

# GAP YEAR ASSOCIATION



This letter confirms your intent to apply for Accreditation by the Gap Year Association. As the governmentally recognized Standards Development Organization for gap years, we are honored to work with you - another organization dedicated to advancing the field of education through gap years. This Engagement Letter will lay out the expectations of the accreditation process, and hopefully answer many of the questions you might have.

The application process is taking between 4 months and 2 years to complete, depending upon a variety of factors. The benefits have universally been lauded by our members and we have never had a gap year member withdraw from active membership since our founding in 2012.

While GYA Accreditation will inevitably translate to more enrollments, our organization is not designed primarily as a marketing channel for our members, but rather to grow the gap year / bridge year movement. In short, if we can do our job to grow the gap year movement (facilitate college credit, access to FAFSA, reputation, research, professionalization, benchmarking, etc.) then of the many students who will newly consider the option, inevitably some sizable percentage will embark on an Accredited Program.

#### PRIMARY BENEFITS OF ACCREDITATION:

- Professionalization and benchmarking using the US Department of Justice-approved Standards Free
- listing on [Accredited Programs web page](#), and on the general [Provider Programs page](#).
- Free [Program-Specific web page](#) (sample)
- Promotional use of "GYA Seal of Accreditation" on all materials
- GYA Seal placed on all listings through GoOverseas, Teenlife, and GoAbroad
- Free access to all past GYA Webinars and discounts on future webinar series
- Exclusive discounts and listing status with GYA-partnered organizations. "Just mention GYA"
  - TeenLife, GoOverseas, & more ...
- Attributed photos on GYA brochures, articles, and promotional materials
- Discounts with iNext health & evacuation insurance (\$30 pp/year)
- Access to gap year data, trends, and expertise (eg., critical incidents, mental health, insurance)

*When a counselor or family asks for references, simply say: "We're Accredited by the Gap Year Association."*

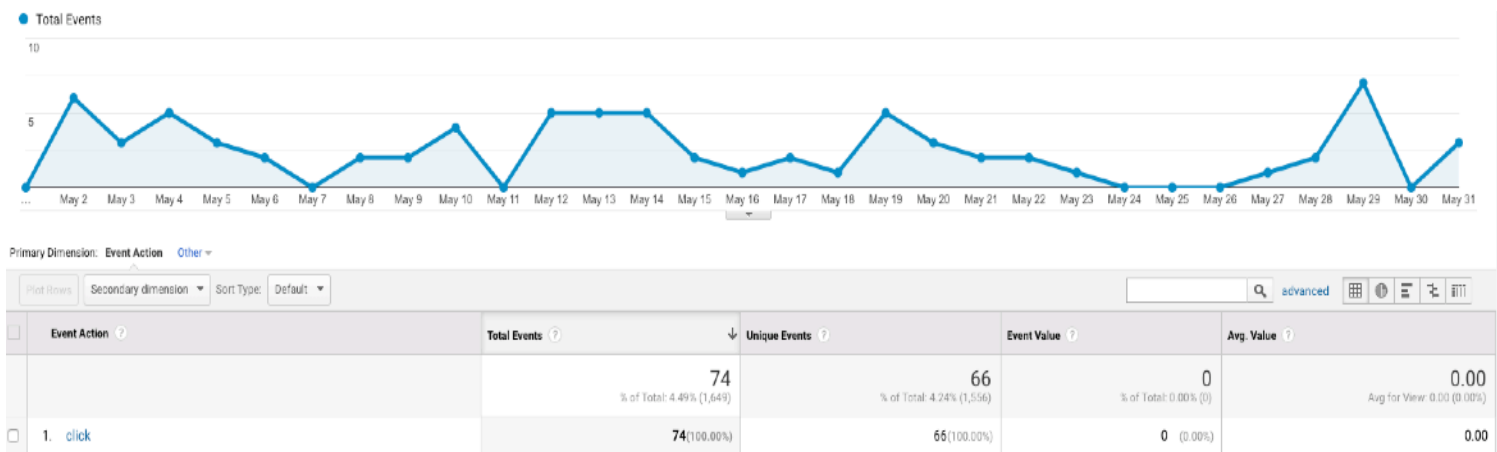
#### ACCREDITATION TIMELINES & PROCESS:

All Association staff and reviewing parties must sign a standard NDA form to ensure that proprietary materials you submit are kept private. As well, we use a cloud-based system with solid encryption to ensure that your materials, once submitted, remain private. Inevitably, each organization will have unique approaches that fit

within the breadth of gap year options available to their students - it is the intent of this process to focus on safety and a pedagogically sound experience for your students, thus, the Standards have been authored to accommodate a wide variety of possible gap year options. In addition, you may request an exemption from any standard pending an explanation of your reasoning. We cannot say how long it will take an organization to become accredited as this is not a guaranteed outcome of the application process. Our goal is to respond to any submitted application with a complete review within two months of submission.

- 1) Review the current [Standards of Accreditation](#) to be sure your organization is ready to apply.
- 2) Sign & date this Accreditation Engagement Letter and submit it with a non-refundable deposit of \$1,500 that is applied to your Accreditation Review Fees (either \$3,000 or \$4,000 depending on whether you work with more or less than 150 gap year students per year). Payment can be made via credit card, wire transfer, ACH, or check.
- 3) Receive access to the [online system](#) via a username and password. Users have 6 months to submit their application once being granted access to the online system.
- 4) Submit the online application. Watch [instructions and a sample](#) of the proprietary system. We're finding this takes about 10-20 dedicated hours of work depending on whether new documents or systems need to be created. Seriously, please watch this!
- 5) You will send a copy of [this survey](#) to 20 of your recent gap year students.
- 6) Once the application is submitted, it takes between two and three months to receive an "Initial Assessment" which is sent back to you with notes asking for clarification or additional information.
- 7) Your organization will then respond to any questions or issues in the Initial Assessment and typically provide new evidence to support our understanding of your program.
- 8) Once we get your application to fewer than five "Investigate" responses, your application will then be passed to an [Advisory Board](#) member for review. We expect Advisors to return their assessment within two weeks. This is typically the last stop. Congratulations!

**GOOGLE ANALYTICS FOR THE MONTH OF MAY, 2019, FOR AN ACCREDITED ORGANIZATION**



ACCREDITED GAP YEAR MEMBER DUES:

- Application fee (every 4 years) of \$3,000 - \$4,000 depending on the size of your organization
- All member dues can be paid by credit card via the member area: <https://members.gapyearassociation.org>



When not in a Review Year, dues are paid annually according to the Provider rate:

- 0 - 50 students - \$400 per year
- 51 - 100 students - \$575 per year
- 101 - 200 students - \$1,100 per year
- 200 + students - \$2,200 per year
  - "Gap year" students are 17-20 years old and 'on program' for a minimum of 2 months.
  - Self-reported, "short" re-application after two (2) years followed by a full re-application two (2) years later.
  - Full re-application every four (4) years thereafter.
  - Application Review Fees are due only on Review Years.
  - Organizations that run multiple programs should complete only one application.
  - Parent organizations that have different brands must complete a separate application for each brand seeking accreditation by GYA

COMMITMENTS:

By signing this document, I represent that I am authorized to sign on behalf of the Organization applying for Accredited Membership in the Gap Year Association. Furthermore, my Organization agrees to:

- Abide by the Standards even when not under Accreditation Review,
- Communicate with parents & students in a professional, timely, and respectful manner,
- In the event of a fatality or near-fatality during a gap year program, the Organization shall notify Gap Year Association as soon as practicable following the event, consistent with any applicable privacy regulations and any other legal or law enforcement requirements or requests,
- Review your organization's admissions process annually,
- On any Accreditation Review year, send a copy of [this survey](#) to 20 of the most recent gap year alumni and cc GYA staff so we can verify this has been done,
- Abide by the GYA Ethics and Judicial process as outlined by the Ethics Committee. This process may result in probationary status and potential expulsion from the GYA Membership without refund of any fees paid,
- Not use any proof of GYA Accreditation in the event the Organization lapses or loses its status as an GYA Accredited gap year (eg, display plaques and GYA seals),
- Indemnify the Gap Year Association and its members and staff from any lawsuit arising out of the Organization's negligence or willful misconduct.

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

My Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My Signature: \_\_\_\_\_