

Celebrity chef to be figure head of key new College Academy



Mouth-watering prospect: TV celebrity and Michelin Star-winning Head Chef of Manchester's red-hot 20 Stories restaurant, Aiden Byrne is linking up with Macclesfield College to mentor learners at its new Whites Chef's Academy.

CATERING and hospitality has always been high on the agenda at Macclesfield College.

Now it is set to further enrich its reputation in this dynamic sector, by appointing Michelin Star-winning, TV celebrity chef Aiden Byrne to be the figure head of its soon-to-be-launched Whites Chef's Academy, situated on campus.

Liverpool-born Aiden enjoys a red-hot reputation on the North West's burgeoning restaurant scene, and with good reason, because his present role as Executive Head Chef at 20 Stories in Spinningfields - the newest and most gleaming jewel in Manchester's gastronomic crown - has been earned and achieved through tireless energy and commitment, relentless drive and an unwavering belief in his own future.

On leaving school at 16, Aiden knew that he wanted to cook for a living. Spurred on by his youthful ambition and passion, Aiden enrolled on a two-year catering and hospitality course

at his local college. He firmly believes that what set him on the path to becoming one of the nation's most successful and celebrated chefs, however, was the 'apprenticeship' he served at the Stanneylands Hotel in Wilmslow, under the aegis of Iain Donald, then Executive Chef of the Hotel, and now the Commercial Director of the illustrious Manchester-based Individual Restaurant Company.

"From the age of about seventeen, I used to travel from Kirkby to Wilmslow to work at Stanneylands, quite literally every weekend," recalls Aiden. "They used to pay for my train fare and let me stay in the Hotel. It paid off massively, in terms of my development as a young apprentice chef."

"In comparison to the other guys I was in College with, I was probably ten steps ahead due to my additional training at the Stanneylands. I was actually in the industry learning, quite literally, on the job from highly experienced and meticulous catering professionals every day." continues

Aiden. "The preparation that gave me going forward when I actually got my first job was unbelievable."

On leaving college, Aiden's first full-time appointment in a professional kitchen, was at the Royal Garden Hotel in Kensington, West London. Then, at the age of 22, he moved on to become Head Chef at Adlard's in Norwich, where he won a Michelin star.

Aiden's stellar career path then took him to many other Michelin-starred establishments the length and breadth of the UK and Ireland, including the Commons fine-dining restaurant in Dublin and Pied-à-Terre in London, working alongside world-renowned chef Tom Aikens - a partnership that was to bear fruit again, when Aiden became Head Chef at Tom's signature restaurant in Chelsea.

Aiden - who, in addition to his Executive Head Chef role at 20 Stories, also owns the 'AA Restaurant of the Year' winning Church Green gastro-pub in Lymm, Cheshire with his wife Sarah - has also served his time as a TV celebrity, appearing in the highly acclaimed BBC Two series 'Restaurant Wars' whilst at the famous Manchester House restaurant on Deansgate in the City Centre.

Quite a coup then for Macclesfield College, to have such a highly experienced and respected individual overseeing its new Whites Chef's Academy. "What we're aiming to do with this new academy concept," elaborates Aiden, "is to say "people need experience", and there is no better experience than actually being knee-deep in it, learning to think for yourself, physically on the job."

His role at Whites Chef's Academy - set to be launched in September 2018 in readiness for September 2019 - will see Aiden (*continued overleaf*)





(continued from the front page) coming into College to develop and nurture the talents of aspiring young chefs, who

will also work in selected partner establishments throughout Cheshire and Greater Manchester.

The idea for this pioneering academy - which will replace the Silk Room training restaurant currently situated on campus - came about following a meeting Aiden had with the College's dynamic and driven Principal and Chief Executive, Rachel Kay. To be able to pass on his experience through the College's new Whites Chef's Academy, is something that clearly excites Aiden, and it is made all the more special by the fact that it will be happening here in his native North West. "When Rachel was discussing the idea with me earlier this year, my ears pricked up immediately," Aiden confirms.

"What we're trying to do here, is to instil a real sense of everyday working ethic into the students, and make them realise that their time at college is preparation for real life. By attending the new Academy," he continues, "they'll not only be learning vital new catering and cookery skills, but they'll also be learning invaluable life skills, and I think that's what we're missing out on at present."

Students enrolled at the new Whites Chef's Academy will attend College three days a week, working towards a Level 3 apprenticeship in Professional Cookery, Catering and Hospitality, complemented by a two-day a week placement with one of Macclesfield's partner organisations.

"Catering really is a go-to industry for people who aren't necessarily academically switched-on," concludes Aiden. "I'm relishing the opportunity to engage with the kids, because I think if you're charged with the responsibility of inspiring the next generation, then you have a duty to do that to the very best of your ability. This is the true nature and value of an apprenticeship, and it is exactly what we're trying to bring back through the new Whites Chef's Academy."

Tailor-made for lasting success



All sewn up: The new Level 5 Bespoke Tailoring qualification is set to be rolled out at the start of Academic Year 2018-19.

ONE of the world's oldest and most noble professions is about to enter the twenty-first century in style, thanks to a landmark agreement between Maxim and a truly visionary local company.

Established in 2014, Hirsch Tailoring - led by master tailor Brita Hirsch (pictured inset below right) - is about to extend its professional services still further by incorporating the Tailoring Academy, in order to give creative people across the UK and beyond the opportunity to master the art of fine, bespoke tailoring.

German-born Brita, who is also a textile engineer, takes up the story: "The Tailoring Academy has been established to specifically cater for the distinct lack of high quality, skills-focused training for the tailoring and garment-making industry. When a fashion or textiles student graduates, they do so equipped with all the theoretical knowledge in the world but, all too often, this is not backed up by the all-important, practical skills in professional clothes-making. That the Academy is located in Macclesfield - a town with such a rich heritage and history in silk and textile manufacture - is particularly special," continues Brita, "and something upon which we are looking to capitalise, prior to our official launch on September 10th."

Key to this launch is the development of a new Level 5 Diploma in Bespoke Tailoring, accredited by ABC Awards and designed in collaboration with the Savile Row Bespoke Association. This exciting, one-year full-time course - also developed in close conjunction with Creative SkillSet UK - is open to any individual with Level 3 or equivalent experience in tailoring or a related field and places are limited to six students

per year. The first Level 5 apprentice to enrol upon this course is Frenchman Quentin Felix who, in addition to his practical training at the Tailoring Academy, is also attending the College for ongoing assessments in English and Maths.

The curriculum for this pioneering course - delivered in partnership with the College and its award-nominated employer-responsive arm, Maxim - comprises pattern drafting, planning and cutting, bespoke trouser, coat and waistcoat tailoring, ironing and shaping, fitting and hand-finishing. Each student will complete the course with an industry-relevant Level 5 qualification, which will enable them to progress into employment, set up their own business or work on a freelance basis in one of the UK's most creative industries.

What's more, the new stand-alone Level 5 qualification - for which the Tailoring Academy, supported by Maxim, is the sole UK provider - is recognised by the CAPITB Trust - a body that benefits those employed or looking to be employed in the fashion and textile industry. "This is particularly good news for local employers in our industry," elaborates Brita, "as it means either current staff or potential new employees could be eligible for a learning grant of up to £4,000."

The relationship between the Tailoring Academy and Maxim was fostered by the Skills and Growth Company for Cheshire East, and its Head of Skills and Employment, Roz Atherton, who put Brita in touch with Tracy Cosgrave, the College's Director of Employer Enterprise and Commercial Services. Tracy came to see the Academy's state-of-the-art studio and, impressed by what she saw, duly agreed for Maxim to take on the QA side of the new qualification, leaving Brita to concentrate fully on the actual skills delivery. "Maxim's input has been vital," concludes Brita, "and we've built a solid relationship which, I'm sure, will prove extremely beneficial to the Tailoring Academy, going forward."



Looking back on a truly momentous year for Maxim

IT is just over 12 months since the Government introduced the Apprenticeship Levy, which has presented Maxim and the College with huge challenges throughout Academic Year 2017-18.

For a start, all professional training providers have had to gain approval by the Register of Apprenticeship providers, which Maxim did in Autumn 2017, as well as having to bid for non-Levy contracts with the ESFA.

A recent report by an independent non-party think tank has confirmed that the reforms implemented in order to accommodate the Levy have been harsh. Moreover, they have been found to be having a negative impact on apprenticeship numbers nationally. The period April to October 2017, for instance, was 40% lower than the previous year.

However, due to successfully gaining supplier approval for a number of large Levy payers, underpinned by the excellent relationships it has forged to date with employers across East Cheshire, Maxim is continuing to build its profile, both regionally and nationally and, vitally, grow its apprentice numbers.

By the end of Academic Year 2017-18, no fewer than 242 apprentices had completed their apprenticeship, compared to 188 the previous year, and just 115 in Academic Year 2015-16.

Furthermore, Maxim has effectively moved all of its apprenticeship programmes from traditional frameworks to high quality standards, to ensure its apprenticeship offer effectively meets the needs of its local employer base. This achievement, noted in the College's most recent, successful Ofsted report, is all the more remarkable, given the ongoing challenges and constraints colleges like Macclesfield are facing in today's tough educational climate.

Ultimately, 2017-18 really has been Maxim's year, and it is now firmly



A time to celebrate: 2017-18 has been a watershed year for Maxim Business Training.

embedded as a leading provider of high quality apprenticeships across the East Cheshire region and beyond.

Moreover, it was rated Grade 2 "Good" by Ofsted, and came in for particular praise in the College's latest inspection report, published in November 2017.



"Apprenticeships are well planned and managed to meet the principles and requirements of a programme. Managers and staff have good working relationships with employers. Leaders and managers have worked particularly hard to develop standards and apprenticeships in response to local skills needs."



Another sure sign of consistent progress for Maxim was its nomination and subsequent shortlisting in two categories - UK Apprenticeships and Employer Engagement - at the 2018 Educate North Awards, held in April. Although Maxim wasn't fortunate enough to win either award, it performed in admirable fashion against some formidable opposition, such as the Liverpool Hope Business School, the Learning Curve Group and Manchester Metropolitan University, and thereby claimed its place among the industry's elite.

Looking to the future, new provision has also been introduced over the past academic year, including HR apprenticeships and higher level management programmes. There is also a particular emphasis around healthcare, with Maxim currently working with Macclesfield General and The Royal Manchester Hospital to develop new apprenticeship pathways for clinical staff. This includes Maternity apprenticeships at Level 3 and Healthcare Science Associate at Level 4.

Goodbye Karl, hello Martin!



FOLLOWING the decision of Maxim's former Employer Engagement Manager, Karl Coppack to leave the College to join the Derbyshire Fire Service, Maxim is delighted to welcome Martin Hallows into this exciting, challenging new role.

Throughout his two-year tenure with Maxim, Karl never failed to tackle each task set before him with relentless energy and unfailing professionalism, and he has been a key figure in the rapid rise to prominence of the College's employer-responsive arm.

The new incumbent of this vitally important role, Martin Hallows, is a highly experienced individual in whom Macclesfield College has placed its total trust in taking its employer engagement strategy to the next level of excellence, by encouraging local businesses to invest in their futures, by upskilling their workforce via high-quality apprenticeship and staff training.

After entering the automotive industry in 1998 as a technician apprentice with Mercedes-Benz UK, Martin moved into recruitment in 2006, before becoming an employment officer for Stockport-based charity, Pure Innovations. In 2012, Martin moved on to become the Area Manager of Brothers of Charity Services, based in Liverpool, before progressing to the role of Regional Sales Manager at Learn Direct - a position he held until August 2017.

Following the Government's introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy in April 2017, Martin accepted a consultancy role with Learn Direct, moving on to his present role with the College in June 2018. "I'm relishing my role here at Macclesfield College," confirms Martin, "and really looking forward to working with some of the region's most forward-thinking and proactive companies."



Maxim reaches out to the local community

AS part of its strategy for continued expansion across a wide range of training and upskilling areas, Maxim has become actively engaged in a whole raft of community projects currently taking place across the dynamic East Cheshire region.

In order to maximise the buoyancy of the local economy, Macclesfield College has recently introduced an enhanced, high quality offer of short community and engagement courses, designed to transform and widen the local skills set, and targeted specifically at Cheshire East residents.

This range of employability, family learning and English & Maths refresher courses has been expressly designed to open up opportunities for local residents to brush up on vital skills, whilst offering clear and effective pathways into work, apprenticeships and volunteering.

By delivering these short, sharp engagement programmes, Maxim is not only providing an invaluable introduction to learning in the College. It is also giving adults unfettered access to essential information and guidance, helping them to optimise their employability long into the future.

Maxim is now also an active and positive presence in everyday community life in the area, working closely with local family and children's



All-round coverage: The team at Macclesfield College are beginning to extend their work into the wider East Cheshire community.

centres to launch short taster programmes focused on parental, carer and familial support.

In tandem with this, Macclesfield College and its dedicated employer-responsive arm are developing effective and strategic partnerships with a range of influential bodies such as JobCentre Plus, the National Careers Service, Remploy, Pluss, Space for Autism, the Disability Information Bureau and Plus Dane Housing, along with various smaller local neighbourhood groups who work in the heart of their communities.



"There is also further development of links with Cheshire East

Council to optimise our course offering to local residents who are not engaged in learning, or are from disadvantaged areas or backgrounds," explains Macclesfield College's Adult Education Manager, Karen Bruce.

"This work is also strengthening the engagement with work-focused providers," concludes Karen, "offering further learning opportunities for unemployed adults, or those wishing to improve their skills in readiness for the workplace."

Maxim helps small businesses to grow and prosper



FOR everybody connected with Macclesfield College and Maxim Business Training, solid, results-driven commercial engagement with local businesses and SMEs sits at the very top of the agenda.

Particularly as the College and its dedicated employer-responsive arm seek to continue building on the considerable and significant success they have enjoyed during Academic Year 2017-18.

As one of the North West's most economically buoyant and enterprising regions, Cheshire East is awash with ambitious young start-up companies and SMEs, and it is these kind of businesses - as we all know - that make a really strong contribution to the ongoing vibrancy and stability of the local economy.

With this in mind - and armed with full ESF funding support - Maxim is looking to deliver expert training and skills provision to the region's small business community.



The European Structural and Investment Funds programme provides funds to help local areas grow. The funds

support investment in innovation, businesses, skills and employment and, most importantly, they create jobs.

"We've helped many local start-up businesses to adopt and develop best practice through training and upskilling their staff bases," confirms Director of Employer Enterprise and Commercial Services, Tracy Cosgrave. "Now we're looking to help the region's next success story make its mark."

Call Maxim today on 01625 410022 for more information on ESF support!



Work-ready for your business!

It's the end of the Academic Year at Macclesfield College, and there are lots of young leavers ready, willing and able to work for you and your business.

If you are interested in taking on an apprentice and moving your business on to the next level, then call Maxim today on 01625 410022!

