FOCUS ON VOLUNTEERING OVERSEAS

Thinking of taking a year off to work or volunteer overseas after school? There are hundreds of gap year companies and programs. To make sure you choose the right company:

- Compare costs between the companies - some will offer similar services and opportunities for varying costs.
- Ensure your parents/guardians and you will have access to 24 hour telephone support during your placement.
- Ask if you can email young people who have participated in the programs so you can gain an independent opinion.
- Ask the company if they will run an information session at your school or in your town/city.
- Make a list of what the expenses cover (i.e., meals, accommodation, flights, VISA).

The following are examples of companies you can explore.

**Cultural Care Au Pair:** You can work as a live in au pair in America. You must be at least 18 years old. [www.culturalcare.com.au](http://www.culturalcare.com.au)

**Latitude Global Volunteering:** You can undertake activities such as community service, medical assisting, outdoor education or teaching in countries such as Africa, Mexico, Spain, Poland, Japan, England etc. Placements range from 3 – 11 months. [www.lattitude.org.au](http://www.lattitude.org.au)

**Letz Live:** You will stay in a boarding school and work as a gap year assistant in countries such as China, Canada, France, India, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, UK etc. Placements range from 3 – 12 months. [www.letzlive.org/australia](http://www.letzlive.org/australia)

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**Camp Counselors USA:** You have three options. 1) Camp counselor leading children in various sports and outdoor adventures in America, Russia, Canada or Croatia over the summer break. 2) Working up to 12 months in the USA, Canada or the UK in a seasonal resort, English pub or a variety of other hospitality positions. 3) Volunteering in one of over 50 projects in Africa, Latin America or Asia. [www.ccusa.com.au](http://www.ccusa.com.au)

**Antipodeans:** You will work with other young Australians on a sustainable volunteer project in a developing country/area such as Kenya, Nepal, Tanzania, Vietnam, Thailand etc. You can work in volunteer projects such as building/construction, conservation, care work, community work and teaching. [www.antipodeans.com.au/gap-break/gap-break.htm](http://www.antipodeans.com.au/gap-break/gap-break.htm)

**World Youth International:** This is similar to Antipodeans in that you work on sustainable programs. You can undertake placements in the following areas- Kenya, Uganda, Nepal, Cambodia, India and Peru. You can undertake projects in building/construction, care work, community work, health and sanitation and teaching. [www.worldyouth.org.au/Home](http://www.worldyouth.org.au/Home)

**Projects Abroad:** You can work in one of 26 developing countries undertaking short and longer term projects such as care work, teaching, conservation/ environment, sports, culture/ community, archaeology, building and performing arts. [www.projects-abroad.com.au](http://www.projects-abroad.com.au)

**International Exchange Programs:** You can undertake working holidays in the USA, Canada, Ireland, Britain and volunteer in Cambodia, USA, Peru, and South Africa. Working holiday placements include working in the hospitality industry, summer camps and skiing. [www.iep.org.au](http://www.iep.org.au)
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Work Experience: If you can raise the funds required, you may be able to participate in work experience overseas. The following are two examples of companies that offer these types of placements

Projects Abroad: Students between 16 – 19 years of age can undertake a two week work experience during the mid year holidays in the following project areas: archaeology, building/construction, care work, conservation & environment, culture & community, law & human rights, medicine & healthcare, and sports. www.projects-abroad.com.au/projects/2-week-high-school-specials/

Gap Medics: This program is for students in years 11 and 12 who are interested in studying medicine, nursing, dentistry and/or midwifery in the future. Placements are offered in Thailand and Tanzania during school holiday periods. You will have the opportunity to shadow highly skilled professionals in a clinic during your placement. www.gapmedics.com

Meet Maddy Hunt: Au Pair World, Canada

My gap year in Canada so far has been an amazing, life changing experience. I am currently an au pair located in Abbostford of BC, Canada. Using a website called Au Pair World, many families from all over the world have contacted me, inviting me to become their au pair.

After a bit of skyping and emailing, I was able to find a host family that I was happy with, and talk about what would be required of me for living with them. Hospitality and accommodation are both covered.

I help babysit their twin babies, Mason and Maija, who have just turned 1, as their mother goes back to work. A schedule is organised for days off, and also two weeks of paid leave, just like any other job. I receive a weekly pay of $200, which is reasonable being an au pair.

My host family like to travel and do lots of outdoor activities. I have been lucky enough to join them on their vacation to Palm Springs, California, where I had an amazing time at a destination I thought I wouldn’t have the chance to visit for another 10 years. We will go camping in the US, as we live five minutes from the border, and visit many more places within Canada.

Being an au pair is not just being stuck looking after kids, you will always have days off. It has two whole different experiences in it. I have become very independent, looking after myself, doing my own washing etc, all while experiencing the Canadian culture. I have met many other au pairs in my area, and am often meeting new people.

The people I have met so far are what has made me fall in love with this country. I recommend a gap year as an au pair to someone who wants and/or loves to travel. It is a fun, over whelming experience, for which the chance won’t be there forever.

The people you meet, in my opinion, are what makes your experience what it is, and are the best part of travelling.

Meet Peter Fisher: Snowboarding in Canada

Peter traveled with a friend to live in Banff, Canada for a year after he completed year 12. They lived in a youth hostel and Peter picked up employment of between 30 – 35 hours per week. He was able to do what he loved which was snowboarding three days per week. Pete learnt the following: “The experience gave me a lot more confidence in dealing with people, which made my transition to Melbourne for university much easier”.

Meet Mitch Glass: Mexico

Mitch undertook a gap year placement in Mexico, assisting children in an orphanage.

Each day was varied. After walking to work for 20 minutes, Mitch undertook activities such as assisting with the organization and serving of breakfast/ lunch and dinner, assisting children to get to school and helping with home work, playing soccer in the park etc.

Mitch worked 12 hours a day 5 days a week but he loved it. He learnt that “orphanages are an amazing place of managed right” Mitch is now studying at RMIT
Sport at La Trobe University: The University has established a specialised unit called 'La Trobe Sport'. They aim to be the number 1 choice for the “study of, participation in, and partnering in sport” in Australia. They have also just announced a three-year partnership with the AFL Players Association. La Trobe will work with the Association on key research in areas such as coaching, physiotherapy, psychology, exercise physiology, nutrition, journalism etc. For more information, go to http://www.latrobe.edu.au/news/articles/2013/release/afl-players-association-and-la-trobe

New Engineering course at La Trobe: From 2014, La Trobe will offer the Bachelor of Robotic and Mechatronic Engineering. Students will

- Fabricate and program robots with mechatronics tools from laser-cutting through to 3D printing and CNC routing, and
- Will study the development of mechatronic systems, software and firmware development for Field Programmable Gate Arrays (FPGA’s) and microcontrollers, control systems, engineering management and communications.


Are you the first in your family to go to uni? Deakin University has created a great resource for students who will be the first in their immediate family to go to university. Whilst you will receive lots of support from your school, this website will be helpful as you will be able to chat to other students who are the first in their family to go to university, and they will be able to give you tips and advice. To explore the new site, go to http://deakin-first-in-family.tumblr.com/

Exciting news about Commerce at Deakin: The Bachelor of Commerce is now internationally recognised and EPAS accredited by the European Foundation for Management Development’s Programme. It is the only Commerce degree in Australia with EPAS accreditation. For more information, go to http://www.deakin.edu.au/buslaw/

Learn about careers in health, law, engineering and design: There are many courses and careers in these four areas. You can explore these areas through the LEAP website (Learn, Experience, Access, Professions) and find out about career events you can attend. Go to http://www.leap.vic.edu.au/

Focus on Melbourne University: The following evening seminars will be run at the Parkville Campus in May

- Commerce (21)
- Biomedicine & Oral Health (22)
- Engineering (28)
- Information Technology (28)
- Agriculture (29)

For more information and to register, go to www.futurestudents.unimelb.edu.au/focus-melb

Are you interested in pursuing an apprenticeship or traineeship pathway after school? The Australian Apprenticeships and Traineeships Information Service is hosting a free information session in Melbourne on Wednesday 15 May.

You will be able to learn about resources available to assist you in searching for apprenticeships. For more information and to register, contact 1800 338 002, www.aatinfo.com.au/news

MyDay Biomedical Sciences & Nursing, Charles Sturt University: You have the opportunity to experience life as a CSU student for a day and explore their courses in nursing, pharmacy and medical science. The MyDay will be held Friday 17 May at the Wagga Wagga campus. For more information and to register, email Judy at infoevents@csu.edu.au
University Experience Days at Australian Catholic University: The University is running workshops that are designed to assist students to explore their courses. Dates and workshops are as follows:

- **Ballarat campus**, Tuesday 2 July: Teaching (Early Childhood and Primary), Nursing, and Paramedicine
- **Canberra campus**, Tuesday 9 July: Teaching (Early Childhood and Primary), Nursing, Social Work and Paramedicine.


Monash Art, Design & Architecture Workshops: Monash University is hosting three days of workshops for year 12 students interested in studying creative disciplines. You will be able to build your portfolio in one or more of the following areas

- Communication design
- Industrial design
- Fine art
- Interior architecture, and
- Architecture.

The workshops will be held 10am – 5pm, 2 – 4 July 2012 at the MADA studios, Caulfield campus. For more details and to register, go to visit [www.monash.edu/mada/workshops](http://www.monash.edu/mada/workshops)

Laboratory Visits School Program, RMIT: Are you passionate about science? You have the opportunity to participate in a medical laboratory visit with RMIT and explore careers in medical sciences. You will be able to go behind the scenes of a major teaching hospital in either Melbourne or regional Victoria. Dates available are Monday 8 – Friday 12 July. For more information and to register, go to [www.rmit.edu.au/medicalsiences](http://www.rmit.edu.au/medicalsiences)

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### MAY EVENTS

- **18: JMC Academy Open Day**, South Melbourne Campus, [www.jmcacademy.edu.au](http://www.jmcacademy.edu.au)
- **20: Global Careers Day**, RMIT, [http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=bjkoe3axlzyx#_Registration](http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=bjkoe3axlzyx#_Registration)