



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY AND GENDER AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY
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Submission Cover sheet

Inquiry into Unpaid Work

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**ACT Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on
Economy and Gender and Economic Equality**
Inquiry into Unpaid Work

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As a university student, I have seen first-hand the effects of unpaid training placements that are mandatory for university graduation. They put students in financial, physical and mental crisis. On Monday 7th May, the Federal Government announced a means tested payment of \$319.50 a week for teaching, nursing and social work students. This payment does not include all students who are required to do unpaid placement during their qualifications, including Psychology students who come under the Allied Health but are unable to get any assistance until they reach Master level qualifications or above. This payment being means tested means it also does not take into consideration any students outside of the 'generic' student type (recently graduated high school young people) like students who have families or mortgages because their partners or their own assets may preclude them from these payments. These possible future supports and the ones currently in place are not enough to help students.

The government should be looking into supporting their students through a variety of streams, not just weekly payments. They could support the universities food pantries, which provide students with a specified amount of free food per week, offer subsidies for buying textbooks, required equipment for placements or help with housing. At the moment one of the biggest concern facing students is the choice between paying their bills and keeping a roof over their head or eating. This stress and a lack of nutrient can cause students to perform poorly in classes and contribute to negative mental health.