

1 Warmer

a. Use a dictionary to find the similarities and differences between the words in the box.

intern	trainee	apprentice	office junior
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b. Are there any of these people at your place of work?

2 Key words

Match the key words from the article with the definitions below. Then find them in the article to read them in context.

Article A

debt	graduates	minimum wage	placement	recruiters	tribunals
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1. a situation in which you owe money to other people / money that you owe

2. a temporary job that gives you work experience _____
3. people who look for others to fill work positions _____
4. special law courts organized to judge a particular type of case _____
5. the smallest amount of money that an employer is legally allowed to pay a worker

6. people who have a degree from a university _____

Article B

crutch	exploitative	favour	self-sufficiency	undermines	welfare
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7. treating people unfairly in order to get some benefit for yourself _____
8. something that you do for someone in order to help them _____
9. something that you depend on for support or help, especially too much

10. money given to people who do not have work or who are in need _____
11. makes something or someone become gradually less effective, confident or successful

12. the ability to provide everything that you need by yourself, without help from other people.

Article A

Should interns be paid?

by Julian Earwaker



YES!

“The vast majority of interns are workers in a legal sense”

BEN LYONS

- 1 There has been a big increase in the number of unpaid internships. Before, these were mostly found in politics, fashion and the media. Now, we see them across a whole range of functions and businesses.
- 2 It's extremely hard to get into many sectors unless you can afford to work for free. The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) estimates that over 100,000 British internships are unpaid; that's more than a third. In America, about half of all internships are unpaid.
- 3 Taking an unpaid internship means getting into a lot of debt. The only people who can take up a placement in London are those who live there and those with parents supporting them. We have more than a million unemployed young people, and unpaid internships are not helping the matter.
- 4 If recruiters are demanding several months' experience or relevant skills before they will give someone a job interview, this makes it impossible for people who cannot afford to do an internship. It's bad for business, too, because it limits the number of available interns.
- 5 The vast majority of interns are workers in a legal sense. If you work regular hours and contribute value to an employer, you are a worker under employment law and

have the right to a minimum wage. We need that to be enforced — especially by our political leaders. A few cases have already gone to employment tribunals and in all these cases, the courts found in favour of interns.

There is a growing risk to the reputation of companies who don't pay interns. It is illegal to have someone who is a worker and, simply by giving them the name “intern”, not to pay them.

Some companies have a rolling internship scheme, whereby they use interns without any possibility of the job later becoming permanent. That's not right. The vast majority of people in Britain think that interns should be properly paid. The problem is that too few employers and young people understand that interns have a legal right to a minimum wage.

Where internships are paid properly, it's of real benefit to companies because they get motivated people who could be good employees.

Hard-working graduates are great for business — young people bring fresh ideas and energy. Internships have become so important that, often, one isn't enough to get a job.

Never in the past were people expected to work without pay for the chance of getting a job. On top of increased university fees, it makes it extremely hard to be a young person in Britain today.

BEN LYONS is co-director of Intern Aware (www.internaware.org), which he started in January 2010 to campaign for fair internships.

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by Julian Earwaker



NO!

“People are free to decide whether to do an internship or not”
BRENDAN O'NEILL

- 1 There has been a massive overreaction to the whole idea of unpaid internships. It presents businesses as exploitative and young people – particularly young middle-class graduates – as victims. The idea that voluntarily working for a company could be slave labour is completely bizarre. Young people are free to decide whether to do an internship or not, and to leave an internship if they feel it's not right for them. No one is being forced to do anything.
- 2 Internships make work for the organizations offering them. You need to train an intern, introduce them to everyone and help them to make sure they get things right. Most organizations and businesses feel that they are doing interns a favour by offering an internship. Very few businesses use interns to do work that could be done by a paid member of staff. Interns should therefore not be paid as long as it's clear that they are doing an internship for training and experience and not working for a long period of time.

3 Student debt is a growing problem, but paying an intern isn't a solution to this. The good thing about internships in the past was that you didn't have to motivate an intern with money. Internships should be for strong minded individuals who want to succeed in the world. If you offer payment, then you replace individual motivation with the crutch of a low wage. It teaches young people that life should be easy when, as we all know, it is not.

4 A government-sponsored graduate internship scheme carries the same risks: making young people dependent upon welfare. Paying interns undermines their self-sufficiency. It tells them that the state will look after them instead of leaving them to look for internships, jobs and opportunities themselves. Left to their own devices, young people learn how to become an adult.

5 Payment changes the whole meaning of being an intern: it turns the position into that of an office junior. If people want that – and to receive the minimum wage for it – that's fine. But an unpaid internship should be a way of introducing someone to the world of work. If you start paying people for it, then you remove what's special about it by turning it into a low-wage form of everyday labour.

BRENDAN O'NEILL is the editor of the online magazine *spiked*. A political and social commentator, he blogs for the *Daily Telegraph* and is a columnist for *The Big Issue* and *The Australian*.

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3 The main arguments

a. Find the arguments given by Ben Lyons and Brendan O'Neil and write them in note form into the table below.

Should interns be paid?	
Yes!	No!

b. Put a tick next to the points you agree with and a cross next to those you do not. Compare your answers and opinions.

4 Multi-word phrases

Put these words into the correct order to make multi-word phrases from the article. Use them in sentences to talk about the article.

1. a whole across of range
2. majority vast the of
3. of found favour in
4. a favour doing (interns)
5. minded individuals strong
6. the world to succeed in
7. welfare upon dependent
8. devices left to own their