WRITING TASK 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

In some countries young people are encouraged to work or travel for a year between finishing high school and starting university studies. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages for young people who decide to do this.

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

You should write at least 250 words.

SAMPLE1.

Travelling seems to be an indispensable part of almost everyone’s life. It helps people broaden their knowledge as well as improve their living skills. Hence, many people recommend that students should travel after finishing high school and before entering university studies. In this paper, I’m going to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this.

Firstly, travelling can help us to improve our health. When travelling, people tend to do much outside activities such as mountain climbing. Hence, it can help students have a better health which is good for their future study. Next, travelling gives us opportunities to explore the world. Going to different countries, you can study different cultures and how they are different from each other. Therefore, students can broaden their knowledge.

Despite the benefits, travelling before starting a new degree in a university can make student forget their academic knowledge. For example, mathematics involves many formulas which are very hard to remember if students don’t keep practicing frequently. Moreover, students who travel like this tend to have problems in re-adapting in an academic environment again.

From my personal viewpoint, travelling after finishing high school and before entering university studies is beneficial even though there are many disadvantages. The reason is that it’s a requirement for all of us now to become qualified so that we find a good job. Therefore, people can still overcome the difficulties that I mentioned.
Many people think that a gap year can help a young person to gain some life and work experience prior to starting university, as well as develop as a person. For a young person traveling provides an opportunity to broaden their horizon and learn about different countries and cultures. Spending some time in a country while working also makes for a less superficial encounter than only being there as a tourist. Besides, travelers can gain work experience and potentially improve their foreign language skills. This experience can be an important advantage in a more international oriented economy.

Additionally, a “gap year” can aid a person in becoming more independent and grown up, as it will require some organization skills and the ability to manage their finance. It can also be argued that right after school is a good time in life to see the world as most young people don’t have any family and professional obligations yet.

However, there are valid concerns whether the time and money for a gap year are well spent. Probably the most serious problem about a gap year is its impact on future academic performance: young people taking a gap year may fall behind their peers or lose the motivation to study altogether. Moreover, school leavers are generally likely to end up with unskilled jobs abroad that barely cover their expenses; especially if they don’t have advanced knowledge of the foreign language used in a country. Therefore, the work experience gained may not be very relevant to a person’s career later and the work might not offer a lot of opportunity to practice a foreign language. From a more practical point of view it is also worth considering that not everyone feels comfortable living in a camper van, tent or hostel for months.

In conclusion, I think time is a valuable resource at any age. There are a number of good alternatives to taking a gap year immediately after school: studying abroad, interning or working in a foreign country once you have completed studies. These alternatives later in a person’s career might be a more focused approach that offers better work opportunities, and ultimately, may proof a better experience than a gap year.