



## TEFL Jobs in Thailand



### Country overview

The following section provides useful, practical information about your destination country. It includes heaps of information about the local cuisine, cultural taboos and travel safety, so that you can make the most of your overseas teaching experience.

### Basic Facts

Thailand, known as Siam until 1939 means 'land of the free' and unlike many of its neighbouring countries it has never been colonised by a foreign power. The country has a great deal to offer as a destination to work and travel in and remains popular due to its tropical climate, delicious food and friendly people. The country is beautiful, with a wide variety of farmland and natural landscapes. Culture enthusiasts will appreciate the thousands of temples dotted throughout the country and the many impressive statues of Buddha. As with many other destinations there is evidence of foreign influence on the country. However, scratch the surface, or travel a little off the beaten track and it is not hard to find traditional communities and a unique experience.

### Society and culture

- Dress is important at your placement. When you are in the classroom you need to wear clothing that covers your knees, shoulders and ideally toes. Some schools are more formal than others. You should avoid vest tops, flip flops and short skirts and shorts.
- At most temples you must take off your shoes before entering. Buddhism is the main religion in Thailand although there is a sizeable Muslim population, mainly in the south of the country.
- With respect to Thai culture you must avoid touching people on the head as the head is regarded as the holiest part of the body. Likewise pointing with things using your feet is considered rude as it is the dirtiest part of your body.
- The royal family is very important in Thailand and you must respect this so as not to cause offence.
- Public displays of affection between couples are still frowned upon in many areas.

- Thais, as with many other Asian people, believe strongly in the idea of 'saving face'. This concept endeavours to avoid embarrassment or confrontation. Thailand is a very friendly nation and the Thais are well-known for smiling so you too should be polite and friendly at all times. It is also worth remembering this characteristic in difficult or frustrating circumstances as people will sometimes agree to do things that they can not really do to 'save face' and avoid embarrassment.
- Another example is that traditionally people will not ask for music or TVs to be turned off/down in restaurants for example to avoid the manager's embarrassment!
- Thus you need to be careful and remember that Western styles of speaking frankly and customer service are not always so evident in Asian countries.

### **Food and drink**

Food in Thailand is delicious and there is a wide choice and great regional variations. The nation's food is influenced by its location too and has adopted flavours and cooking techniques from India, China and the Middle East. Popular ingredients include herbs, lime juice, coriander, lemongrass, coconut milk, chilli, ginger, ground nuts, shrimp paste, fish sauce and garlic. It's often hot and spicy too - so be warned!

There is a lot of seafood on offer and delicious tropical fruit can be bought everywhere too.

In tourist areas you will be able to find a wide variety of Western style food and lots of vegetarian options. Most of the familiar brands of soft drinks are available but you may find that local brands are cheaper than imported ones.

You will find a variety of local food stalls with freshly prepared food which are a great source of fun and you will find a huge range of foods to sample – all very cheaply.

### **Transportation**

Public transport is cheap and user-friendly in Thailand. Buses and trains can be booked through many agents in tourist destinations or by going directly to the train and bus stations themselves.

Tuk tuks are one of the cheapest forms of transportation for short distances but you do need to negotiate a price before you go to avoid being over-charged.

## Climate

Thailand is a hot, tropical country and it can get very humid. Even the 'cool' season has temperatures over 80 F. There are traditionally 3 seasons – hot, rainy and cool (well relatively cool anyway). The hot season tends to run from March to July with temperatures hitting 35 C+. The rainy season is July through to October. During this time you will experience refreshing and torrential downpours. However, these tend to dry up very quickly. November to February is the cold season with much of the country experiencing clear skies and temperatures ranging between 25-30 degrees. Please note that in the mountains overnight temperatures can be very cold – under 10 degrees C.

## Money and budgeting

Credit cards and ATM cards are accepted but you may like to check with your bank for any charges they may levy on you for using this service. You should take a combination of some cash for your first few days whilst you have your orientation and settle into your placement (we would recommend US\$100), some travellers' cheques and a credit card for emergencies and larger purchases.

## Communications

Mail can be received at the school or accommodation that you are working at. The postal system from Thailand is good but it can take a couple of weeks for international mail. There are plenty of internet cafes, especially in the cities.

International phone cards can be bought at most 7Elevens, garages and other shops. To call the UK you need to dial: 00 44 then drop the first 0 off the regional code.

Many English teachers buy local SIM cards for mobile phones in order to take advantage of cheaper mobile calls whilst abroad and as a useful means of keeping in touch with the others.

## Travel Safety

Thailand is a safe country to travel around but it is important, as with all travelling, to use your common sense and not to do things that you would not do at home. Remember to trust your instincts.

- Be careful of pickpockets, especially on public transport and in tourist areas.
- Carry your passport, credit cards, travellers' cheques and most of your money in your money belt, and only keep a small amount of cash in your wallet.

- If possible, leave your camera and other valuables securely locked in your room. If you are carrying your valuables with you, keep them in your day bag and lock it with a small padlock.
- Never leave your valuables unattended and never trust anyone you don't know to look after them for you.
- Don't flaunt your relative wealth by wearing expensive clothes or jewellery.
- Don't resist muggers - give them the money in your wallet.
- Where possible travel in groups and avoid deserted areas, especially at night.
- Women in particular should avoid travelling alone.
- Female teachers might consider carrying a personal alarm. Previous teachers have also recommended wearing a ring on your wedding finger to deter local men.
- Dress responsibly to avoid attracting attention to yourself.
- Try not to look lost or apprehensive. Acting confidently can be a deterrent to crime.
- Be careful of travel advice that strangers give to you, and don't go off with anyone you don't know. Consult your guidebook and ask several different people before trusting a piece of advice.
- Follow bathing advice at the beaches. Some areas are subject to riptides and strong currents.
- Don't get involved with drugs, and avoid any political demonstrations.
- Don't do anything you wouldn't do at home. In fact, you need to be even more vigilant as unfamiliar situations can sometimes catch you off-guard and make you more vulnerable.
- Take two photocopies of your passport in case it gets lost or stolen. Keep one with you to use if you need it and you may consider leaving one with friends or relatives too in case both your original passport and copy are lost in-country.

### **Avian Influenza (Bird Flu)**

According to the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (June 2006), "Outbreaks of Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) have resulted in a small number of human fatalities. As a precaution, you should avoid live animal markets, poultry farms and other places where you might come into contact with domestic, caged or wild birds; and ensure poultry and egg dishes are thoroughly cooked". Travellers to Thailand are unlikely to be affected, but you should follow the advice of the FCO (or the equivalent in your home country) to avoid putting yourself at risk.

For further information, please check the FCO website at [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk), the World Health Organisation (WHO) website at [www.who.int/topics/avian\\_influenza/en](http://www.who.int/topics/avian_influenza/en) and the Department of Health's website (Latest Updates) at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk).

## **Festivals and Holidays**

### Public Holidays

1 May International Labour Day

1 Jan New Year's Day

Songkran April, the exact date varies from year to year

Visakha Puja 15th day of the waxing moon in the 6th lunar month

12 Aug Queen's Birthday

Loi Krathang November, the exact date varies from year to year

5 Dec King's Birthday

Many festivals are linked to Buddhist or Brahman rituals and follow a lunar calendar. New Year/Songkran, is celebrated in mid-April by 'bathing' Buddha images, paying respects to monks and elders by sprinkling water over their hands, and generally tossing a lot of water in the air for fun.

The official rice-planting season in early May - the king participates in an ancient Brahman ritual in Sanam Luang in central Bangkok.

A Rocket Festival is held in May in the country's northeast, using a volatile mixture of bamboo and gunpowder to convince the sky to send rain for the new rice season; and the rice harvest from September through to May leads to many local celebrations throughout Thailand.

The Vegetarian Festival in Phuket and Trang, during which devout Chinese Buddhists eat only vegetarian food, runs for nine days from late September to early October. Meritmaking processions are the most visible expression of this festival, but there are also ceremonies at Chinese temples.

During the Loi Krathong Festival, held after the rainy season (usually in November), candlelit floats are cast into waterways to bring good fortune for the coming year.

### Useful websites and information resources

- [www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/south\\_east\\_asia/thailand/](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/south_east_asia/thailand/)
- [thailand.embassyhomepage.com/](http://thailand.embassyhomepage.com/)

Thai Embassy  
 29-30 Queen's Gate, London SW7 5JB.  
 Tel: 020 7589 2944  
 Fax: 0207 823 9695

Consular Section:  
 Tel: 020 7589 2944

Tourism Authority of Thailand

- [www.thaismile.co.uk/index.php?page=46](http://www.thaismile.co.uk/index.php?page=46)
- Thailand Lonely Planet or Rough Guide and phrasebook
- Thailand; A Short History by David Wyatt: This book is one of the more readable general histories.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- Application
- Pre-departure
- Thailand - Employment | Teaching

## Application

1. What are the application requirements?

- Native English speaker, TEFL qualified.
- You need to be a university degree holder.
- UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand or South African Passport holder

Following your initial application, you will need to submit the following documents:

- CV/Resume
- Covering letter
- Scanned copy of the information page of your passport
- Passport photograph
- Application Form

2. Can I apply with someone else?

It's possible for us to place applicants in the same accommodation and in the same school Thailand Government Schools.

3. Can I choose where I teach?

In Thailand please specify in your covering letter which location you would like to be placed in Bangkok or outside Bangkok.

#### 4. When are the start dates?

There are monthly start dates in most cases. It is suggested you apply as far in advance as possible.

#### 5. What is the project length?

6 or 12 months

#### 6. When should I apply?

It is best to apply as early as you can to secure your application. We recommend applying a minimum of three months in advance. However, depending on availability it is sometimes possible for us to fast-track applications in 4 weeks.

#### 7. I haven't finished my degree yet, can I still apply?

As long as you have completed your degree and have got your certificate prior to departure, you are still eligible to apply. Please include a letter from your University supervisor / academic advisor with your application to confirm this.

#### 8. How do I apply?

Call your nearest i-to-i office or [www.onlinetefl.com/jobs](http://www.onlinetefl.com/jobs) and apply now.

#### 9. What happens if I apply but don't get accepted?

We have a 90% success rate for applicants who meet the basic application criteria. If however, you are not accepted, you will be refunded the full project fee.

### **Pre-departure**

#### 1. How do I get my visa?

On confirmation of employment you will be provided with a visa invitation letter for you to apply for a non-immigrant B visa. Within two months of your arrival your employer will apply for your work permit. Please note that to do this you will be required to take original copies of your degree certificate, TEFL certificate and an official breakdown (transcript) of your degree to Thailand.

## 2. Which airport should I fly into?

Bangkok

## 3. When and how should I book my flights?

Please wait to book your flights until you are advised by our in-country agent to do so.

## 4. Do I need to take out travel insurance?

We strongly recommend that you take out adequate travel insurance for the entire duration of your stay. For details of travel insurance for UK citizens, please visit [www.endsleigh.co.uk](http://www.endsleigh.co.uk). For citizens from outside of the UK, please visit: [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com).

## 5. Do I need vaccinations?

We strongly recommend that you visit your GP or specialist travel clinic before you start your course of inoculations. They will give you professional advice particular to your circumstances and the latest health recommendations. You should also arrange a general health check-up before you go.

### Inoculations

The following list of inoculations is based on information from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and should be used in conjunction with your doctor or travel clinic.

- Yellow Fever (a certificate is required if you are travelling from an infected area)
- Polio (recommended)
- Tetanus (recommended)
- Typhoid (recommended)
- Hepatitis A (recommended)
- Hepatitis B (sometimes recommended)
- Rabies (sometimes recommended)
- Diphtheria (sometimes recommended)
- Japanese Encephalitis (sometimes recommended)

### Malaria

Malaria is prevalent in the areas bordering Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar - this includes Nong Khai. Consult your doctor for recommended medication.

## 6. How much money should I bring with me?

We recommend that you bring approximately £500 / USD \$900 / €750 to cover all initial costs until your first payday. (You may be required to pay a bond on your apartment.) Always have access to emergency funds (Monies that can be transferred to you at short notice from home)

## 7. Do I need to be able to speak the local language?

No, but learning some simple phrases will be very useful.

### Basic Thai words and phrases

With the Thai language it is polite to end sentences with 'khrap' for men or 'kha' for women. This also expresses the affirmative, so is a means of saying yes or agreeing with someone.

Your in-country team will also go through some basic vocabulary with you during orientation and will give you some more information in-country.

English	Thai
Hello	Sawat – dii (khrap/kha)
How are you?	sabai dii reu?
I'm fine	sabai dii
Thank you	khawp khun
Excuse me	khaw thoht
What's your name?	khun cheu aria?
My name is	Di phom cheu (men) Di chan cheu (women)
I like	chawp
I don't like	mai chawp
I understand	khao jai
I don't understand	mai khao jai
No	mai chai
one	neung
two	sawng
three	saam
four	sii
five	haa
six	hok
seven	jet
eight	paet
nine	kao
ten	sip

8. Is there a dress code?

Smart casual/work casual

9. How long will it take to complete the TEFL training?

The course can be completed in a minimum of 2-3 weeks. Most people finish the course in 4-6 weeks. You have a maximum of 6 months to complete the course. You will be sent your certificate, letter of reference and hard copy of the course within 21 days of completion of all components of the course. (TEFL course outline)

10. What happens when I arrive?

You will be met at the airport/train station of your teaching destination and transferred to your accommodation. You will have two orientations: one to prepare you for teaching and one to show you around the school and city.

### **Thailand: Employment**

1. How much will I be paid?

You will be paid 25,000- 35,000THB / \$600 -\$800(USD) / £340-£480 / €500-€700 per month in THB into your local bank account (you will be assisted in setting this up on arrival.) The tax rate is 10%.

The cost of living is approximately 10,000THB-15,000THB / \$240-\$370USD / £130-£200 / €200-€300 per month including accommodation costs (please note that this is a guide only).

2. Do I receive a bonus or flight re-imbusement?

You will receive a bonus / flight re-imbusement of 12 000 - 32 000 Baht (£160 - £440) on successful completion of a 12 month contract.

3. How many days holiday will I receive per year?

You will receive 15-25 paid holidays per year.

4. What are my working hours?

You will work approximately 25-40 hours per week. Depending on your contract, you may be required to teach during evenings and at weekends.

### 5. Can I renew my contract?

Your contract may be extendable; you would need to discuss this with your school.

### 6. What happens if I need to break my contract?

Ideally, you will give at least 2-4 weeks notice to your employer. Once you leave the contract, the school will notify immigration department and you will have to leave within 7 days as your visa status will be invalid. Bonuses may be lost.

### 7. What will my accommodation be like?

Temporary accommodation will be arranged for your arrival and you will be assisted in finding more permanent accommodation on arrival close to your school.

Schools arrange a studio type with bathroom apartment, not shared accommodation.

## **Thailand: Teaching**

### 1. What age and level of students will I be teaching?

You will need to be prepared to teach all levels and all age groups.

### 2. How many students will there be in each class?

There are usually 8-25 students per class.

### 3. How long are the classes?

Most classes are 50 minutes long.

### 4. Are there any teaching resources?

Yes, institutes are well-resourced. You may also like to take photos and pictures of your home country, family and friends.

### 5. Will I be teaching alone or team teaching?

For most projects, you will be teaching alone with the guidance and support of other teachers and your supervisor. In some projects, you will conduct the classes, assisted by Thai team-teachers.

6. What kind of school will I be teaching in?

You will teach in a private language institute.

## TEFL certification

All our TEFL Jobs include the 40 hour Online TEFL course and the 20 hour Grammar and Language Awareness Module. These courses will give you the skills you need to teach English as a foreign language, so you can walk into your first TEFL classroom with the utmost confidence.

You'll be sent details of how to access your courses via email. You will have six months to complete the 40 hour course and extra time after that to complete the Grammar and Language Awareness Module. Both courses must be complete by the time you start your placement.

It's also an idea to take your TEFL certificate with you when you go. Some placements request it – and even if they don't it's always handy to have it with you.

It's not uncommon for applicants to desire extra qualifications to supplement their Online TEFL certification and further develop their skills. That's why we offer a range of specialist certificates that will help you tailor your skills towards a specific area of the TEFL business. As an i-to-i tutee you are entitled to 10% off any of these certificates.

Visit [www.onlinetefl.com/online-tefl/certificates](http://www.onlinetefl.com/online-tefl/certificates) to find out more or call/email us at:

UK & the world: +44 (0)113 205 0077 [tefljobteam@i-to-i.com](mailto:tefljobteam@i-to-i.com)

Ireland: 058 400 50 [ireland@i-to-i.com](mailto:ireland@i-to-i.com)

North America: 800 985 4864 [usca@i-to-i.com](mailto:usca@i-to-i.com)

Australia: 1300 556 997 [australia@i-to-i.com](mailto:australia@i-to-i.com)

## **Surviving culture shock**

Almost everyone experiences some degree of culture shock when they first arrive at their destination - even if they're a seasoned traveller. It may be felt as stress, frustration, anxiety or homesickness and is a perfectly natural reaction to encountering a new culture that looks, sounds and feels different to what you're used to.

Try not to worry if you feel overwhelmed at the start of your placement – just go with the flow and before you know it you'll start to settle in. The following advice will help you to overcome culture shock as quickly as possible.

Doing as much research as possible into your destination will help to reduce culture shock, as you'll be prepared for many of the differences you will encounter. The Lonely Planet and Culture Shock! Guides are good resources to use for this.

Try to arrive at your destination as fresh as possible. Avoid alcohol and caffeine on your flight, eat a light meal and rest as much as possible. This will give you the energy to get through your first day in-country. If you're exhausted when you arrive, everything will seem a lot more challenging.

Take it easy on your first few days, to give yourself time to adjust to your new environment and get over your journey. You don't have to see and do everything in the first few days – that's just the adrenaline talking!

A good tip is to observe the locals and do as they do. They are used to the heat, humidity and altitude and know how best to cope. Watch what they do and adopt their ways.

Remember that if you're finding things difficult at your placement, it may be due to culture shock. Try to keep an open mind and avoid making comparisons with how things are done in your own country – if you wanted everything to stay the same you wouldn't have gone overseas in the first place!

If you're going away for several months, budget for a well-deserved break halfway through your placement. Treat yourself to a night in a comfy hotel and a good meal, then return to your placement feeling refreshed. It's okay to want a few home comforts while you're away – something as simple as watching a movie in English in an air-conditioned cinema can make you feel much better!

## Checklist for Paid Teaching Placements

### We send you:

- Confirmation email of PTP placement
- Confirmation/login details email of Online TEFL course
- DVD and GAM for TEFL course

### What you need to do:

- Send relevant documents to complete application:
- CV/Resume
- Cover letter
- Scanned copy of your University degree certificate or a letter from your university confirming your expected graduation (English translation required). Please note a degree is not needed for paid teaching placements in Hungary
- Scanned copy of the information page of your passport
- Arrange suitable travel insurance.

### Plus:

- Thailand - Passport photography / application form.

Documents will be sent to the in-country representative who will contact you about the application. Remember to complete your TEFL course!

### Once accepted we send you:

- Terms and conditions to be signed.

### In-country representative sends:

- Confirmation of placement contract
- Thailand - Employer will issue a visa invitation letter for you to apply for visa.

### Next Steps:

- Once your visa has been accepted and returned, book flights

## Enjoy your trip!