Types of Work Abroad

Various types of programs and experiences can be classified as work abroad. Below is a list and short summary of the four major work abroad categories.

**International Internships** [1]

Internships are available in a wide range of locations and disciplines. Internships can be found abroad or in the U.S. with an international organization. There are also academic programs that provide internship and service-learning opportunities alongside courses. Paid internships are rare, however, the experience offers the most direct connection to an international career. Typical duration is for a summer or semester, through some programs may last a year.

**Short Term Paid Work Abroad** [2]

These programs offer the best opportunity to earn money abroad or at least offset the cost of living. Keep in mind that even these programs require up-front costs, such as program fees, airfare, and initial spending money. Typical jobs include restaurant work, temping, childcare (au pair) and farm work. Programs are available for students or recent graduates. The typical duration of these programs ranges from a summer up to a year. Locations are limited and tend to be in select European countries as well as Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

**Volunteer Work Abroad** [3]

Volunteering abroad is defined not so much by pay or lack of it, but by a motivation to serve. Volunteers usually work with local citizens in areas such as education, health, environment, and small business development. Some study-abroad programs (for academic credit) offer volunteer experiences as an integral part of the curriculum. This is often called “service-learning.” Volunteer programs are located in various locations and can last anywhere from 2 weeks to 2 years. Volunteering is excellent career preparation for those interested in developing countries or careers with non-governmental organizations.

“For more information about volunteer programs, see [Volunteer/Service][3].

**Teaching English Abroad** [4]

Teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language (TEFL or TESL) is one of the most accessible options for long-term (1-2 years) working abroad. Programs are available around the world and at various academic levels. Options are available for certified and non-certified teachers and can range from a few months to two or more years in duration. A college degree is required by most programs and tutoring or
teaching experience is recommended. For a list of teaching programs, see Teaching Abroad [4].

**Source URL:** https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/abroad/swt/work/types-of-work-abroad

**Links**
[1] https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/abroad/swt/work/internship-research