

Career Center

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Guide to Teaching English Abroad

Teaching English is an excellent way to simultaneously gain work experience and see the world. We hope this guide will provide you with some useful information about teaching English abroad. Please note that the information provided below is to be used as a starting point, and students should conduct their own thorough research before pursuing any of these opportunities. Lewis & Clark is not affiliated with, nor do they endorse, any of these programs.

Frequently asked questions about teaching English abroad

Where can I teach abroad?

English teaching opportunities range from small, private ESL schools to large, government programs. Teaching jobs are available in Brazil, Costa Rica, Russia, Japan, Korea, France, Spain, China, Thailand, Taiwan and many other countries around the world.

What certifications do I need?

Different programs will require different certifications. Some positions require that you have a teaching degree and be certified in teaching ESL students. Others will require a TESOL certificate. Some programs will only require that you have a bachelor's degree and be a native speaker of English. The qualifications you have or are willing to acquire will likely determine the programs for which you will be most competitive or which programs you will be eligible for. TESOL International Association, <http://www.tesol.org>, can assist you with the certification process.

What is the pay like?

Your income will vary widely depending on the English language school and the cost of living in that country. Keep in mind that \$15,000 in one country may go just as far as \$40,000 in another country once you calculate your in-country living costs. You should also consider that you may have to pay start-up costs such as your plane ticket or a TESOL course.

Advantages of teaching English abroad

- Learn another language. The best way to learn a foreign language is through immersion. Living in another country can give you the chance to gain conversational skills, and if you're really committed, you can take structured language classes to gain fluency in reading and writing.
- Obtain hands-on teaching experience in diverse classroom settings.
- For those interested in pursuing a career in language education, this experience is a valuable addition to any CV or resume as many job openings prefer some experience teaching abroad.
- Receive special scholarship consideration at some graduate schools.
- Develop positive characteristics such as responsibility, commitment, flexibility and adaptability.
- Live in a foreign country and become part of another culture and community.

- Build intercultural skills –skills for working with people from other cultures will be a great advantage for your personal and professional development. Intercultural skills enhance your resume and provide opportunities to add value to your future workplaces for years to come.
- Build confidence and public speaking skills – as a teacher you will learn how to speak comfortably in front of an audience.
- Develop connections and friendships that will enrich you personally and may help with future career goals, even if you don't plan on teaching forever.

Some considerations

- Teaching is tough work. It takes commitment, organization and patience to be an effective teacher. Successful teachers spend hours outside the classroom preparing lessons and grading student assignments. You might not have as much free time as you imagine or wish for.
- Culture shock is real. You may be the only American in a small town and find adjusting to a new living and working environment difficult and tiring. Even seasoned travelers experience lonely days in which you crave the comforts of home and easy conversations with friends.
- There are varying levels of commitment to education around the world. While you, as the teacher may be prepared and diligent at your job, the school, parents, students, and government may have a different idea of what makes effective instruction, which may lead to conflict or burnout.
- You're not going to be rich. This job will likely pay your bills, but don't plan on paying off all of your student loans. You may also have to invest in up-front costs before you start earning a salary and it will take time to earn those back.
- You may be working in a different educational system than what you are used to. Be prepared for many different types of schools. Your supervisors may decide the teaching methods they would like you to utilize in the classroom and you may not always agree. Be prepared for educational systems that prefer memorization to creativity and critical thinking.

Resource Guide

Suggestions for searching for programs:

If you have a specific country in mind, research their government and embassy websites for information on English teaching opportunities.

Utilize any connections you may have, including professors or staff at VCU, or community members with connections to the region or country where you are interested in teaching.

Governmental programs:

- USA – **Fulbright**: <http://us.fulbrightonline.org/english-teaching-assistantships>
- France – **Teaching Assistant Program in France**: <http://www.tapif.org/>
- Spain – **Cultural Ambassadors**: <https://www.mecd.gob.es/eeuu/convocatorias-programas/convocatorias-eeuu/auxiliares-conversacion-eeuu.html>
- Japan – **JET**: <http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/JET/> | <http://jetprogramme.org/>
- Korea – **TALK**: http://www.talk.go.kr/talk/talk_intro/intro.jspU |
- Korea – **EPIK**: <http://www.teachaway.com/teach-english-korea/epik-english-program-korea-public-school-jobs-korea/>

Other programs:

- **AIESEC**: www.aiesec.org/
- **Central European Teaching Program**: <http://www.cetp.info/inside/aboutprogram.htm>
- **CIEE Teach Abroad**: <http://www.ciee.org/teach/>

- *Dave's ESL Café*: <http://www.eslcafe.com/>
- *Disney English programs*: <http://disneyenglish.disneycareers.com/en/default/>
- *ESL Jobs World*: <http://esljobsworld.com/>
- *Go Abroad.com*: <http://www.goabroad.com/teach-abroad>
- *Go Overseas*: <http://www.gooverseas.com>
- *Masa Israel Teaching Fellowships*:
https://www.israeloutdoorsnext.com/teach/?gclid=EA1aIQobChMlr4Dm06jg2QIVUF5-Ch3hVwDbEAAAYASAAEgLYIPD_BwE
- *Oxford Seminars*: <http://oxfordseminars.com/graduate-career-assistance/steps-to-teaching-abroad.php>
- *Transitions Abroad*: <http://www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/work/esl/bestwebsites.shtml>
- *World Teach*:
http://www.worldteach.org/site/c.buLRIbNOIbJ2G/b.6150577/k.9B0A/Teach_Abroad_at_WorldTeach_teaching_volunteer_opportunities_worldwide.htm

Definitions

- ELT = English Language Teacher (primarily used in the UK)
- TEFL = Teaching English as a Foreign Language (used by most)
- TESL = Teaching English as a Second Language
- TESOL = Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

Cambridge Certificate (CELTA): this certificate has a solid reputation in the international teaching community and high levels of recognition among employers around the world. The certificate is not only offered in the UK, it is also offered in a number of countries around the world.

Trinity Certificate in TESOL: this certificate is regarded as having equal standing as the Cambridge Certificate. It also offers training in a multitude of centers around the world. Trinity stipulates a minimum of 130 hours offered intensively over a minimum of four weeks or part-time over a longer period. Also, the future teacher must take a learning pre-course and requires observed and assessed teaching hours.

- There are other TEFL Certificates offered online and through other schools. It is highly recommended that you carefully investigate and research the certificate before you commit yourself to the program.
- There are also Training and Placement Programs that will provide you with certification and a teaching placement. Many of these programs have costs associated with them and careful research should be done before investing your time, money, and energy.
- Furthermore, certain jobs in certain countries may prefer certain types of certificates and experience.

Finding a Job or Program: Places to Look

Please remember to do your research when investigating the sites listed below and make contact the various organizations directly for more information.

Training and Placement Programs:

- [Global Experience](#)
- [Teach Abroad](#)
- [Working Abroad](#)
- [JET Programme](#)
- [Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships](#)
- [LanguageCorps](#)
- [Council on International Educational Exchange](#)
- [WorldTeach](#)
- [TeacherPort](#)
- [US-China Education and Culture Exchange Center](#)

Free Online Posting Sites:

- [EL Gazette](#)
- [Dave's ESL Café](#)
- [Study Abroad Program](#)
- [Teaching English as a Foreign Language](#)
- [ELTNews, English Teachers in Japan](#)

Paid Online Posting Sites:

- [TIE Online](#)

Additional Resources:

- [TESOL \(Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.\)](#)
- [Best Teaching Abroad Programs and Organizations](#)
- [Currency Conversion Resources](#)

International associations that students might connect with during study abroad experiences:

- [British Council](#)
- [IATEFL](#)
- [KoTESOL](#)
- [JALT](#)