

Guide to 'on-the-job' Driver CPC Periodic Training

We are frequently asked "what would JAUPST accept?" in a DCPC Periodic Training course. Unfortunately, only JAUPST is in a position to answer that question with any certainty.

However, if you are unsure, it is always worth sending JAUPST an email with a brief outline of your intentions and your reasons for considering the proposal to be within the regulations. This is a better use of resources than writing a full application, only for it to be rejected.

One of the most difficult areas to cover is 'on-the-job' training. Many of us will judge that this training brings many benefits, in particular the reality and variety of the scenarios covered. While many skilled trainers create excellent scenarios in the classroom, others would argue that nothing beats the first-hand experience gained in on-the-job sessions.

With the restrictions on content and timing of DCPC Periodic Training, it is essential to ensure that any course proposed meets the requirements in these matters. The main challenge with 'on-the-job' is clearly showing where 'on-the-job' finishes and 'training' starts.

Therefore, the key to success lies with identifying the specific area to be trained on, how the training will be delivered and the time to be spent on that element.

We also need to remember that 'assessment' and 'training' have different meanings and, while a certain element of ongoing assessment is necessary as part of ensuring the training is successful, it is unlikely that a session focussing on assessing is going to be accepted.

Many of the areas mentioned in the DCPC syllabus lend themselves to on-the-job training, including:

Advanced training in rational driving based on safety regulations

Understanding the characteristics of the transmission system, operation of safety controls to minimise wear and prevent malfunctioning, optimisation of fuel consumption and defensive driving could all be considered suitable, as long as the key requirements of approval are addressed.

Ability to load the vehicle with due regard for safety rules and proper vehicle use

It is hard to think of a more beneficial way of training safe loading of vehicles than practical application in the workplace, using vehicles the driver will operate and loads he or she will encounter in their working life.

To know the social environment of road transport and the rules governing it

Real life, real time experience of the complexities of calculating the differing break requirements of drivers' hours and WTD can be clearly demonstrated in the challenging environment of a typical working day for many drivers.

To make drivers aware of the risks on the road and accidents at work

It would be hard to make up some of the bizarre actions of certain road-users and while classroom awareness and hazard perception tests all have their part to play, the reality of facing the challenge of

driving a commercial vehicle while being tutored in risk assessment, defensive driving and the type of accidents which may be encountered can supplement other forms of training. These can potentially be addressed within a normal working environment as long as the training element is clearly identified and separated from the work element of the day's activities. Always be aware of the need to identify the required number of hours of training to be completed.

Ability to prevent physical risks and assess emergency situations

Attendance at the workplace and customer premises or pick-up points provides an opportunity for realistic risk assessment of real-life scenarios which could be encountered in a driver's working day, thus making this another area with the potential for inclusion in on-the-job DCPC training.

Ability to adapt behaviour to help enhance the image of the company

The opportunity to learn while face-to-face with genuine customers who are relevant to the driver's daily routine brings a level of reality to training which would otherwise be difficult to create.

Any of the above has the potential to achieve the clearly stated aims of the Driver CPC. However, it is essential to remember that the day or days concerned are training days where the training element comes first and the job (on this occasion!) comes second.

When planning on-the-job training we also need to ensure that the training does not suffer from being part of the working day but benefits from the opportunities that such a scenario offers. This would include a 'fall back' plan if traffic congestion or customer delay impacted negatively on the training session. You may wish to plan your on-the-job session as 3.5 hours within a longer working day for two consecutive days as a way of ensuring distractions or delays created by the work element of the day do not have a negative effect on the training content.

It has to be stressed that approval or otherwise sits with JAUPD but following this guidance should strengthen your case where approval is required.