

## Careers and Employability Code of Practice for the promotion of unpaid internships & work experience

The University recognises that work experience and work shadowing are both hugely beneficial for students and graduates, in helping them to build their skills and experience in a workplace environment. We welcome and appreciate the opportunity that employers give our students to develop their employability and boost their CV.

Work experience is highly valuable for students and may be undertaken as an essential part of their course, with specific learning outcomes attached. It may also be undertaken by students outside their course work, for example on a part time basis or in vacation periods, to develop specific experiences and an understanding of professional employment. New graduates or people changing career direction may also find a short period of work shadowing very useful as a way of understanding work environments and cultures.

We also recognise the value of volunteering in the local and wider community, as a way of making a contribution towards charitable and voluntary organisations, as well as enabling a student to develop further skills and expertise.

In seeking and promoting these important opportunities for students and graduates, the University will look to ensure that vacancies and placements fully align with legal requirements (such as health and safety, and the national minimum wage) and the University's values, including ethical, sustainable and socially responsible employment. When reviewing unpaid internships, we will balance the benefit to the students with the cost and the potential impact of being away from their home and support base. We will also ensure that internships offer equality of opportunity to students based on skillsets and career aspirations.

Therefore, the Careers and Employability Service will normally only promote unpaid internships which adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Internships which last no more than three weeks or the equivalent in part time hours
2. Opportunities for which tasks are voluntary, meaning that interns would not have a job contract or be expected to perform specific duties, as in doing so they may be seen as 'workers' and thus be entitled to the national minimum wage. Businesses would be expected to reimburse interns for any necessary work-related expenses such as work-related travel costs.
3. Unpaid internships which are exempt from the National Minimum Wage, such as volunteers who 'work for a charity, voluntary organisation, charity shop, school, hospital or similar body; and they receive only reasonable expenses, relevant training and/or subsistence (but not money for subsistence)'. See [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)

Placements which are run as part of academic programme are not covered by this Code of Practice

Further information: [Common best practice code for high quality internships](#)