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# PURPOSEFUL PATHWAYS

## Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC)

### Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC) for students

The safety and welfare of our students and Gap Program Instructors, followed by the effective education of our students are our top priorities. Instructors are not present with the students 24/7 and students need to be able to exercise sound judgment in absence of direct supervision.

Our Gap Program traverse areas that may be remote and may be culturally, climatically, and environmentally unfamiliar and challenging. Additionally, the standard of accommodation, cleanliness, hygiene, medical facilities, safety, transport, telecommunications and infrastructure development may not be of the standard you are used to at home. Due to the geographical factors, the educational activities and the challenges of living and travelling in a small group, we require each student to be fully committed to the goals of the program.

Carlow University believes in making its experiential programs as accessible as possible and does not discriminate by gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexuality, or ability. The following Eligibility Criteria are essential for all program participants.

Our programs are not recommended for students coming out of youth-at-risk or therapeutic programs as we are not ourselves a therapeutic program.

### EEC for participation on the Carlow University Gap Program

#### Suitability

Carlow University reserves the right to decline applicants whom we believe are not a good fit for the program experience. The gap program is not suitable for:

- Students who are adjudicated (court mandated)
- Students with mental health conditions that require therapy during the program
- Students with a physical disability or injury that prevents them from participating in the activities of the program

#### Mental Health

- Students who have a mental health condition (e.g. depression or anxiety) must disclose this on their application. They and their families will then be contacted by Carlow University to ensure they meet our essential eligibility criteria for safe participation in the study abroad program. Open and forthcoming disclosure is a prerequisite for acceptance.
- We may require a report or letter from a doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist which states the student is suitable to participate in a Carlow University study abroad program and that they meet all of the criteria outlined in the Safety & Judgement and Program Behavior & Leadership sections below.

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## **Mental Health (cont.)**

- If a mental health condition is not disclosed on the application form, Carlow University reserves the right to withdraw the student from the program.
- Students must be able to self-manage their own condition.

## **Medication**

- Students who take prescription medications need to be able to self-manage; carrying and caring for the medication and self-administering medication at appropriate dosages or intervals without instructor supervision. If loss of medication could be problematic, instructors can carry a backup or emergency supply of medication.

## **Language/communication**

- Students must be proficient in the English language.

## **Age**

- Students must be aged 18-24 years.
- We will accept 17 year olds who've graduated high school if we are satisfied they possess the requisite maturity.
- We will occasionally accept students over 24 who are still studying or who have recently graduated, if we are satisfied that their participation will not adversely effect the rest of the group.
- Carlow University offers no guarantee to accept applicants outside the 18-24 age range.

## **Safety and Judgement**

Each student must...

- Be able to exercise sound judgment and act reliably in the absence of direct supervision, including but not limited to the hazards stated below.
- Be able to independently identify, recognize, alert and warn others of potential hazards or impending dangers. These hazards and dangers may include, but are not limited to, loose and unstable surfaces, falling rocks; rugged, steep, and uneven terrain; moving water (fast or slow) such as rivers, creeks, surf, or tides; traffic and pedestrian hazards.
- Recognize and understand the hazards and risks posed by other students, which include, but are not limited to, fatigue, state of mind, and actions that may influence judgment and decision-making.
- Recall and understand hazards and risks previously explained by Gap Program Instructors, activity instructors and volunteer project coordinators.
- Be able to effectively signal or notify program instructors or other course members of personal distress, injury, or need for assistance.

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## **Safety and Judgement (cont.)**

- Independently perceive, understand, and follow directions and instructions given by others to be able to successfully execute appropriate techniques to avoid hazards and/or manage risks.
- Be able to stay alert and focus attention for up to several hours at a time while travelling in wilderness terrain, undertaking volunteer project work, or receiving instruction.
- Be able to respond appropriately to stress or crisis such as when encountering severe weather or a medical emergency.
- Not continually take a greater share of the instructors focus and energy than other students.
- Practice good self-care: Maintaining adequate hydration, sufficient food intake for energy needs, sufficient sleep/rest, and dressing appropriately to remain generally healthy and be able to avoid environmental injuries such as hypothermia, heat illness, sunburn or frostbite.

## **Program Behavior and Leadership**

Each Student must...

- Abide by the Program Rules and Behavioral Guidelines.
- Have an open mind and be willing to challenge their ideas and assumptions.
- Work effectively as a member of a team despite potentially stressful and difficult conditions. This may require problem solving on an interpersonal or group level as well as a willingness to accept differences.
- Contribute to a safe learning environment – no inappropriate behavior towards others is tolerated for any reason – verbal or otherwise.
- Effectively communicate ideas and concerns on an individual and group level.
- Have the cognitive ability to learn necessary skills given the normal time limitations of the Gap Program
- Have the maturity and self-awareness to see how their behavior may be perceived by others and ability to act appropriately in differing contexts (i.e. within a group and also in an unfamiliar culture).
- Be able to take care of and always know the location of their possessions during the program.
- Acknowledge that the Gap Program can be physically challenging. Although some programs have no minimum physical requirements, our programs are active and a degree of fitness enables students to better withstand the typical rigors of travel, climate and program pace.
- Be able to participate in all program activities unless ill or injured.

## **Environmental and Social Sustainability**

Each student must learn and then practice minimum impact and ethical travel techniques which include but are not limited to:

- Buying local – to keep money in local communities and reduce the environmental impact of transporting food and goods large distances.
- Minimizing waste and resource usage.

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## **Environmental and Social Sustainability (cont.)**

- Abiding by local cultural norms for dress and behavior.
- Not buying any products made from wild animals, shells, corals or tropical hardwoods.
- Abiding by culturally appropriate dress codes.

## **Program Rules and Behavioral Guidelines**

Each student is responsible for understanding, acknowledging and following the Program Rules and Behavioral Guidelines (available on our webpage: [www.carlow.edu/pathways](http://www.carlow.edu/pathways)). These are in place to protect you, your peers, our host communities, Gap Program Instructors, and Carlow University.

Breach of a Program Rule is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Disregard for Behavioral Guidelines can result in dismissal from the program.