Meet Chen, a former international student*

The Fair Work Ombudsman helped me work out the right pay for my job.

Chen’s situation
- When I was studying, I worked in a family restaurant.
- My housemate told me that I was being underpaid.

What happened next?
- I found information from the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) in my own language.
- I used the FWO Pay and Conditions Tool (PACT) to work out the right pay for my job.

How did Chen address it?
- I asked my boss to pay me the minimum wage.
- He was new in Australia and did not know about the work laws. He agreed to pay me the correct amount.

Learn your rights!
The Fair Work Ombudsman can give advice to international students in different languages.

*This is a fictional case study, based on situations reported by international students who have experienced workplace exploitation. For information visit fairwork.gov.au/internationalstudents, or ato.gov.au. You can also contact the student support services at your education provider, or a community legal centre.
Meet Lisa, a former international student*

I told my supervisor that working extra hours put my visa at risk.

Lisa’s situation
- In my job, I was often asked to work extra hours on weekends.
- I had not told my supervisor that I was only allowed to work 40 hours every two weeks.

What happened next?
- Student services gave me advice on how to talk to my supervisor about my visa restrictions.
- They also referred me to the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) for more information about my workplace rights and protections.

How did Lisa address it?
- I told my supervisor that working extra hours put my visa at risk. She was surprised.
- She agreed to stop asking me to work extra hours.

Talk to your employer about your limits on work hours as an international student before starting work.

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Meet Kavya, a former international student*

I knew my situation was not right – I had to make a change.

Kavya’s situation
- I was working as a cleaner while studying. I wasn’t getting proper breaks, and it was affecting my studies.
- My tutor suggested that I talk to a community legal centre.

What happened next?
- The legal centre gave me free advice. It turns out I was entitled to more breaks, and I was underpaid!
- They helped me write a letter to my boss, and told me to keep a record of my work hours.

How did Kavya address it?
- My boss would not agree to pay me more. I knew this was wrong.
- I looked for a new job. Once I found one, I reported my old boss anonymously on the Fair Work Ombudsman website.

If something is not right, speak up!
You have rights at work that deserve to be protected.

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