

Advisory Notes for Completing Your Application Form

Thank you for choosing to apply for a gap year placement through The Gap Network – our aim is to help you have the year of a lifetime!

We strongly believe that the best gap year experiences come from finding you a closely matched placement – it's certainly not just about slotting people into spaces available.

The Gap Network offers a caring and personalised service which aims to find you the school position that most closely fits your interests, skills and experience. We want to learn all about you - what you want to achieve during your gap year and beyond...

The following notes will help you complete our application form correctly, please read them carefully - the information you provide will help us start the process.

Before you begin...

Make sure you review the eligibility criteria outlined on our website to ensure that we can accept an application from you.

Complete the form by downloading, typing directly into the fields and *saving it to your computer*.

It is in your best interests to consider and answer the questions as carefully as you can. Please be honest and factual in your responses, don't tell us what you think we want to hear – it will not help in finding you a well-matched gap placement. We will also ask for supporting documentation further down the track.

In the process of completing the form, you may think of questions or additional information you would like to receive. Refer to our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) which will answer most of the usual queries. If you still need an answer, either email us at info@thegapnetwork.org or make a note of the question(s) for later discussion or explanation at your interview.

There's no 'cut off' date with The Gap Network but clearly the earlier you apply, the more opportunities we will have to find you a well matched placement. Be aware, it is increasingly competitive to secure a UK school placement and demand across the sector is very high and growing. Schools receive many more applications than there are places available. For a number of valid reasons, many UK schools are now unwilling to take independent (unsolicited) applications directly from young people as they have done in the past. We strongly recommend that you get off to an early start with your application.

1. My details

Ensure that all details are accurate and reliable, especially your email address. The Gap Network will communicate with you through this email address and you may need to respond quickly.

As you may be about to leave school/college/university, some people choose to use (or open) a personal email account rather than one linked to an educational institution.

Please describe your current circumstances, for example: Final Year School Student, University Undergraduate, College Student, Working F/T or P/T, Other (please explain).

Supply your full residential address (ie not a Post Office Box) including suburb, postal code and country.

My emergency contact details

Provide details for TWO people aged over the age of 18 to be points of contacts in your home country. It's very important that you provide reliable and accurate details for these two people as this information will be used in the (unlikely) event of an emergency.

Most often these people are family members, or one family member and another person who knows you well. The first of these emergency contacts will be copied in on some of the more important emails we send you as you prepare for departure. They will also be the first person we contact in an emergency.

2. My education

If you have been at your current educational institution for 2 years or less, we will ask you questions about your previous place of education during your interview.

3. My health

Do you have any health conditions that might need to be considered in the placement process? Do you follow a special diet or have specific medical needs? It is certainly helpful to discuss any considerations relating to your health and well-being with us at an early stage. After your appointment, individual schools can have their own additional procedures for new employees appointed to a role in the school community. It can cause problems if health issues come to light at a later stage and may put your placement at risk.

4. My gap year

For all questions with an extended response and word limit, we recommend that you first draft your responses in a word document and then cut and paste into the relevant field.

5. My gap placement

Think carefully about your preferences. A UK school-based gap experience is different for every young person. Remember people may offer their views on the "right" placement for you, whether or not they have actually experienced a gap year themselves. We are very happy to answer any questions and talk this through with you during interview.

6. My interests and activities

Please ensure you indicate the level of proficiency and age of involvement for each sport or activity listed.

Sporting abilities

Think about the team sports you play at school/college/university. How many years have you been playing? Could you train, motivate and inspire a team of younger students? Do you participate or compete in an individual sport? Are there any sporting achievements in particular you would like us to note?



Musical skills including singing and dancing

Do you have skills and experience in performance, school musicals, concerts or festivals? Could you provide lessons in a musical instrument or assist with a choir or orchestra? Are you proficient at a type of dance, perhaps you been involved with teaching younger students, competed or performed?

Drama/debating/public speaking

Detail any involvement in school plays, theatre sports or drama productions, acting, directing or backstage work. Are you an experienced debater or a confident public speaker?

Community involvement

Have you been a member of any sporting clubs, youth or community groups? How have you contributed? Perhaps you been involved in fundraising, volunteering or charity work.

Leadership positions

List any elected positions or nominated school leader positions. We may discuss this with your school referee or ask you to verify your leadership experience.

Part-time paid work experience

Outline any previous experience in paid positions, for example part-time, casual and holiday jobs or work experience. Part-time employers are sometimes a valuable referee as they can verify your ability to function well in a team environment.

Interests

Do you have any other interests not listed above that you would like to tell us about?

Qualifications

Please select any of the qualifications you have completed. We will ask for supporting documentation at a later date.

7. My referees

Please choose these people carefully as they will be very important in the application process.

Provide the names and *accurate* contact details for THREE referees willing to provide a CONFIDENTIAL written reference for you. We will contact these people directly and ask them to detail their own knowledge of you, your personality, skills and life experience.

It is **strongly** advised that you confirm the availability, contact details and request the permission of your chosen referees **before** you include their details on your application. The Gap Network will contact your referees after your interview and your application cannot progress until their responses are received.

Important: DO NOT request a written reference yourself from your referees. We cannot accept open testimonials as they are invalid for the clearances necessary to work with school-aged children. Only confidential references (ie those we obtain by direct request from your referees) can be used.

In addition, please note:

- Your references are confidential and used only for the purpose of your gap year application through The Gap Network.
- Referees must have known you for *a minimum* of 6 months.
- One of your referees must be from your educational institution eg Principal, Teacher, Year Coordinator.
- Additional references can be accepted from a sporting coach, music or dance teacher, employer, youth leader, local community representative or similar.
- Referees cannot be related to you, but we will accept a maximum of one character reference from a family friend.

8. My resume

A personal resume **must** accompany your application form. Your resume should:

- Be concise ie max 2 – 3, A4 pages, referees are not mandatory given that they are included on your application form.
- Incorporate a recent head and shoulders photograph in a top corner of the first page. Good quality image, no social media shots, Year 12 photograph or similar is ideal.

9. How did you hear about The Gap Network?

We suggest you choose a response from the following options: Internet Search/The Gap Network Website, Word of Mouth, Facebook, Careers Advisor, Other (please specify).

10. Agreement

Please read the terms of the agreement carefully. If there are any parts that you do not understand or require further explanation, please email us at info@thegapnetwork.org

If you are under 18 at the time of application, your form cannot be submitted without the countersignature of a parent or legal guardian.



11. Payment

Submitting an application through The Gap Network incurs an initial non-refundable application fee. The second (final) payment is **only** payable on confirmation and acceptance of a placement.

All payments must be in Australian Dollars.

Direct deposit payments can be made to the following account:

The Gap Network

Commonwealth Bank

BSB: 062-108

Account Number: 1025 2344

SWIFT Code:CTBAAU2S

Payment reference: IMPORTANT Please provide first initial and surname of applicant to allow us to identify your payment

And finally...

Thank you for your interest and support for the work of The Gap Network. As you submit your application, please use the checklist below to ensure you have supplied everything necessary for smooth and prompt processing.

Checklist:

- Application Form – all fields completed.
- Application includes *accurate* contact details for THREE reliable referees who know you well.
- Personal Resume (2 – 3, A4 pages) incorporating recent head and shoulders photo in top corner. REMINDER: No social media shots.
- Application fee paid to The Gap Network via direct deposit (details above).
- Notes of any extra questions/information you would like to discuss at interview.
- Submit your completed Application Form and Resume to info@thegapnetwork.org. We will confirm receipt of your application. If you do not hear from us, please send us a follow-up email.