

Apprenticeships work-based learning guidance

1. Introduction

Apprenticeship courses are designed in such a way to articulate the notional hours of learning that are derived from the workplace in order to ensure the credit equivalence of the courses and modules we offer.

- 1.1 Higher and Degree Apprenticeship courses include significant proportions of work-based learning alongside more traditional forms of delivery. Course design should articulate this using the following two categories of modules:
 - a. Category 1: work-based learning;
 - b. Category 2: non-work-based learning.
- 1.2 Courses will normally include a minimum of 80 credits of work-based learning modules (Category 1) at each level of study. Course teams are further encouraged to consider if modules deemed category 2 can be delivered as category 1 modules.
- 1.3 The suggested amount of work-based learning credits for an undergraduate apprenticeship course has been derived by taking into account a number of different factors. This is to ensure that modules in an apprenticeship, where significant amounts of learning is undertaken within the workplace, adopt a consistent approach and have equivalence of learning hours (and thus their credit value) with a standard undergraduate module. See appendix for further details.

2. Category 1: Apprenticeship Work-Based Learning Modules

- 2.1 Apprenticeship work-based learning modules focus on the application of discipline specific knowledge, skills and behaviours within a work-based context.
- 2.2 An apprenticeship module recognises that a large proportion of learning in an apprenticeship is undertaken within the workplace and draws on this in the design of learning, teaching and assessment tasks, offering apprentices the opportunity to learn through work.
- 2.3 Learning outcomes are written to enable apprentices to demonstrate knowledge, skills and behaviours that are assessed through a varied assessment strategy

which may include: observation of workplace practice, reflective accounts, work-based projects, live case studies.

- 2.4 Assessment tasks may also be negotiated with learners, allowing them to personalise their learning and the outcomes of assessment within the module.
- 2.5 In addition to specific work-based tasks, the learning, teaching and assessment strategy for the module should encompass a broad range of disciplinary learning that learners can apply to their current and future working practices. An overemphasis in the module on solving narrow or specific work-related problems risks limiting learning in the module to only localised or specific work features.
- 2.6 When writing an apprenticeship WBL module, course teams should adhere to the general guidelines as specified below:

An apprenticeship work-based learning module should:

- Adopt a learning, teaching and assessment strategy which recognises the workplace as the predominant place of learning in an apprenticeship, and which enables learners to develop solutions to their own workplace problems drawing on theory and practice;
- Strike a balance between learning, teaching and assessment activities that focus on specific work-based problems and those that relate to the wider disciplinary modes of enquiry and practice that relate to apprentices' current and future work contexts;
- Enable apprentices to negotiate aspects of assessment in the module to ensure that learning is applicable to their individual workplace setting;
- Where appropriate (and in conjunction with employers, PSRBs etc.), provide opportunities for competency-based assessment of knowledge, skills and behaviours through observation of practice within the apprentice's workplace setting;
- Provide apprentices with regular opportunities to undertake critical reflection on their workplace practice;
- Recognise the distance learning nature of an apprenticeship and adopt a blended approach to learning, teaching and assessment;
- Include workplace mentors and work-based assessors in the assessment of an apprentice's progress within the module;
- Identify the notional amount of workplace learning hours needed to support the work-based learning within the module.

3. Category 2: Non-WBL Modules

- 3.1 These modules are existing or new modules that enable learners to develop the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding outside of a specific work-based context. These modules and their assessment strategy may have elements

mandated by a PSRB which would restrict them meeting the general criteria for a WBL module as set out above.

Appendix – calculation for minimum amount of work-based learning

The calculation is built on a number of assumptions e.g. that an academic level is delivered over a full calendar year, that apprentices have a full-time working pattern, an average amount of annual and statutory leave (approximately 5 weeks) and access to a minimum of 20% off-the-job training time.

The calculation for the minimum amount of work-based learning is provided below:

- There are 120 credits per academic level for undergraduate courses. Therefore, 1200 learning hours are needed to complete an academic level. Assuming an apprentice has approximately 47 working weeks in each calendar year, this equates to 25.5 learning hours per week needed to complete the qualification ($1200 \div 47$).
- The minimum amount of off-the-job training is 20% of an apprentice's total working week. Assuming an apprentice is in work for 37 hours per week, this equates to approximately 7.5 hours per week off-the-job training time to undertake their qualification studies and a remaining 18 hours per week of the learning that can be attributed to learning undertaken within the workplace (work-based learning).
- Therefore, to calculate the amount of credits to be allocated to work-based learning: 18 hours per week as a percentage of the total learning undertaken in the week (25.5) equates to 70.5%. Calculating this as a percentage of 120 credits gives approximately 85 credits of work-based learning. Rounded down to the lowest denomination of 20 credits equals 80 credits of work-based learning.

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