vice President Craft Guild of Chefs
- Kate Nicholls, Chief Executive Officer, UKHospitality
- Danny Pecorelli FIH MI, Chairman of the Master Innholders.
- Anne Pierce MBE, Chief Executive, The Springboard Charity & Springboard UK Ltd
- Neel Radia, Chair, National Association of Care Catering (NACC)
- Robert Richardson FIH, General Manager, The Grand
- Adam Rowledge FIH, Managing Director, Rowledge Associates
- Molly Shaher, Chair, Professional Association for Catering Education (PACE)
- Richard Shepherd CBE, Honorary President & Trustee, The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts
- Robin Sheppard FIH MI, Chair Institute of Hospitality, Chairman, Bespoke Hotels
- Chris Sheppardson, Founder, EP Business in Hospitality
- Craig Smith FIH, Honorary National Chair, Hospital Caterers Association
- Sara Jayne Stanes OBE, Chief Executive & Trustee, The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts
- Alastair Storey FIH, past President Institute of Hospitality and Chairman & CEO of WSH
- Brian J. Turner CBE, President & Trustee, The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts
- Chris Upton, Chair, HOSPA
- Matthew White FIH MIoD, Chair, The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO)
- John Williams MBE, Chair & Trustee, The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts

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