The hospitality industry is notorious for the challenges it faces in recruiting and retaining talent. Recent research from the Savoy Society shows that 40% of those currently undertaking a hospitality degree are not seeking careers within the industry upon completing their courses - with over half citing poor pay and long hours as deterrents. In addition, it reveals that a further 40% of parents surveyed have actively discouraged their children from taking up careers in the industry!

These statistics paint a dismal prognosis for hospitality. However, the Springboard Charity is fighting these negative perceptions through its ‘GEMS programme’ – a scheme dedicated to developing budding industry talent.

GEMS originally started out as the Savoy Society Mentoring Scheme mentorship programme back in 2008, and was rebranded in 2017. The scheme is UK wide - helping degree-level hospitality students to find their feet within the industry, by providing guidance throughout their studies and into their careers. They do this in three main ways – including industry talks from experienced professionals, specialist assistance in finding placements, and a one-to-one mentorship scheme that provides guidance and support to the students.

The scheme is invaluable for students starting out in the industry. It builds their confidence – offering support and guidance on the trials and tribulations of working in hospitality, and promotes it as a rewarding career path. It also helps them to gain work experience that will enrich their CVs and boost their prospects – all while identifying their strengths and fortifying their weaknesses at the same time. Finally, the scheme allows them to start building a professional network that they can call upon throughout their lives in hospitality.

The GEMS programme is a fantastic opportunity for hospitality students across the country, and Springboard is available to assist in any way they can – all thanks to the support provided by the Savoy Educational Trust, the Savoy Society, Casna Group, Moët Hennessy, Lorde Forte Foundation, HOSPA, Worshipful Company of Innholders, and BaxterStorey. To become a mentee, please visit [springboard.uk.net/gems](http://www.springboard.uk.net/gems), or send an email to CoralineP@Springboarduk.org.uk.