

University Statement on Unpaid Student Placements and Internships

[For the purposes of this document, in Henley Business School the Programmes Areas will be fulfilling the functions of Schools]

Scope of guidelines

1. The University encourages students to participate in activities that will enhance their learning and experience. The following guidelines have been written to outline the University's position on the promotion and endorsement of unpaid internships and placements.
2. Schools, Departments and Services considering the promotion of a unpaid internship or placement should use the guidelines below before formal

The University advertising an external opportunity

7. Where Schools, Departments or Services are considering promoting or offering an unpaid internship or placement to students, it is important to consider whether the students can be regarded as “workers” and should therefore be paid. The following factors should be considered ;

- a. Would the student be working under a contract or a voluntary arrangement?
A contract may indicate that a student is , whereas a document simply setting out expectations is more likely to suggest that the student is not. This will include statements regarding hours of work or requirements to undertake particular duties/tasks.
- b. Would the student be simply work-shadowing or observing?
If so, the student is less likely to be a worker .
- c. Is the student required to carry out work which would otherwise be undertaken by an employee/worker of the business (administrative duties for example)?
If so, the student is more likely to be a worker .
- d. How long will the placement last?
The longer the placement, the more likely it will be that the student is a worker .
- e. Would the student be paid a fixed rate for “expenses”, regardless of whether expenses are actually incurred?
If so, this could be interpreted a payment for the work, indicating the student is a worker and so should receive the NMW.
- f. Would the student receive any other benefits that could be construed as wages, including training (other than that required to undertake the internship) or the promise of a permanent role on completion of the internship?
This may indicate worker status

8. Where a student is expected to pay a fee before participating in an unpaid internship or placement, the opportunities should be approached with considerable caution. Schools, Departments and Services should ensure the legitimacy of the scheme and what the fee is for.

There has been an increase in 'agency' style schemes, both in the UK and overseas, which are designed to give students exposure to a 'cultural' experience as well as a placement or internship opportunity. These opportunities tend to be more costly and this element of the placement or internship should be made clear to students.

Student voluntary

