

**Busy  
Bees.**

Education and Training

**A guide to**  
**Off-the-Job**  
**training.**

## What is Off-the-Job training

**Off-the-Job training (OJT) is a requirement for all apprenticeship standards at all levels. Apprentices must spend 20% of their contracted working hours undertaking Off-the-Job training. OJT is defined as “learning which is undertaken outside of the normal day-to-day working environment and leads toward the achievement of an apprenticeship.”**

Off-the-Job training must be directly relevant to the apprentice’s programme and teach them new knowledge, skills and behaviours that will help them reach competence in their occupation.

Off-the-Job training was recommended by the Richard Review of Apprenticeships and Ofsted to ensure that apprentices are actively learning and working to attain the required knowledge and skills within their sector while enrolled in their placement program.



## What does Off-the-Job training look like?

All apprenticeship standards have now been developed to include one year of full-time employment, with Off-the-Job training accounting for at least 20% of the apprentice’s contracted working hours.

This means that their time might be broken down like this:

Practical period of learning in weeks = 78

Working days per week (5) x Hours working per day (7) = 35 working hours per week

Holiday entitlement in hours (5.6 weeks)

20% Off-the-Job training requirement = 487 hours in total / 6.24 hours per week

This is also equivalent to the apprentice spending one day per week during their 12-month apprenticeship undertaking Off-the-Job training.

However, this all depends on their contracted working hours within the day and/or week and the length of their programme. If an apprentice works more hours in the day and the week, or if their programme is longer than 12 months, then their Off-the-Job training requirement will still consist of 20% of their contracted hours. Their total OJT time might consist of more hours than the example given above.

## Why is Off-the-Job training conducted within the Apprentice’s contracted hours?

As an apprenticeship is a work-based programme, training that contributes towards an apprentice’s development should be included in their contracted working hours. The Department for Education argues that it would be unreasonable to expect an apprentice to undertake training that is part of their apprenticeship in their own time.

If training must take place outside of the apprentice’s working hours, then this should be recognised by their Employer and Training Provider. For example, if an apprentice has to attend a 2-hour lecture scheduled after their working hours, then arrangements should be made by their Training Provider and employer for the apprentice to make up the time by leaving work 2 hours early.

## What does Off-the-Job training include?

Off-the-Job training can include a number of activities that can take place on or off the employer's normal work premises. These can include:

### The Teaching of Theory

This can include lectures, role playing, simulation exercises, online learning, manufacturer training and so on. Teaching theory should help the apprentice better understand their role, the topics and subjects relevant to their role and their sector in more detail.

### Practical Training

This can include shadowing, mentoring, industry visits, attendance at competitions and so on. This training should practically train the apprentice and teach them skills that they can use in their current job or in a future position.

### Learning Support

This refers to learning support provided by the Employer or the Training Provider. This includes time spent conducting projects, writing assignments and so on.

Learning support counts towards OJT to ensure that all individuals have the support needed and that all barriers to education and training are removed. Some apprentices may require more assistance in their programme to help them reach their best potential. This could include physical adjustments, access to accessibility software, additional revision classes or personal support from their Training Provider. Time spent on assignments is also included in OJT as new knowledge, skills and behaviours can be developed while completing them.

While OJT takes place outside of normal working duties, it is possible to undergo OJT at the apprentice's workstation. For example, OJT could include learning to use a new machine or undertaking e-learning. While conducting this training, normal working duties should not be required of the apprentice. In essence, Employers or Training Providers are setting aside time for the apprentice to improve themselves, their knowledge and/or their skills.



## Off-the-Job training checklist

If you are unsure of whether an activity can be regarded as Off-the-Job training, ask yourself these questions:

Is the individual undertaking this activity signed up to the apprenticeship programme?

Is the activity directly relevant to the apprenticeship?

Is the activity teaching **new** knowledge, skills and behaviours?

Is the learning taking place in the apprentice's contracted working hours?

**If the answers to the questions are all yes, then you've got an OJT activity!**

## What can't be included in Off-the-Job training?

### Off-the-Job training cannot include:

- Enrolment
- Induction
- Training to acquire knowledge, skills and behaviours that are not required in the standard or framework
- Progress reviews or on-programme assessment needed for an apprenticeship framework or standard
- Training which takes place outside the apprentice's working hours (although, as mentioned before, there are exceptions if this time is made up within their working hours)
- English and maths (up to level 2) which is funded separately

The government acknowledges that apprentices will inevitably want to spend time outside of working hours to familiarise themselves with their work. However, any personal initiative shown by the apprentice will not count towards Off-the-Job training. Any time that an apprentice takes to conduct OJT is counted towards their normal working hours. That means that if an apprentice is interested in undertaking training outside of their working hours, they should ask their Employer and Training Provider first and see if arrangements can be made to accommodate this.

Off-the-Job training does NOT include time spent on compulsory activities in the apprenticeship, including time spent on English and Maths qualifications, any basic safety and compliance training, diversity training and so on.

Off-the-Job training can also take place at home via distance learning. If there is a program of study that the apprentice can complete online that contributes to the completion of their apprenticeship, as long as the learning package is included as part of a blended learning programme, this can be counted as an OJT activity.

For those Employers or Training Providers who are confused, the activity that the apprentice undertakes is the main focus of OJT. As long as the OJT activity actively contributes to the completion of the apprenticeship, the location matters less than the activity itself.

## How can you prepare for Off-the-Job training?

It is the responsibility of the Employer and Training Provider to ensure that the apprentice spends 20% of their apprenticeship undertaking Off-the-Job training. Completion of OJT must be documented and evidenced in order for the apprentice to complete the apprenticeship.

In order to comply with the funding rules, each apprentice should receive a commitment statement from the Employer/Training Provider outlining the program of training the apprentice will receive and how the Employer/Training Provider intends to spend the Off-the-Job Training time. The recipient of ESFA funding (usually the main provider) should keep, update and maintain the relevant files.

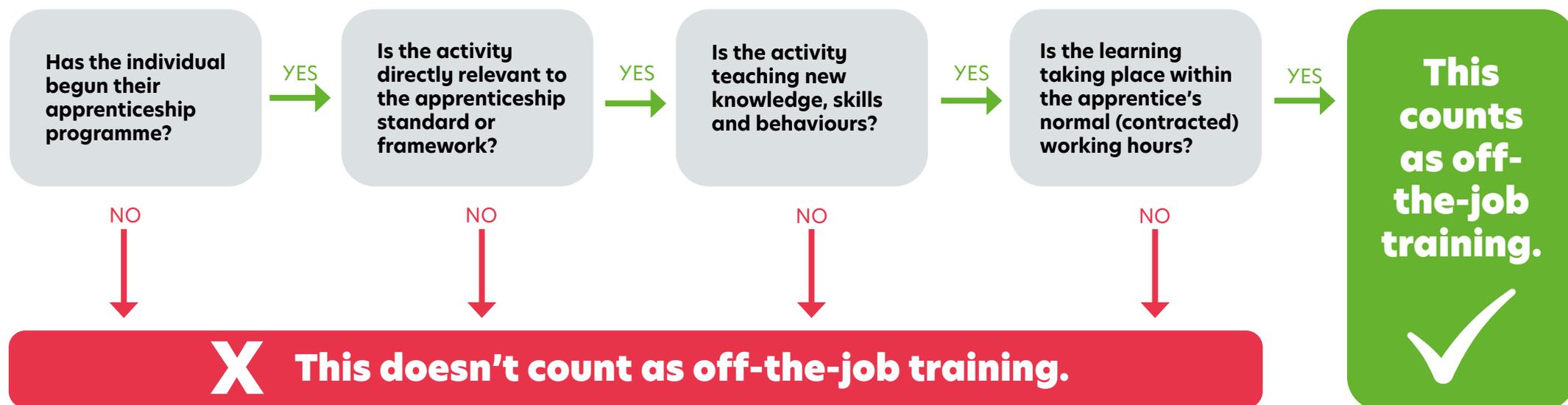
The ESFA will remain flexible about the type of evidence that should be retained and provided. They want Training Providers and Employers to use naturally occurring evidence where it is available. Many Training Providers have their own systems of collecting and storing evidence. Some examples of naturally occurring evidence might include:

- Apprentice timesheets
- Training logs
- Registers
- HR training systems



# Off-the-Job (OTJ) training

Steps to help you determine whether an activity counts as off-the-job training during an apprenticeship.



## Key facts

**1**

Off-the-job training must make up at least 20% of the apprentice's contracted hours, over the total duration of the apprentice's planned training period.

**2**

Off-the-job training can be delivered in the apprentice's normal workplace or at an external location.

**3**

Progress reviews and on-programme assessments do not count towards 20% off-the-job training, as they do not deliver new knowledge, skills and behaviours.

**4**

If needed, English and maths training must be on top of the 20% off-the-job training requirement.