

# Guidelines For Universities



Hospitality  
Now!

## *On How To Better Support Working Students*

Students increasingly work while studying due to the growing costs of living and studying. Our research shows that, for many students, combining work and study is challenging and can negatively impact on their academic performance, wellbeing and confidence. Being young, having limited work experience and knowledge of working rights as well as experiencing financial hardship, they can be vulnerable to exploitation and would benefit from better support from their institutions.

Hospitality, Now! has produced a series of Policy Briefs for Employers, Universities and Unions which are [downloadable from the website here](#). The Policy Brief for Universities highlights key challenges experienced by students, while this document outlines practical steps that universities could implement to better support working students.

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## Step One

### *Recognise challenges working students face and understand this duty of care within university pastoral support*

- Recognise working students within university policies as a distinct student group needing dedicated support.
- Make sure that teaching and student support staff are aware of the challenges working students face.
- Acknowledge that universities have a duty of care to working students and that students experiencing pressures from their jobs need support.
- Recognise that the student experience is more than just the experiences on campus and in university accommodation. It now also needs to encapsulate work students undertake while studying.

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## Step Two

### *Establish processes for student-workers to share their work-based problems*

- It is important that students know that their working lives matter to the university (rather than work being unrelated)
- Create space on campus and develop administrative processes (both formal and informal) for students to report any employment issues with identified university team.
- Make sure such places and systems are promoted throughout the university and accommodation blocks.
- Ensure students understand where they can report and get supportive advice from relevant university personnel on negotiating with employers.
- Gather regularly comprehensive and disaggregated data (both qualitative and quantitative) about working students, the evolving challenges they face (financial and non-financial), how work impacts on their academic performance and wellbeing, and how they can be better supported by universities and employers.
- Consider financial and non-financial ways of helping working students. This could be through better timetabling (days clear of classes, classes less spread out), recognising work stress as a valid reason when granting extension requests, or offering quick access hardship loan schemes for students who experience unexpected reduction in hours or suddenly lose work.

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## Step Three

### *Provide tailored training, counselling and support*

- Include in the student service provision, training, counselling and advice for student-workers to address stress and anxiety arising from pressures from work.
- Ensure linkages are developed and maintained between processes of complaint and counselling provision.
- Empower students, raise their awareness of worker rights and equip them with tools to address issues (e.g. through training during welcome week, information sheets about zero-hour contracts).

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## Step Four

### *Work collaboratively with local businesses and unions, and promote good student employment practice*

- Contribute publicly to the debate around student employment and the cost of living crisis, and shape public understanding through thought leadership.
- Reach out to local businesses and unions and develop fora on university premises where issues can be aired, employers can advertise roles, and students can assert their employment needs.
- Promote good student employment practice. Influence local businesses to improve working conditions for students. Encourage sign up to the [Good Student Employer Charter](#) and recommend adoption of the [8F Framework of Good Principles in Student Employment](#).
- Promote those employers who display good practice in student employment in University media to incentivise good work practice. This could involve keeping a register of businesses that sign up to the [Good Student Employer Charter](#) and in Student Job Fairs prioritising employers who display good practice.



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