



FACT SHEET

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships: Minimum hours per week

Which qualifications are approved for school-based apprenticeships and traineeships?

Industry recommends the apprenticeship and traineeship qualifications that are suitable for delivery to school students. These qualifications are gazetted by the Minister and are listed on the Public Register, which is available at dtwd.wa.gov.au/classab.

For more information on school-based apprenticeships and traineeships see the [School-based apprenticeships and traineeships fact sheet for students](#).

What are minimum hours?

A school-based apprentice or trainee (SBAT) must do **at least** 7.5 hours per week of paid work with the employer who is named on their training contract. The minimum hours requirements apply throughout the full term of the SBAT arrangement, including during school holiday periods. The hours can be averaged over six months (see *Why is averaging of work hours allowed?* below). The minimum hours requirements mean that a SBAT must do **at least** 195 hours of paid work every six months.

It is important to note that a SBAT who is absent from work may need to make up this time so that they meet the minimum hours requirements for paid work. Leave entitlements vary between industrial instruments. Confirmation of award provisions can be obtained by contacting the [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) on 13 13 94.

SBATs must also receive training. This may be off the job training at an institution, on the job training which is integrated into their work, or a combination of the two.

Why set minimum hours?

Workplace learning is an essential component of apprenticeships and traineeships and is highly valued by industry. The minimum workplace requirement for apprentices and trainees is typically 15/20 hours per week. For SBATs, the minimum is set at 7.5 hours per week.

Lower hours are accepted for SBATs because these students are completing a vocational qualification plus other studies towards their Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE). The minimum hours accommodate students' WACE requirements while also meeting industry's requirements for work based learning.

Can the student work more than 7.5 hours per week?

Yes. However, the employer, student, parents and school should discuss this before signing the training contract. The extra time at work needs to be balanced against the SBAT's school program. If the employer would like to engage the SBAT in work that is outside the scope of the training plan, this should be formalized in a separate arrangement which may require a different rate of pay.

If industry would like to establish a higher minimum requirement for a particular qualification, this must be approved as an exception on the public register. The [State Training Board](#) manages variations to the qualification.

Does the student have to work 7.5 hours in one shift?

No. The work times can be arranged to suit the employer, school and student. For example, the work hours could be completed as two half days, short shifts after school hours, weekend shifts or a combination of these. This flexibility allows SBATs to get workplace experience in a range of real conditions.

Why is averaging of work hours allowed?

The minimum work hours don't have to be done as regular weekly work. They can be done as short shifts or blocks of full time work, as long as it averages out to 7.5 hours per week over six months (that is 195 hours every six months).

This gives students, employers and schools flexibility. For example:

- students can do less work during exam time and more work in school holidays;
- students who miss some work due to sickness can do extra work to catch up;
- students who need extra support (for example students with a disability) can plan their work and training to suit their needs; and
- employers can schedule work for times that fit in with their business.

What fees and charges will the student pay?

Students are exempt from tuition, resource and enrolment fees if they are enrolled in school (full or part time) and are undertaking a publicly funded apprenticeship or traineeship as part of their secondary education. However, there may be other costs. Some industries may require students to purchase uniforms, books, protective equipment, tools or other equipment. These items remain the student's property.

If the apprenticeship or traineeship training continues beyond the compulsory school education period, it will attract fees and charges (see [VET fees and charges policy](#)).

How much will the SBAT be paid?

Employment conditions and pay rates are provided under the relevant State Award, Australian (Modern) Award, or workplace agreement. The SBAT's training contract gives details of the award type. All SBATs receive payment from their employer for hours worked. However, they may or may not be paid for hours in training:

- Under a State Award, SBATs are paid for hours spent in training.
- Under a Modern Award, school-based trainees are not paid for hours spent in training.
- Under a Modern Award, school-based apprentices receive an additional loading on their pay for off the job training. It is based on the number of hours worked, not the number of hours spent in training.

All hours worked are paid. If an SBAT works additional shifts to make up the required minimum hours of 195 hours for every six months, then the SBAT needs to be paid for these additional shifts.

How can I find out more about SBATs?

- To ask about the SBAT policy, contact apprenticeshippolicy@dtwd.wa.gov.au.
- To ask about SBAT training contracts, contact the [Apprenticeship Office](#).
- For SBAT support, contact your [Australian Apprenticeship Support Network](#).
- For queries about State Awards and award-free arrangements, refer to [Wageline](#)
- For queries about Modern Awards and agreements, refer to the [Fair Work Ombudsman](#).

Example 1 – Making up time

Angus is undertaking a Certificate II in Engineering as a school-based traineeship. He is employed by ABC Engineering Services Pty Ltd. Angus attends work for one day each week for 7.5 hours during school terms. He receives his training fully on the job, which is integrated into his work. Angus does not attend work during school holidays as his school is not able to provide the required duty of care during school holiday breaks.

Arrangements are made between Angus' school and his employer for him to work some additional days during each school term to make up for the school holiday periods where he doesn't work. Angus is paid by his employer for these additional days when they are worked. These arrangements allow Angus to meet the minimum hours requirements for his school-based traineeship.

Example 2 – Flexible working arrangements

Rosie is undertaking a Certificate II in Retail as a school-based traineeship. She is employed by Luxury Brands Pty Ltd who sell luxury leather handbags and wallets. Rosie attends work for one day each week for 7.5 hours and spends the other four days per week on her Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) studies. For three weeks each term (leading up to and during school exam periods) Rosie doesn't attend work so she can focus on her school studies.

Rosie's school is willing to provide for her duty of care outside of school hours, so this provides Rosie with the flexibility to work during school holidays. Arrangements are made between Rosie's employer and her school for her to work full time for a week during each school holiday break. This allows Rosie to meet the minimum hour requirements for her traineeship and provides her employer with an extra staff member when they need it during their busy retail periods.

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