Introduction

Teaching English can go down two very different paths and is probably unparalleled as a career choice in this respect. For many, training as an English teacher is a way to travel abroad and earn money while doing so, and is a popular gap year option either pre or post-university. While this is probably the more commonly-held perception, for some it represents a fulfilling long-term route. Based either in the UK or abroad (or for some, both) it can allow those working in it to draw a good salary, become experts in their field and have a good work-life balance.

This handout seeks to set out the different ways of getting into teaching English as a language, explaining some of the terminology and courses which can often prove confusing to those starting to explore, as well as some sources of work experience and jobs.

TEFL vs TESL vs TESOL

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and Teaching English as a Secondary Language (TESL) are similar, and are often used interchangeably, so it can be hard to know the difference. The key difference is that TESL courses are run in English-speaking countries for students whose first language is not English, whereas TEFL courses are run for students who want to learn English in countries where it isn’t the primary language. TESOL is a term referring to both practices.

It’s worth noting that neither of these terms are actual qualifications which will help teachers gain employment but are used to describe the general practice. There’s more information on different course providers below.

Getting involved at King’s

ELT Blog
https://kingselt.blog/

A great resource, with lots of helpful teaching-related links recommended by academics at Kings, as well as a blog with alumni case studies and event information. Well worth subscribing to.

Study at King’s - Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) MA
https://www.kcl.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/taught-courses/teaching-english-to-speakers-of-other-languages-tesol-ma.aspx

“Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) MA will provide you with a thorough introduction to current research, teaching theory, principles and practices in English language teaching. You will have the opportunity to observe actual language classes, plan and teach real lessons and carry out research on language learning and teaching.”

Find out more about this MA, the entry requirements and career prospects by clicking on the link.

Study at King’s - Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching MA
https://www.kcl.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/taught-courses/applied-linguistics-and-english-language-teaching-ma.aspx

“The Applied Linguistics & English Language Teaching MA is for experienced teachers wanting to extend their knowledge and understanding of current research, theory, pedagogy and practice in ELT. The course offers you an excellent opportunity to further your career in ELT and develop expertise in specialist fields such as language assessment and testing, materials development, teaching EAP, management and evaluation and ESOL.”

A guide to Courses

These qualifications tend to be aimed more at people interested in teaching English as a long-term career. If you’re just interested in it as a more short-term option then you might want to go with providers who offer shorter, cheaper courses. A list of these is available on the following page under the “Qualifications” section - https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/english-as-a-foreign-language-teacher

CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults)
https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english-teaching-qualifications/celta/

A well-regarded and commonly taken initial English language teaching qualification, recognised across the world. It can be taken either as an online course or face-to-face at approved qualification centres across the world. Taking the course full-time takes 4-5 weeks.

Trinity College London CertTESOL (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)
https://www.trinitycollege.com/site/?id=201

Similar in structure and reputation to the CELTA qualification.

Delta (Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults)
https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english-teaching-qualifications/delta

A more advanced qualification, for those who already have an initial teaching qualification and at least a year’s experience. The course can be completed either full-time or part-time at a pace to the candidate’s fitting, and focuses more on the theory behind teaching English.

TEFL
www.tefl.org

Provider of various courses, both online and classroom based across a number of different UK locations.

International House London
https://www.ihlondon.com/

General Information

The links below represent a small sample of some of the key sites amongst the numerous that relate to teaching English as a language. If you have a particular country in mind that you’d like to teach in it’s well worth doing some searching for specific programmes and websites relating to teaching English there.

Prospects – English as a Foreign Language Teacher job profile
https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/english-as-a-foreign-language-teacher
Information on working in this area, providing details on the skills required, what the job consists of, salary expectations and where you can find work experience.

**Prospects – Teach English Abroad**  
https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/gap-year/teach-english-abroad  
Not as detailed as the above Prospects link and aimed more at those seeking to teach English abroad as part of a gap year, but still contains some useful information and further links.

**British Council**  
https://www.britishcouncil.org/ and  
https://www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-abroad/outside-uk/english-language-assistants  
Large employer in the sector, their website has lots of information on studying and gaining experience both in the UK and abroad.

**JET**  
https://www.jet-uk.org/home.html  
An official scheme from the Japanese government linked to teaching of foreign languages. This site takes you to the UK’s site, but they run programmes with other countries so if you’re not a UK national it’s worth having a look for these.

**Work experience opportunities in the UK**

Most of the sites listed below are not directly related to TEFL/TESL – such opportunities may become available after qualification, or when you’re able to commit to them full-time, but will probably be limited before that. These will however allow you to gain some classroom-based experience, helpful for working out whether it’s definitely a career that interests you. The skills you’ll pick up will also be helpful to use on applications in the sector and show your dedication to it as a career.

**Beanstalk**  
https://www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/  
Beanstalk recruit volunteers to offer one-to-one literacy support to children aged between 3-13, particularly in the form of reading assistance. A good opportunity to work on your own literacy skills, as well as gaining practical experience of interacting with students in a teaching capacity.

**Team Up**  
https://teamup.org.uk/  
Team Up are a charity (initially founded as a student society at King’s) who run a voluntary leadership programme, where volunteers tutor children from low income backgrounds. A great way to build leadership and teaching skills.

**Schoolreaders**  
https://www.schoolreaders.org/  
Schoolreaders recruit volunteers to work one-to-one with students who are struggling with their reading.

**Do-it**  
https://do-it.org/  
A large volunteering database, with thousands of volunteering opportunities listed. You can use the advanced search function to find opportunities related to education and teaching that fit around your availability.

**Get Into Teaching – advice on arranging experience directly**  
https://getintoteaching.education.gov.uk/school-experience/arranging-school-experience-independently  
Get Into Teaching is a website with information about careers in teaching produced in association with the Department for Education. Their website is a useful tool to use generally, but this page about contacting schools directly in order to arrange work experience directly might be particularly useful.

**Other job sites for English language teaching (ELT)**

As well as the sites listed below, if you’re looking to teach English in your home country it’s worth doing some research on who the main organisations employing ELTs are. There’s too many to list here, but for example in China major organisations include New Oriental, EF, Sesame Street and Rise.

**Dave’s ESL Café**  
http://www.eslcafe.com  
Outdated in appearance, but a useful website with a jobs board and professional development opportunities.

**TEFLequityadvocates**  
http://teflequityadvocates.com  
A useful cite set up to counter ’native speaker’ biais in ELT and equal opportunities for native and non-native speaker teachers.

**The Guardian**  
https://www.theguardian.com/education  
Often advertises jobs in FE and the state sector.

**Times Educational supplement**  
https://www.tes.co.uk  
Jobs in FE and the state sector in the Times Educational supplement.

**ESL Jobs**  
http://www.esljobs.com/  
Opportunities advertised across the world.

**EL Gazette**  
http://www.elgazette.com  
Jobs and news from the elt world, including conferences.

**International House World**  
www.ihworld.com  
Different from ihlondon.com with lots of jobs worldwide.