

Teacher of English as a Foreign Language

Teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) teach English to adults or children, from a variety of different cultures and backgrounds, whose first language is not English.

The Work

You could be:

- teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), to students who need to learn it for work or leisure, often through short courses in private colleges in the UK or abroad
- teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), to students or immigrants who live in the UK, but whose first language is not English, in community or adult education centres or colleges
- teaching English as a second or additional language (TESL or TEAL), to students countries such as India, China, Japan and parts of Africa and the Middle East.

In all cases you could be:

- teaching English to students whose first language is not English
- preparing and giving lessons to small groups of students
- using role play
- using a range of materials including text books, worksheets, computers, audio-visual aids, whiteboards and materials you have prepared yourself
- organising and directing the whole class and helping individual students as required
- encouraging students to speak English as much as possible
- setting and marking assignments and tests, and preparing students for exams in English
- keeping records of students' progress.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide as actual pay rates may vary, depending on where you work and the company or organisation you work for.

Many jobs are short term and part time, so salaries are often quoted as hourly or weekly rates. However, starting salaries for full time EFL teachers in the UK tend to be between £16,000 and £20,000 a year, rising to £25,000 to £39,000 a year.

Hourly rates for part time posts in the UK vary, depending on your employer, experience and qualifications, from about £12 to £30. Weekly rates for seasonal staff vary from about £300 to £600 (for specialist teachers and experienced course directors). Some posts paid at lower rates include accommodation.

Overseas salaries vary depending on the country in which you work. Teaching English to professionals in Europe can be well paid. In some overseas countries, salaries are low – but the cost of living is also low. Some posts overseas are for volunteers who work in return for their keep and pocket money.

If you teach overseas, check your contract carefully for conditions of work and salary arrangements as well as holiday and sick pay.

Conditions

- You would work in a classroom or language base, either in a private school, a college, university or a community or adult education centre.
- For some posts you may be teaching on an online basis from your home to students in other countries.
- Your working hours might be variable. Classes would mostly be during the day but some may be in evenings or at weekends.
- You would probably have to do preparation and assessment work at home.
- Many posts are short-term or part time. In the UK it is easier to get a job in summer, when overseas visitors come to study.
- There are many jobs abroad, throughout the world, but most contracts are short term, from 9 months to 2 years.
- You should be aware that teaching can be mentally and physically demanding.

Getting In

- You could take a short introductory TEFL course, which may help you decide if you would like this work.
- You might be able to get a job without a TEFL qualification if you have a good standard of education (at least Highers and usually a degree). For entry to a degree (SCQF Level 9-10) course you normally need 4-5 Highers.
- You must also have Higher English and National 5 Maths. National 5 Applications of Maths is accepted in place of Maths.
- However, most EFL teachers qualify by taking one of the courses below. You must normally be at least 18 and have qualifications to enable entry to higher education.
- Many entrants have a degree and while any subject is usually accepted, English, modern foreign languages or education are particularly useful.

The following courses are run at centres throughout the UK and abroad:

- Cambridge English Language Assessment Certificate or Diploma in Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults (CELTA or DELTA).
- The Trinity College London Certificate or Diploma in teaching English to speakers of other languages (Cert/DipTESOL).
- If you already have the CELTA or CertTESOL but no experience of teaching young learners you might be able to take the TKT: Young Learner (YL) specialist module for CELTA or the Trinity Young Learners Extension Certificate (TYLEC).
- Cambridge English Language Assessment runs an online CELTA which combines distance learning with teaching practice in a classroom.

The Certificate courses are run as short full time (4-5 weeks) or part time (over several months) courses. The Diploma courses can be taken full time over 2-3 months or part time over 6-12 months. Distance learning options are also available.

You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.

In the UK, jobs are with private sector colleges, further and higher education institutions and some local authorities, particularly where there are large ethnic communities. Overseas employers include the British Council, aid and volunteer agencies, embassies, cultural institutes and educational establishments.

Jobs are advertised on the internet.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- a good command of the English language, in all aspects
- a clear speaking voice
- patience and adaptability
- enthusiasm and energy
- confidence
- good organisational skills
- a sense of humour and positive outlook
- creativity for planning lesson activities.

You need to be able to:

- get on with people from all backgrounds and of all ages
- explain new ideas clearly
- work well under pressure.

Training

- Training is mainly on the job, through experience.
- The [Scottish Association for the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language](#) runs regular talks on teaching EFL.
- You could take a specialist postgraduate course including those offered by the Universities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier, Glasgow, Stirling, St Andrews, Strathclyde and the West of Scotland.
- You could teach training courses such as CELTA or DELTA or Cert/DipTESOL.

Getting On

- With experience you might specialise in Teaching of English for Academic Purposes (TEAP) or for business, medical or legal purposes.
- You could study for a Professional Development Award (PDA) in TESOL awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), which are available at SCQF Levels 9 and 10.
- You may become a freelance teacher of EFL.
- You might become manager of a language school in the UK or abroad.

More Information

Most EFL teachers work overseas, but there is also a demand in the UK. There is a lot of competition for permanent posts in the UK.

The [British Council](#) employs teachers in over 100 countries. However, they only employ graduates who have a recognised TESOL qualification (such as CELTA or Cert TESOL) and a minimum of 2 years' full time relevant work experience. See the [jobs section](#) of their website for more details.

Contacts

Trinity College London

Website: www.trinitycollege.co.uk

X: @TrinityC_L

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TrinityCollegeLondon

University of Cambridge (ESOL Examinations)

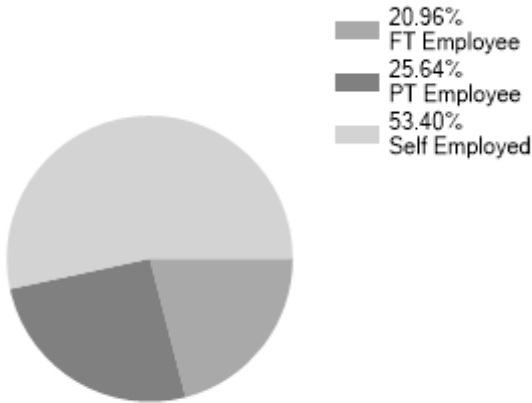
Website: www.cambridgeenglish.org

X: @CambridgeEng

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CambridgeEnglish

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

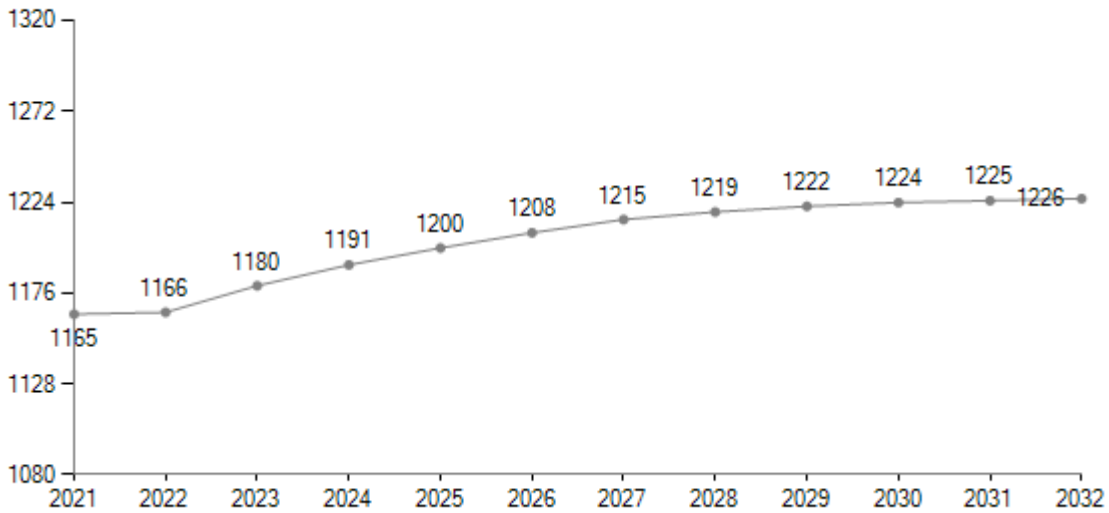


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)