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Module 1: Introduction

What's the Difference Between CELTA and TEFL/TESOL?

- TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language.
- TESOL: Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
- TESL: Teaching English as a Second Language.
- CELTA: Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (now known as Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)

It's perhaps no surprise that one of the most popular jobs for native English speakers abroad is teaching their mother tongue, but choosing a certification for this career option can make it feel like you're drowning in a veritable alphabet soup of acronyms: TEFL, TESOL, TOEFL, TESL, CELTA... How are you to know the difference and, more importantly, how are you to know which one is right for you and your career?

The question was, which one to choose?

When it comes to choosing between TEFL/TESOL and CELTA, the first thing to know, right off the bat, is what these acronyms stand for:

- TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language
- TESOL: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
- TESL: Teaching English as a Second Language
- CELTA: Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (now known as Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)

While at their roots, each of these acronyms means something slightly different, in practice, the first three are often used interchangeably to refer to any certification program that trains an English speaker to teach their language to others.

Acquiring a TEFL/TESOL certificate is your first step to career freedom, opening the door to traveling and teaching in practically any country in the world. But before you jump head first into verbs, vocabulary, and visualizing yourself kicking back on a Thai beach after a day's teaching, there's an important decision to be made: Exactly how many hours of TEFL/TESOL course study should you go for?

TEFL and TESOL courses come in all shapes and sizes. 120 hours is the standard length of most courses, generally because this is the traditional amount of contact time if you sit the internationally-recognized CELTA course. All TESOL/TEFL courses are internationally recognised.

So why dedicate more of your precious hours towards your qualification?

In one word: experience.



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If your TEFL/TESOL course is longer than 120 hours, it's likely that some (or all) of those extra hours will be put towards your 'Practicum,' which consists of hours spent observing, assisting, and teaching in the classroom. It might seem like a no-brainer that you need to have a chance to put into action the lessons you've learned, but many online TEFL/TESOL courses don't even (sometimes) offer a practicum but most schools would prefer it from an English Teacher, who likes to apply for a Teaching position.

A longer TEFL/TESOL course can also include all sorts of extra goodies. You might gain a more thorough and comprehensive training in areas beyond the traditional nuts and bolts of TEFL tuition, such as teaching in a business or young learner context or preparing students for English language exams.

You'll also find that these courses, many of which are accredited by independent examinations bodies, look better on your resume than the standard 120-hour TEFL/TESOL every other teacher is applying with on their resume. You never know, they might well be the thing that makes you stand out from the crowd when it comes to the crunch: the all-important job application.

Difference between TESOL and TEFL?

TEFL refers to Teaching English as a Foreign Language: programs in countries where English is not the primary language and is not a lingua franca. TESOL, which stands for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, is a general name for the field of teaching that includes both TESOL and TEFL.

What is your budget for a TEFL certification?

The cost of a TEFL/TESOL certification can vary greatly depending on what type and what level, or the number of hours, you want to be certified for. A 120-hour course is generally what most overseas teaching jobs will require or prefer. Fewer hours will typically be cheaper and likewise greater hours will typically be more expensive. Generally, TEFL/TESOL certifications run from a few hundred dollars to a few thousand.

By far, online TEFL/TESOL certifications are the cheapest option out there: you can get TEFL/TESOL certified for less than \$100! Though you need to be wary when searching for inexpensive TEFL/TESOL options, as unfortunately often a cheaper course equates to a lower quality course. Don't believe all the rumors though, it is possible to find good quality and informative course without breaking the bank.

In-class certifications tend to be much more expensive than online TEFL/TESOL courses, and with many additional costs as well. You will have to consider accommodation which is rarely included,, daily expenses, and flights (often) in addition to the course fee if your course is abroad. However, the higher cost also comes with more benefits and assistance.



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How much time can you commit to a TEFL/TESOL certification?

The time you can commit to a TEFL certification will determine what type of TEFL/TESOL course is best for you. If you are a student or working full-time, or both – an in-class option can be difficult to incorporate into a busy schedule. However, if you have the time to commit to an in-class course that option may be best for you.

Online certifications have the best customizability and flexibility since you can complete your certification on your own terms. Some online courses do have deadlines, but most typically give you six months to complete your course – which is more than enough time for even the busiest of bodies. The flexibility of an online course allows you to complete a TEFL/TESOL certification on the go, while traveling, working, or studying.

In-class certifications can take from a few weeks to a few months to complete. If you cannot find somewhere locally to get certified there are options all over the world to complete a TEFL/TESOL. For those who find it difficult to do self-directed studying and in-class certification is the best option for you. The time you spend on the course will be surrounded by other individuals who can support you and help you to get the most out of your learning experience.

What kind of experience are you looking for?

Participating in a TEFL/TESOL course abroad is a great way to see and experience a new place and culture meaningfully. You can discover more about another country and also gain experience teaching abroad with some types of in-class courses.

An in-class course abroad is also a great way to meet new people from around the world and gain knowledge at the same time. Some courses offer cultural immersion and language courses concurrently with a TEFL/TESOL course – which is a great way to get the most out of your experience abroad. Online courses of course can not offer this. Also tours or any extra activities are not offered with TESOL online courses. Only the Parada Foundation TESOL 4 week in-class course fee includes tours, activities and accommodation

However, if you want to travel while also getting a TEFL/TESOL certification you don't need to enroll in an in-class course. Since online TEFLs/TESOLs are so flexible, you can travel and get certified, for likely a much lower course fee. Alternatively, if you're not looking for experience during your TEFL/TESOL certification course you can save money with an online certification – giving you a larger travel budget when you eventually go overseas to teach English.



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What kind of course content are you looking for?

At this point, you know you want to teach English abroad and obtain a TEFL/TESOL certification, but you still need to consider all of the different available course options. For first-time teachers, it can be difficult to know how to approach teaching certain groups of students, such as young-learners or business clients. TEFL/TESOL courses often have special course modules that are dedicated to preparing you for special teaching situations.

Some online and in-class courses don't include these types of specialized training in their curriculums, so you need to make sure the course you select is going to give you the right kind of knowledge for your teaching career.

If you want to learn more than just teaching theory and practice while obtaining your certification an in-class option may be best for you. Many programs offer supplemental courses and cultural classes abroad that you can take while getting certified.

Here more abbreviations:

CEFR –Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

CELTA – Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (Cambridge ESOL Qualifizierung),

CertTESOL – Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (Trinity College Qualifizierung),

CETYL – Certificate in English Language Teaching to Young Learners,

CLIL - Content and Language Integrated Learning -

DELTA – Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults (Cambridge ESOL

DipTESOL – Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (Trinity College Qualifizierung),

EAP – English for Academic Purposes,

EFL – English as a Foreign Language,

ELT – English Language Training (America),

ESL – English as a Second Language,

ESOL – English for Speakers of Other Languages,

ESP – English for Special Purposes,

IELTS – International English Language Testing System,

TEFL – Teaching English as a Foreign Language,

TESL – Teaching English as a Second Language (usually for immigrant/long term learners),

TESOL – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages,

TKT – Teaching Knowledge Test (Cambridge-Examen),

TOEFL – Test of English as a Foreign Language,

[Link to Exam](#)