

IDEAS FOR GAP YEAR

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GAP YEAR(S)

- Planned between finishing A levels and starting a degree or other course
- Planned, to gain necessary experience, or extend qualifications needed to apply for a competitive course or job
- Open ended, without a specific long term goal, to do further thinking and get some ideas
- All of these options need to be planned

APPRENTICESHIPS

- Job with training. Training = Qualification related to the job
- Levels – 2, 3 = Advanced, 4 = Higher, 5 = Degree level
- Need to know the type of work you want to do. Competitive
- Available in wide variety of sectors, reflects labour market needs
- Apply during Y13, vacancies appearing throughout the year, though competitive vacancies need early applications
- Sheffield City Council, NHS Hospitals Trusts, AMRC, and many more
- Degree apprenticeships – apply to company and if successful company will tell you which university and course to apply for

VOLUNTEERING

- Opportunity to build experience of a sector or type of work
 - to improve chances of employment in chosen sector
 - to improve chances of an offer of a place on competitive degree
 - to test out a career idea in practice
- Improve employability skills
- Wide range of volunteering opportunities – Sheffield City Council, the Sheffield based NHS Trusts, South Yorkshire Police, and nationally
- See ‘A Year Out’ on my website caroljames.co.uk

VOCATIONAL COURSE

- Going to college to study for a qualification which will lead straight into employment. Wide range of sectors such as health and social care, child development, catering and hospitality, business administration, engineering, animal management, sport and fitness, technical support, construction operations, hair and beauty
- Level 3 qualifications from college (= A levels) can also be used to progress to level 4 and beyond, often working and studying part time

EMPLOYMENT

- Labour market buoyant at the moment particularly sectors – health, social care, hospitality and catering, transport, leisure sector, manufacturing ... and others
- Part time, casual, temporary, zero hours – useful to try out a sector
- Can be a stepping stone to a more structured career, eg NHS degree apprenticeships mainly go to existing employees, so starting as a health care support worker can give good progression
- Needs systematic approach to applications – researching organisations, tailored CV, good interview skills

TRAVEL

- Need to plan. Timing, where, languages? Visas (tourist)? Money?
- Working while travelling. Working visas harder to get.
- Type of work. Consider TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language) but will need qualification. Sporting qualifications always useful – pool lifeguarding, coaching, also musical instruments playing and teaching. Au pair work. Vocational skills/qualifications
- Travel and Volunteer as part of a programme
- Vast majority degree courses in UK offer a year or semester study abroad option at partner university in English speaking country

ORGANISING A GAP YEAR

- Be clear about the purpose of the 'gap'
- If intending to go to university after the 'gap', either apply and defer entry, or apply in the autumn after receiving A level results
- Research your options, depending on what you want to get out of the gap year and what you want to do during it
- Where are opportunities advertised? When? Jobs and employment fairs
- Have your CV ready – but be prepared to tailor it to every opportunity