



Department  
for Education

# **Apprenticeships: off-the-job training hours estimates**

**Ad-hoc notice**

**March 2018**

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## Introduction

This ad-hoc statistical release presents analysis by the Institute for Apprenticeships that estimates the overall volume of hours of off-the-job training for apprentices. The analysis combines statistical and survey data to give an early insight into the effect of the reforms to the apprenticeship programme.

We estimate the total hours of off-the-job training over an apprenticeship using survey data on weekly hours of training and administrative data on duration. We then calculate the total expected volume of hours of off-the-job training associated with apprenticeship starts in the first two quarters of the 2017/18 academic year compared to the same period in 2016/17. This is not a comprehensive estimate of off-the-job training; it is any relative change that is important, not the total level.

This data is being published to support the delivery of the Apprenticeship reforms.

Changes in the way apprenticeship funding works were introduced and implemented from May 2017. Guidance about these changes and paying the apprenticeship levy can be found at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work>

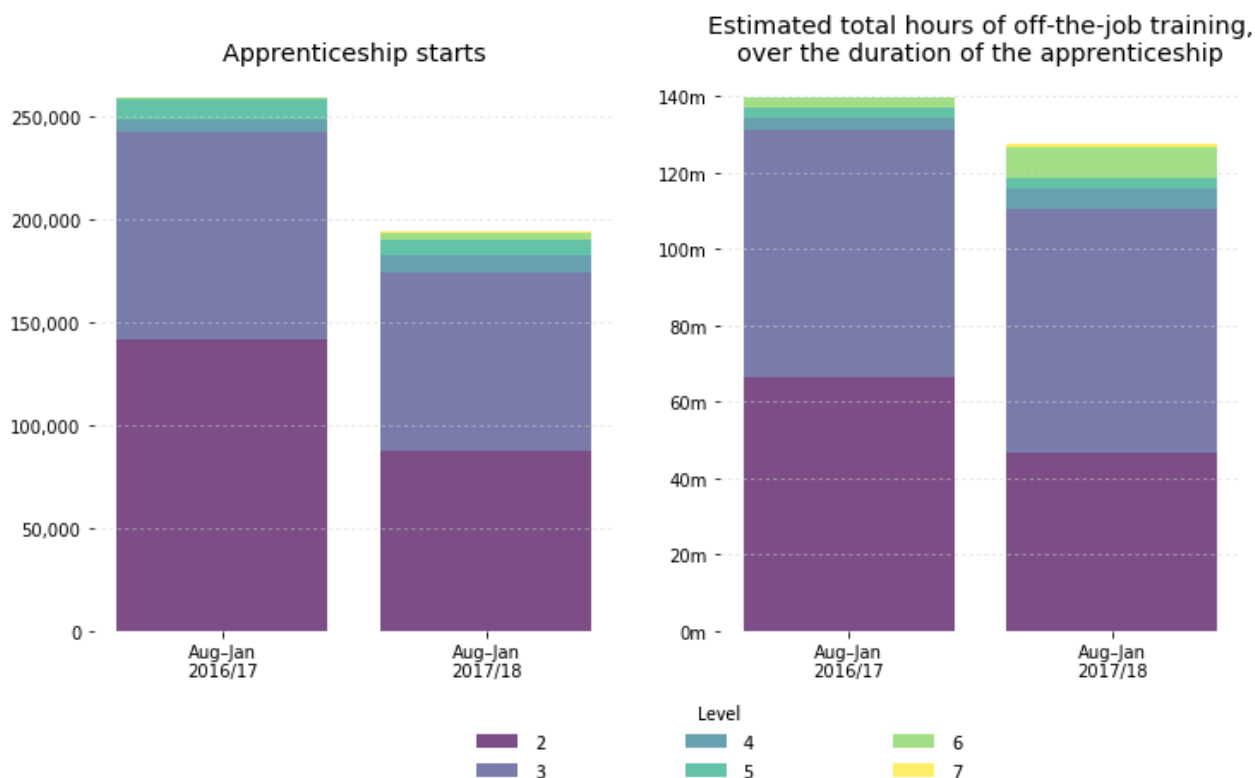
## Main findings

Apprenticeship starts in the first two quarters of 2017/18 have shown a fall and a significant shift to apprenticeships with higher expected training intensity relative to the previous year. The shift has been towards higher level apprenticeships and to subjects with greater training requirements. We estimate the expected total off-the-job training in the first two quarters of the 2017/18 academic year decreased by ~8 per cent relative to the same period in 2016/17 (from 140m<sup>1</sup> off-the-job training hours to 130m off-the-job training hours respectively), compared to a decrease in starts in the same period of ~25 per cent (from 258,800 starts to 194,100 starts). Further, we judge that the level of training in 2017/18 is likely to be greater than we estimate, indicating that there is likely to have been little or no reduction in the level of training this year compared to last.

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<sup>1</sup> Figures are rounded to the nearest 5m.

**Chart 1: Apprenticeship starts and estimated hours of off-the-job training**



## Methodology and data limitations

We estimate the total expected volume of off-the job training by taking the findings on average hours of formal training per week from the ‘Apprenticeships evaluation 2017: learners survey’ research report<sup>2</sup> and combining them with apprenticeship starts and duration data from the Individualised Learner Record (ILR)<sup>3</sup> dataset. The granularity is set by the survey data, with inputs split by detailed level (2-7) and Sector Subject Area.

For the weekly hours of off-the-job training for an apprentice we used the learner survey findings on the percentage reporting any formal training, and the average reported hours of formal training either in the workplace or at an external provider. For example, see figure 4.4 and table 4.4 of the learner survey report for apprenticeship at levels 2 and 3.

It is important to note that we use the same estimate of weekly off-the-job training for starts in both 2016/17 and 2017/18. The 2016/17 off-the-job training hours are estimated from the Apprenticeship Evaluation Survey findings on average hours of formal training per week. This may under-estimate the average hours of off-the-job training in 2017/18, given the shift from apprenticeship frameworks to standards which require relatively more training and the additional quality reforms brought in from May 2017: an apprenticeship

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-evaluation-2017-learners-survey>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-other-statistics-and-research>

must have a minimum duration of 12 months and a minimum of 20 per cent off-the-job training. We expect these reforms will mean that, once all new apprenticeship starts have embedded these requirements, the amount of off-the-job training will increase.

Apprenticeship duration is based on the start date and either the actual end date, where available for completions, or the planned end date of the Apprenticeship as recorded in the ILR.

The 2017/18 apprenticeship starts and durations are based on provisional figures for the first two quarters of the 2017/18 academic year. Data are subject to change until final data is published in November 2018, as some providers report some of their data for this period later in the year. To be as comparable as possible, the 2016/17 apprenticeships starts and durations for the first two quarters of 2016/17 academic year are based on the provisional figures from the same point last year.

We have not attempted to account for provider behaviour in reporting, which can change from year to year. For example, there could be differences in data lag for reported starts or withdrawals. We have also not accounted for any differences in behaviour due to the reforms, such as changing patterns of withdrawal or completion rates. For example, the data being published on durations does not use actual end date in cases of withdrawal. If there were fewer early withdrawals as a result of the reforms, this would increase the volume of training being delivered, but would not be captured in this estimate.

For the estimate of total off-the-job training associated with an apprenticeship start, we have not made any assumptions to account for factors like annual leave, whether term dates affect total training, or how patterns of training are distributed over a duration. As such this is not a comprehensive estimate of off-the-job training, the insight comes from any relative change, not total levels of training.

What this brings into the public domain is the like-for-like snapshot from the first two quarters of academic year 2016/17, and the durations based on administrative data.

## **Interpretation of the results**

- The total hours of training estimates are indicative and likely to change when more data becomes available.
- The estimates represent the total hours expected across the length of the course.
- The total hours of training estimate in 2017/18 is likely to be an under-estimate.



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