

## TAKING A GAP YEAR

Ensure your reason for taking a gap year is constructive.

You can apply to Universities in September/October and **defer your entry for a year** – this is probably a good idea if you have a firm idea of what course you want to do. Or you can apply the following year – but then you will not be in school with the back up of our help.

You do need to check if the course and Universities you are going to approve of gap years. Most do – but for certain subjects like mathematics and some of the sciences it might not be so highly thought of because there is a feeling that you will have got “out of the swing” of that particular style of learning.

Most students gap years comprise of different things; travelling, earning money, work experience and shadowing, voluntary work.

If at least part of your gap year is related to your chosen course – improving your foreign language, work related skills etc – then this is more likely to be favoured by Universities.

Certainly gap years should increase your maturity, independence and self reliance and broaden your experience of life.

They do cost – and so part of the 15 months is likely to need to be in paid employment

If you are travelling – then you need to decide whether you are going to do this independently or with an organisation – the latter does mean you have the organisations support, you will be part of a group with new people and you will be doing some form of work.

You will need to explain in your Personal Statement brief details of your gap year proposals and the benefits you hope to get from it.

There are many organisations that organise gap year travel or volunteer projects abroad and in the UK.

Both Connexions and the dedicated resources area in the Common Room has plenty of information and literature to refer to.

Make sure that you do your research and organise it well.

Have a look at the website links listed under the heading ‘Thinking about a GAP year?’ on the careers pages of this website.