

Focus/Topic: Gap Years

Rationale: Year 12 students may benefit from an introduction to gap years as a post-18 option.

Timing: 60 minutes (adapt activities to suit timeframes)

Group Details: A whole year group of Year 12 students (working in groups of 5)

Aim: To help Year 12 students understand what a gap year is, explore the various possibilities it offers, and consider factors in deciding whether to take a gap year.

Objectives:

- Explain what a gap year is
- Analyse potential benefits and risks of taking a gap year
- List at least 3 activities you could do on a gap year

Aids and materials:

- Room set up for group work
- Computer and use of screen projector
- Clicker, stopwatch
- Slides:
 - https://www.canva.com/design/DAGHKKtiFx8/RG3uC5zKeSKesu0w8zyOGg/edit?utm_content=DAGHKKtiFx8&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton
- **XX** printed sets of the Gap Year Reasons & Considerations cards (1 per group of 3-5): https://www.canva.com/design/DAF-LSOCz9I/PB-NlvIPOUBbkP-IN3unqA/edit?utm_content=DAF-LSOCz9I&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton
- **XX** A6 wallets for Gap Year Reasons & Considerations cards (1 per set)
- **XX** sets Shape of Career cards – <https://sunrisecareerguidance.co.uk/shapeofcareercards/>

- <https://sunrisecareerguidance.co.uk/shape-of-career-cards-scotland/> either laid out on tables in advance for students to visit or 1 pack per group of 4/5 (depending on group size)

Stage One: Introduction

4 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • SLIDE 2: This session today is aimed at helping you think about what a gap year is, what it can offer you, and whether it might suit you. • You will have the opportunity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discuss what a gap year is ○ Analyse potential benefits and risks of taking a gap year ○ List at least 3 activities you could do on a gap year ○ Consider if it might be an option for you
2 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLIDE 3: The idea is for this to be interactive, so that everyone gets involved, and we can learn from each other. • I'll be talking some of the time but a lot of the time you'll be working together in pairs and small groups, so... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please listen and come back together when I need you to ○ Share what you are comfortable sharing and keep each other's information to yourselves after the session ○ Collect and return any resources we give you
3 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a gap year? What do you know about them already? • SLIDE 4: A gap year is literally time and space. It is time out between structured career activities e.g. between school or college and an apprenticeship, university, or a job. It can happen between university and a job or even between a job and another job. • There are no hard and fast rules about what a gap year is or how to have one – what you do with it is up to you. • A gap year can happen at any time - not necessarily straight after school



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It doesn't have to last a whole year – but it can end up lasting longer |
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Stage 2: Development	
2 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLIDE 5: Looking at this scale, how do you feel about the idea of a gap year? Discuss with the person next to you for a minute.
5 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLIDE 6: Do you know anyone who has taken a gap year? • Discuss in groups - who took one, what did they do with it?
10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLIDE 7: I'm going to hand out some packs of cards now. • Working in groups of 5, consider each card, discuss whether each statement is a good reason FOR a gap year or AGAINST a gap year. There are no right and wrong answers – how you feel about it will be personal to you. You have 10 minutes.
5 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a whole group, let's discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What makes a 'good' gap year? ○ What can go wrong with a gap year? ○ When is a gap year no longer a gap year?
5 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLIDE 8 & 9: A gap year doesn't have to follow a set format. There are lots of things you can do with it. As this and the next slide show: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning more about yourself ○ Applying for university / apprenticeships / jobs etc. ○ Building your network ○ Exploring opportunities / testing ideas ○ Broadening perspectives ○ Developing skills that you can take forwards ○ Get clearer on what you want to do next and make the right decision for you ○ Gaining experience that can boost your CV and applications ○ Earning / saving money ○ Trying something new ○ Pause and take a break from studying and learning

2 minute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLIDE 10: A gap year could also help you develop skills like these: independence, confidence, resilience, budgeting etc.
12 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLIDE 11: Let's see what you could do with a gap year. • EITHER: Around the hall we have laid out Shape of Career cards that show things you could do in your career, some of which you might want to do in a gap year. In your groups come up and have a look at the cards and take pictures of any that might work for you. • OR: In your groups, use your set of Shape of Career cards to explore what you might want to do in a gap year. • Pick 1 option each and discuss pros/cons of that option within your group.
5 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLIDE 12: As we've seen, gap years can include a lot of different activities. There's no one way to do it. This is how some people were planning to spend their gap year in 2022. • SLIDES 13 to 18: It can look like all these things. • You'll need to consider if it is the right option for you. If you need any support thinking it through, you can discuss it in your career guidance meeting if you'd like to. • SLIDE 19: If you want to do a gap year, here are factors to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Goals: what do you want out of it/what will you do with it? ○ Timings: When will you take it and how long will it last? ○ How: How will you fund it? How much do you need? How will you make this happen? ○ What comes after the gap year and what do you need to do to prepare for that now and in the gap year?
2 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLIDE 20: Here are some gap year programmes. Some people also choose to organise their time and activities themselves. • SLIDE 21: Some sources of support and advice around gap years. • SLIDE 22: How do you feel about the idea of a gap year now?



Stage 3: Conclusion	
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3 minutes	
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are your takeaways from this session? Any questions? |
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