

The Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP
Chair, Business and Trade Committee
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Dear Liam,

MAKING WORK PAY: UNPAID INTERNSHIPS CALL FOR EVIDENCE

The government's Plan to Make Work Pay is a core part of our mission to grow the economy, raise living standards across the country, and create opportunities for all. This will help tackle low pay, poor working conditions, and poor job security, all of which have been holding our economy back.

In our Plan we committed to banning unpaid internships, unless they are part of a formal educational or training course. This government believes that a fair day's work deserves a fair day's pay and employers must pay their workers the pay they are entitled to.

Today, we are launching a 12-week call for evidence on unpaid internships.

The call for evidence relates to internships which are unpaid or paid below the National Minimum Wage, work trials, voluntary workers, volunteers, and work shadowing.

Whilst voluntary workers, volunteers, and individuals who are work shadowing are not entitled to the National Minimum Wage, there are some employers who are engaging individuals, particularly young people, under these terms incorrectly to avoid paying them.

This government is committed to striking a balance between giving individuals a choice in the type of work they do, and how they do it, whilst not allowing employers to be tempted to take advantage of individuals, especially our young people, by making them work for free.

The call for evidence seeks views from employers, individuals, and interested stakeholders on unpaid internships and internships paid below the National Minimum Wage, and other similar categories of people who may be conflated with interns.

This government is committed to tackling practices where workers who are entitled to at least the National Minimum Wage are not paid or are under paid.

The responses to this call for evidence will help shape future policy on these issues.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Justin Madders', with a long, sweeping horizontal line underneath.

JUSTIN MADDERS MP

Minister for Employment Rights, Competition and Markets
Department for Business and Trade