

Get work experience



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Academically speaking, ISB students are fully prepared to take on the university or college experience at the institution of their choice. Our curriculum sets a solid foundation of fundamental understanding and conceptualisation and our students often take advantage of additional summer programs in preparation for their academic career. However, the immediate transition from high school to a college campus is not a one-size fits all shift.

For some, there is a significant benefit in taking a gap year before continuing their studies. Gap years are individualised, allowing for the flexibility to decide what areas of growth graduates want to focus on.

Regardless of how a gap year is spent, graduates will grow and cultivate invaluable life lessons and real world skills such as developing interpersonal relationships, handling increased responsibility, and time and financial management skills. Graduates who postpone university for a year often use that time and those experiences to help solidify future plans and distinguish what the right path is for them to pursue when they begin university.

TIPS FOR INTERNSHIPS

Experience desired Students can pursue something relevant to their chosen degree. This is invaluable as things they think they know end up being not at all what was expected once they experience it. Or, choose something outside the scope of their degree – this allows for inter-disciplinary learning.

Due diligence Make sure the organisation you're looking to intern in is reputable and that the internship will offer you the ability to gain insight into the career field.

Be pro-active Make sure your time is well spent and valuable to your learning. Ask questions and take on additional duties. If you have your heart set on role within the company, ask someone in that role to lunch and ask about their experience and their advice on your next steps. Often, it is through the duties that you didn't really expect that you learn the most and obtain the best insight.

Keep in touch Send a thank you note at the end of your time, ask about future possibilities or other opportunities such as internships during the school year. Future work (both paid and unpaid) are often a result of connections made in previous positions.

Do your research, take initiative, make a good impression and keep your options open. Internships provide opportunities for growth.

BEEN THERE...

A year off school

We speak to two students from **Yew Chung International School** who share with us how their gap year helped

Katie Zhang Xiao Mu

Now at Berklee College
of Music

Why did you do a gap year?

I was pretty sure I was going straight to college after high school. But when I didn't get my top pick, I started questioning the path I had chosen for my future career. I talked to my parents about switching majors from music to liberal arts and re-applying. But they suggested I take a year off and take this time to think about what I really wanted to do in the future.

So I applied to a 10-month independent artist program in LA to learn more about music and what I can do with it.

What was the course about?

It's an independent artist program in a music institute in Hollywood for musicians to focus on what they're interested in and also get to know the music industry. I studied song writing, music production and performance, which allowed me to further understand myself as an artist. I realised that during high school, I was really focused on performing, but I wasn't taking enough time writing songs, which is actually what I am better at. The program allowed me to get in touch with a lot of unique musicians, which encouraged me to become better at what I do.

What opportunities did it give you?

Studying IB music helped my music theory but it focuses on music history and classical pieces rather than contemporary music. During this gap year, I learnt a lot of practical skills. The music institute I studied at was full of opportunities. The teachers are actual songwriters and producers, so I had a lot of opportunities to work with them. Lessons and encouragement from professional musicians gave me a lot of confidence as well.

How did the gap year help you?

It led me to a lot of music knowledge, getting to know a lot of people that I respect and like being around. And



I think the most important thing is that I grew confident that this was the industry for me. I ended up getting into the top contemporary music college that I was rejected from last year, and with an annual 10,000USD scholarship too!

Theodore Cui Xin Long

Now at Ringling School of Art & Design

Why did you decide to do a gap year?

I wanted to apply to a better university compared to the ones I've been admitted to.

What did you do for the year?

I learnt Spanish and got my driving license during the gap year. I also had the fortune to spend more time with my family as once I enter university, I won't get to see them often.

How did the gap year help you?

Learning Spanish creates more internship opportunities in the future. As a film major, it also helps me reach out to filmmakers in Latin America.

