



Considering teaching English in China?

(Information current as at 23 February 2017)

The Education and Research Section in the Australian Embassy has received a number of enquiries from Australians seeking clarification of Chinese government requirements for teaching English in China.

Regulations and guidelines governing foreign teachers in China are established by the [State Administration for Foreign Expert Affairs \(SAFEA\)](#). In regard to education and experience requirements for teaching in China, the SAFEA states: "The foreign educational expert should hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree and more than two years of related work experience." The way the guidelines are implemented varies from province to province depending on the position and on local requirements. Some provinces may insist on a bachelor's degree as a condition for issuing a work certificate and a foreign expert certificate (FEC), another may only require an EFL teaching credential, e.g., TEFL, TOESL, CELTA, etc., while others require none of the above. There is no legal requirement to have a Bachelor degree or TEFL, TOESL, CELTA credential to teach English in China.

English teachers in China are employed in a wide variety of institutions and settings (including kindergartens, boarding schools, summer and winter camps, business English teaching, private language institutions, university departments, private teaching and tutoring). It is recommended that prospective teachers take care to confirm with their potential employers any requirements regarding level of education qualifications and work experience for teaching in China.

The key to successful employment as an English teacher in China is to be employed by a reputable school or company and to negotiate a well-written contract prior to leaving Australia. It is advised that anyone considering accepting an English teaching job in China carefully review the terms of the contract regarding working and living conditions before accepting a teaching position.

Working legally in China requires a "Z" Visa from a Chinese embassy or consulate. The Z visa is the only valid work visa. Sponsorship from an employer is needed in order to obtain a Z

visa. Prospective teachers should also be aware that working in China on any type of visa other than the Z visa, such as a tourist “L” visa or student “F” or “X” visa, is illegal and can result in large fines or even detention.

Information on obtaining a Z visa and a complete listing of the documents required is available on the website of the [Chinese Embassy in Australia](#).

For further enquiries, please contact the [Education and Research Section](#) of the Australian Embassy in Beijing.