



39th AEHT ANNUAL CONFERENCE & COMPETITIONS
2nd – 7th November 2025
Ferrara, Italy
STRATEGIC THINKING COMPETITION
Competition details



Objective

Students will exhibit a comprehensive understanding of strategic decision-making in the hospitality sector by analyzing and applying strategic choices for a designated hotel in Ferrara. This hotel will present a specific challenge, prompting students to develop and propose effective strategic solutions.

Team & Language

Teams

Teams will consist of three students from different schools and different countries and drawn by the jury.

If the number of registered participants so requires, teams of 2 or 4 students will be formed.

This is also possible in one of the following cases:

- Disqualification of one of the participants
- Participants last minute abandonment

Language

English (oral and written) is the compulsory language at all the competition phases:

- master classes,
- briefings,
- work plan (written),
- communication with teammates and judges during the different tasks
- presentation

Minimum level of English: B2 (according to AQF).

Immediately after the announcement of the teams' constitution, team members should check whether correct communication in English within the team is possible. If there is serious doubt, the team should report this to the Head Judge immediately. Complaints about language problems will not be accepted after the written test/quiz is launched.

Important Notes

Participants can prepare themselves before the conference by doing research on following topics

- general knowledge about strategic concepts for hospitality
- tourism figures on Ferrara
- seasonality in Ferrara
- customer profile of the different tourism segments



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general tourism (business & leisure) information on Ferrara



- Participants should bring their own laptop and a USB stick as backup in case of technical difficulties.
- Participants must wear their full professional uniform.
- All rules and regulations must be adhered including the General AEHT Competition Rules, including the fact that a candidate can assess only once (1 time) to the overall of AEHT Competitions.

Assessment

Teams will be assessed by the jury, for a maximum classification of 100 points, according to the following guidelines:

- Group written test: 10 points (max) Based upon Mr. Robert Bosma Masterclasses and general knowledge about strategic choices within the Hospitality industry.
- Pitch & Teamwork: 40 points by the jury plus 10 points by the other teams based on the following evaluation criteria:
 - Team engagement
 - Professional attitude
 - Adopted strategy
 - Presentation support
 - Fluency and Communication skills
 - Q&A
- Written report: 40 points



Additional notes:

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- Team members must observe all competition schedules and attend the Masterclasses held by Mr. Robert Bosma (place and time to be announced)
- Each team gets the opportunity to make a reservation for private consulting (Mr. Bosma – Mind your Guest).
- Each team will have up to 15 minutes to present the solutions on their strategic thinking, in front of a jury.
- The presentation should show evidence of research, teamwork and use knowledge about strategy in hospitality.
- The jury will then appraise the results of each team and will classify them according with the best strategic results.
- The jury decision is final. In case of any conflict, the Head Judge will have the final decision.
- Both the briefing and the final presentations are open to the public.

Responsibilities & Tasks

- Head judge (responsible for the team of judges)

In charge of the overall coordination of the competition, decision maker in case of any misunderstanding or non-conformity.

Responsible for the organization of Mr. Robert Bosma Masterclasses.

- Judges

Chosen within

- local professionals (general manager, revenue manager or F.O. manager)

If possible, should be present at the Briefing (1st day) to meet the students. On presentation day (last day) it would be fantastic if he/she could do a short talk presenting him/herself and giving his/her vision over the future industry,

- Teacher(s) from (one of) the member schools.



Competition Schedule

Tuesday 03/11/2026 (Afternoon)	General Masterclass: R. Bosma - Mind Your Guest Strategic Masterclass: R. Bosma Briefing with competition specifications Written test Hotel Tour of the assigned hotel
Wednesday 04/11/2026	Teams work Free consultancy with R. Bosma 20h00: Sending written report (maximum 8 pages text, maximum 12 pages including illustrations and diagrams) to the judges
Thursday 05/11/2026	Morning: Group Presentations Afternoon: Final feedback

Day of the briefing

- Briefing & announcement of the teams by the Head Judge
- Immediately after the announcement of the teams, team members check whether correct communication in English within the team is possible. If there is serious doubt, the team should report this to the Head Judge immediately. Complaints about language problems will not be accepted later.
- Research is limited to students' own textbooks, internet and personal notes. No books will be supplied. Participants must have a memory stick.