

INDUSTRIAL TRAINING FUND

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy statement is the first revised training policy document of the Industrial Training Fund. (ITF) (It should be read in conjunction with other extant documents of the Fund like the enabling ACT and other operational guidelines).

TRAINING POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The Industrial Training Fund (ITF) was set up under Act No 47 of 1971 (as amended up to date) to promote and encourage the “acquisition of skills in industry and commerce with a view to generating a pool of indigenous trained manpower sufficient to meet the needs of the economy”. To finance the scheme the Act provides for contributions on the part of employers and for subventions on the part of the Federal Government. The Federal Government made available the sum of ₦1,000,000 (£500,000) during the Plan Period 1970-74 as take off grant.

The Governing Council of the Fund decided that part of the contributions by employers will be disbursed for the development and support of training programmes. Consequently, the Fund will bear part of the cost incurred by employers in training their employees by reimbursing part of the cost incurred for courses undertaken. Employers should note, however, that training reimbursement are only a part of the return they can receive from the Fund. Other returns include the general availability of trained and mobile manpower throughout the economy, the prompt attention and guidance of the training advisers of the Fund, and the access to the wealth of information and expertise which the Fund has built up over the years.

2. THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE FUND

A Governing Council of thirteen members drawn from the public and private sectors will be appointed by the Federal Government to manage the Fund. This is to reflect the co-operative spirit of the enterprise, the need for private employers, organized labour, and the providers and users of training to co-operate in identifying training

needs and devising training policy and system. The thirteen-member Governing Council of the Fund shall comprise of the following:

- (a) The Chairman;
- (b) The Director-General;
- (c) One representative each from the following Federal Ministries:
 - 1. Industries;
 - 2. Employment, Labour and Productivity;
 - 3. Education.
- (d) One representative of the Ministry of Budget and Planning;
- (e) One representative of the National (Nigerian) Employers Consultative Association;
- (f) One representative of the National (Nigerian) Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture
- (g) One representative of the Nigerian Labour Congress;
- (h) One representative of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria
- (i) One person with extensive knowledge of and close association with industrial training; and
- (j) two persons who shall not come from the same state, to represent the State in rotation for two years at a time.

3.0 THE SYSTEM

3.1 THE SUPPORT MACHINERY FOR TRAINING

The Fund will support training in several ways, including

- 3.1.1 bearing a proportion of the direct costs incurred by employers in human capital development and performance improvement, focusing on current trends.
- 3.1.2 assisting and/or strengthening training capability and facilities throughout the country; as it relates to the application of information and communication technology in training
- 3.1.3. directly building up training facilities of its own; with emphasis on information communication technology
- 3.1.4. organizing research and studies into training as a support to other activities of the Fund.
- 3.1.5 publishing training guides and manuals.
- 3.1.6 giving ex-gratia awards

3.2 *DIRECT TRAINING COSTS*

The Fund will reimburse part of the cost involved in on-the-job and off-the-job training of Nigerian workers undergoing approved training courses. An “approved training course” is a course so defined by the Training and Research Committee of the Fund after satisfying itself that the course content and curriculum meet the requirement and standard set by the Committee through syllabuses, etc.

Prescribed forms for individual courses will be completed and submitted by employers sponsoring their employees in respect of courses for which they intend to seek the reimbursement from the Industrial Training Fund.

3.3 *TRAINING PROCEDURES*

As the larger part of training under the auspices of the Fund will be of an in-service nature, the role of employers in determining the training needs in the workforce is considered crucial. Employers will continue, to a considerable extent, determine the training needs of individual employees and the relevance of such training to the work process in the establishment. The Governing Council of the Fund will, however for those courses attracting its support, ensure that the needs for specific training exists, that training standards are maintained, that the course content is relevant to the needs of the industry and the economy, and that in certain cases the programme, syllabus, curriculum approved by the Council or its Training and Research Committee, are met. Employers will be encouraged to adopt systems approach to training as major training delivery strategy.

3.4 *ASSESSEMENT OF TRAINING REQUIREMENTS*

The involvement of employers in deciding training requirements will ensure that training is purposive and that most trainees take up or return to jobs immediately after training. The Fund, however, retains its responsibility to ensure that training carried out with its approval is decided on the basis of identifiable needs in the economy generally. For this purpose, the Fund will set up unit(s) which will collaborate and liaise with other relevant organizations in identifying training needs in the economy. At the national level, it will be necessary that training is so rationalized as to ensure that the training effort does not by itself accentuate unemployment problems.

3.5 TRAINING CONTENT AND STANDARDS

The Fund will seek to evolve flexible training systems suitable to the needs of the Nigerian economy. Under the guidance of the Training and Research Committee and its sub-committees, curricula and syllabuses will be built-up for the use of employers and trainers. For this purpose, the Fund will have a specialist unit charged with the responsibility of researching into training techniques and methodology, their adaptation to local conditions, and the evolvement of relevant training techniques, methodology, curriculum and syllabus for wide or specific use in industry and commerce. Therefore the unit will put in place a skills training standard. Ultimately, compliance with the training recommendations and standards of the Fund will be a condition attracting the approval and reimbursement of the Fund.

3.6 TRAINING AIDS

The Fund will embark on a continuing programme of research and development of training aids and will assist employers and trainers by making available the result of such research. To effectively improve the quality and volume of training for skills, the role of the Fund will be interpreted in terms of developing training infrastructure and strategy, backed by intensive research and the introduction of innovations for accelerated training. Jobs will be analyzed, syllabuses and curricula built up, and training manual and aids prepared.

3.7 SELECTION OF TRAINEES

It has been indicated earlier that employers have a crucial role in determining the areas of in-service training and selecting the individual workers for such training. The duty of the Governing Council of the Fund to set standards for training courses that will attract approval and reimbursement of the Fund implies, however, that the number, status, grade or pre-training qualification of trainees, are set or approved by the Fund. For certain courses, the Fund will establish minimum standards to ensure that trainees under the Fund are trainable and are being trained with an eye on job suitability.

In certain circumstances, the Fund will sponsor the training of persons not yet in employment. These cases include where the anticipation of new industries calls for training in new technology or where the training facilities within industry are not adequate for training needs in the short term. In such circumstances, the Fund will ensure that training has an employment

objective. Candidates selected for such training will normally meet the minimum requirements set by the Fund.

To support the selection process, the Fund may encourage the development of counseling and guidance services and aptitude testing.

3.8 TRAINERS

One of the critical requirements for the massive training effort of the Fund is the availability of Human Resources Development Personnel. The Fund will embark on a programme of training trainers who will be direct employees of the Fund. At the same time, the Fund will encourage employers to appoint direct full-time training officers/instructors. For establishments having approved training centres or in-plant training facilities, the Fund may contribute to the cost of hiring trainers and instructors.

The Fund will encourage the growth of training consciousness by improving the status of trainers and instructors, supporting the development of training and development institutions and by organizing conference or seminars of stakeholders for the purpose of exchanging views on developments on the training scene.

3.9 GRANTS

As part of the Fund's mandate towards the promotion and encouragement of the acquisition of skills in industry and commerce, the Fund may give ex-gratia awards to employers who have contributed immensely to Human Capital development in the Nigerian economy. The criteria for ex-gratia awards will be determined by the Fund's management.

4.0 TRAINING CENTRES AND FACILITIES

4.1 Industrial Training Fund Centres

The rapid growth of technology in the world today has brought about a significant new dimension to the provisions for training the workforce be it internationally or locally. This dimension is the pressing need for efficiency as well as effectiveness in order to reduce costs and raise the standards of training to promote remunerative employment at national levels.

The Fund therefore, instead of just supporting training, will directly set up and run its own training centres for the training and upgrading the skills of

employees selected from among the nominees of employers or from the open selection process of the Fund. Nominal fees will be charged.

4.2 EMPLOYER-OWNED TRAINING CENTRES

The Fund has a responsibility to help develop and strengthen training centres within establishments. This is with the view to meeting the challenges of our times which lies in the application of a systematic approach to training that embraces all the desirable elements of success. In this connection, a selective policy will be adopted to ensure that such support goes to credible or approved centres. Accordingly, the strategy of the Fund to training centres by employers will be as follows:

4.2.1 In-Company Training Programmes

For each employer in this category owning and running programmes within the establishment, the Fund's training officers will liaise with the company's training officer, and such companies will be required to:-

- (a) prepare for the prior approval of the Fund the annual training programmes within the training Centres.
- (b) prepare for the approval of the Fund the financial estimate of the training programmes;
- (c) direct and supervise the training programmes approved by the Fund .
- (d) be accountable to the Fund for the achievement of training targets under the programmes;
- (e) ensure that funds made available for training are properly utilized to meet the objectives of the Fund.

Only claims based on approved training programmes will be entertained.

4.2.2 Trade-Group Training Programmes

To encourage greater involvement of employers, particularly small employers in the organization and direction of training, the Fund will encourage the establishment of training centers by groups of employers in certain areas of economic activity. In such cases, the groups will enter into Group Training programme agreements with the Fund playing supervisory and coordinating role.

Training programmes for the Centres as well as estimates of training costs should be submitted for approval to the Fund three months before the

beginning of each accounting/training year of the Fund. The Centre should be at all times open to the inspection and supervision of the Fund's officials.

4.3.0 FORMAL TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

The Fund will seek to harmonize its training efforts and support in collaboration with the activities of these training institutions and as well utilize their facilities for sandwich courses, etc. The training of craftsmen through apprenticeship schemes and other less expensive and less formal systems will also be carried out in collaboration with formal training institutions.

4.3.1 SIWES OPERATION

SIWES operation should be fully funded by the Federal Government. This will include the payment of all allowances and the funding of the administrative support services, infrastructure and equipment.

5.0 GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR GRANTING TRAINING REIMBURSEMENTS

Training Reimbursement may only be made if the following conditions are satisfied:

- (i) Claims for training reimbursement may only be entertained after a company has incurred the cost in question. Authenticated training expenses records must be presented in respect of internal or in-plant training programmes.
- (ii) Claims may only be made on the prescribed forms issued by the Fund and are payable to contributing employers not employees.
- (iii) ITF approval documents for all courses for which claims are made must accompany the claim forms submitted to the Fund. For on-the-job training, prior approval of the training programmes by the Fund is also a basic requirement for consideration of claims for reimbursements.
- (iv) The relevance of the training for which a claim is made to the needs of the trainees and of the firm and the cost-economy and effectiveness of the training are basic conditions for the payment of training reimbursement. Each training Programmes will be based on identified training needs.
- (v) For areas of training and further education where the Fund has approved and published training recommendations, compliance with such recommendations, which will allow sufficient flexibility and adaptability, will be a condition for training reimbursement approval. Equally, for on-

the-job training, compliance with the programme as approved or modified by the Fund will be a condition for training reimbursement.

6.0 MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISORY TRAINING

The Industrial Training Fund will collaborate with relevant Government agencies in policy-formulation and the co-ordination of the various management and supervisory training efforts to ensure the relevance of courses to needs, that courses are not duplicated, and are provided economically.

For the purpose of a management-training reimbursement, a “manager” is described as an employee whose responsibilities include setting objectives, organization and planning, implementing policy decisions, and the general direction of operations for the company, or a division of the company.

Supervisors are distinguished from administrative managers by their responsibility for actual overseeing, inspection and direction in the area of operation. They include second-line supervisors (e.g. foremen) who direct the supervisory link and are immediately below management (e.g. assistant foremen and charge-hands) and working supervisors who combine supervisory duties with operative duties and have limited formal authority. The supervisor is concerned with the quality, quantity and cost-effectiveness of the product or service.

The Fund will not consider training claims for participation at meetings dealing with a company’s plans and operations such as Director/Managers trips, holidays, etc. Training reimbursement will only relate to exercises with specific training relevance.

7.0 PROFESSIONALS, TECHNOLOGISTS AND OTHER SPECIALISTS

Training reimbursement may be made for this category of employees for following purpose:-

- (i) Post-qualification internship
- (ii) Sandwich Courses; and
- (iii) Block or Day-Release Courses leading to membership of recognized professional bodies.

8.0 CRAFTS APPRENTICESHIP COURSES

Apprenticeship is described as training for occupations in the category of skilled crafts and trades requiring a wide and diverse range of skills, knowledge, experience and independent judgment. The programmes consist of on-the-job training and work experience with related instructions in the theoretical aspects of the job. A basic assumption in an apprenticeship scheme is that the skill of the apprentice on the job improves steadily during the period of well-programmed training and his productivity pays for part of all the cost of training. The Fund takes account of this progression in determining training reimbursement levels to employers sponsoring apprenticeship schemes.

The following conditions are required before training reimbursement claims are considered for an apprenticeship:-

- (i) The trainee should not be less than sixteen years of age.
- (ii) The trainee must have certified proof of literacy.
- (iii) There must be an approved scheduled of work processes and organized instruction design on which the trainee is to receive training and experience on the job. The Fund provides apprenticeship manual on which employers may flexibly base training.
- (iv) The employer must adopt an increasing schedule of wages for apprentices as the apprenticeship progresses.
- (v) An agreement between the employer and apprentice must be entered into and a copy deposited with the Fund. The Fund has a draft agreement for general use. Employers could adopt these agreements with or without modifications. An agreement should include the following among others: period of apprenticeship, wage schedule, length of probationary period, credits from previous training or trade experience, and the signature of the employer and apprentice. The first three months of apprenticeship are regarded as a probationary period by the Fund; a trainee's continuation on apprenticeship after this period will depend on a satisfactory report of performance during the period of probation.
- (vi) Proper records must be maintained on the programme
- (vii) The training period should aim at the standard or qualification approved or set by the Fund.

The Fund will provide certificates to trainees on the satisfactory completion of an apprenticeship programme recognized and approved by the Fund.

9.0 OPERATIVE AND NARROW SKILLED WORKERS

The Fund will consider training claims for the approved training of operatives and narrow skilled workers

10.0 TRAINING OF TRAINING STAFF

The Fund places great emphasis on the training of company training officers/instructors. A training officer assists management in identifying training needs and formulating and implementing training programmes to meet these needs. A training officer is engaged full-time in training workers on an organized programme of training – on - or off-the-job. Informal instruction as part of normal operational work is not regarded as constituting training for this definition. In recognition that certain small-sized firms cannot employ full-time trainers, the Fund may consider training claims in respect of employees who spend only part of their time on training duties.

Training reimbursement for the training of training staff are for training in

- (i) the administration of training activity and/or
- (ii) training techniques/methods. Reimbursement can only be claimed if the training programme had been submitted to and approved by the Fund prior to the start of training.

11.0 SAFETY TRAINING

Safety training includes training aimed at preventing industrial accidents or training in first-aid/and or fire-prevention. Training reimbursement is considered for such training.

12.0 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

In today's globalised economy where information and communication technology (ICT) is significant, greater emphasis should be given by employers to the use of ICT, therefore the Fund shall encourage employers to pay adequate attention to ICT training as relevant to their operation.

13.0 TRAINING IN OTHER AREAS

Applications for any other areas not listed above may be made to the Fund by employers in circumstances where they consider that training claims are valid. Such claims will be considered on their merit.

14.0 ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

Generally in on-the-job training, the following conditions should be met:

- (a) The training takes place in the job environment in which the trainee will work at the end of his training;
- (b) The trainee works with equipment and materials which he will use at the completion of training;
- (c) The job procedures are the same as will obtain after training .

As on-the-job training may vary from an extremely structured to a very unstructured or informal training system , the Fund requires that all on the job training programmes on which training reimbursement may be made should be cleared with and approved by the Fund prior to the start of training. The Fund will ensure that programmes have definite training objectives and are formulated on the basis of an analysis of the job in question. The analysis should include a breakdown of the job into processes and steps for specific tasks and establish evaluation methods for measuring the progress of trainees.

The Fund recognizes that, because of the variations in actual personnel and training situations, small and medium sized firms are more likely to rely on on-the-job training than large-sized firms. Accordingly, for on-the-job training, the reimbursement system approved by the Fund recognizes this fact.

The general conditions for training reimbursement are:-

- (i) that the training programme is cleared and approved by the Fund prior to the start of training ;
- (ii) that the Fund is satisfied that the instructors to implement the programme are competent to instruct;
- (iii) that training for which claim is made must cover a whole working day or series of working days not necessarily consecutive. In exceptional cases, the Fund may accept training carried out in series of sessions of less than a whole-day's duration for which purpose a total of eight hours will make up a day. In cases where training runs concurrently or is sandwiched between normal operations, the Fund has the discretion

to decide what proportion of the total time spent is attributable to actual training. The Fund shall from time to time monitor the implementation of the In-company training programmes.

15.0 OVERSEAS COURSES

The programme for an overseas course for which reimbursement may be made must be approved by the Fund before training is undertaken.

Programmes for overseas training stating venue, syllabus, objectives, level of participants, period of course, course sponsors, source of financial support if any, course fees and other expenses, should accompany application seeking Fund's approval. At the end of the course, it will be the obligation of the employer to attach to his claim for training reimbursement all the necessary supporting documents.

16.0 INDUSTRIAL EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS

Great emphasis will be placed on assisting certain products of post-secondary school system to adopt or orientate easily to their possible post-graduation job environment. The Fund will seek to work out a cooperative machinery with stakeholders whereby students in institutions of higher learning may receive training in industry or commerce compatible with their area of study.

The Fund will provide administrative support services, while the Federal Government will contribute the necessary Funds for the operation of the scheme.

17.0 CONCLUSION

The Governing Council of the Fund has directed that the foregoing statement be issued for the guidance of employers without prejudice to any review of policy that may be necessary from time to time.