

## Off-the-job-training Policy

Re-approved	August 2023
Review by	August 2024
Authorised by	C Gavaghan (CEO)

## 1. Summary

Derwent Training Association (Derwent Training) ensures that all apprentices have a minimum of 6 hours per week off-the-job-training as mandated by the Government, and that Derwent Training delivers all apprenticeships in a compliant manner and ensures employers understand how apprentices must achieve the requirement.

## 2. Introduction

The Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) defines off-the-job-training as

“training received by the apprentice, during the apprentice’s paid hours, for the purpose of achieving their apprenticeship. It is **not** training delivered for the sole purpose of enabling the apprentice to perform the work for which they have been employed. Off-the-job-training is a statutory requirement for an English apprenticeship. Off-the-job-training must be directly relevant to the apprenticeship framework or standard, teaching new knowledge, skills and behaviours required to reach competence in the particular occupation.”

Off-the-job-training is about upskilling an individual to reach full occupational competency, not accrediting their existing skills. If it is not new learning, (i.e., the apprentice already has the knowledge, skills, or behaviours at the required level), then it is not off-the-job-training. Instead, it is prior learning and must be excluded from the off-the-job-training calculation.

## 3. What may be included in off-the-job-training?

- a. The teaching of theory e.g., lectures, role playing, simulation exercises, online learning, or manufacturer training.
- b. Practical training, e.g., shadowing, mentoring, industry visits and attendance at competitions.
- c. Learning support
- d. Time spent writing assessments & assignments.
- e. An apprentice’s induction at the workplace if they are already signed up for an apprenticeship
- f. Health & Safety training in the workplace if the training is new to the apprentice

Derwent Training follows the advice and guidance from the ESFA for testing whether off-the-job-training is valid.

1. Is the person signed up to the apprenticeship programme?
2. Is the activity directly relevant to the apprenticeship?
3. Is the activity teaching new knowledge, skills, and behaviours?
4. Is the learning taking place in the apprentice’s paid working hours?

If the answer to all four questions is ‘yes’ then the activity can be regarded as off-the-job-training.

#### 4. What is excluded from off-the-job-training?

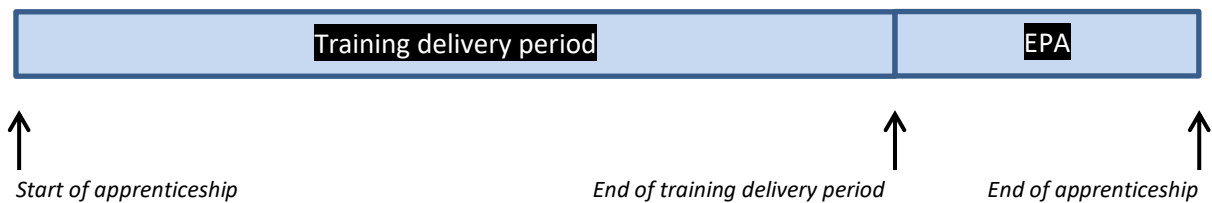
Anything that does not impart new knowledge, skills and behaviours is excluded.

- a. Training to acquire knowledge, skills and behaviours that are not required in the apprenticeship standard or framework
- b. Progress reviews or on-programme assessment needed for an apprenticeship framework or standard
- c. Training which takes place outside the apprentice's paid working hours
- d. English and maths (up to level 2) which is funded separately
- e. The end point assessment
- f. Accreditation of existing knowledge, skills, and behaviour

#### 5. How is off-the-job-training calculated?

Derwent Training offers apprenticeship standards.

Figure 1: Apprenticeship Standards



In the diagram above, the 6 hours per week off-the-job-training only relates to the training delivery period and does not include the EPA period.

#### 6. Recording off-the-job-training

As per the guidance from the Department of Education, Derwent Training will ensure that the Training Plan contains and shows the 6 hours per week off-the-job-training calculation.

Statutory annual leave for apprentices equates to 28 days (or 5.6 weeks) per year, this includes the eight UK bank holidays. It is now deducted from the calculation of off-the-job-training for all new starts from August 2018. The figure is pro-rata for part time workers.

It should be clear to employers and apprentices how the amount of required off-the-job-training has been worked out. This is recorded on the learner file on both the apprenticeship agreement which is between the employer and apprentice and the training plan, which is between employer, apprentice, and training provider. With regards to off-the-job-training, the apprenticeship agreement sets out the employer's commitment to release the individual for the number of hours specified on the agreement.

Despite the annual leave deduction, if an apprentice misses a planned session (e.g., due to annual leave, sickness, operational pressure), the expectation is that the apprentice must make up that lost

off-the-job-training. This could occur through a mop-up session, a 1:1 session or by completion of online learning material. However, it must still be during paid hours and not in their own time.

## 7. Where does off-the-job-training happen?

As set out in the apprenticeship funding rules, off-the-job-training can take place at an employer's workplace or off-site (e.g., in a classroom or from home via distance learning). It can even take place at the apprentice's normal workstation. It is the activity, rather than the location that determines whether the training meets the definition of being off-the-job-training,

As individuals have different learning preferences, good off-the-job training would have more than one delivery method, e.g., a combination of face-to-face delivering, on-line learning, mentoring.

With regards to distance learning, the ESFA recognises two types of distance learning but it must be done during working hours:

- a. Self-directed distance learning (where the apprentice is working on their own with no real-time support);
- b. Interactive online learning (virtual classrooms where the learner is able to receive support, in real time, from their training provider).

It is important to note that when Derwent Training has a period of planned closure, e.g., over Christmas and New Year, it does not mean that off-the-job-training has to stop.

## 8. Audit

The ESFA monitors information on the individualised learner record from training providers. Analysis of this information can trigger an audit.

The audit will start with a review of the quantity of off-the-job-training as indicated on the apprenticeship agreement and training plan. This is then triangulated against evidence of off-the-job-training, for example, apprentices' timesheets, training logs, attendance registers etc. Whilst an audit is a sample, errors can lead to a 100% audit of all learner files.

Non-compliance in terms of a poor evidence base will need to be rectified between the training provider and an employer. The ESFA audit the quantity of the off-the-job-training, Ofsted inspects the quality of it.

## 9. Evidence

The following can be used as evidence of off-the-job-training having occurred. Employer's signature is required on the apprenticeship reviews. This signature is confirmation by the employer that they have ensured that an apprentice is completing the minimum requirement of off-the-job-training. If an employer or Derwent Training feels this has decreased, both parties will plan how to rectify this over the training delivery period to ensure full compliance.

Evidence	Originator
Attendance registers	Derwent Training
Timesheets	Employer
Records of CPD	Employer

Records of meetings with mentor/employer	Employer
Evidence of attendance at exhibitions	Employer
Learning new skills, knowledge in the workplace linked to Standard/Framework	Employer

## **Appendix**

### **Example shared with employers on CEO newsletter June 2019**

The Department of Education reissued the Apprenticeship Off-The-Job Training Policy. To remind all, an apprenticeship is a job with a formal programme of training. Underpinning that, and set out in legislation, is off-the-job training. To attract Government funding there is a minimum requirement of 6 hours per week threshold for off-the-job training. Government funding includes all payments from an account with 'levy' money, as the levy is released back to an employer from the Government as it is collected via the HMRC. It is also well publicised that the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) will be conducting audits on the off-the-job training hours. The widely held national view is that in too many cases, apprentices are not hitting the minimum requirement for their training being off-the-job. That has implications for every provider and employer in so far as the records and evidence that is required. To clarify, this applies to every provider of apprenticeships and is not unique to Derwent Training.

The document is absolutely clear that the off-the-job training must occur during an apprentice's paid hours. It does not and cannot include training undertaken in their own time. In exceptional circumstances, if training did occur outside of working hours, the apprentice must be given time in lieu.

Off-the job training does include, for example, teaching theory (lectures, role play, simulation exercises, online learning, manufacturer training), practical training, shadowing, mentoring, industry visits, attendance at competitions, learning support and time spent writing assessments and assignments (if it is done during working hours).