

### INFORMATION SOURCES

**Fact sheet:** *Unpaid trial work* [worksite.actu.org.au/unpaid-trial-work](http://worksite.actu.org.au/unpaid-trial-work)

**Video:** *Before and After* [worksite.actu.org.au](http://worksite.actu.org.au)

You need experience to get a job, but you need a job to get experience. It's the challenge facing all first time job seekers.

Both work experience and volunteering are great ways of getting experience before your first job, but you need to be aware of the unpaid trial rip-off. This is when an employer expects you to work for no pay to get experience or to try-out for a job.

It's important to know the difference between work experience, volunteering and a paying job so you don't get tricked into working for free when you should get paid.

### Activity 1: Knowing the difference

Draw a line and match the kind of work with its definition.

- |                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Work experience | ➔ | Voluntary work includes unpaid work with charities, sporting and community groups.          |
| Volunteering    | ➔ | Being asked to work without pay to try out for a job.                                       |
| Unpaid trial    | ➔ | Work experience is a short term placement with an employer as part of your course or study. |

### Activity 2. Volunteer, Work experience, or Unpaid Trial?

Read the unpaid trial work fact sheet and decide which of these scenarios are **right** and **wrong** according to the rules of fair pay.

You apply for a job at a cafe. The boss asks you to come in and work for 3 shifts in a week. After these shifts you are told that you didn't get the job. You never get paid.	<b>right</b> or <b>wrong</b>
You help run a stall at a community fete on a weekend for 4 hours and don't get paid.	<b>right</b> or <b>wrong</b>
You apply for a job and get asked to come in for a trial. You work for 3 hours but don't get the job. You get paid for all of your work.	<b>right</b> or <b>wrong</b>
Your school organises for you to go to a local business for one week to get some experience. You don't get paid.	<b>right</b> or <b>wrong</b>
You paint faces at a young cousin's birthday party for a few hours and don't get paid.	<b>right</b> or <b>wrong</b>
An employer asks you to work a trial shift at a new job for no pay. They hire you and start paying you after that first shift.	<b>right</b> or <b>wrong</b>

If you apply for a new job you might get asked to do a work trial before they hire you. This is ok because the boss can see if you can do the job and you get to see if you like it. If you agree to a trial period, the employer **MUST**:

- Tell you how long your work trial or probation period will be.
- Pay you for any work that you do – even if it’s only a few hours.
- Pay you the award wage for the job you are doing.

### Activity 3. Have a look at the Unpaid trial work fact sheet and answer the following question.

What should you do if you are asked to work an unpaid job trial?

Look for another job	yes or no
Politely explain that if you work, it is your right to be paid	yes or no
Say yes, it may lead to a paid job	yes or no
Get in touch with Fair Work Australia and let them know	yes or no
Tell all your friends not to look for work there	yes or no
Briefly explain your answer.	

### Activity 4. Working hard or hardly working?

Have a look at the *Unpaid trial work* fact sheet and circle the scenarios below where an employer has to pay you.

You work a 3 hour trial shift	You stay after work to talk to friends	You have to attend a training session outside of work hours
You come into work to shop/have lunch with friends	You drop in your resume to apply for a job	You attend a staff meeting during a shift
You stay after your shift if your boss asks you to work longer	You come into to work early because you are bored	You take on extra shifts if you are asked

There are some employers who will try and get free work from young people so it is important to make sure you know what your rights are, and that you let employers know that you know.

The Fair Work Ombudsman says employers are acting illegally if they take on workers for unpaid work experience outside an education or training course placement. This means that unpaid work experience generally remains unlawful unless it is part of an authorised education or training course.

- If you say yes to a work trial, always ask if you will be getting paid for your time.
- If they are going to pay you, make sure it is the award wage and no less.
- If the employer says that you will not be getting paid for the trial shift, politely tell them that you are entitled to be paid for any work you do.

### Activity 5. Role play asking questions about work and pay

In pairs, take turns to role play the employer and job seeker. Hold a job interview and discuss the job, the hours and the pay.

Here are some ideas to get you started.

What time will I be starting work?

When will I finish?

What work will I be doing?

How should I dress for work?

How much will I get paid?

