

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) is teaching English to students whose first language is not English and is also known as TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) or ELT (English Language Teaching). This training enables you to teach English to speakers of other languages. There are two main types of training.

Nationally accredited qualification. - “I want to be able to work as a TEFL teacher in a school in Ireland & abroad.” ACELS coordinates and accredits English language services in Ireland. Numerous ACELS schools

throughout Ireland deliver English language training to speakers of other languages, if you wish to work in one of these schools as a TEFL teacher, then you must complete the appropriate CELT course - <https://www.acels.ie/celt>

Details of ACELS recognised courses:

Duration: 4 weeks (usually 5 in practice), with no less than 120 hours of study for each trainee (i.e., 100 hours of course input, 20 hours of reflective learning). Breakdown: At least 6 hours of classroom practice and 6 hours of observation of professional teachers. 35 hours are dedicated to language analysis. If applicable, check with the individual course providers to see if they run part time programmes, investigate course content. Some details of course content can be found here: <https://www.acels.ie/teachertraining>

Cost? Prices vary between schools (see link above), and range between €900 - €1500.

Application process: Apply directly to the school / course provider with which you wish to enrol. It is your responsibility to check all necessary details before you accept a place on a programme. Some course providers may enforce a minimum age limit of 20 years of age.

Seeking employment:

1). Identify a list of potential employers (e.g., <https://www.acels.ie/schools> or a school outside of Ireland), 2). Create a tailored CV and cover letter, 3). Send your CV and cover letter to your target employer. Ask the MU Careers Service for help with your application!

Additionally, you can go abroad with this qualification and seek your own work. See the job boards on the websites at the end of this information sheet. This qualification travels well.

Useful Links:

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/english-as-a-foreign-language-teacher>

<https://gradireland.com/career-sectors/languages-and-culture/teaching-english-as-a-foreign-language-tefl>

ACELS Advantages:

More involved training course, which includes practice.

Government recognised certificate, which allows you to work in Ireland.

ACELS certificates travel well and are internationally recognised (if you go abroad).

ACELS Disadvantages:

Takes more time to complete (up to 5 weeks)

More expensive than other TEFL options.

Training providers offer no help finding work upon completion of the course.

Private qualification - “I want to go abroad and work as a TEFL teacher.”

An alternative to the ACELS accredited training courses (which enable you to teach English to speakers of other languages in recognised schools in Ireland), are the numerous private organisations that exist to train people to teach English to speakers of other languages. A quick google search for “TEFL” will reveal numerous hits for these types of companies, consisting mostly of ads for TEFL courses offered by private training providers.

What are these companies and what are their TEFL certificates/courses like?

These are businesses that you pay to teach you how to 'teach English as a foreign language'. The certificates that you gain from completing one of these courses are not ACELS accredited, so you cannot work in recognised school in Ireland. However, these offer additional advantages, which make them the most common form for TEFL courses taken by university students. E.g., these certificates can help you gain work abroad, so it is worth considering one of these certificates if you intend to go abroad and work as a TEFL teacher. Each training company runs their own course, and so they vary greatly. Most, however, do offer a choice of courses ranging from 20hours – 140hours in length. The longer the course, the more training you get, therefore the more attractive you would appear to an employer (e.g., a school abroad). A large portion of each of these courses is delivered online, which is convenient, but do not usually contain any integrated teaching practice.

Cost? Prices vary greatly, but guide figures are €150 - €400 approx. The price is usually related to the length (hours) of the course on offer, and the additional benefits that company can offer (e.g., an interview with an employer, access to job opportunities, useful travel/destination information, 'get-home-quick' help etc.).

There are many TEFL providers. How do I pick a good one?

Initially, decide which country in which you wish to work. Most TEFL companies have connections to schools in several countries so that they can help you find an employer. Do your research. Contact the company, ask them about their TEFL teacher training course(s). Example questions to ask these companies:

- Is there any teaching practice included in their course(s)?
- Do they have contact/relations/networks with employers (e.g., Schools / institutions / universities) and can you have access to that information?
- After finishing the course, is it up to you to find your own work, or what help do they offer you to help you secure a job?
- After graduation, do they guarantee you an interview in a country of your choice?
- What support structures are in place for you going abroad using their qualification?

Advantages:

Shorter than ACELS courses

Cheaper than ACELS course

Can help you find work, set up an interview abroad

(e.g., Can provide additional supports for TEFL workers cannot work in Ireland)

Disadvantages:

Shorter than ACELS courses

Usually no placement/classroom experience

No official recognition of the certificate

See below for a sample list of some well know TEFL providers:

<http://www.i-to-i.com/> <http://www.cactustefl.com/> <https://www.teflcoursesireland.ie/blog/>

Pay: It is not possible to include a guide on TEFL pay scales in this information sheet as pay varies dramatically between country and employer. However, it is reasonably common/possible for people to make a living wage and accumulate modest savings after being abroad working as a TEFL teacher. Be aware that some countries generally pay higher than others do. Keep this in mind if you are considering which TEFL provider to go with. Do your research! Ask the training provider if they are taking a cut of your pay if they set you up with an interview in a school! If you think that low pay is on offer relative to the local economy, you may be wise to look elsewhere.

General information:

Remember, when going abroad you do not always need an ACELS recognised CELT qualification, or a certificate from a private training provider. It can even happen that you may land a job entirely on the basis that you are a native English speaker. However, it does help to have one, and employers are increasingly looking for TEFL teachers with as much training as they can get. You can source you own employment through the internet or cold calling an employer.

Examples of programmes that do not need a TEFL qualification.

JET Programme (JAPAN) https://www.ie.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/00_000048.html

EPIK (Korea) http://overseas.mofa.go.kr/ie-en/wpge/m_8215/contents.do

Further Information

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/gap-year/teach-english-abroad>