

Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

The qualifications surrounding English language teaching can be confusing. Here is an explanation of some common acronyms...

CELTA		Certificate of English Language Teaching to Adults Accredited by Cambridge University.
CELTYL		Certificate in Teaching English to Young Learners. Accredited by Cambridge University
DELTA		Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults Accredited by Cambridge University.
EAP		English for Academic purposes i.e. University Entrance Exams.
ESP		English for Specific Purposes for example Business, tourism or medicine.
ESOL		English for speakers of other languages.
TEFL		Teaching English as a Foreign Language (Generally for Teaching in countries where English is not spoken).
TESOL		Teaching English to speakers of other languages.
TRINITY		Certificate of English Language Teaching to Adults.
Cert TESOL		Accredited by Cambridge University.

Frequently asked questions about TEFL

TEFL gives you the opportunity to see the world, experience a different culture and is a great way of gaining valuable experience.

What is TEFL?

The term TEFL is often used to mean the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language or Second Language (TESL / TESOL) and also to refer to the qualification. In reality there are numerous qualifications and deciding which one you should do or even if you need to do one at all can be confusing.

Overall TEFL/ TESOL qualifications enable you to teach English to those whose first language is not English in commercial language schools and institutions of further education. You may be teaching children or adults overseas or in the UK so it's important to work out the level of training and job that's right for you.

Where are most of the jobs?

English is the international language of commerce and culture; therefore TEFL teachers are in high demand. It is estimated that more than 1 billion people are learning English worldwide and demand is likely to increase.

Demand for TEFL teachers is currently high in China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Europe. The ease of finding work varies considerably according to the location. You will also see adverts for English language summer camp tutors in Europe. There are, on occasion jobs advertised for online TEFL tutors as well.

The vast majority of TEFL teachers work overseas yet qualified TEFL / TESOL teachers are still needed in the UK. However in the UK there is a lot of competition for long-term permanent posts.

Do I need a qualification?

1. Start by researching the job market, you will find jobs vary widely in what they require.
 - Many employers favour courses that are over 100 hours in length, which include teaching practice, such as CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching Adults).
 - Some countries may require you to have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and often up to two years general classroom experience.
 - You may not need TEFL qualifications but be required to be a Native speaker. You might not even need a degree.
 - English language summer camp tutor roles may not require qualifications as many will give you training. They are a good entry level way to get experience and find out if you will enjoy the work.
 - You may find relevant experience more important than a qualification.

Use job vacancy sites and the *Teaching English Abroad* book available in the careers Library to research the countries you want to travel to.

2. Are you planning to teach overseas in a non-English speaking country or in the UK? Will you be teaching children or adults? This may also affect the qualification or experience you need.
3. How long are you planning to teach for? What level of investment are you prepared to make?
4. Do you have any previous teaching experience, how will you cope with lesson planning and classroom management?

TEFL qualifications are open to graduates in any discipline who have good English language skills; however the following degree subjects may also increase your chances: English, Modern European Languages, Modern Non-European Languages; Linguistics and Education.

You can train for a TEFL qualification at various levels, in a large number of language schools and colleges in the UK and abroad. They vary from short introductory courses lasting only couple of days, studying part time, and online or intensive certificate courses lasting around five to six weeks, you can even do a Masters level qualification.

For those who are only interested in short term TEFL work, cheaper course may be the most suitable option. It is still advisable to look for a course with some teaching practice included, which will better prepare you for a TEFL job.

You also need to consider the course location, price, dates and times and level of qualification, as well as asking the course provider questions such as where have previous students from the course gone to work? Do you get support from the course provider to find a job during or after the course?

For further advice on choosing courses see some useful advice from QuiTE at:

www.quality-tesol-ed.org.uk/TESOL_career/TESOL_career.html

Where can I look for courses?

There are a wide range of courses available at different levels and costs. Courses are available at further education colleges, select universities as well as through private organisations

Searchable lists of courses and further information on training in the UK:

- Cambridge CELTA: www.cambridgeenglish.org/find-a-centre/find-a-teaching-centre/
- Trinity CertTESOL: www.trinitycollege.co.uk/site/?id=212
- Cactus www.cactustefl.com

Schools in Manchester where you can study TEFL courses include:

The University of Manchester

- Introduction to TESOL - open to any student from any department across the university with an interest in language teaching.
<http://www.languagecentre.manchester.ac.uk/teach-english/our-courses/introduction-to-tesol>
- Cert TESOL - validated by Trinity College London
<http://www.languagecentre.manchester.ac.uk/teach-english/our-courses/cert-tesol>
- Manchester Academy of English
www.cambridgeenglish.org/find-a-centre/find-a-teaching-centre/
- Manchester Central School of English
www.manchestercse.co.uk
- Cactus TEFL courses
www.cactustefl.com/tefl-courses.php
- i-to-i
www.i-to-i.com/tefl-courses/tefl-courses-in-manchester.html
- TEFL.org.uk - short courses at Manchester Conference Centre
www.tefl.org.uk/dates-and-locations/england-locations/tefl-courses-in-manchester

What will a TEFL course cost?

Course costs can vary between different organisations, their location, facilities, length or level of qualification and the reputation of the school.

Taster courses start from around £150. Online courses are also a cheaper option. In General the cost of the course will depend on how many contact hours there are, if teaching practice is involved and the level of certification.

Is there any financial support available?

If you want to take a CELTA course at a college or training centre in England, you can now apply for a loan to help with the costs of training.

CELTA is now eligible for funding under the Advanced Learner Loans scheme. Eligible individuals can apply for funding of up to £1,417 and loans do not have to be repaid until the course has been completed and the person is earning a specified amount.

<http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/teaching-qualifications/celta/advanced-learner-loans/>

You should expect to provide your own funding for most other TEFL courses. You may find offers for reduced rates or competitions to win a place but it is rare to find a fully funded place.

What will the work be like?

Teaching abroad does not follow a typical nine-five routine, classes are often run on evenings or weekends when the students are not working or studying. Class size varies between locations ranging from four to twenty pupils or more depending on age. Classes are usually taught entirely in English; even at beginner level therefore knowledge of a foreign language is useful but not always essential.

The ability to entertain and dramatise is useful as lessons tend to be practical and functional rather than just concentrating on theory and grammar. You will encourage students to communicate with each other and improve their listening, reading, speaking and writing skills.

Whilst abroad you may also be expected to take part in extracurricular activities on evenings and during weekends especially if teaching on summer courses for young people.

How much will I earn?

Salary levels vary depending on the location, the type of employer you work for, the terms and conditions of employment, as well as your level of qualification and experience. With a reputable employer you should earn enough to get by comfortably in local terms.

Salaries vary widely between countries and across organisations. If you are teaching abroad you can be paid from £12,000 - £20,000 but this is not always the case and salaries can vary considerably. Cost of living in your host country may still allow you to live comfortably abroad on a lower salary than you would expect in the UK. Generally the better paid jobs are available in countries such as Japan, Taiwan Korea and parts of the Middle East. Private schools may also offer higher salaries and teaching English to professionals is likely to pay more.

For teaching in the UK salaries vary between £13,000 and £30,000, which can depend on your qualifications, experience, location and language school.

Although it may be tempting, do not apply for work in a particular country just because it offers high salaries. The wages may be high because the location is particularly expensive to live in.

What do I need to consider when making an application?

When making your applications you should carefully consider;

- The cost of living (accommodation, food, travel costs etc.) Many positions include free accommodation - you will need to check this with your employer.
- Will you have to pay for your initial flights or will your employer?
- Will you need a work permit?
- What is the rate of national and local tax?

- How will you be paid, monthly, weekly or hourly?
- Are you guaranteed a minimum salary/number of teaching hours per month?
- Are there opportunities to work overtime?
- Does the employer pay sick leave/holiday pay?
- Will you be entitled to maternity leave?
- Does the employer cover the cost of medical insurance?
- Will you feel safe and happy living in that particular location?
- Is the country's political and economic situation stable?
- Are there any extra-curricular activities that will be part of role?
- Remember to research the Language school fully before accepting a position of employment.

It is important to ask questions from the organisation you will be working for so that you are fully prepared for what to expect.

Is TEFL a long term career option?

Most graduates going into TEFL will probably do so for a summer or just few years, as it is a great way to work and travel. However for those really interested in a long term career, it is possible to move into more specialist or senior roles, for example developing materials, managing and teaching staff or even setting up your own TEFL school.

To pursue a long term career, a higher level qualification such as diploma is usually necessary, for example the Cambridge Diploma in English Language teaching to adults (DELTA). Qualifications such as this, combined with at least two years' experience, can make you more successful in applying for more senior positions.

You can also do an MA in TESOL at The University of Manchester. This course is for experienced TEFL / TESOL teachers looking to move into management or research.

www.manchester.ac.uk/study/masters/courses/list/01367/ma-tesol/

Where can I look for job opportunities?

- **British Council:**
<https://www.britishcouncil.org/jobs>
- **Cactus TEFL:**
www.cactustefl.com
- **Eslbase:**
www.eslbase.com
- **Hunt Esl:**
www.huntesl.com/english-teacher-jobs
- **i-to-i**
www.i-to-i.com
- **Tefl.com:**
www.tefl.com
- **Tefl.org.uk**
www.tefl.org.uk

What else do I need to prepare?

It is important to be aware of what to expect when working in a TEFL role and consider any other practicalities to consider or cultural differences. Check for more details on preparation in the *'Teaching English Abroad'* book in the Careers library.

- **Occupational profiles:**
www.prospects.ac.uk/english_as_a_foreign_language_teacher_job_description.htm
'English as a foreign language teacher - job profile. Find out what a typical role involves and how to get one.'
- **Edufind:**
Resources for learning English.
www.edufind.com/

- **Guardian Educational Supplement:**
News and links about teaching English abroad.
www.guardian.co.uk/education/tefl
- **International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL).**
Linking, developing and supporting English language teachers worldwide.
www.iatefl.org
- **Inlingua:**
One of the world's leading language training organisations.
www.inlingua.com
- **International House World Organisations:**
One of the largest groups of language schools worldwide
www.ihworld.com
- **QuiTE**
Promotes quality in the training and education of teachers of English to speakers of other languages
www.quality-tesol-ed.org.uk

Other resources:

- You may find it useful to look at our starting point guide on 'Careers using Languages', which can be found in our Careers Library or online at
www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/startingpoints
- There is also our Work and Studying Overseas section on our website <http://www.careers.manchester.ac.uk/findjobs/overseas/>

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