



UK Policy on Paid/Unpaid Placements and Internships

This information is for University of Nottingham UK staff and students and for UK organisations who wish to recruit University of Nottingham students.

Unpaid internships and placements can offer valuable opportunities for students to gain work experience and put their learning at university into practice. However the University of Nottingham will only advertise and promote unpaid opportunities to students which are legal under National Minimum Wage (NMW) legislation and meet the guidelines set out here which are designed to ensure equality of opportunity for all University of Nottingham students in the UK.

The key exemptions from NMW which will apply to placements and internships are:

- Students working on a placement or internship with an associated assessment and/or which contributes to the final degree award are exempt from the NMW, as long as the placement does not last longer than one year
- A placement does not have to pay the NMW if the placed student can be classed as a “volunteer”; under law, a volunteer is someone who:
 - Is under no obligation to perform work and carry out instructions
 - Has no contract or formal arrangement, and so can come and go as they please
 - Has no expectation to be paid, rewarded, or receive any benefit in kind (but reasonable expenses e.g. travel costs can be paid and this should be encouraged)
- Work shadowing arrangements do not have to pay the NMW as the placement consists entirely of work shadowing with no work being performed

Opportunities for students to work in the UK which do not meet these criteria are not exempt from NMW legislation. These opportunities should only be promoted and advertised by the University if they are offering an appropriate salary. **In April 2019 the NMW rate for those aged 21 and over was set at £7.70 per hour.**



We will only advertise an unpaid placement if:

- The placement meets the conditions for exemption from NMW requirements, as set out in NMW legislation (and above) **and either**
- The total requested time to be worked does not exceed 145 hours (four weeks fulltime equivalent)
- The position is with a registered charity, voluntary organisation, associated fundraising body or statutory body

Where a student is receiving a stipend or bursary for an out-of-term research project, hours of work should be calculated to reflect NMW legislation.

For further details please consult the government's National Minimum Wage guidelines on work experience and internships:

- www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-work-experience-and-internships
- www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage/what-is-the-minimum-wage
- www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/197222/11-1216-national-minimum-wage-worker-checklist.pdf
- www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/251483/bis-13-1085-best-practice-code-high-quality-internships.pdf

If you have any questions about how this applies to work experience opportunities within your school or professional service, please contact the Recruiter Services team at the Careers and Employability Service on 0115 82 32233 or email recruiterservices@nottingham.ac.uk

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