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## TEFL – Teaching English as a foreign language: choosing your course

***Joe Hallwood, co-founder of TEFL Scotland, TEFL England, TEFL Wales (now TEFL Org UK) and TEFL Courses Ireland discusses important points to consider when choosing your TEFL course, and the opportunities that await you once qualified.***

TEFL is a widely renowned way to travel, see the world and work abroad. It's a great option for students who want to work short-term over the summer break, or graduates who want to get away for a while and try something a bit different before settling down into their chosen profession.

The thing people find most attractive about TEFL is that you don't need to have any previous teaching experience. When I started out it was something completely new to me too, but it's a fantastic opportunity and one that people should be taking full advantage of!

One recent trend however is in budget TEFL courses, which are unaccredited and unsupported. They are often available through discount/coupon sites like Groupon and Living Social, and many have opted to re-enrol with another provider afterwards to gain a recognised qualification. Things to be wary of when it comes to budget courses:

- Hidden charges – will you be charged to receive your certificate or to receive a tutor reference letter? And will you be charged to access job listings?
- Accreditation – is the quality and content of the courses strictly monitored and controlled by external organisations?
- Support – who is there to help if you have a problem? It's an educational process, so there needs to be a certain level of assistance. Are there experts on hand to help? And are the courses tutor-led?

These are important factors that should not be overlooked. Make sure that you check how much support is given, accreditation bodies and affiliations, and what exactly the course fee covers.

There are TEFL jobs all over the world; from teaching children in a rural village in Thailand, to teaching business executives in downtown Bangkok. There are a variety of options available when it comes to the type of work you do too, and how long you go for (1 week to one year). Some employment packages come with great extras like

flight allowances, accommodation, insurance and visa assistance, so it can be a very inexpensive travel option.

As a graduate you would be eligible for the widest range of jobs, simply because a degree is needed to gain working entry in to some countries. You will boost your CV whilst gaining widely transferrable skills in things like communicating, presenting, organisation, management and English grammar. Those who venture off to teach English abroad will undergo vast self-development, and encounter new and interesting cultures – not to mention, have the time of their life. It's something that changed my life forever, and we're immensely proud to help others achieve similar experiences overseas.

***If you would like more information please visit the website: [www.tefl.org.uk](http://www.tefl.org.uk)***

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