

Apprentice entitlements

As an apprentice you'll get the same entitlements as other employees, such as annual leave, sick leave, public holidays and breaks.

Awards and registered agreements can have specific entitlements or rules that apply to apprentices. Some of these, like whether you get paid to attend training and who pays for your training fees, are the same in many awards. Other entitlements, like overtime and pay increases, are different in each award.

Find out about:

- [Training and fees](#)
- [Our Guide to starting an apprenticeship](#)
- [More award entitlements](#)

Best practice tip

You should also check your training contract for other entitlements.

There may be entitlements in awards and [registered agreements \(www.fairwork.gov.au/Dictionary.aspx?TermID=2034\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/Dictionary.aspx?TermID=2034) that apprentices don't get.

Training and fees

Many awards contain the same entitlements for time spent at training and reimbursement of training costs, fees and textbooks. These entitlements are explained in more detail below. Check if these apply to you by [selecting from the list below](#).

Payment for time spent at training

Off-the-job training is time spent in structured training delivered by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). It's often delivered at a site away from the workplace and referred to as trade school. It doesn't include:

- normal work duties or
- supervised practice on the job.

Apprentices

Many awards contain the same rules about payment for the time apprentices spend at trade school. These entitlements are explained in more detail below.

The time you spend at trade school is paid time and is included in your ordinary hours of work (eg. 38 hours). You need to agree with your employer about how often you will go to trade school (eg. 1 day per week or week blocks of training).

If you don't go to trade school when you're supposed to, you don't get paid for that time (unless you're on sick leave or another type of leave).

School-based apprentices

The payment for trade school isn't worked out based on the actual hours you go to training. Instead, you get paid for 25% of the hours you work for your employer each week.

This payment for training:

- only applies when you're a full-time school student
- is paid at the full-time apprentice hourly rate (including any [all-purpose allowances \(www.fairwork.gov.au/Dictionary.aspx?TermID=2097\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/Dictionary.aspx?TermID=2097))
- can be averaged over a semester or the year.

If you aren't a full-time student you have to be paid your hourly rate for all the time spent in training.

Example: Payment for training for school-based apprentices

Sean is a full-time school student doing a school-based apprenticeship. He works 8 hours per week with his employer.

Sean must be paid:

- for the 8 hours per week he works with his employer and
- 2 hours per week for his off-the-job training (being 25% of 8 hours).

In total, Sean needs to be paid 10 hours per week.

Check if these apply to you by [selecting from the list below](#).

[Back to top](#)

Training costs - fees and textbooks

Many awards contain the same entitlements for training costs, fees and textbooks. These entitlements are explained in more detail below.

You have to be reimbursed for:

- all the fees charged by your RTO that are related to your training
- the cost of your prescribed textbooks for your apprenticeship.

Check your award to find out when you should be reimbursed.

When training costs aren't reimbursed

An employer doesn't have to reimburse you for fees and textbooks if:

- your progress in the course is unsatisfactory
- your employer pays the costs and fees directly to the training organisation, or
- you aren't working for them at the set time that the costs have to be reimbursed.

They also don't have to reimburse you any part of the fees that the Government reimburses you.

Read more about [what is considered unsatisfactory progress and how it affects training costs \(www.fairwork.gov.au/library/K600399_Apprentice-training-costs-unsatisfactory-progress\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/library/K600399_Apprentice-training-costs-unsatisfactory-progress) in our Library.

Check if these apply to you by [selecting from the list below](#).

[Back to top](#)

Guide to starting an apprenticeship

For detailed information about rights and responsibilities as an apprentice, check out our [Guide to starting an apprenticeship \(DOCX 56.5KB\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/712/guide-to-starting-an-apprenticeship.docx.aspx) (www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/712/guide-to-starting-an-apprenticeship.docx.aspx) ([PDF 1.8MB](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/712/guide-to-starting-an-apprenticeship.pdf.aspx)) (www.fairwork.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/712/guide-to-starting-an-apprenticeship.pdf.aspx).

[Back to top](#)

More award entitlements

Find more information about apprentice entitlements in your award by selecting from the list below.

Based on what you've told us, it looks like you're covered by the Plumbing and Fire Sprinklers Award [MA000036].

This award has entitlements for apprentices. This means that the training and fees information above applies to you.

The list below includes common apprenticeships in the Plumbing Award:

- plumbing
- fire sprinkler fitting.

Pay increases during an apprenticeship

The Plumbing Award has time-based pay increases. This means that your pay is based on how long you've worked eg. after 1 year of the apprenticeship, you'll move to the second year rate.

Example: Time-based pay increases

Joe is doing a plumbing apprenticeship under the Plumbing Award and has just finished his first year. Because this Award has time-based pay increases, Joe gets a pay increase after finishing his first year and now gets the second year pay rate.

Overtime and shiftwork

Your employer can't make you work overtime or shiftwork if you're under 18. However, you can work overtime or shiftwork if you choose.

You can't be required to work overtime or shiftwork if it stops you from going to your RTO, unless it's an emergency.

Training costs

Other training costs that aren't reimbursed

Under the Plumbing Award, in addition to the information above, your employer also doesn't have to reimburse you for textbooks if they have them available for you to use.

When training costs should be reimbursed

The training fees and textbook costs need to be reimbursed within:

- 6 months of starting the apprenticeship or a stage of the apprenticeship (eg. start of second year) or
- 3 months of starting training with the training organisation (whichever is later).

Time spent travelling to training

You don't get the fares and travelling time allowances for days you attend trade school.

Your employer has to arrange return travel to and from block release training and suitable accommodation at no cost to you when:

- you are doing a sprinkler fitting apprenticeship and
- it's not reasonable to expect you to travel to and from your house to block release training.

Allowances for apprentices

Junior plumbing apprentices

You're paid the full amount of the:

- industry allowance
- fares allowance
- travel time allowance
- allowances for travel and expenses

and a percentage of:

- plumbing trade allowance
- tool allowance (except for trainee apprentices, who get the full amount).

The percentages are set out in the award and are based on the level of your apprenticeship. Check the Plumbing Award for more information about allowances.

Adult plumbing apprentices

If you're an adult plumbing apprentice who gets the relevant apprentice rate, you get the same allowances as junior apprentices.

If you're an adult apprentice who gets the National Minimum Wage Order you don't get the plumbing trade allowance. If you supply your own tools, you get the full tool allowance as a separate payment. You also get the full amount of the:

- industry
- fares
- travel time
- travel and expenses allowances.

For information about when adult apprentices get the National Minimum Wage as their pay rate, go to clause [20.3](#) of the Plumbing Award (<http://awardviewer.fwo.gov.au/award/show/MA000036>) and use our [Pay Calculator](https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/findy-ouraward) (<https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/findy-ouraward>) to calculate your rate.

Junior sprinkler fitting apprentices

You're paid the full amount of the:

- fares allowance
- travel time allowance
- allowances for travel and expenses.

and a percentage of:

- the industry disability allowance
- space, height and dirt money allowance
- sprinkler fitters adjustment
- tool allowance.

The percentages are set out in the award and are based on the level of your apprenticeship. Check the Plumbing Award for more information about allowances.

Adult sprinkler fitter apprentices

If you're an adult sprinkler fitter apprentice who gets the relevant apprentice rate, you get the same allowances as junior apprentices.

If you're an adult apprentice who gets the National Minimum Wage Order, you get the full industry disability allowance but don't get the space, height and dirt money or sprinkler fitters adjustment allowances. If you supply your own tools, you get the full tool allowance as a separate payment.

See clause [20.3](http://awardviewer.fwo.gov.au/award/show/MA000036) of the Plumbing Award (<http://awardviewer.fwo.gov.au/award/show/MA000036>) for more information on how to determine whether adult apprentices get the National Minimum Wage Order or the relevant apprentice rate. You can use our [Pay Calculator](https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/findyouraward) (<https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/findyouraward>) to find out which one you get.

Making up lost time

When you have time off during an apprenticeship year that isn't paid leave or leave without pay, you need to work the extra days before you can move to the next apprenticeship level.

The extra time you need to work will be reduced by any hours you worked in that year in excess of your ordinary hours.

If you're an apprentice in Queensland you may have different entitlements. Go to our [Pay and Conditions Tool](https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/) (<https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/>) for more information.

To find out more about who this award applies to, go to the [Plumbing Award summary](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements/awards/award-summary/ma000036-summary) (www.fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements/awards/award-summary/ma000036-summary).

Source reference: [Plumbing and Fire Sprinklers Award \[MA000036\] clauses 15 and 20.2\(b\)\(v\) and Schedule E](http://awardviewer.fwo.gov.au/award/show/MA000036) [☞](http://awardviewer.fwo.gov.au/award/show/MA000036) (<http://awardviewer.fwo.gov.au/award/show/MA000036>)

Queensland apprentices

If you're an apprentice in Queensland you may have different entitlements. Go to our [Pay and Conditions Tool](https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/) (<https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/>) for more information.

[Back to top](#)

Think a mistake might have been made?

Mistakes can happen. The best way to fix them usually starts with talking.


Check out our [Help resolving workplace issues](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/how-we-help-you/help-resolving-workplace-issues/default) (www.fairwork.gov.au/how-we-will-help/how-we-help-you/help-resolving-workplace-issues/default) section for practical advice on:

- figuring out if a mistake has been made
- talking to your employer or employee about fixing it
- getting help from us if you can't resolve it.

What to do next

- Go to [Leave \(www.fairwork.gov.au/Leave/default\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/Leave/default) and [Employee entitlements \(www.fairwork.gov.au/Employee-entitlements/default\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/Employee-entitlements/default) for more information on your entitlements
- To find out what your pay rate is as an apprentice, use our [Pay Calculator \(http://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/FindYourAward\)](http://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/FindYourAward)

You might also be interested in

- [Australian Apprenticeships Trade Support Loans \(https://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/aus-apprenticeships-incentives\)](https://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/aus-apprenticeships-incentives) 
- [Free online courses to develop your money management skills at ASIC's Be MoneySmart online training centre !\[\]\(92f87f30b7499b35d0173f4346c498d6_img.jpg\)](https://www.moneysmart.gov.au/teaching/teaching-resources/teaching-resources-for-vet) (https://www.moneysmart.gov.au/teaching/teaching-resources/teaching-resources-for-vet)

Page reference No: 2751

Contact us

Fair Work Online: www.fairwork.gov.au

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50

Hearing & speech assistance

Call through the National Relay Service (NRS):

For TTY: 13 36 77. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

Speak & Listen: 1300 555 727. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline 13 13 94

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