

Higher Education - The Gap Year/A Year Off

In recent years, more and more students have been taking a year off from their studies between school and Higher Education. You may defer entry through UCAS but it is as well to check with the institution concerned to find out their attitude to students taking this form of action. They are more likely to encourage you if you have plans for the constructive use of your time. Below are listed some of the more general advantages and drawbacks of following this option.

The advantages may be listed as follows:

- 1 You may be able to do some work, or live in another country, which will prepare you for your course of give you an insight into its application;
- 2 You may become more highly-motivated towards your studies;
- 3 You may have an opportunity for wider experience of life and travel;
- 4 You should be more mature, and therefore likely to get more out of your course;
- 5 You may avoid the staleness that some students experience form several years of academic study.



The drawbacks may be listed as follows:

- 1 You may lost the 'will to work' and there is a particular danger in some Science and Mathematics areas that you may 'lose the thread' of the subject;
- 2 You may find disciplined study difficult after a year away from an academic atmosphere;
- 3 You may have personal reasons for wanting to begin your career as soon as possible.

Resources for Further Research

- 📖 'A Year Off A Year On' - a booklet published by The Careers Research & Advisory Centre (CRAC), available in the School LRC;
- 📖 'A Year Off' (Trotman & Company Ltd);
- 📖 'Taking A Year Off' (Trotman & Company Ltd);
- 📖 International Directory of Voluntary Work' & 'The Charities Yearbook', available from Bromley Central Library;
- 📖 GAP Activity Projects (GAP) Ltd, 44 Queen's Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 4BB tel: 01734 594914: an educational agency which offers placements.
- 📖 See also www.oysterworldwide.com.

Mrs Jones usually organises an outside speaker to give full details of gap years in an assembly during February to May of Year 12.

