

Dr. TEFL: HOW TO CHOOSE A TEFL COURSE



EBC - TEFL training since 2003

EBC International TEFL Certificate

Trinity CertTESOL online and in Madrid

A useful guide for choosing a TEFL course

Accredited? Online? Four week? Hybrid?

Getting a job?

TRINITY
COLLEGE LONDON

Validated Course Provider 65747

EBC International TEFL Certificate—Internationally recognised TEFL training



HOW TO CHOOSE A TEFL COURSE

OK, so we run TEFL courses and teach abroad programmes, but **we have been running TEFL courses since 2003, so we have loads of experience.** EBC runs one of the best TEFL courses available, but there are other courses. This guide from Dr TEFL walks you through all the options and highlights the pros and cons when choosing a TEFL course.

Types of TEFL course

There are quite a few different types:

1. Four-week face-to-face TEFL courses
2. Online TEFL courses
3. Hybrid / blended TEFL courses
4. Five day or weekend TEFL courses

The best TEFL course content according to British Council international TEFL standards

If you are going to invest in a TEFL course and expect to get a job with a good language school, choose a course that has all the following:

1. Live trainer input (face-to-face or in a virtual classroom).
2. At least 160 hours of total study time.
3. At least 6 hours of observed teaching practise with real English language learners.
4. Accreditation by a government registered university or examination board.
5. External moderation (quality control) by a visiting moderator of the university or examination board.
6. Documented acceptance and recognition by the British Council, an internationally recognised institution with English schools and offices in more than 110 countries.
7. Awards a public domain TEFL / TESOL certificate.

Currently, there are only two named certificates in the world that meet these criteria. The Trinity CertTESOL is one of them. You can get your Trinity CertTESOL by taking an online, blended or face to face course.

FOUR WEEK FACE-TO-FACE COURSES

The main attraction of a face-to-face course is living, studying and working in a great new location. Somewhere where you have always wanted to live like Spain, for example.

Face-to-face courses are designed for people who can attend a training centre course and dedicate themselves to 4 weeks' full-time learning.

The best thing is to attend a face-to-face course in the country where you would like to teach. Doing this is the easiest way to train and teach abroad.

Face-to-face training is interactive. There are lots of practical exercises performed under your trainer's direct supervision, and most importantly, you get to

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teach practice classes to real English language learners (ELLs). Ideally (as in EBC's case) you should teach your classes to real ELLs rather than fake classes given to your trainer or classmates. You should also get to teach to beginner, intermediate and advanced level ELLs. Teaching different levels lets you see the learning challenges for each level.

Pros

A face-to-face course is the best way to learn. You are in a classroom with your trainer and classmates. You can interact with your classmates who are facing the same challenges as you. You can ask questions and ask for clarification in real-time. You will finish in 4 weeks, so the learning cycle is intense and most importantly, fast.

You should get to teach practice classes to real English language learners. Apart from the invaluable experience of doing this, you will be infinitely more attractive to employers than the other job candidates who have not had any teaching practice in their course.

If you have chosen wisely, you are already in the country where you want to teach. If you have chosen EBC, you will be working within about a week of graduating. If you choose a different school, it will take longer, and you may even have to look for jobs on your own.

Cons

A face-to-face course means that you must set aside 4 weeks to take the course. You must spend on airfare and living expenses while you are training on your face-to-face course.

COVID means that the school could cancel your course without warning if schools are closed, limits are placed on the number of students in a classroom, travel is restricted where you live or where the school is located, etc.

Summary

A face-to-face course is the best of all options. Top-quality courses (like EBC's) are externally moderated. This means that an independent, external moderator will interview you and quality check your work. The EBC Trinity College

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CertTESOL course is one of only two TEFL certificates accepted and recognised by the British Council.

What does this mean? CREDIBILITY. Would you like to interview for English teaching jobs with ease? Would you like your certificate to speak for itself?

Would you want the hiring school to regard you as better qualified than the others because of your certificate?

It all comes down to "What's in a name?" Your Trinity College CertTESOL is that name. Schools all over the world will always prefer a trusted name in EFL and ESL training. When we go shopping for services or goods, the brand's name plays a big role in our buying decision. It is normal, it is natural, it is to be expected. You want the best, and a trusted name in the field speaks for itself.

Your Trinity College CertTESOL course includes teaching practice classes given to non-English speakers at different language ability levels.

An accredited TESOL TEFL certificate qualification gained through a face-to-face course that includes real teaching practice and is quality controlled by an external moderator is the most attractive to language school hiring managers.

You must also consider whether it would be better if you took an online course to have your certificate before you arrive and get a job faster.

ONLINE COURSES

BEWARE

There are many types of online course. Many do not include teaching practice. Almost none of them are externally moderated a.k.a. quality controlled. Only two online courses have the best TEFL course content according to British Council international TEFL standards:

1. Live trainer input (face-to-face or in a virtual classroom).
2. At least 160 hours of total study time.
3. At least 6 hours of observed teaching practice with real English language learners.
4. Accreditation by a government registered university or examination board.

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5. External moderation (quality control) by a visiting moderator of the university or examination board.
6. Documented acceptance and recognition by the British Council, an internationally recognised institution with English schools and offices in more than 110 countries.
7. Awards a public domain TEFL / TESOL certificate.

Only two online courses give certificates that have this content. The Trinity CertTESOL is one of these two elite online courses.

How online courses work

Online courses grew from old distance learning courses. Distance learning started in the 1970s, and they worked using the postal service. Material and assignments were interchanged between student and teacher using the postal service. As we are now in the internet age, the postal service has been replaced by email and other internet-based delivery types.

Online course delivery varies depending on cost. The cheaper the course, the lower the quality and job prospects are lower.

Most online TEFL courses are simply quizzes where you are shown material, asked questions, and your reward is a certificate of questionable quality. Sadly, you will not find out about the limitations of your cheap certificate until you start looking for work.

Most online courses do not have any input from experienced trainers, do not have lesson planning, do not have teaching practice, and are not externally moderated to ensure quality. This type of certificate will not be attractive to hiring managers in quality language schools. As the saying goes, "you get what you pay for".

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The EBC online Trinity CertTESOL course

The EBC online Trinity CertTESOL course uses MOODLE and ZOOM web technology. MOODLE is a standard platform used by many universities, and ZOOM is a professional, live communications tool we use for hosting our virtual classroom.

Live trainer input (face-to-face or in a virtual classroom).



At least 160 hours of total study time.



At least 6 hours of observed teaching practice with real English language learners.



Accreditation by a government registered university or examination board.



External moderation (quality control) by a visiting moderator of the university or examination board.



Documented acceptance and recognition by the British Council, an internationally recognised institution with English schools and offices in more than 110 countries.



Awards a public domain TEFL / TESOL certificate.



Unlike 99% of most online TEFL courses, the EBC Trinity CertTESOL online course has input from experienced trainers, lesson planning, teaching practice with real English language learners, and externally moderated to ensure quality. Besides, you will learn how to teach using ZOOM.

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This type of certificate is attractive to hiring managers in quality language schools. Quality has a cost, but it also has great advantages and benefits.

Pros

High-quality online courses cost less than four-week face-to-face courses because you do not have extra travel and accommodation.

A high-quality online course is ideal if you cannot afford to take time away from work or other daily commitments.

A high-quality online course is also the answer in these trying times of COVID.

A high-quality online course gets you your TESOL certification before you decide to travel and teach abroad.

When all TEFL certificates are in doubt because there are so many cowboy TEFL certificates, the name Trinity College CertTESOL is a guaranteed authentic TEFL certificate. Authenticity is the most important thing for all language school hiring managers.

Cons

Low-quality online courses (self-study TEFL quiz courses) are not attractive to language school hiring managers.

Language schools have low or no respect for online TEFL certified teachers who have never taught in a classroom (real or virtual).

Your job opportunities are limited if your online course did not include teaching practice.

Some people prefer face to face study over virtual study.

Summary

A high-quality online TEFL course offered by a trusted and reputable course provider will train you to be an EFL and ESL teacher in the safety of your home.

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There are only two high-quality online TEFL courses available, and the Trinity CertTESOL is one of them.

Online study is cheaper because you do not have to pay for airfare and lodging while you are getting trained.

If you do a gold standard certificate course like the Trinity College CertTESOL, you can take your time choosing the country where you would want to relocate to, and you do not risk course cancellations due to COVID.

If you really want to teach abroad and want to start your training as soon as possible, take an online course. If your course provider is an internationally trusted name like the Trinity CertTESOL, your certificate will open more doors to job opportunities as a face to face or online teacher EFL teacher than any other certificate.

HYBRID / BLENDED LEARNING

Hybrid / blended learning courses are a half-way house between an online course and a face-to-face course.

The hybrid / blended learning course combines an online course to learn the theoretical aspects of teaching with a short face-to-face teaching practice course.

Make sure that the hybrid / blended learning course has the best TEFL course content according to British Council international TEFL standards:

Pros

A high-quality hybrid / blended learning course combines most of the advantages of online and face-to-face learning.

A high-quality hybrid / blended learning course includes teaching practice which will help you get work.

Cons

The online part has the problem of a lack of immediate response by a tutor to your questions. The face-to-face part still has the problem of you needing to ded-

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icate time and travel to complete the face-to-face part or teaching practice module.

The uncertainty of you completing the course. You could have finished the online part, but if the country where you are to do the face-to-face part is closed to travel, what then? You paid for a blended course, and you cannot get your certificate because you have not finished the course. Money and time wasted.

Summary

Hybrid / blended learning is for you if you want more than an online course but cannot afford the time or perhaps the cost of a 4-week intensive face-to-face course.

Abbreviated one week or weekend courses

These courses provide the equivalent of a management summary about teaching English. They are not designed to train you how to teach. They are overview courses. Anyone who tells you otherwise is not telling the truth.

The course is usually given over a weekend or a few days (usually 1 week). You usually get 16 to 20 hours of tuition so as you can imagine. You are not going to learn anything to the level of detail you will need to teach properly. Usually, there is no teaching practice either.

Pros

Short and cheap.

Cons

On a cost per hour basis, they are expensive, usually twice the price of a face-to-face course and often more expensive than a good online course. If you are given a certificate at the end of it, very few employers will accept it because it fails the generally accepted minimum criteria for a TEFL certificate.

Summary

If you have a bit of time to spare on the weekend and are looking for something

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to do, then this type, of course, could be for you. If you are serious about teaching English and want to get an acceptable qualification, then do not take one of these courses. If due to personal circumstances, the abbreviated or weekend course is the only type, of course, you can do, save your money.

Aside from slick marketing, we have no idea how these courses survive as they are basically useless if you want to teach abroad.

COURSE SELECTION CRITERIA

Here are the main criteria you should consider when making a short-list of face-to-face, online and hybrid/blended learning courses. You should find out the following:

1. Does the course have live trainer input?
2. Does the course have at least 160 hours of total study time?
3. Does the course have at least 6 hours of observed teaching practise with real English language learners?
4. Is the course accredited by a government registered university or examination board?
5. Is the course externally moderated to ensure quality control by a university or examination board's visiting moderator?
6. Does the TEFL certificate has documented, the publicly available evidence of acceptance and recognition by the British Council (an internationally recognised institution with English schools and offices in more than 110 countries)?
7. Is the certificate you get a public domain TEFL / TESOL certificate?
8. Can you get references from past students?
9. Are the course entry requirements selective, or can anyone take the course?
10. Does the course include a free, worldwide, lifetime job placement programme?
11. Does the course give you travel help?
12. Does the course give you accommodation help?
13. Does the course give you student visa help?

If you follow our basic guidelines, you will end up with the course that best suits your needs, and that does not fail your expectations.

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Before you continue, here are some things you will not have to worry about if you choose the EBC Trinity CertTESOL online or face-to-face course:

1. The quality of the course
2. The quality and experience of your course tutors
3. The international recognition of your qualification
4. An open door to British Council school jobs in over 110 countries
5. Getting an English teaching job
6. The authenticity of your certificate when you apply for work visas
7. The course syllabus
8. All course material
9. The qualifications and experience of our trainers
10. The quality of our training centres
11. The content and truthfulness of our web site

HOW TO GET A LIST OF COURSES

These days the internet is your source. Many web portals list TESOL TEFL courses around the world. An alternative is to go to a search engine, e.g., Google, MSN Search etc. and type in a few keywords, such as TEFL course, Trinity College CertTESOL, and the location where you would like to work or study. This will give you a list of all courses in the area that you are interested in.

Once you have the list, start making a short-list based on the suggested criteria shown in the next sections.

A word of caution about TEFL course web portals

Be incredibly careful about TEFL portals. You can tell them apart from organisations that run courses because they usually offer many courses run by different schools in different locations.

The easiest way to check if the web site you are looking at is to do a "PORTAL TEST". The "PORTAL TEST" is to ask the question, "give me the address and phone number of your school in [country]." If they say no, they are hiding the identity of the school because 1) it is a bad school or 2) they do not want you to apply directly to the school because they will lose their commission.

They are the equivalent of travel agents, but unlike travel agents, they will not

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tell you who your course provider is until you have paid. By then it will be too late to back out if you find that they have just sold you a course from a provider that you had previously rejected.

They operate on commission; they are pure for-profit organisations; they add no value to the TEFL community. They only confuse by creating the illusion of courses that they run. The reality is that all they are doing is maintaining a sales portal, taking your few hundred USD, GBP, Euros, etc. and then simply passing you along to the actual school that will train you. Added value or quality? You decide.

Does the course have live trainer input?

Trainer input is essential. It should be live and interactive in a classroom or in a virtual classroom like EBC's that uses ZOOM. How can you learn effectively without expert guidance? Teaching is a human skill. It cannot be learned by reading and watching a few videos. As a benchmark, EBC's face-to-face course has 100 trainer contact hours, and EBC's online course has 80 trainer contact hours. Contact hours are live either in a physical classroom or a ZOOM virtual classroom.

Does the course have at least 160 hours of total study time?

Anything less than 160 hours is simply not enough. This total covers live sessions with your trainer, homework, self-study, and exams.

Does the course have at least 6 hours of observed teaching practice with real English language learners?

If a course does not have this component, it is more difficult for you to find a job. Schools want teachers who have experienced teaching a classroom. They do not want people with only academic and theoretical knowledge. The other component here is "observed". If you teach practice classes and are not observed by a qualified trainer/observer, you will not get feedback, so how will you improve?

As a point of comparison, EBC gives you 6 hours of teaching practice taught to classes of non-native English speakers. These classes are taught via Zoom or in a physical classroom. You will teach 2 beginners, 2 intermediate and 2 advanced level classes to see the challenges associated with each level.

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Is the course accredited by a government registered university or examination board?

This is a tricky area. A guaranteed answer to this is Trinity College London. This UK government registered, and regulated examination board awards the world's gold-standard TEFL certificate. The British Council and its schools officially recognise the Trinity CertTESOL in over 110 countries.

Almost all of the alleged examination board accreditation you will see will be home-grown, unregistered or second tier compared to Trinity College London.

Is the course externally moderated to ensure quality control by a university or examination board's visiting moderator?

Trinity College London externally moderates every course using a visiting, independent moderator. No other accreditation does this. This is of vital importance to good employers because it guarantees quality.

Does the TEFL certificate have publicly available evidence of acceptance and recognition by the British Council (an internationally recognised institution with English schools and offices in more than 110 countries)?

Evidence that the Trinity College London CertTESOL is accepted and recognised is here on the British Council web site on page <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teacher-training/formal-qualifications>.

The British Council has schools in over 110 countries, and the Trinity CertTESOL allows you to work in them. If the TEFL course you want to attend is not mentioned on this web page, it is probably not accepted and recognised by the British Council, and you will not be allowed to teach in their schools.

This is a good example of other TEFL certificate limitations.

Is the certificate you get a public domain TEFL / TESOL certificate?

A public domain certificate means that a government recognises the certificate. If the government does not recognise a certificate, is not public domain and is difficult to get "apostilled", it would be difficult to prove that your certificate is authentic when you want to work abroad. An apostille is a process that proves that

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a document, like your TEFL certificate, is authentic.

The Trinity CertTESOL is registered on the UK's "Ofqual" list. Ofqual is a UK government qualification registry. The link to the Trinity College London (TCL) CertTESOL is here: [https://register.ofqual.gov.uk/Detail/Index/19650?category=qualifications&query=TCL%20Level%205%20Certificate%20in%20Teaching%20English%20to%20Speakers%20of%20Other%20Languages%20\(Cert%20TESOL\)](https://register.ofqual.gov.uk/Detail/Index/19650?category=qualifications&query=TCL%20Level%205%20Certificate%20in%20Teaching%20English%20to%20Speakers%20of%20Other%20Languages%20(Cert%20TESOL))

Can you get references from past students?

Always ask the schools that you are considering for references from previous course students. This is by far the best way to check how good a school is. EBC is more than happy to provide references, and we have a lot of references on our web site, Google and YouTube.

You can also learn more about our graduates' experiences by following our blogs.

Are the course entry requirements selective, or can anyone take the course?

In general, almost all courses (accredited and non-accredited) will accept anyone from the age of 18 that finished secondary education.

EBC's entry requirements are probably the highest of all courses. You must be at least 18, and either has a degree or 5 years of work experience. We set the bar higher than most because we know that this student profile is employable immediately after graduation. We do not want to give anyone who enrolls on our course false expectations of getting employed; it would be unethical to do so.

Does the course include a free, worldwide, lifetime job placement programme?

Ask the schools on your short-list what type of job help they give. This is especially important because you do not want to be hanging around without work for weeks after finishing your course. Make sure you do not forget to ask what kind of job help they will give you. Ask the school to give a detailed explanation of how their job placement works. Ask the school for specific examples of how they have helped people. Ask them to give you a contact for someone they have helped find a job.

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EBC is different because EBC applies for jobs for you.

EBC's lifetime, job placement assistance programme is unique and unrivalled. It is proactive, fast, efficient and it will have you working within a few days (or less) of graduating from one of our face-to-face courses or after completing the teaching practice option that goes with our online certificate course.

EBC will give you help and advice that quickly translates into getting a teaching job abroad with a reputable educational institution.

So far, everyone who has taken our course and then wanted to stay on and work has done so. This is regardless of what passport they hold. Most people are interviewing within a few days of finishing the course, and all who want to stay are working within about a week of finishing.

Does the course give you travel help?

You will need help with flights, transfers, and health/travel insurance. Make sure that the school you choose helps you and advises you about these issues before your travel.

EBC's central and local staff will help you out with flights, transfers, health/travel insurance and accommodation.

Does the course give you accommodation help?

It is best to get your accommodation arranged at least 3 to 4 weeks before you plan on starting the course. Part of your course selection process should include finding out from your short-list of schools whether they provide accommodation or whether they will refer you to reputable accommodation agents, hotels, hostels, etc. They will also provide some advice and assistance.

The school that you eventually choose should be sympathetic because you are moving to a new country to study and therefore need all the help you can get. EBC offers help all the way regarding accommodation. We have a wide range of reputable accommodation options at affordable prices.

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Does the course give you student visa help?

Some countries may require you to get a student visa. Ask the school if one can be arranged for the countries where they run face-to-face courses.

EBC has a one-year student visa programme for Spain that allows you to study and work. You get the Spanish student visa programme with our face-to-face and online TEFL courses. If you take the online course, you can do the course first and then get the student visa. This means that you do not have to pay for your student visa when you pay for the course. You can delay paying for your student visa until a time that best suits you. Taking the online option can save you up to 3,500 Euros.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND THE FUN FACTOR

If you want to attend a face-to-face TEFL course based purely on the fun factor - save your money. You will have more fun and money to spend whilst travelling abroad without the additional challenge of attending a face-to-face TEFL course. Having said that, the fun factor does play a useful role if it is secondary to your learning experience. As the old saying goes "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy". If your course is all work without any extra-curricular activities to give you some needed relaxation time, then you may begin to look at your course as more of a chore than something that you appreciate doing.

In EBC's case, we have to say that the EBC face-to-face TEFL course is intensive, and it is challenging, but we do add in extra-curricular activities. Group dinners, visits to discos, cultural excursions or simply watching Spain's world-famous flamenco dancing, etc.

We have found that these activities, help you relax and recharge your batteries for focussing on the course.

COST AND QUALITY

The cost of a TEFL course is relative. In general, accredited courses cost more than non-accredited courses for one simple reason; the course operator has to pay a registration and certification fee on a per-head basis to the accrediting organisation. You must always check with the accredited schools on your short-list whether the moderation fees are included in the course fee.

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There are cheaper courses that may have some alleged accreditation, but is it worth it in the long run? Would you pay for a cheap degree with dubious accreditation? If your answer is no, take my advice and get the Trinity CertTESOL accredited certificate. It will open more doors to jobs just about anywhere in the world than almost all other TEFL certificates.

The EBC Trinity College CertTESOL course is possibly the best value for money course there is.

EBC has designed the course around your objectives, budget and ambitions to be a successful English language teacher and improve your life and give something back to society.

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CONTACT US TO ASK MORE QUESTIONS

To request a call-back from one of our student advisers, just email us, give us your phone number or Skype id, and we will call you.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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YOUR NEXT STEP

1. [Apply for an EBC course by filling out an application on our web site.](#)
2. If you have applied, [guarantee your place by securely sending your deposit via our web site.](#)

READY TO START?

EBC's mission is to ensure that you achieve your teaching goals and get you started on a successful EFL career. We focus on quality training and getting you a job in the shortest time possible, usually within a week or less.

The **4-week, intensive EBC online CertTESOL course** is a practical and thorough course designed for candidates with no previous experience teaching English. It is also suitable for candidates with some experience but no formal training in the TEFL TESOL field.

The **EBC online Trinity CertTESOL** gives you online training, feedback sessions with your dedicated trainer and even better, you get the option to get a one year Student Visa that allows you to come and work in Spain.

EBC is an accredited centre of Trinity College and awards internationally recognized TEFL certificates.



EBC International TEFL Certificate—Accredited TEFL training courses

EBC International TEFL Certificate

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