

FAIB First Aid Blended Learning (Update November 2020)

What is Blended Learning?

Blended learning is a combination of distance and face to face classroom learning.

HSE Guidance

In 2015, Ian Kershaw MBE sat on the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) Group called First Aid Quality Partnership (FAQP) This group includes representation from Ofqual (England), SQA (Scotland), CQFW (Wales) and CCEA (NI), the Voluntary Aid Societies as well as FAIB these being the main Regulators of First Aid training in the United Kingdom.

This group had several discussions about Blended Learning and particularly how much time should be spent as distance learning and how much time face to face in the classroom.

First Aid Course under the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

The agreement reached at that time (2015) within the FAQP was that one third should be distance work and two thirds would be face to face classroom work for First Aid at Work (FAW), First Aid at Work Requalification (FAWR) and Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW).

The HSE First Aid Guidance document (GEIS3) states that the Blended First Aid courses must have a face-to-face practical element.

First Aid Courses under the Department for Education (DfE)

At the same time The Department for Education (DfE) decided that the Paediatric First Aid (PFA) course could be split 50/50 so that one day would be distance and one day would be classroom.

However DfE decided that the Emergency Paediatric Course (EPFA) could not be conducted as a Blended course.

This situation still remains the same with DfE at the present time.

This situation (in terms of the ratios between distance and classroom training) remained the same until early 2020. However with the arrival of Covid 19 pandemic, the lockdown and the introduction of Social distancing, Employers were starting to consider other options instead of face to face training. It was also very clear that new technologies like Zoom and Microsoft Team were being used by Employers in training situations

FAIB have always made clear that we were happy to include Blended Learning within First Aid training but would **NEVER** accept a fully on line course for FAW, RFAW, EFAW, PFA and EPFA.

The FAIB Blended Learning Working Party

In the summer of 2020 FAIB set up a working party of 4 very experienced First Aid trainers. The aim of the group was to look at the possibilities (in line with the views of a number of Employers) as to whether more distance learning could be conducted on the HSE First Aid courses.

Several weeks of discussion followed and then trialling of a number of FAW courses at Universities in London and Birmingham. The group concluded that it was possible to spend more time on the distance part of HSE First Aid courses and so reduce the face to face classroom element. However it is important to note that it was still possible to achieve all the practical elements of the course within the final third of the course.

In conclusion FAIB agreed that for FAW, EFAW and RFAW that it was possible to conduct these courses with a **MAXIMUM** of two thirds distance learning and one third face to face classroom learning.

Please remember that this is only an option for Training Providers, some may continue to run face to face courses or blended courses that don't have as much distance learning. It is up to Training Providers to decide which way they wish to provide First Aid training.

St John Ambulance had already set a precedent within First Aid Blended learning by introducing (following some trialling of the product) a Requalification First Aid at Work (RFAW) that was split 50/50 so that one day would be distance learning and one day would be face to classroom learning. This had not been discussed with the First Aid Quality Partnership before it was introduced.

The FAIB Approach

FAIB have consulted with Members of our Advisory Panel and have had discussions with a number of our Training Providers over our proposals.

The approach of FAIB has always been that any FAIB Training Provider wishing to offer a Blended First Aid course will have the course material vetted and tested before being accepted.

The package will of course have to cover all the bullet points listed below.

FAIB also want to ensure that every FAIB Training Provider (irrespective of size) is able to offer a Blended First Aid course to their clients.

However we are aware of the high costs involved in creating your own Blended First Aid course (particularly for a small Training Provider).

Any FAIB Training Provider can produce its own Blended First Aid course which will be vetted by FAIB which it can then use for its own training or if it wishes sell it as a commercial package through the FAIB or FOFATO website.

This means that if any FAIB Training Provider is asked to provide a Blended course (by an Employer) this should always be available and the Employer should feel safe in the knowledge the material has already been vetted by FAIB.

Areas that MUST be covered in any FAIB Blended package

- Ensure that blended learning is as effective as face to face learning
- Ensure that students know how to use the technology
- Ensure that the Training Provider has adequate means of supporting students
- Ensure that the Training Provider has a robust system to prevent identity fraud
- Ensure time is set aside during the working day to undertake any First Aid training they receive. (Regulation 13, Health & Safety Management Regulations 1999)
- Ensure that Contact time **IS NOT** reduced but it may provide more flexibility particularly for the Employer.

As previously mentioned in the FAIB Approach to Blended Learning we are happy to advertise a First Aid Blended Package once it has been vetted by FAIB.

Please Note: All Blended options that are available to FAIB Members are listed on the FAIB website.