

Daniel is apprentice of the year



Premier Inn recently awarded Daniel Bianco from the Edinburgh Airport Newbridge hotel, as this year's UK Apprentice of the Year, which received over 150 entries.

The award, which is in its second year, recognises and pays tribute to the hard work and dedication from all apprentices taking part in the Premier Inn Apprenticeship Programme and to find a young rising star.

Margaret Auld, Operations Manager at the hotel, nominated Daniel (19), in recognition of his outstanding commitment and enthusiasm since beginning his apprenticeship two years ago after leaving school with no qualifications. He was initially taken on to work in the restaurant, however within a month he started showing signs of real potential resulting in being offered a place on the Apprenticeship Programme.

Margaret said: "I'm absolutely delighted Daniel has won this Award. From the minute we signed him up for the Programme he has been incredibly engaged and driven to succeed.

"Looking back 16 months ago it's hard to believe he is the same person. He really has flourished from a young boy with little confidence and no direction in life to a young man who is an integral part of our team. He continues to shine as a star of the future at Premier Inn who is well-liked by his colleagues, relied on and trusted by the management team and most importantly, praised highly by our guests."

The criteria for the Apprentice of the Year Award included assessing key achievements, how new skills have been utilised

and overall participation, which has enabled apprentices to reach their full potential.



During the Programme Daniel, who was trained in all areas of the business, including how to manage stock control, driving sales and analysing guest feedback in order to recommend improvements, also gained various qualifications, including Maths and English with the help of a Learning Support mentor.

All Premier Inn apprentices also attend a series of workshops to enable them to learn more about their role and open up new skills and ways of thinking, which Daniel thrived on, especially having the opportunity to meet other apprentices.

Sandra Kelly, Head of Education at Whitbread, said: “Daniel has been a brilliant ambassador for our Apprenticeship programme by inspiring so many others by his desire to learn new skills and increase his knowledge.

“As a role model, Daniel’s achievements show that you can progress in hospitality and I’m sure Daniel is one of our future managers.’

Daniel said, “Winning the Apprentice of the Year Award has been an amazing achievement for me and totally unexpected.

“So many people believed in me from the beginning of my journey when my confidence was at an all-time low and I genuinely had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and I am very grateful to them.”

“The Apprenticeship Programme has been a fantastic experience and really helped me understand not only the running of the business and how it all fits together to make a great hotel, which I feel very privileged to be working in, but also some important life skills which will stay with me forever.”

Since winning his Award, Daniel has been sharing his

experience at various events, including presenting at The Big Hospitality Conversation to over 300 people from 75 leading businesses in the UK about increasing the number of apprenticeships and work placements for young job seekers, The Birmingham Skills Show and various school career events.