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# UTSSA Student Legal Service **Employment Tips for International Students**



- **You have rights** – international students have the same work rights as anyone else working in Australia. You have a right to be paid no less than the minimum wage, and to have a safe place to work. You also should be paid superannuation, and other benefits.
- **Minimum Wage** – you should be paid at no less than the minimum wage, which from 1 July 2020 is \$19.49/hour, and you might be entitled to be paid more. This is true, even if you agreed to be paid less than the minimum wage.
- **It is not illegal to be paid cash** – you are not doing anything wrong if you are being paid in cash by your employer. But keep good records of when you are paid, and how much you are paid. If you can, send your employer a text/wechat/whatsapp message to confirm the amounts that you are paid, and when.
- **Find out who you work for** – make sure that you know or find out the full name and address of the person or company that you are working for. All employers should have an Australian Business Number – an ABN. Try to find this out.
- **Keep records** – try to keep records of the days and hours that you work, including meal breaks. This will make it far easier to check if you have been paid the right amount, and, if not, to get your employer to pay you properly.
- **Cash back schemes are illegal** – your employer cannot ask you to pay any of your wages back to them in cash. This is illegal.
- **If I complain will I be sacked?** If an employer isn't paying you the right amount, then you shouldn't be sacked if you complain – that would be illegal. But if you prefer, you can chase underpayments of wages after you stop working for an employer.
- **Worried about visa breaches?** Even if you are on a student visa and you have been working more than 40 hours per fortnight, you can complain about not being paid the right amount, and you should not be in trouble with your visa. The Fair Work Ombudsman says "We've come to an agreement with the Department of Home Affairs that a person's temporary visa will not be cancelled if they had an entitlement to work as part of their visa, believe they have been exploited at work, have reported their circumstances to us, and are actively assisting us in an investigation." see <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/visa-holders-and-migrants>.
- **How long will it take to get paid properly?** Sometimes we can get you paid properly within a few weeks, but it can take up to 6 months. Talk to us to find out.

**If you think you are being underpaid or you are not being treated properly at work, then we can help you.**

Email the UTSSA Student Legal Service at [studentlegalservice@uts.edu.au](mailto:studentlegalservice@uts.edu.au) to make an appointment, or call us on **02 9514 2484**, or drop in to see us. Our service is totally free and confidential.