

ANNEX B

Response to Intern Aware briefing on internships for Jo Swinson

'A high proportion of internships are unpaid'

There is no official or agreed definition of what an internship is, and consequently no definitive data source on overall internship numbers. We cannot be sure therefore what proportion of interns are paid or unpaid. A 2009/10 survey from the Higher Education Statistics Agency showed that 1.7 per cent of graduates were volunteering or undertaking unpaid work six months after graduating in 2009/10. This compared with 1.6 per cent in 2008/09 and 0.7 per cent in 2002/03. CIPD (2010) research showed that 18% of member employers did not pay their interns a wage but covered their expenses.

There is very little data available on the incidence of work experience or internship opportunities.

'HMRC is failing to enforce the law'

[REDACTED]

The pay and workers rights helpline has a fast track complaint referral system for interns and a targeted enforcement programme. HMRC investigates every complaint they receive and are working with Intern Aware to write to worst offender employers. HMRC dynamic response team also undertook a high profile targeted campaign during London Fashion Week.

'Most interns have set hours and responsibilities and are therefore "workers" and entitled to the NMW'

[REDACTED] Not borne out by the dynamic response team investigations into fast track cases which show that most interns could not be classified as workers. [REDACTED]

'HMRC 'refuse' to take further action'

HMRC has undertaken a successful comms strategy and has an innovative use of social media and working relationship with 3rd parties to raise awareness. High profile dynamic response team interventions raise awareness (for example during London Fashion Week). [REDACTED]