Why time out?
Perhaps you just want to see some of the world before launching into a demanding career; or you have time to kill before starting further study; maybe you’ve been working for some years and want a break to recharge your batteries. There are many valid reasons for a gap year which is definitely not just something young people do between A-levels and university.

However, you probably ought to think about how you’re going to present your break to recruiters in the future so that they understand you did it for a good reason and not because you are work-shy!

What might you get out of the break?
There is a lot to gain – directly and indirectly – from the various experiences you can have during a period of time out. For example:

- Knowledge about yourself – what you are capable of, what interests you, what you want to do in future;
- Satisfaction at doing a worthwhile project;
- Personal development from the challenges and experiences – you won’t be the same person after returning from travelling the world or working on, say, a voluntary project to help disadvantaged children;
- Skills and attributes you can transfer to a future workplace such as planning, problem solving, dealing with people, self-sufficiency, adapting to different environments and cultures;
- Work experience for casual or longer-term jobs or volunteering you do;
- For career breaks, rejuvenating your ideas and motivations.

Resources in the Careers Library
The following books in our library give further advice and suggestions.


General advice for planning time out
A sample of online resources offering advice

Gapadvice.org
www.gapadvice.org

For independent gap year travel information, research and advice for travellers and their families. Has sections for young people, those taking a career break and ‘in retirement’ activities. There is a placement search facility and for a small fee the organisation will help you set up a placement.

**Gap-year.com**
www.gap-year.com

Offers wide-ranging information relating to gap year and career break opportunities. You can find advice on how to prepare for and plan your year out. The website refers to opportunities in the UK and abroad. Not to be confused with gapyear.com!

**Objective Gap Safety**
www.objectivegapyear.com

An organisation offering training for those going on a gap year and other placements in potentially hostile environments, aiming to equip them with the skills to deal with difficult situations.

Safetrek
www.safetrek.co.uk

Safetrek delivers safety awareness and personal security training for young travellers both at home and abroad. The courses are intended to allow young adults to travel, work and live safely whilst overseas and at home, secure in the knowledge that if confronted with a difficult situation they are well prepared to deal with the problem and resolve it successfully. There are some FAQ/checklists of things to consider before going.

Examples of gap year organisations recently ‘recruiting’
Here is a list of organisations that have promoted time out opportunities to King’s students in recent years.

**BUNAC**
www.bunac.org/uk

BUNAC is a not-for-profit organisation that specialises in sending young people on working holidays and volunteer projects.

**Frontier**
http://www.frontier.ac.uk

NGO dedicated to safeguarding biodiversity and ecosystem integrity and building sustainable livelihoods for marginalised communities in the world’s poorest countries. Provides opportunities for gap year work, volunteering and travel.

**Gapyear.com**
www.gapyear.com

Gap year guides, advice, suggestions and help, but also ideas and a platform via which you can look for travel mates can be found on this website. Not to be confused with gap-year.com!

**Gapforce**
www.gapforce.org

A family of companies to you offering adventures around the world, volunteering with major partners like the Red Cross,
UNESCO and AWF, and training programmes for Dive, Ski and Expedition instructors. Divisions are: Greenforce, Ozforce tekfroce, Skiforce, Medforce and Sportforce.

**Inspired Breaks**
www.inspiredbreaks.co.uk

Volunteering, gap year and career breaks.

**Inter Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE)**
www.icye.org.uk

ICYE is an ethical volunteering organisation with over 50 years of experience in international volunteering. ICYE volunteers live and work in countries throughout Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe, helping to support local NGO’s and aid International development.

**Outreach International**
www.outreachinternational.co.uk

Volunteering, gap year and career break opportunities in a range of projects from orphanages to eco-tourism, conservation to arts and crafts.

**Projects Abroad**
www.projects-abroad.org

Projects Abroad is an international volunteering organization offering a diversity of volunteering abroad projects, ranging from teaching abroad, health and social care, conservation and environment, sports, culture and community, and archaeology, as well as a small number of internships abroad (in Journalism, Business, Law and Human Rights).

**Raleigh International**
www.raleighinternational.org

Offers a range of gap year and volunteering opportunities for students and graduates. Volunteering abroad is combined with adventurous expeditions.

**Real Gap Experience**
www.realgap.co.uk

Provides gap year jobs and volunteer gap year projects abroad for students, as well as career breaks and gap years for professionals at all stages. You can choose from a large variety of opportunities in over 45 countries.

**VentureCo**
www.ventureco-worldwide.com

Offer travel/adventure breaks, gap years, career breaks primarily in South America.

**VSO**
www.vso.org.uk

International development charity working through volunteers. Mainly longer-term placements for experienced people.

**Year Out Group**
www.yearoutgroup.org

Year Out Group provides help to plan your gap year. There are over 35 member organisations that provide a wide range of gap year programs in over 90 countries.

**Further advice**

Don’t forget, our Careers & Employability centre offers take-away information on how to write CVs, application forms, covering and speculative letters, a one-to-one feedback service (quick queries) and workshops on CVs/applications to support you through any application process. For more information please go to our website www.kcl.ac.uk/careers.

**King’s CareerConnect**
www.kcl.ac.uk/careerconnect

King’s CareerConnect is our exclusive online career portal enabling students and recent alumni to engage with our services. Once logged in, you can access our vacancy board and search hundreds of part-time roles, placements, internships and graduate-level opportunities, book one-to-one careers or application guidance appointments, apply for exclusive King’s Internships and view our full events calendar to book attendance at our many events throughout the year.

Updated: November 2018

Throughout our website there are links to websites whose content is outside our control. The inclusion of links on these pages in no way constitutes a recommendation of the services or information provided. Please use your own judgement and be especially wary of any service which asks you to pay! Be cynical.

This material can be provided in alternate formats. Please discuss your requirements with a member of staff.

Our full policies on third party links and accessibility can be found on the “About Us” section of our website.

Copyright ©TheCareers Group, University of London