

Arsenal Community



ARSENAL GAP PROGRAMME

Information Pack for applicants from the UK/EU & outside the UK/EU

Arsenal Gap Programme

The Arsenal Gap Programme (AGP) offers a unique opportunity to gain qualifications and experience in coaching football whilst contributing to Arsenal Football Club's community projects in the UK and around the world.

There are two intakes of the Arsenal Gap Year Programme each year. The August intake is made up of 3 stages lasting up to 12 months in total. The November intake comprises Stages 1 and 2 only and lasts around 8 months in total.

'Gappers' will undergo football and education courses alongside practical coaching and teaching experience to reinforce the delivery of learning materials.

Stage 1

Based at the Arsenal Hub in Islington, 'Gappers' will gain qualifications and experience with Arsenal in the Community, predominantly in football coaching but also classroom-based projects. During this time 'Gappers' will also undertake a timetable of activities working within local schools and community projects. This will provide the main bulk of your practical training.

Please note that Stage 1 is unpaid and requires travel to the Arsenal Hub and the surrounding area (namely Islington, Hackney and Camden) 5 days a week for five months, often during peak hours. It is essential that volunteers are able to cover their own expenses, including accommodation and travel, as Arsenal will not be able to contribute towards these costs.

Stage 2

Upon successful completion of Stage 1 and after an individual review, 'Gappers' can be offered a placement with one of our community projects overseas. Each placement will be for a period of up to 3 months.

Placements will depend on the 'Gapper' fulfilling the necessary visa requirements of the intended destination country.

Stage 3 (August intake only)

'Gappers' in the August cohort have the option to return to London for a further period of 3 months, to undertake a bespoke work programme that allows them to continue their development and supports them towards achieving their next step beyond the programme.

The Format

This is an exceptional way of spending between 5 months to a year with Arsenal in the Community before or after higher education, or even as a career break. 'Gappers' must be aged 18 or over at the start of the programme if applying from the UK, or at least 17 years old if applying from Republic of Ireland or Scotland. There is no maximum age.

Successful candidates will need to demonstrate a willingness to learn and a responsible attitude. Ideally 'Gappers' will have some experience of working with children or in schools.

The Cost

The cost of Stage 1 of the programme is £500, plus a non-refundable holding deposit of £100 to reserve your place upon acceptance, plus a £150 deposit which is returned (less any expenses incurred) when the Gapper completes any of the stages of the AGP. The deposit is forfeited if the Gapper leaves the programme before completion of a full stage. During Stage 1 you must also cover any additional personal expenses whilst in London e.g. accommodation, travel, food and spending money.

‘Gappers’ will also be required to pay for their own flights for Stage 2 of the programme, though food and accommodation will be provided for you (see below).

Whilst abroad during Stages 2 of the programme, food and accommodation is provided by your overseas host. ‘Gappers’ will therefore only need to pay for personal expenses whilst on placements abroad.

The £500 fee funds necessary expenses during Stage 1 of the programme which include the following:

- FA Level 1 coaching qualification
- FA Emergency Aid certificate
- Criminal Record check and FA Safeguarding Children course
- Other FA coaching courses as advised by AGP Coordinator
- Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) course
- Official club training kit/clothing
- Coach Education sessions with Arsenal in the Community which take place throughout Stage 1, three to four times a week

We believe this represents good value and great fun too. You will meet like-minded people and make new friends. You will be learning and gaining practical experience alongside Arsenal in the Community coaches. The programme will also offer you unique access to Arsenal Football Club and the opportunity to contribute to the work of Arsenal in the Community.

***Information for non UK/EU applicants. Most UK visas allow people to volunteer, although some may have restrictions as to the number of hours you can do. If you are unsure if your visa allows you to volunteer we suggest you contact the UK Borders and Immigration Team. Arsenal in the Community is not able to support applications for volunteer/work visas, but we can supply you with a letter of “conditional” acceptance and you can submit these information notes.**



How to Apply

The first step is to complete and submit an application. Based on the strength of your application, and if we feel that you would be suitable for the programme, you will be invited for an interview with the Gap Year Coordinator or a senior staff member of Arsenal in the Community. Interviews will be conducted either in person at the Arsenal Hub in London or by video call (for candidates living at least 3 hours away from Emirates Stadium).

Applications are via our online careers portal: <https://www.arsenaljobs.com/>

Some points to consider:

1. The Arsenal Gap Year Programme is unpaid and is a voluntary programme.
2. If you do not live in London, please calculate your travel expenses to check that they are affordable. You will need to travel to the Arsenal Hub and/or surrounding boroughs (namely Islington, Hackney and Camden) each day, mostly at peak times.
3. The programme requires you to be free Monday – Friday, between 9am – 6pm. There is also the opportunity to volunteer on weekend projects, although this is not compulsory.
4. The start date each year is early August for the first cohort and mid-November for the second cohort. Arsenal in the Community will confirm your start dates upon offering you a place on the programme.
5. Overseas placements are only offered following the satisfactory completion of Stage 1 of the programme and after an individual review. You are therefore not guaranteed to go abroad if we feel you have not reached the required standards. Similarly you do not have to go abroad; you may choose to complete your Gap Year with Arsenal in the Community projects based in London.
6. The Gap Year Programme is not a placement year during a university course. It is for those who intend to take a gap year either before or after further studies at college/university, or for those looking for a career break. If you wish to take a year out of your university course to take part, this is acceptable although it would not contribute towards your studies.

An average week:

Below is a typical weekly programme for 'Gappers' during Stage 1 of the programme.

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
AM	Coach Education	Coach Education	Coach Education	Coach Education	Coach Education
PM	Curriculum time coaching in secondary schools	Curriculum time coaching in primary schools	Coaching at an Arsenal in the Community Project	Coaching at an Arsenal in the Community Project	
AFTER SCHOOL	After school coaching in secondary schools	After school coaching in primary schools	Coaching at an Arsenal Team-based session		Coaching at an Arsenal Team-based session

During the school holidays/half-term you will continue to broaden your coaching and teaching experience within other community programmes.

As you can see, the programme is very much full-time, however we try to be flexible where possible. In past years, some 'Gappers' have been able to fit in a little of their own part-time work during evenings and weekends to help cover some of the costs of the programme. Others have also applied successfully for external grants awarded to volunteers.

After the Gap Year Programme

Having completed the Gap Year Programme, some of our 'Gappers' have continued to coach for Arsenal in the Community on a part-time basis. Some have started coaching careers at other football clubs in the UK and overseas, gone into teaching, or pursued careers in the football or sports industries away from the pitch – including marketing, business, finance and corporate social responsibility. Other Gappers have gone into higher education or resumed the careers they had prior to taking part on the Gap Year Programme.

Whatever your ambitions for the future, the Arsenal Gap Year is a great way to spend a year upskilling, gaining experience and qualifications, traveling and meeting new people. This provides a unique platform for you prepare for the working world and to start shaping your future.

If you require further information, please contact gapyear@arsenal.co.uk.



Frequently Asked Questions

How much does the programme cost?

The Arsenal Gap Year Programme costs £750 and covers the expenses for your training whilst in London. Included in these costs is a £100 non-refundable holding deposit to reserve your place on the programme upon accepting an offer, plus a £150 refundable deposit which is returned on successful completion of the course at any of the stages. The £150 deposit is not refundable, though, if you leave the programme before the end of a full stage.

What am I paying for?

Including weekly Coach Education sessions delivered by Arsenal in the Community, the cost of the programme goes towards all courses and qualifications during Stage 1 as well as your club training kit.

How long is the programme?

Stage 1 is based in London and lasts 5 months. Stage 2 is based abroad (subject to selection by the Arsenal Gap Year Coordinator) and lasts around 3 months. August 'Gappers' have the option of a Stage 3 in London that would run until the end of July. You can end the programme at any stage, provided that you have successfully completed Stage 1.

If you are starting in November, the programme finishes after Stage 2.

Do I have to be good at football to take part in the programme?

No. Whilst you don't have to be the best footballer, you must be able to demonstrate basic skills and techniques. Enthusiasm for coaching football, communication and delivery skills are also extremely important.

What if I already have completed any of the courses listed courses?

In that case a reduction in the overall fees will be made and communicated to you in advance of Stage 1.

Where can I get an application form?

You can complete an online application form at <https://www.arsenaljobs.com>

Is there an age limit?

The minimum age to apply for the programme is 18 years (17 years if you are from Scotland or Republic of Ireland). There is no upper age limit.

I don't live in London, can I still apply for the programme?

Yes, past 'Gappers' have come from all across the UK & Ireland, and some from further afield. Please note that the programme is voluntary and Stage 1 is based in London for 5 months. You will therefore need to be able to cover your own expenses for accommodation, food and travel during this time. If you do not live in the London area we can recommend a local hostel for a reasonable cost but it is your responsibility to make the arrangements.

Can I get a part time job to help fund the programme?

We understand that this is a voluntary programme, so the timetable is designed to enable participants to obtain part-time work during evenings and weekends in order to help towards some of the costs that are incurred whilst on the Gap Year Programme. As long as you are available for an average school week, including after school sessions, any part-time work outside of those hours should not cause any conflicts.

Do I need previous coaching experience?

Previous coaching or related experience (e.g. youth work or volunteering) is desirable when applying for AGP. However, if you do not have any, you do not need to worry as we provide an intensive coaches training programme as part of the programme.

Am I guaranteed to go abroad?

No 'Gapper' is guaranteed to go abroad. During the five months in London each 'Gapper' is individually assessed. Once that assessment period is over a decision will be made by the Gap Year Coordinator as to Gapper's suitability to go abroad. Those not selected, or who choose not to go abroad, will have the option to remain on the programme and undertake a placement abroad at a later stage, subject to the approval of the Gap Year Coordinator.

Where can I go abroad?

We have several locations spread across the world. Some of our present and past destinations include; Australia, Barbados, Greece & Cyprus, Israel, Kenya, Bahrain, Mozambique, Uganda, Zambia, South Africa, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Philippines, India, Mexico and Bolivia. This list is subject to change each year.

Do I get to choose where I go?

We will endeavour to match Gappers to projects we think they will work best in and benefit the most from.

What do I have to pay for when I am abroad?

When abroad, your overseas host covers basic cost of accommodation, 3 meals a day (or an allowance towards food) and transport to and from sessions. 'Gappers' are responsible for social costs such as going out, personal excursions and so on.

Do I have to go abroad?

No. If you do not want to go abroad during Stage 2, you have the option of carrying on with the programme based in London.

After the programme, what are the exit routes?

Exit routes from the Gap Year Programme are varied. We have had past 'Gappers' go into teaching, work with local and worldwide charities and within community football programmes in the UK and abroad.

I have more questions, who do I contact?

For further information please contact arsenalgapyear@arsenal.co.uk.