

# The IFT Academy Learning Programme



**Shaun O'Callaghan**  
Grant Thornton



**Andrew Dixon**  
Independent Member

**The Academy Learning Programme is a 5 module programme that runs over 12-months, designed for the next generation of leaders in the turnaround and restructuring community.**

The programme helps individuals to develop a deeper understanding of the technical, commercial and functional skills required to plan and develop a successful restructuring. The Academy Programme provides a unique perspective on leadership in turnaround, unrivalled insights from senior practitioners, with peer and onsite learning, using case studies and active learning.

The programme is led by Shaun O'Callaghan, the UK Head of Restructuring and Debt Advisory for Grant Thornton. Shaun has more than 20 years' experience as an adviser, executive and board director in the management of change in difficult and uncertain circumstances. He is the published author of 'Turnaround Leadership: Making Decisions, Rebuilding Trust and Delivering Results after a Crisis', Kogan Page, 2010. Andrew Dixon works alongside Shaun to deliver the Academy Programme. Andrew is an independent Member of The IFT, having previously worked in the restructuring team within KPMG. He has 20 years of experience as a turnaround leader and has experience across a multitude of sectors.





# About the IFT

The Institute for Turnaround aims to provide UK businesses with the best possible chance of survival and success, by creating, connecting and enhancing a community of experts, unmatched in professional quality and commitment

The IFT supports and enhances the work of industry-leading professionals in helping challenged firms to achieve success through critical business change.

Our members are accredited to the highest standards and demonstrate significant experience within the turnaround profession. The rigorous process to become an accredited member makes The IFT unique, **we are the only UK-based membership body to accredit turnaround professionals.**

The IFT brings together independent professionals, bankers, lawyers, investors and advisers to evolve the profession and respond to new challenges and trends. We are an incubator for turnaround talent, connecting, nurturing and developing a community of experts at all stages of their career. We are particularly keen to encourage a more diverse community of people into this rewarding profession

Upon completion of the Academy Learning Programme, graduates are eligible for free Associate Membership for 3 years.

# Why join the IFT Academy?

With the application window for the next cohort open now, we spoke to four alumni to find out what they gained from the programme.

The IFT Academy gives participants a structured grounding in organisational turnaround, making it invaluable for many aspects of career development.

Aga Toczydłowska, Director at the Special Credit Unit at HSBC UK, graduated from the Academy in 2022. She says: *“I had moved from a different role in the bank, and I could see the Academy would be a good way of accelerating my learning and development in the turnaround field.”*



**Aga Toczydłowska**

Director at the Special Credit Unit at HSBC UK

Aneesh Prasad, Legal Director for Gateley Legal, who graduated in 2019, says: *“The profile of my work was skewing from insolvency to turnaround. My skillset was evolving, and it made sense for me to join the Academy.”*



**Aneesh Prasad**

Legal Director for Gateley Legal







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**Toby Bundy**

Investment Manager  
at Sandton Capital  
Partners

For Toby Bundy, Investment Manager at Sandton Capital Partners, who graduated in 2022, it's a slightly different story. He self-funded his place, and alongside the opportunity to develop his knowledge, the Academy also offered other benefits. *"At the time, I was working in interim finance director roles and most of my work came from intermediaries. Joining the Academy was a way to extend my network and market myself."*



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**Rebecca Ingham**

Associate Director at  
Interpath Advisory

Rebekah Ingham, Associate Director at Interpath Advisory, graduated in 2022. She saw the Academy as a way to bring more value to her clients. *"You want to be one step ahead of a client – it's why you're worth engaging. But I also have a curiosity and a thirst for knowledge and development."*



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**Felix Connolly**

Investment  
Director at Endless  
LLP

For Felix Connolly, Investment Director at Endless LLP, who graduated in 2019, the Academy offered a way to formalise his skills. He says: *"Most of my training had been practical. The Academy was a good opportunity to get the theory behind the practice."*



# Gaining Vital Insights

**All five alumni  
highlight the quality  
of the programme and  
how it has helped  
them in their careers.**

For Rebekah, the opportunity to reflect on her practice was valuable. *"You're guided through the academic models by experts and because you're with your colleagues and peers you're in a position to think about those models, challenge them and do more research if you want."*

Felix comments: *"I now have building blocks that I use in my day-to-day work of investing in distressed businesses and turning them around."*

Aneesh says the programme introduced him to new concepts and helped develop existing skills, which in turn have advanced his professional development. He says: *"It's given me more confidence in the market and to focus on leading rather than doing."*

As well as the formal learning opportunities, Toby emphasises the value of his mentor on the programme. *"It was valuable to be able to talk to someone 10 to 15 years ahead in their career as an interim manager, especially because I was an independent and didn't have senior people in my organisation I could turn to for advice."*

# Understanding the Turnaround Jigsaw

## Building a Closer Connection with the IFT

**The opportunity to see the turnaround industry from a holistic viewpoint was an unexpected benefit.**

Aga says: *“Being able to look at a situation alongside other professionals who have different objectives to you is very eye-opening. It teaches you how to get to the same point more quickly.”*

Aneesh appreciated the insights too. *“Understanding how we all fit together in the jigsaw of advisors involved in a turnaround situation was really useful for me.”*

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**Alongside building a greater understanding of the turnaround process and the turnaround community, the alumni highlight the opportunity to build closer ties with the IFT itself.**

Aga has now joined the IFT as an accredited member, and both Felix and Aneesh plan to take that step.

Aneesh comments: *“The IFT is across my desk most weeks now, whether it’s attending an event, speaking at a conference or just coming up in conversation when I’m having coffee with someone. Being part of the Academy really opened my eyes as to what the IFT is about and how embedded in the turnaround community it is.”*

# Growing Your Network

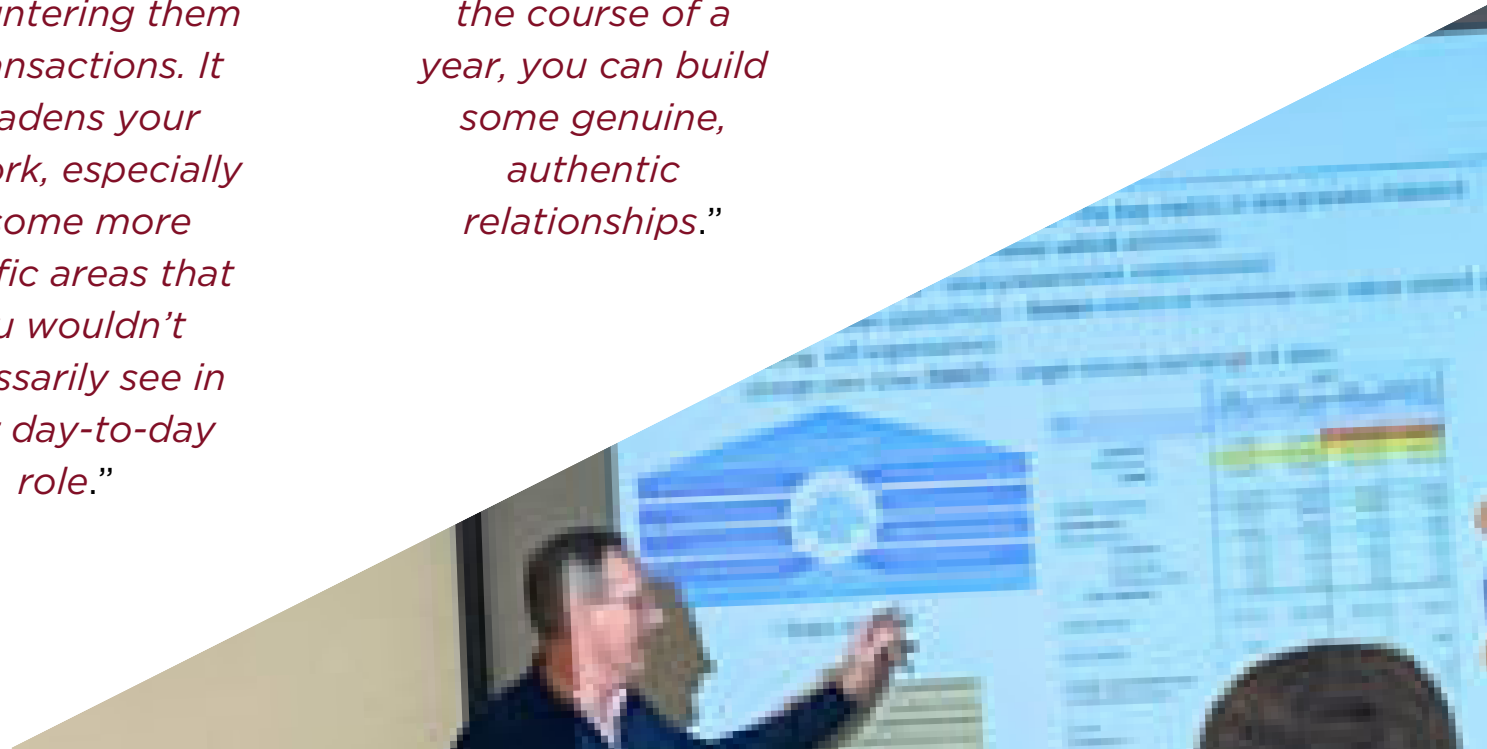
**The Academy more than lived up to Toby's expectations of its networking benefits. He says: "I changed careers recently and my job involves sourcing investments and opportunities. The Academy has proved super-helpful in giving me a network of people I can turn to for help and vice versa."**

**The network proved an important benefit for Aga, Aneesh, Felix and Rebekah too.**

Aga says: *"I had a rich network of contacts I'd built up over the years that were valuable in my previous role, but when I started my current role I had to grow a new network from scratch. Being part of the Academy was the perfect opportunity to accelerate that growth."*

Felix adds: *"I'm still in touch with a number of my cohort as well as encountering them in transactions. It broadens your network, especially in some more specific areas that you wouldn't necessarily see in your day-to-day role."*

Rebekah comments: *"Because you're with people over the course of a year, you can build some genuine, authentic relationships."*



# Course Programme

## **Module 1: The Turnaround Platform – Business, Learning and Leadership**

22nd & 23rd January 2024  
London

## **Module 2: Changing Times**

18th & 19th March 2024  
London

## **Module 3: Delivering Results Whatever the Weather**

20th & 21st May 2024  
West Midlands

## **Module 4: Building Confidence with Divergent Stakeholders**

16th & 17th September 2024  
London

## **Module 5: Clarity & Cashflow**

18th & 19th November 2024  
London

## Academy Costs

Standard Rate: £10,000

IFT Corporate Partner Rate: £5000

Contact us to enquire further

**[info@the-ift.com](mailto:info@the-ift.com)**

