

Malmaison and Hotel du Vin champion Triple A training



Malmaison and Hotel du Vin Hotels Group is the latest hospitality organisation to adopt the Triple A appraisal tool for its in-house apprentice scheme. All 21 of its existing UK kitchen brigades including Manchester and Liverpool are putting candidates through the process as well as the 10 new hotels planned in the next two years.

The group see Triple A as the hub of company training, starting with the AAA Foundation Chef syllabus for 3-4 candidates in each hotel, all at commis and chef de partie level. This will expand to include both senior chefs and those progressing from the first level to the AAA Chef award.

Sean Wheeler, group director of people development, explains: "Because the Triple A is the profession's own standard and is purpose-built for the workplace, developing both mentors and apprentices, it's an ideal way for us to integrate chef training across all hotels to a common standard that will be independently measured and help us develop and retain our chefs for the future".

Mark Bennett, head chef at Malmaison's new 130-bedroom hotel in Liverpool, is

another convert to the programme: "It's good to give people just starting out in this industry real direction and goals. Programmes like this help chefs like me really focus training efforts. We have a structure we can work within that is flexible but consistent so everyone we train can achieve the standard that the industry recognises as its own."



Group executive chef Keith Shearer believes creating the industry benchmark will give tangible benefits to businesses and encourage more people to enter the profession: "Chefs will know exactly what to expect from new recruits, have an understanding of their proficiency and be able to help them further develop skills. I'm excited about being involved in this programme and can see benefits for my own kitchens as well as for the profession as a whole."

Triple A training is supported by the British Hospitality Association and is formally endorsed by the Institute of Hospitality Award Body as "encouraging the highest professional standards within the hospitality industry".

Triple A news

• **Paul Askew**, chef patron of The London Carriageworks, part of the Hope Street Hotel in Liverpool, has joined the AAA National Committee as the representative for the Academy of Culinary Arts: "It's a chef-led scheme that provides us with a framework for our in-house training, which then leads to a trade test examined by chefs to standards set and maintained by chefs. There's a nationwide shortage of skilled chefs and it's time we put our own house in order." The National Committee is responsible for the Triple A syllabus and standards. The other chef bodies represented are the Association Culinnaire Francaise, British Culinary Federation, Craft Guild of Chefs, Federation of Chefs Scotland, Masterchefs of Great Britain and Welsh Culinary Association.

• **Jurys Doyle Hotel Group** has adopted the Triple A training programme for all its hotels in Ireland and the UK. Development and training manager, Edward Gallier, said the Triple A training would make a significant impact on standards across the hotel chain and ensure a minimum skill set for kitchen staff. "As part of our re-positioning as a collection of hotels — 11 four- and five-star hotels across the UK, Ireland and the US — we want to use Triple A as part of a larger chef development programme to increase the quality and consistency of restaurant food throughout the group."

• At the end of August the Triple A programme launches in the southwest, in collaboration with **Cornwall College**, which will provide a raft of measures to support mentors and candidates in the region.

• Online knowledge tests are already a feature of the Triple A and from September these will be joined by **Chef TV** — short, practical video demonstrations illustrating various aspects of the syllabus.

• **Chartwells**, the Compass Group catering specialist for the independent schools sector, has signed up to use Triple A to monitor and complement its own in-house training. Andrew Walker, executive chef at Chartwells, is a keen proponent of the Triple A approach: "The Triple A system is driven by chefs, for chefs. The beauty of it is that it allows a tailored training programme to be developed to suit the needs of individual chefs. This, combined with our Chartwells Chef Academy which provides the training and mentoring support, helps us ensure that our school chefs are at the forefront of the profession."



Applied Ability Awards — practical exams for professional chefs, designed and delivered by chefs

The greatest asset and expense in any business is the workforce. For the hospitality industry, kitchen workers and particularly chefs are a valuable asset to the business. With Triple A training programmes you can get the best from trainees and mentors alike, ensuring consistent quality. By engaging staff in the programme, businesses are more likely to retain staff — and increase profits.

For more information on Triple A visit www.greatbritishkitchen.co.uk and click on Applied Ability Awards.

