There are many positive reasons for undertaking vacation work abroad: to experience a foreign culture; to improve your employability and language skills; to do something worthwhile, to stand out from the crowd and to have fun. The attractions of working abroad during university vacation periods are limitless. You don't have to want to run an American summer camp, be a ski instructor in Canada or pick fruit in France for the rest of your life to really benefit from the wide variety of working abroad programmes that are on offer. Such opportunities are a great way of expanding your horizons, developing skills and exploring interesting alternatives in an unusual and fun environment.

However, it is important to plan ahead and allow plenty of time to organise your vacation work and consider what you hope to achieve. There are a number of factors you need to consider:

- **Language/culture** - do you speak the language? Can you learn enough to get by?
- **Climate** - would you be happy in a different climate? Can you deal with extremes in temperature?
- **Do you need a Visa for where you want to go?**
- **Distance** - how would you deal with life miles from home?

**Working in the European Union (EU)**

Working within the EU is the most straightforward option for many students wishing to work abroad. With mainland Europe so near travel is relatively cheap. Visas are not required for British citizens and most European countries are used to offering internships and summer work.

If you choose to send a speculative application (CV and covering letter) you should ensure it includes the dates of when you are available and is written in the appropriate language and style for your country of choice as CV styles vary from country to country – see ‘Working Abroad’ in the ‘Jobs and Work experience’ section on [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) or [https://online.goinglobal.com/](https://online.goinglobal.com/).

The web provides access to many company sites and online applications. International White and Yellow Pages online [www.wayp.com](http://www.wayp.com) are also helpful and can, for example, provide lists of employment agencies in other countries.

Any vacation work overseas we receive is advertised regularly through the ‘Vacancies’ section of our website - [http://www.stir.ac.uk/careers/](http://www.stir.ac.uk/careers/).

**Other useful web resources for working in Europe:**

- [http://ec.europa.eu/eures/](http://ec.europa.eu/eures/): the EURES (Employment Service) website aims to make it easier for workers to move freely throughout the EU with information on living and working conditions of individual countries.
- [http://www.graduatejobsinurope.com/](http://www.graduatejobsinurope.com/): data about graduate employers across Europe with economic information per country
- [https://europa.eu/youth/EU_en](https://europa.eu/youth/EU_en): for paid and volunteering work experience in Europe

**Working outside the European Union**

If you are looking for work outside the EU then you may have more of a challenge as in most countries visas are a necessity. Some Commonwealth countries and the USA issue ‘Student Exchange Visas’ which allow up to 12-18 months of work and travel. In some cases you can apply direct to the relevant embassy’s visa section in London, but for others you will need to travel with a sponsoring organisation. This can add to your costs, but it does make organising your vacation

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*Image from Stirling University, Careers and Employability Service*
For more information contact the Careers and Employability Service:

www.stir.ac.uk/careers

Updated August 16 All URLs are provided in good faith.