

PAY EQUITY INFORMATION

Pay equity is about achieving equal remuneration outcomes in your workplace. It can also be about eliminating sex discrimination from the wage-setting system by ensuring that employers use gender-neutral and gender-inclusive criteria to determine the value of job components such as skill, responsibility, qualifications and working conditions.

An example of pay inequity is not promoting workers based upon assumptions such as carer's responsibilities or not providing equal opportunities to part-time employees regarding training or professional advancement.

Equal remuneration, however, is more than just equal pay through wages; it includes discretionary pay, allowances, performance, merit and bonus payments and superannuation.

The information that follows aims to equip you with the knowledge and understanding of the concept of pay equity.

Equal pay for equal work

Involves a direct comparison of jobs occupied by the opposite gender where the job is the same or basically the same.

Equal pay for work of equal value

Involves comparing the value of jobs performed by one group of workers with that of jobs performed by another group of workers, where the jobs may be of a different nature but are comparable in other ways such as skill and responsibility.

An example is comparing the value of the work of an engineer with that of a social worker. In some cases, engineers can be seen as more highly qualified workers than social workers, yet both are four year degree qualified. Both roles require tertiary degrees, advanced skills and knowledge in their respective fields as well as high level of responsibility, yet social work (female dominated) is generally paid substantially less than their engineering professional counterpart.

Equal pay for work of equal value means that rates are based on the value of the work, with the value of the work assessed free of any consideration of the gender of the workers.

Pay inequity in your workplace can be for the reasons outlined above. Pay inequity can also be caused by the uneven distribution of one gender in the lower levels of the workforce compared with the other gender. For example, we see more men occupy senior and consequently higher-paying jobs than women, while women may work in lesser paid roles (often with a "caring" component), which are also often part-time or casual. All of these attributes mean women are often concentrated in the lower paid part of the workforce.

HOW CAN WE FIX PAY INEQUITY?

Discovering if or what type of pay equity problem is occurring in your workplace or industry is the first step. The solution will be different depending on what conclusions you arrive at.

If you feel there is a pay inequity issue at your workplace, contact the ASU. The ASU can assess the issue and discuss what action needs to be taken to try and resolve the issue within the workplace.

How the ASU can help

The ASU provides advice and information to members regarding workplace rights and obligations. ASU members can contact their State ASU office for more information. If required the ASU provides members with individual representation.

To obtain the contact details of your local ASU Branch visit the ASU national website www.asu.asn.au or contact the JSA National Project Coordinator on (03) 9342 1400 or help@employmentservicesunion.org.au

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