Choosing a Program for Teaching Abroad Without Certification

There are several strategies for finding an overseas teaching position. Below are three different options; the University of Michigan International Center generally recommends the first option which entails applying through a U.S. based organization.

- Apply through a U.S.-based organization. These usually arrange the placement and provide for logistical matters, such as housing and a work permit. An extensive list of programs with worldwide placement can be found here. [1]
- Contact overseas schools directly. Keep in mind that chances of success are limited without going to that country for an in-person interview.
- Go to the country where you would like to work and apply in person for a teaching position. This method may be costly because the individual is responsible for transportation and living costs before the position is found. Also noteworthy- one would likely have to leave the country just to get a work permit if the job is obtained.

Teach Abroad Placement Organizations

Most U.S.-based teaching placement organizations are small non-profits. Other programs include the Peace Corps, the Fulbright Teaching Assistantship and English teaching assistant programs sponsored by the Japanese, Korean, French and Spanish governments. Placement organizations view their mission as one primarily of cultural exchange, not as a placement agency for well-paid overseas jobs.

Most organizations prefer a commitment of one academic year, though some offer summer or semester possibilities. A bachelor's degree (BA or BS) is a minimum requirement for most positions. Unless otherwise indicated, participants are responsible for round-trip transportation and health insurance.

Programs vary widely in the fees, services, and assistance they offer. When choosing a program, inquire about the following basic criteria before applying: fees, salary, job placement, work permit, health insurance, housing, teacher training and materials, whether there is an orientation, and level of on-site support. It is important to ask placement organizations about these specific details before arriving. The following is a deeper discussion of these criteria.

**Fees.** How much are the application and program fees, if any? What exactly do they include (airfare, housing, work permit)?

**Job placement.** Who and what age are the students? Elementary, high school, university students or adults? Where and what kind of school? A state school, private school, or for-profit language institute?
Salary. How much and how often will you be paid? Compare your salary with the cost of living. When converted to U.S. dollars, is it enough to cover your basic living expenses in-country?

Health insurance. Is health insurance provided? Health insurance may not be provided by program fees, may be available for a separate fee, or you may be covered by socialized medicine available only in-country. Obtain an International Teachers' ID Card or ISIC Card for $25 at MyISIC [2], which includes a minimal health insurance policy and provides access to student-rate airfare prices. Consider special comprehensive coverage for educators.

Current U-M students are encouraged to purchase the U-M Travel Abroad Health Insurance [3] to cover their time abroad.

Teaching materials and training provided by the program. Determine just what teaching materials and training the program provides. If they do not provide teaching materials, can they recommend some to bring with you? Also, even if some training is provided, it would nevertheless be useful to get experience teaching or tutoring in the U.S.

Source URL: https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/abroad/swt/work/choosing-program-teaching

Links
[1] https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/abroad/swt/work/programs-worldwide-placement
[3] https://www.uhs.umich.edu/tai