

New Child Employment Act for Queensland

New laws have recently been legislated in Queensland, concerning the number of hours that students may work outside of school. The revisions to the act and new laws: protect school-aged children from performing work that may be harmful to their health and safety, or that compromises their mental, moral or social welfare limit the hours of work for school-aged children to ensure that their studies aren't adversely affected by employment.

Maximum allowable hours of work for school-aged children are:

	On a school day	On a non-school day
During a school week	4	8
During a non-school week	12	38

The 2006 Child Employment act and the 2006 Child Employment Regulation makes it clear that school aged children are only allowed to work the nominated hours listed above. By definition, a school aged child is a child under the age of 16 and who has not yet completed year 10 of their schooling. The new laws: set the age at which children can work at 13, although those between 11 and 13 can perform supervised delivery work for items such as newspapers and advertising leaflets. children between 11 and 13 are not allowed to work between 6pm and 6am, while all other school-aged children are not allowed to work between 10pm and 6am. A parent consent form must provide by parents to the child's employer before employment can occur School-based traineeships and apprenticeships With the case of most school-based traineeships and apprenticeships this should not pose a problem. Most students entering into a SAT are over 16 and finished year 10 before they commence their Certificate training. But, what happens to a student in Year 10 who has commenced a School-based traineeship and is expected to work 7.6 hours per week to make up the required amount of time for their certificate? Simply, the Act does not regulate work carried out as part of: work experience vocational placements apprenticeships traineeships charitable collections covered by other legislation As a result students starting on a school-based traineeships or apprenticeships, and are by definition considered to be of school age, can start a SAT. This exclusion on the act obviously allows the students to benefit in nationally recognized training but it also raises concerns for parents and schools. Some RTOs in some select industry areas "may" start to actively recruit students of school age into a SAT arrangement that may not completely protect young people. Students need to consider the reasons they wish to start a SAT and parents and schools need to be responsible in the information that they give to school aged children.