

# Finding a Job Teaching English in the United Arab Emirates

Qualified English teachers in the United Arab Emirates can realistically expect to make \$1,800 - \$5,000 (or more) tax-free a month with benefits including airfare to and from the assignment, health insurance, and even furnished housing. Dubai and Abu Dhabi receive a high number of English teaching inquiries due to the fact that Dubai in particular is known for its fantastic assortment of shopping, dining and other attractions (the 160 story Khalifa Tower and a number of indoor ski slopes, for example) and its cosmopolitan reputation as a center of trade, finance and tourism. Because the UAE is considerably smaller than Saudi Arabia and a coveted destination for foreign teachers, the job market is extremely competitive. Beginning TEFL teachers may find it difficult to be hired here, as most jobs will go to experienced teachers with advanced credentials.

Many schools and universities begin in August-September, so spring and summer tend to be excellent times to look for jobs, but job vacancies do open throughout the year.

Most teachers are interviewed and hired in advance from their own country and have their visa processed prior to their departure for their teaching destination. To receive their visa, teachers should expect to pass a physical and an HIV test, and in many cases, academic transcripts and a criminal background check may also be necessary. Expect the processes of interviewing and procuring a visa to take at least 1-3 months.

English teaching jobs for teaching English in the U.A.E. are concentrated in the cities of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Al Ain and other large cities.

For more detailed information on finding a job in the UAE please refer to International TEFL Academy's [Job Search Guidance Manual](#).

The steps below should be followed in order to successfully find work as an English teacher in the UAE.

## **Before you go....**

### **1. ENSURE THAT TEACHING ENGLISH IN THE UAE IS RIGHT FOR YOU.**

**...ask yourself the following questions**

- **Are you open to the age of students you will teach?** *Students in the UAE can range from children to adults.*
- **Do you have approximately \$1,500.00 - \$2,500.00 USD to support yourself in the UAE for 1 month before you receive your first paycheck?** *The start-up cost in the UAE will vary depending on what benefits your school is giving you. This cost does not include flights or any other pre-departure costs you may have.*
- **Do you want to be abroad at any time?** *Schools in the UAE typically hire teachers year-round, however the summer months tend to be a peak time for schools to hire teachers to begin with the September start dates.*
- **Do you have at least a 4-year degree from an accredited college or university?** *Degrees are required to teach English in the UAE and most schools prefer at least a master's degree.*
- **Do you have a clear medical record?** *It is required to obtain a clear medical check to receive an Employment Visa and Residence Permit in the UAE.*

**If you answered “no” to the above questions, it may be a good idea to rethink where you want to teach.**

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## 2. PREPARE YOUR COVER LETTER AND RESUME

- Review the [Job Search Guidance Manual](#) section on writing a resume and cover letter.
- Model your current resume after the sample resume in the Job Search Guidance Manual.
- Once your resume and cover letter has been updated, email them to Student Affairs to review and offer feedback.

## 3. CHOOSE ONE MAJOR CITY WHERE YOU WANT TO LIVE AND WORK

Most teaching jobs will be found in larger cities such as Al Ain, Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The demand for English teachers in smaller towns is much lower than it is in larger cities due to the amount of language schools there. If you are interested in teaching English in a small town we recommend giving yourself a certain amount of time to find a job. If unsuccessful, we recommend focusing on schools in Dubai or other major cities.

## 4. RESEARCH AND FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE CITY AND LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

Resources can include:

- **International TEFL Academy's [UAE School Finder](#)**
- **[Teaching English Abroad](#)** by Susan Griffith
- **Online web searches and a UAE guidebook such as [Lonely Planet](#)**

## 5. DO YOU STILL WANT TO TEACH IN THE UAE

Continue reading if your answer is “yes”:

### **How to Get a Job In Advance of Being in the UAE:**

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International TEFL Academy recommends trying each different method that is outlined below to ensure you find the job that is right for you.

- **Contact Schools** – You can find a list of language schools to contact in International TEFL Academy's [UAE School Finder](#). When you apply for positions directly with a school include the following information and any other information that is requested by the school:
  - Resume (as a PDF attachment)
  - Cover Letter (as a PDF attachment)
  - In the body of the email include the following:
- **Body of the Email:** Include a brief overview of who your qualifications and what the intention of your email is. For example:

*To whom it may concern,*

*My name Joe Smith and I am currently seeking a position teaching English at your school. I recently completed a 180-hour TEFL Certification Course in Chicago, USA and have a bachelor's degree in psychology. I am available to start as early as February 1, 2013.*

*I have attached my resume, cover letter and a recent photo for your review. I welcome the opportunity for an interview at any time or day that is convenient for you.*

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*Please let me know if you have any questions about my background or qualifications. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.*

*Sincerely,  
Joe Smith*

- **Apply to schools using job boards and other resources** – You can find a list of specific resources for the UAE and general ESL job boards in [International TEFL Academy’s Job Search Guidance Manual](#).
- **Recruiters:** Recruiters are companies that assist job seekers (English teachers in this case) in finding English teaching jobs abroad in public schools, private English language schools and universities. Essentially, they act as the middle man between the English teacher and the school but don’t ultimately hire the English teacher. As a job seeker, you should not have to pay for a recruiter; recruiters should only be paid by the school that hires you. If you are ever unsure whether or not a recruiter is “legit” don’t hesitate to contact International TEFL Academy to check if we’ve heard of them.

International TEFL Academy works with the following recruiters for the UAE although there are many more out there. It is completely up to you if you want to work with a recruiter and which recruiter you end up working with. This is not a comprehensive list of recruiters for the UAE.

- SeekTeachers - [http://www.seekteachers.com/jobs.asp?country\\_id=5](http://www.seekteachers.com/jobs.asp?country_id=5)
- TeachAway
  - Abu Dhabi - <https://www.teachaway.com/teaching-public-schools-abu-dhabi>
  - Dubai - <https://www.teachaway.com/teach-in-dubai-uae>
- Footprints
  - Abu Dhabi - <http://www.footprintsrecruiting.com/teaching-jobs-abroad/city/abu-dhabi>
  - Dubai - <http://www.footprintsrecruiting.com/teaching-jobs-abroad/city/dubai>

Each recruiter has different ways they would like you to contact them and different documents they will ask you for. Research each recruiter and their requirements before contacting them by going to their websites. Generally, you will *apply* to work with a recruiter by submitting certain documents (i.e. resume, cover letter, photocopy of passport, photo) through their website. Once your application has been reviewed a recruiter will contact you and set up an initial screening to find out more about you, where you are interested in working, where you are willing to work, when you are able to start, etc. As long as you meet the recruiter’s requirements, the recruiter will begin to work with you on finding you a school.

## 6. HAVE A JOB OFFER? NOW WHAT?

- **Review and Sign Your Contract:** Before you sign anything make sure that you completely understand your contract. Refer to the Job Search Guidance Manual for more information and tips on reviewing a contract. A few of the major things you should look for are:
  - **Salary (how much and how often you get paid)**
  - **Start and End Dates**
  - **Housing Allowance (if applicable)**
  - **Flight Reimbursement (if applicable)**
  - **End of contract bonus (if applicable)**
  - **Anything else they promised you in the interview**

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- **Work Visa:** Now that you have signed your contract your school should help you in the steps to obtain a work visa. **Please note that it is not the practice of every country to assist English teachers with obtaining a work visa.**

**What is a visa?** A visa is simply a document (often in the form of a stamp in a passport) issued by a government that authorizes a foreign citizen to enter that government's country for residency, tourism, education and/or work. Read International TEFL Academy's article, "[What is a visa and do I need a visa to teach English abroad?](#)" for more information on visas.