



# THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE THAMES SKILLS ACADEMY

THE EMPLOYER-LED ANSWER TO DELIVERING STRUCTURED,  
EFFECTIVE MARITIME TRAINING AND COMPETENCIES  
FOR THE TIDAL THAMES

## **Introduction**

The Thames Skills Academy (TSA) will operate as a Group Training Association (GTA) - a learning and skills partnership where employers subscribe to on and off-the-job training in order to provide efficient, expertly-delivered skills that meet shared needs across an industry or sector. The TSA will broker and facilitate, and (in due course as a training provider) deliver, a comprehensive solution to meet the marine skills and competency requirements of commercial vessel operators and other marine and port-related organisations within the Port of London and the wider Thames Estuary.

GTAs have evolved in response to the needs of local, sector-specific employers who are directly involved in their governance, and in the development of training standards and the delivery of teaching and learning. They understand the pressures under which businesses operate and how to support them with a highly responsive, holistic and long-term service, covering all aspects of workforce development.

## **The Benefits of Membership of the TSA**

Being an Employer Member of the TSA will bring a number of benefits in the areas of training and the development of skills and competencies. The TSA:

- ✓ is a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee. Any surplus will be re-invested in the organisation in the continuous improvement of its service, for the benefit of its Members;
- ✓ constitution allows for Members to be represented and involved operationally in the organisation through its Employer Advisory Group, and strategically through representation on the TSA Board;
- ✓ will act as a focus for a more structured, collective and cohesive approach to marine training and development on the tidal Thames;
- ✓ will, through economies of scale and excellent training providers, facilitate and broker high quality, flexible training at the lowest possible cost;

- ✓ will provide dedicated support to employers to enable them to meet the costs of running high-quality apprenticeships; and support training and development generally;
- ✓ drive forward and support the ongoing development and evolution of the tidal Thames (Inland Waterways) competency and career framework;
- ✓ raise standards and improve safety;
- ✓ organise Members' networking opportunities, discussion forums and seminars;
- ✓ keep our Members updated on current legislation and best practice;
- ✓ be an access point for advice on all aspects of training; and
- ✓ give employers a voice in order to shape the commercial future of the Port of London and the tidal River Thames.

### **Membership of GTA England**

The TSA is a member of GTA England, the national association of GTAs. This in itself brings a number of advantages and benefits not just for the TSA, but also for its membership.

- Operating on a national level, GTA England effectively engages in lobbying activities with Government, which have resulted in access to influence, funding and capital for members.
- GTA England communicates with members and responds to Government inquiries and consultations. GTA England represents members and employers interests on many fora including: Trailblazer groups for developing employer-led apprenticeship standards; the All Party Parliamentary Group dedicated to the advancement of apprenticeships; and the national advisory group for the Further Education Area Reviews.
- GTA England members can participate in a Peer Review inspection process (Peer Review is a mock OFSTED inspection service undertaken by trained and qualified GTA staff).
- Members can receive free training for Training Officers, including the essential skill of Business Needs Analysis critical for future Apprenticeship Levy arrangements, and for Mentors supporting Apprentices in the workplace, allowing members to differentiate services to employers.
- GTA Members also have the opportunity to:
  - participate and submit applications in the high profile GTA England Annual Apprentice of the Year Awards;
  - attend Members Days to discuss key issues and updates from sector specialists; and
  - receive the GTA England newsletter.

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