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**Top Irish hotels achieve EFQM accreditation**

Fáilte Ireland is delighted that the Maryborough Hotel and Spa, Cork and the Clarion IFSC Hotel, Dublin have achieved accreditation from the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). Both hotels have progressed to this achievement through Fáilte Ireland's Optimus programme attaining the top level, the 'Award of Excellence, in 2006 and 2007 respectively.

These hotels are the first hotel companies to be so honoured by the EFQM in Ireland and the United Kingdom. The achievement of the Maryborough Hotel and Spa and the Clarion IFSC in reaching this level places them in a select group of high corporate achievers more often associated with high tech sectors such as pharmaceuticals, telecommunications and precision engineering. Traditionally enterprises in the tourism sector have not been prominent in this space. These Irish hotels have notably led the way in reversing this trend.

The Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, Séamus Brennan T.D. in congratulating the hotels, said: "The outstanding achievement by both hotels has taken the desire for quality and excellent management in the Irish hospitality and tourism area to new heights and has shown what dedication, commitment, innovation and the pursuit of excellence can achieve. These two hotels have reached a level of international recognition that I am sure will challenge and inspire other hotels to work to attain over the coming years."

Aidan Pender, Director of Policy and Industry Development, at Fáilte Ireland, congratulated the Maryborough Hotel and the Clarion Hotel on their achievement. "Through all its levels, the Fáilte Ireland Optimus programme is in effect a National Standard for Best Practice in hospitality and tourism in Ireland. Central to it is the process of continual improvement, culminating in the EFQM Level 4 Award of Excellence. These two hotels have incorporated excellence in the way their leaders lead, how they treat their employees, the importance of the customer – all with the intention to achieve sustainable business results and the desire to not just satisfy, but delight their customers."

[www.discoverireland.ie](http://www.discoverireland.ie)

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EFQM is a not for profit, membership foundation, headquartered in Brussels which is dedicated to the mission of promoting sustainable excellence throughout organisations in Europe and beyond. Over 700 organisations of every size, sector and both private and public belong to EFQM's network. Within this network of organisations, thousands of individuals contribute to encouraging organisations to improve and strive for excellence in an effort to achieve successful business results. EFQM is the creator of the EFQM Excellence Model and the European Quality Award.



**The Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, Séamus Brennan, TD, congratulated the Maryborough Hotel and Spa, Cork, and the Clarion IFSC Hotel, Dublin, on achieving accreditation from the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). Left to right (back row): Brendan Curtis, CEO Choice Hotels; Emer Archbold, Excellence Co-ordinator, Clarion IFSC; Denis Tucker, Manager Quality Assurance, and Tony Lenehan, Head of Business and Management Development, Fáilte Ireland; Dan O'Sullivan, Proprietor, Maryborough Hotel & Spa; and Aidan Pender, Director Policy and Industry Development, Fáilte Ireland. Left to right (front row): Dermot De Loughry, General Manager, Clarion Hotel IFSC; Minister Brennan; and Justin McCarthy, General Manager, Maryborough Hotel & Spa**  
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