



Major Reform in ITI Training: Mandatory 150 Hours of OJT / Group Project Introduced

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The Directorate General of Training (DGT), under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India, has issued detailed guidelines regarding the implementation of a mandatory provision of 150 hours of On the Job Training (OJT) or Group Project for trainees in Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) under the Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS). This provision has been made effective from the academic session 2022–23.

In the traditional training system, trainees primarily receive instruction using tools and machines available within ITI campuses. This limits their exposure to modern and emerging industrial technologies. As a result, many trainees require additional on the job training after joining the industry. In view of the rapidly evolving industrial landscape and continuous technological advancements, strengthening industry integrated training has become essential. In alignment with the National Education Policy 2020, DGT has restructured CTS qualifications. The annual training duration has been reduced from 1600 hours to 1200 hours. In addition, a mandatory provision of 150 hours of OJT or Group Project has been introduced to ensure that trainees gain real industrial exposure.

On this occasion, Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education, Government of India, stated, “The mandatory 150 hours of structured On-the-Job Training or Group Project for ITI trainees is a significant reform to enhance the quality and relevance of vocational education. In a rapidly evolving industrial landscape, classroom learning alone is not enough. Real workplace exposure builds practical competence, confidence and professionalism. This step will deepen industry–institution linkages and ensure that our youth are truly job-ready and future-ready.”

He further added, “The government’s objective is not merely to provide certificates, but to equip youth with skills aligned to real industry needs. Through an industry integrated training model, this step will accelerate the vision of ‘Skilled India, Developed India’. In line with the National Education Policy 2020, this initiative will prove to be an important milestone in making skill training more relevant, practical, and industry focused.”

The primary objective of OJT or Group Project is to strengthen the employability of ITI trainees by aligning their skills with actual industry requirements. It will enhance collaboration between industries and ITIs, ensuring that training programs remain updated in accordance with current industry needs. This initiative will help trainees integrate smoothly into the workforce and adapt better to workplace environments. It will also ensure continuous assessment of their skills in real industrial settings so that their competencies develop in line with industry standards.

Under this provision, it is mandatory for every trainee to undergo OJT or, where OJT is not feasible, to complete a project related to their respective trade. Trainees will become eligible for OJT or project work only after completing a minimum of three months of training in the ITI. The training will be conducted

under the guidance of industry mentors, and their performance will be regularly evaluated. Trainees will be required to maintain a logbook documenting their activities and the skills they acquire. The final assessment will be conducted during the practical examination. It will be based on mentor or trainer evaluation, review of the logbook, and a viva. The corresponding grade will be reflected in the marksheet. Upon successful completion, an industry approved certificate will be issued by the ITI.

Keeping trainee safety in view, State Directorates may consider provisions such as accidental group insurance. Arrangements for travel and accommodation may also be made for trainees undergoing OJT at distant locations. Additionally, OJT will be incorporated as an important parameter in the Data Driven Grading Methodology (DDGM) in the future. For trainees studying under the Dual System of Training (DST) mode, mandatory project work has been provided in place of OJT, as they already undergo industry training.

DGT has directed all State and Union Territory Skill Development Departments, NSTIs, and RDSDEs to identify suitable industries and ensure that trainees are provided with quality OJT opportunities, along with effective implementation of the guidelines.

This initiative will further strengthen the ITI skill ecosystem by deepening industry linkages. It will reinforce the Skill India Mission and serve as an important step towards making youth self reliant, industry ready, and better prepared for sustainable employment.

The Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS), launched in 1950, is a well-established initiative aimed at creating a skilled workforce in the country. It provides employment-oriented training to youth and equips them with skills aligned to industry requirements. Through NCVET (National Council for Vocational Education and Training) and DGT certification, millions of young individuals have gained access to long term career opportunities. The scheme continues to play a significant role in building India's productive workforce.

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