



## FACT SHEET

# Frequently asked questions – Averaging of hours for part time apprenticeships and traineeships

### **What is a part time apprenticeship or traineeship?**

A part time apprenticeship or traineeship is where the ordinary industry hours of employment, including the off-the-job training component, are less than the usual hours of employment for a full time employee and employment is of a regular nature.

### **Can a casual worker undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship?**

Casual arrangements where the work is irregular, occasional or intermittent are not suited for apprenticeships and traineeships, because an apprentice or trainee needs to receive sufficient employment based training to meet the requirements of the qualification.

Where the apprentice or trainee is meeting the minimum weekly work hour requirements for apprenticeships and traineeships, within the averaging provisions, this is not considered to be an irregular, occasional or intermittent employment arrangement for the purpose of the training contract.

### **Are all apprenticeships and traineeships available part time?**

Part time arrangements for apprenticeships and traineeships are determined through industry consultation and must be supported by the appropriate industrial instrument.

Most apprenticeships and traineeships are available on a part time basis. Details are available on the [Classification of Prescribed Vocational Education and Training Qualifications \(Register of Class A and B qualifications\)](#).

### **What are the minimum hours required for part time employment and training?**

The minimum weekly hours of work and training undertaken by an apprentice or trainee are 15 hours, unless otherwise specified.

Some sectors, including Hairdressing, Manufacturing and Electrical industries, have requested minimum hours for their apprenticeships/traineeships to be 20 hours per week.

The number of weekly hours stated in the training contract include the number of hours of formal training to be undertaken by an apprentice or trainee through a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), whether undertaken off-the-job at the RTO's premises or at the workplace.

### **What is averaging of hours?**

Averaging allows the total hours of work and training undertaken by an apprentice or trainee to be spread over a four-week period to meet the minimum weekly hour requirement.

The averaging of hours is already in place in Western Australia for school-based apprenticeships and traineeships (SBAT) and Elite Athletes Apprenticeships and Traineeships (EAAT).

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## **What are the benefits of the averaging of part time hour arrangement?**

This arrangement provides flexibility to individuals who are otherwise not able to undertake an apprenticeship or traineeship due to not being able to meet the weekly hours. It may also support the participation of employers in offering apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities.

## **Will the off-the-job component be affected by averaging of part time hours?**

Delivery of the formal training component should not be affected by averaging. The provisions of the current training plan guidelines apply equally to a part time apprenticeship or traineeship as they do for a full-time apprenticeship or traineeship. When developing the training plan, the employer and apprentice/trainee should inform the RTO of the hours specified in the training contract and the days rostered to work.

## **Can all part time training contracts access the averaging of part time hour arrangement?**

The averaging of part time hour arrangement is available to all training contracts lodged on or after **5 May 2023**. Parties to an existing part time training contract can also access this arrangement from this date. They should discuss with their nominated RTO whether their training plan needs to be adjusted.

## **Case Studies**

### **Scenario 1**

ABC Residential Care employs staff on a monthly roster with the majority of staff working seven hour day shifts. Over a four-week roster, Ann regularly works 2 shifts (14 hours) in weeks 1, 2 and 3 and three shifts (21 hours) in week 4. In any four-week period Ann works a total of nine shifts (63 hours).

Ann would like to undertake the Certificate IV in Aged Care as a trainee. However, before the averaging of part-time hours was available, Ann would not be eligible under this work roster as it would not meet the minimum part time requirement of 15 hours per week. With the averaging of part time hours, Ann would be able to maintain the flexible work arrangements and still be eligible to enter into the traineeship.

### **Scenario 2**

Trent owns Tourist Town Café and is finding it difficult to hire someone to work in the kitchen with his chef. One of his casual workers Marie is keen to establish a career in hospitality and wishes to undertake a traineeship in Certificate III in Hospitality.

Marie is the primary carer of her child and requires work hours that align with school hours. She is able to work additional hours every alternative week when her child is with another carer.

Marie can commit to 64 hours per four-week period, consisting of 12 hours per week when her son is living with her and 20 hours in the weeks when her son is not with her.

The averaging of part time hours over four-week periods will allow Marie to undertake the traineeship.

### Scenario 3

Daniel is 30 years old and has just commenced the final year of his Automotive Technician (Light) apprenticeship. Daniel is experiencing some family issues and is finding it difficult to work full-time. He is contemplating cancelling his apprenticeship and getting a part time job as a labourer.

Daniel's employer Liam believes the operations of his automotive repair business are flexible enough to support Daniel's change to a part time apprenticeship. Daniel and Liam have agreed on the following roster.

	Hours per week
Week 1	15 hours
Week 2	15 hours
Week 3	30 hours
Week 4	20 hours

The averaging of part time hours will support Daniel to continue his apprenticeship.

### Assistance and information

It is important that no coercion takes place for either party to agree to the averaging of part time hours.

The averaging of part time hour arrangement is intended to support apprentices who are unable to meet the minimum weekly part time hour requirement, either on a temporary basis, or for the duration of the training contract. Employers should offer the standard part time hours to the apprentice in the first instance.

If the parties cannot reach an agreement on the averaging of part time hour arrangement, they may seek assistance from their nominated Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) provider for advice and guidance in the first instance. They may also contact the Apprenticeship Office on 13 19 54 for assistance.

For assistance on matters relating to awards, averaging of hour arrangements or other employment related issues, contact the [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) on 13 13 94 if the apprentice is employed under a modern award. If the apprentice is employed under the state industrial relations system, contact the [Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety](#) by phoning 1300 655 266.