



BEECHEN CLIFF



How to have a Well Planned GAP YEAR

Thinking of taking a GAP Year before starting university, beginning work, an apprenticeship or school leaver programme (or taking an unexpected GAP Year if you fail to get the results you needed for university)?

Plan ahead so you get what you want out of your GAP Year.

There are plenty of potential benefits to having a GAP year after you finish your A levels but to get the most out of it you need to have some idea of what you want to achieve.

It will help you later on to be able to tell employers why you took a GAP year and what you did with it. Recruiters typically don't mind either way whether you take a GAP year, but if you do one they may well ask about it and won't be impressed if you ended up spending most of your time at home watching TV.

Your main options will be working, volunteering and travelling. You might find ways to combine these together or do a bit of everything at different points in time.

What do you want to achieve from your GAP year?

Reasons for taking a GAP year include the following, which is most important to you?

- Having a break from studying
- Getting work experience (either in a particular area or just in general)
- Getting life experience
- Having time to do something you particularly want to do, such as going travelling
- Deciding what to do in life
- Earning some money
- Having a second attempt at getting into the university/degree programme/school leaver programme you really want
- Being able to apply to university with the advantage of already knowing what grades you've got.

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Prioritising your GAP year aims and knowing which aim is most important will help you plan your time.

For example, if it's having a second attempt at getting onto your preferred course at university or school leaver programme then you'll need to make sure you're available for applications and/or interviews at the relevant time of year. Find these dates out and plan them in. You might therefore choose to delay that trip to New Zealand until you have an offer of a place. You might also plan to get some relevant work experience early in your GAP year that will look good on your application.

If your main aim is to clarify your direction in life, you'll probably want to plan in a series of different activities across the year to allow you to try different things, rather than waiting for inspiration to strike while you work on the till at Tesco.

Taking action before your GAP year

Think about what you can do before your GAP year that will help you achieve your aims.

For example, if you want to spend a year travelling overseas before going to university, some courses will allow you to apply in your final year at school and then defer entry if you are offered a place. That would save you the hassle and expense of trying to get back to the UK or worrying about where you can find wi-fi to log onto UCAS Track while you're half way up the Amazon.

If you want to work during your GAP year, it might be easier to find a job if you have completed relevant voluntary work or training. For example, if you fancy spending a year as a healthcare assistant it may help if you can squeeze in some volunteering in a hospital or mental health setting before you leave school.

Pin down your aims

If you have a clear aim such as 'Get a job in retail and save at least £2,000 towards the cost of university' then you are well on your way. If your main goal is less clear-cut, try to pin it down.

If your priority is 'having a break from studying', what would you prefer to do instead?

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Aiming at 'getting life experience'? Think about what this means to you – for example, is it having a full-time job, experiencing a new culture or being the responsible adult in charge of a group of children?

If you want to spend a year 'deciding what to do in life', consider what your career options are and which potential GAP year activities could help you choose between them. For example, if you're deciding between a career as a doctor or an actor you might decide to get a job in a local nursing home, audition for parts in plays with local amateur groups and book yourself a place on a one-week taster course at a drama school.

Can you afford your plans?

If you want to travel, take a course, do a paid-for volunteer placement abroad or work to gain skills and save money before you start your travels. You also need to factor in living costs if you are thinking of staying at home. In particular, are your parents willing for you to continue living with them without contributing to costs, or will they expect you to start paying your way? Having an honest chat with them now could prevent your plans being derailed further down the line.

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DATABASE OF ORGANISATION OFFERING GAP YEAR OPPORTUNITIES, 2018 Edition www.independentgapadvice.org.

TYPE OF GAP YEAR	NAME OF ORGANISATION	PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS	PHONE	WEBSITE / EMAIL
Agriculture (Organic)	Willing Workers on Organic Farms	Volunteer exchange programme worldwide: farming/gardening work 4-6hrs/day for food/accommodation. 2200 hosts.	Go to website	www.woof.net
Art History / Italy / Culture	Art History Abroad	Enlightening cultural courses travelling throughout Italy. 2-6 weeks, all year round, dynamic on-site tuition in small groups.	01379-871800	www.arthistoryabroad.com
Art History / Venice / Language	John Hall Venice Course	Cultural gap year course in Venice, Florence, Rome: art history, literature, music, cinema, cookery, life drawing, photography.	020-8871-4747	www.johnhallvenice.com
Business / Information Technology	IBM UK Ltd	12 month paid gap year, work in various business areas including HR, Marketing, Finance, Technology, Software.	Go to website	www.ibm.com/employment/uk

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Church-based Projects (S America)	Latin Link - Step Teams	Step Teams get involved with practical projects, help in the community and join with local Christians in evangelism.	0118-957-7114	www.latinlink.org.uk/step
Conservation	Earthwatch Institute (Europe)	An international environmental charity recruiting volunteers to join research projects operating all over the world.	01865-318838	www.earthwatch.org.uk
Conservation Volunteering UK	Action for Conservation	Residential summer conservation camps & information service on opportunities with other UK conservation charities.	07766-307-675	www.actionforconservation.org
Conservation (Australia & New Zealand)	Conservation Volunteers OZ & NZ	Practical conservation programs in OZ & NZ; all training given; 4,6 weeks or longer, urban, regional & remote locations.	3-5330-2600	info@conservationvolunteers.com.au
Conservation work with wildlife	African Conservation Experience	Work with African wildlife and carry out valuable conservation work on Game and Nature Reserves in Southern Africa.	01454-269182	www.conservationafrica.net

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Conservation Expeditions	Coral Cay Conservation	2 week to 6 month coral reef & rainforest conservation, community work, learn to scuba dive. Philippines.	0207-620-1411	www.coralcay.org
Conservation Expeditions	GAPFORCE	Remote conservation, teaching and medical placements, working holidays, sport coaching, ski instructor and leadership training.	0207-384-3028	www.gapforce.org
Conservation Expeditions	Blue Ventures Expeditions	3-12 week marine conservation expeditions: Madagascar, Belize, Timor-Leste. SCUBA dive qualifications included.	0207-697-8598	www.blueventures.org
Cookery & recruitment for ski resort work	Orchards Cookery Ltd	Training, recruiting chalet cooks 5 day / 2 week residential courses. Off to University course. Qualifies for Gold DofE.	01789-490259	www.orchardscookery.co.uk
Cookery/Wine (professional & amateur courses)	Leiths School of Food and Wine	London-based courses from one week to nine months, pre- and post-university amateurs and potential professionals.	0208-749-6400	www.leiths.com

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Dance	Springs Dance Company	A contemporary Christian dance training course, performance and teaching experience on national tour, runs Sept to June.	07775-628442	www.SpringsDanceCompany.org.uk
Drama Course	Year Out Drama	An intensive, full-time, year-long practical drama course based in Stratford-on-Avon.	via website	www.yearoutdrama.com
Engineering	Renishaw PLC	Summer placements, gap years, apprenticeships, industrial placements & graduates. University sponsorships possible.	01453-524524	www.renishaw.com
European Voluntary Service	Erasmus+ Volunteering Activities	Fully-funded 2-12 months working with EU community projects: youth work, cultural, social care , environment.	0121-212-8947	www.erasmusplus.org.uk
Expeditions (Oceanic)	Tall Ships Youth Trust	Tall Ship Adventures in the UK, Mediterranean, Canaries, Trans-Atlantic & Caribbean.	023-9283-2055	www.tallships.org
Expeditions / Environmental Research	British Exploring Society	Adventure and environmental research expeditions to remote wilderness environments worldwide.	020-7591-3141	www.britishexploring.org

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Expeditions Overseas	Oasis Overland Ltd	Budget-friendly overland adventure camping expeditions in Africa, South America and Central Asia from 2 to 40 weeks.	01963-363400	www.oasisoverland.co.uk
Finance / Business Scholarships	Deloitte	Scholars Scheme: paid placements, business training & working with professional staff. See website for more details.	0207-303-6943	www.deloitte.co.uk/scholars
Industry: science, engineering, IT, technology	The Year in Industry (YINI)	Degree-related, paid, year-long work placements in business, ICT, marketing, technology, science or engineering.	023-8059-9172	www.yini.org.uk
Internships / Career Experience (overseas)	Projects Abroad	Wide range of career experience placements in 30 countries around the world.	01903-708300	www.projects-abroad.co.uk
Interships / Career Experience (overseas)	Oyster Worldwide	Medical internships in India, guaranteed work in Canadian ski resorts, hospitality/Outbank work OZ/NZ.	01892-770771	www.oysterworldwide.com
Interships / Career Experience (overseas)	The Leap Overseas Ltd	Internship / career experience options in teaching, medical, media, ecotourism. Refer to website for more options.	01672-519922	www.theleap.co.uk

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Interships / Career Experience (overseas)	Travellers Worldwide	Overseas Internships and work experience in Law, Journalism, Medical, Dental, Veterinary, Tourism, Sport and more.	01903-502595	www.travellersworldwide.com
Language Immersion Courses	En Famille Overseas	Short term home stays, France/Spain, usually 1-2 weeks 1 to 1 tuition, preparation for exams, language fluency.	01397-712906	info@enfamilieoverseas.co.uk
Language Courses Abroad	LANACOS	Certified residential courses (DofE) 1 week to 1 year, approved by top universities, speak fast on a linguistic gap year.	01732-456543	www.lanacos.com
Language Courses (Spanish)	don Quijote UK	Year round Spanish courses 1-44 weeks, all levels, in schools in Spain & Latin America. Accommodation provided.	020-8786-8081	www.donquijote.org
Language Courses Abroad	CESA Languages Abroad	1 to 16 week language courses + Academic Term / Year courses. All ability levels. In Europe, Latin America & Asia.	01209-211800%	www.cesalanguages.com

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Languages / Hospitality Management (Paid)	Canvas Holidays	Paid summer work in campsites across Europe. Wide range of roles.	01383-629012	www.canvasholidaysrecruitment.com
Management Consultancy	Accenture	8 month scholarship programme in business & technology, with possible sponsorship through university.	via website	www.accenture.com
Medical work experience	Gap Medics	Provider of international hospital work experience for students who are aspiring healthcare professionals.	0191603-1111	www.gapmedics.co.uk
Medical / Journalism / other work experience	Global Volunteer Projects	Medical, Nursing, Physiotherapy & Journalism work experience projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America.	0191-222-0404	www.globalvolunteerprojects.org
New Zealand Working Holiday Scheme	Immigration New Zealand (Government)	Stay in NZ up to 23 months and work for up to 12 months in one or many jobs. Apply on line. Website links to job sites.	02380-597061	www.immigration.govt.nz/ukwhs

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Paid work,volunteering worldwide,USA camps	BUNAC	Paid working holidays (US,Canada,OZ,NZ,Japan),volunteering (Africa,Asia,Americas), internships (Asia), summer camps USA.	0333-999-7516	www.bunac.org
Paid Seasonal Work Overseas	Eurocamp & Al Fresco Holidays	Paid summer work on campsites in Europe, variety of positions available working for Eurocamp and Al Fresco Holidays.	01606-787522	www.eurocampandalfrescojobs.com
Paid Work, Banff, Canada	GAP YEAR CANADA	Paid work Banff, Canada, pre-organised mountain jobs & early season instructors course, guaranteed employment.	403-763-7015	www.GapYearCanada.com

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