

Council
30 April 2013

Guillotined to twenty minutes

Unpaid Internships

A note by the Union President – Paul Beaumont

- Imperial College Union has never had a stance on unpaid internships before, though the possibility has been discussed a number of times previously.
- There are Pros and Cons to unpaid internships, and, with the help of other sources, I hope us to have a debate on what Imperial College Union's stance should be, and to what extent we want that to effect the organisations we collaborate or have ties with.

Attached is a paper from the National Union of Students and University and College Union against unpaid internships. I have unfortunately not been able to find any material 'justifying' unpaid internships in quite the same form, but hope below to try balance the arguments slightly.

Cons

- Access – wealthy students can afford to do them whilst poorer students are excluded because they need payment, or to work part-time jobs to support themselves
- They are normally jobs that deserve payment, so why should students – who are working for the company – receive no wage for their efforts?

Pros

- Small charities might not be able to function without them
- The cost to a company of taking on an intern, developing their skills, is real – in that the person looking after the intern is being paid to not do their normal duties
- They give insight into the workings of a hard to access career

Possible things to consider

- Not all unpaid internships may be bad – small charities v big charities v private companies
- What relationship with external organisations this would foster

Discussion

- On the above
- Any potential resolves?