

How to...plan time out after graduation

It is increasingly common for graduates to consider taking time out on completion of their studies. Travelling, volunteering, gap years or flexible working may be just some of the options you are considering whilst you take stock of your short and long term career objectives.

Things to think about:

- What do you want to gain from your time out?
- The financial implications
- All aspects of work/study in the UK and abroad
- Deferring entry to postgraduate study
- Researching employers open to the idea of you taking a year out to build up your employability skills

What next?

You need to explore your options before making a decision, set yourself some goals. You may want a plan in place for when you return to work or study, so you are ready and motivated for what lies ahead.

How to get started

- **Analyse your skills** – think about what skills and competencies you gained from your time at university and explore the types of jobs that would suit you. See our **How your Degree has made you more Employable** [handout](http://www.mmu.ac.uk/careers/students-and-graduates/resources/guides/) <http://www.mmu.ac.uk/careers/students-and-graduates/resources/guides/> or **Prospects Planner** www.prospects.ac.uk/links/ppanner
- **Explore the types of jobs linked to your degree** www.prospects.ac.uk/links/options or for details of entry routes into specific careers see www.prospects.ac.uk/links/occupations
- **Research the industry** you are hoping to work in, to gain an understanding of entry requirements, job roles, typical employers and future trends. See www.prospects.ac.uk/links/industries
- **Keep up to date on graduate recruiters** by checking vacancies on our website www.mmu.ac.uk/careers/coves or by looking at our career guides on Job Vacancy websites including Graduate schemes <http://www.mmu.ac.uk/careers/students-and-graduates/resources/guides/> or see www.prospects.ac.uk/links/coprofiles for details of graduate recruiters.

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Where to get advice

- An appointment with a Careers & Employability Adviser can help to clarify your thoughts.
- The Employability and Careers Service can advise you on CVs and application forms as well offering advice on how to prepare for interviews.
- Discuss your decision and future plans with friends and family.
- Talk to people who have taken time out to find out about their experiences and what they gained from it.
- Attend Careers fairs such as the Work Experience or Not for Profit and Voluntary Sector. For more details, see <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/wexpfairs>
- The Employability and Careers Service hosts presentations from a variety of employers and organisations throughout the year, see www.mmu.ac.uk/careers/events/

In the Information Library

- The Employability and Careers Service has many reference books which may be a useful starting point. They cover Working Abroad, Voluntary Work, Teaching English as a Foreign Language and many other areas.
- Details of various Year Out/Holiday/Work Experience organisations, which specialise in arranging opportunities for travel for students.
- See our career guides on How to get Work Experience, Working Abroad, TEFL Opportunities and many more.

On the Web

www.mmu.ac.uk/careers

See our links to voluntary organisations and sites with overseas jobs
<http://www.mmu.ac.uk/careers/students-and-graduates/resources/guides/>

Prospects Web:

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/gapyear>

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/volunteer>

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/workexperience>

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/abroad> - exploring work and study options abroad including country specific information.

In addition some of the following Careers and Employability Service 'How To...' sheets may be of use to you:

- How to get started on your Careers Research
- How to Assess your Skills
- How to Sell your Skills