

Student Profile: *Brittany Nixon*

The Horizons Adventure Leadership Programme/ GAPYear Experience provides students with the skills and knowledge required for employment or further training in the outdoor recreation industry. The theoretical and practical skills taught in this program combined with leadership and personal development create a unique experience for young New Zealanders.

Hi Brittany. It looks like you're having an awesome time in Hong Kong!

I'm having an amazing time, so glad I got the position.

Why did you do the Horizons course in 2011?

I did the Horizons course as I thought it would be an ideal opportunity to get out in the field, have some fun, make new friends and gain new knowledge about working and teaching in the outdoor environment. The amazing opportunities of travelling abroad and working in the outdoors also appealed, whilst being supported by a structured outdoor programme back in Christchurch.

What technical skills did you learn whilst doing the Horizons course?

Throughout the course I learnt many new technical & facilitation skills. I can now plan and teach an ABL session with kids for a day and construct my own abseil and rock climbing rigs and anchors, (and actually having to test it out). I also learnt specific hard and soft skills like kayaking, tramping & survival, and outdoor first aid.

From the start of the course not even being able to speak publically and confidently, to leading a group of primary and high school children by myself. I'm now using this in a job where I'm constantly holding up a strong profile and engaging clients in many outdoor activities that was first introduced to me through Horizons.

What was your biggest 'learning' on the programme?

Over all the skills learnt, my biggest take away would have been learning and perfecting my confidence and leadership qualities that it takes to work individually and in a team. I have also learnt to accept new tasks and responsibilities which has helped my progression as an Outdoor Instructor in Hong Kong.



What are you doing now?

I am currently a Junior Instructor, working for a company called Treasure Island, which is based in Hong Kong on a 6 month contract that offers a large variety of outdoor orientated activities based all over Hong Kong like, surfing, abseiling, gorging, kayaking, camping and many more.

How has the Horizons course helped your role at T.I.?

Horizons has helped me to gain many personal skills like responsibility, time management, leadership, flexibility, and confidence with myself. This has encouraged me to take on new tasks as a junior leader and using my initiative to help out my co-workers, and keeping a positive work environment in front of many clients like, surf camp kids, high school campers, to corporate adult groups. Horizons also taught me to take on any opportunity given whether it's to get great travelling experiences or even to accept challenges out of my normal depth or comfort zone.

How have you grown/developed since you first started the Horizons ALP?

I feel I have grown into a strong team member, whilst personally keeping fit and healthy in a foreign environment by myself. Accepting new and harder challenges every day which only helps me to gain more knowledge in the outdoor environment. I know I'll be able to offer this to any future employment and work environment. Horizons encouraged me to be the individual I am and for that I have made a huge group of new friends which only encourages me to move up.

Cheers Britt!

Traditionally a gap year is time taken away from education – either between school & university, or immediately after university.

A period of 'time out' can be valuable at any stage or age, to gain life skills and broaden horizons.

In our Horizons GAPYear Experience we have created a structured opportunity for people to take time out, learn career skills and expand their leadership potential.



Graduate Profile

At the successful completion of the programme, students have the required competencies to function effectively and manage groups at initial levels within the adventure recreation sector.

A graduating student could be expected to undertake, following the completion of this course, entry level positions in the following jobs:

- 'Specialist Instructor' in American Summer Camps.
- Outdoor camps and centres in NZ and internationally.
- Adventure Education Instructor - entry level.
- Adventure Based Learning Facilitator- entry level.
- Adventure Tourism Outdoor Guide - entry level.
- Challenge Ropes Course Facilitator.

Typically our graduates gain work with:

- IEP: Camp USA.
- Full On (NZ), Wales and Italy.
- Treasure Island, Hong Kong.
- The Outdoor Education Group, Vic, Australia.
- Higher Ground, Qld, Australia.
- Sea Kayak, rafting, tramping and glacier guiding companies as well as ski resort work in NZ and over-seas.

The Gap Year

Working overseas provides a platform for students to travel. Experiencing new cultures further broadens their horizons and exposes them to future possibilities. Through these experiences students become more connected with themselves, their abilities & ambitions.

Upon returning to New Zealand, Horizons GAPYear students often begin further tertiary study and use their new found independence and resourcefulness at University or in their chosen career.

Qualifications & Certs Awarded

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be awarded:

- Horizons Certificate in Adventure Leadership [including Unit Standards at Level 3 & 4]

Including Industry Certificates in:

- NZOIA Leader Awards [Abseil, Rock & Bush]
- Risk Management
- Challenge Ropes Course Facilitation [ACCT Certified]
- Red Cross First Aid
- Outdoor First Aid

Certifying Authority

New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)

NZ Outdoor Instructors Association (NZOIA)

