



Living and working in the UK



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1. Welcome

We hope you're feeling excited ahead of your big adventure to the UK!

Heading to a new country can be daunting, which is why we have made this guide to help. We are experts in all things education and since 2018 we have helped international educators, just like you, start their new adventure. We want to make sure you get the most out of the UK, by making the most of your career opportunities and seeing all that the country and surrounding areas have to offer.

This guide is here to show you what life is really like in the UK, along with our top spots to visit. We will also go through all the important bits, such as visas and accommodation, so you can step onto the plane with confidence.

If you have any questions about anything in this guide, drop us an email and our team will be more than happy to help.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Meet the team



Christine Roseto
Head of International



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Join the conversation!



@TeacherActive



2. A once in a lifetime opportunity

We can't always vouch for the weather, but life in the UK is completely unique. A country full of history and culture, nightlife, scenic spots and metropolitan hubs. One day you could be strolling the grounds of an ancient castle, and the next enjoying the UK's unique comedy shows, films, music and art.

From fish and chips to Cadbury's chocolate, a pint down the pub or a classic cup of tea, you will find new things to see and do every day, either solo travelling or with other educators you meet at our social events!

Want to travel past the British Isles? Then you're in luck, as you won't be far from an airport that will take you to France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Poland and the rest of Europe in just a few hours.

It's hard to tell you everything the UK has to offer in just a few paragraphs, which is why you need to experience it for yourself.



Want to know where to begin? Contact our team today.



3. Why TeacherActive?



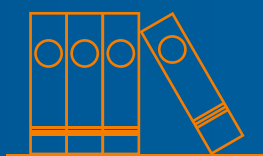
Free flights to
the UK*



Guaranteed pay
schemes



Relocation
support



Free CPD
resources



Top daily
rates



Termly social
events



Network of
over 3,600
schools



Dedicated consultants,
expert advice

Ready to start your UK adventure?

Get in touch today.

*T&C's apply.



4. What should I do when?

Preparation is key to getting the most out of your time in the UK. Once you know your arrival date, it's time to get planning! Below is our recommended roadmap to success, which you should start around 12 months before your arrival.

Roadmap

12 months before

- Reach out to your TeacherActive specialist.
- Research life in the UK (we'll help you get started).
- Learn more about our roles and schools.
- Follow us on social media and download our app!

Six months before

- Review our CPD videos on My-Progression.
- Apply for QTS if you're a qualified teacher.
- Research your visa options.
- Select your UK location(s) of choice.

Three months before

- Apply for your visa and police checks.
- Send us your documents.
- Book your flights and arrange accommodation.
- Connect with local UK consultants and schools.

On arrival

- Meet your local UK consultants in person.
- Apply for your National Insurance number.
- Get your UK SIM card or eSIM.
- Explore your new community!

We offer reimbursement on standard flights up to a specified limit once you have worked 20 days or more with us. T&Cs apply.



5. All about education in the UK

The UK curriculum will, of course, be different from what you are used to. But you'll be surprised at how many similarities there are with your home country's curriculum. Here's a handy guide for you to reference, for more information visit the [UK Government's website](#).

The school years:

Age		Year	Stage	School
3-4	Pre-school Reception	Foundation	Pre-school	
4-5				
5-6	1	Key stage 1	Primary school	
6-7				2
7-8	3	Key stage 2		
8-9				4
9-10				5
10-11				6
11-12	7	Key stage 3	Secondary school	
12-13				8
13-14				9
14-15	10	Key stage 4		
15-16				11
16-17	12	Key stage 5	Sixth form	
17-18				13

Each term is usually 13 weeks long, with a week off halfway through, called half term.

You can expect around two weeks off at the end of term one and term two, for Christmas and Easter respectively. When the school year ends, you can expect six weeks off for the summer holidays.

Each region of the UK varies with its exact term dates, so please see this as a rough guide. You'll often find Year 11s and Year 13s may finish earlier, depending on where their last exams fall. For more detailed curriculum information, head to [GOV.UK](#) or check your local council's website for specific term dates.



6. How is the education system different from other parts of the world?

The UK school year runs from September to July. Pupils will usually wear uniform up until key stage 5, and most school days start between 8 am and 9 am and end between 3 pm and 4 pm, with breakfast and after-school clubs around these times.

The core subjects across primary and secondary school are English, maths and science. In secondary school (usually in Year 9) pupils will be able to pick other subjects, such as foreign languages, art, sports, science and more, to take and study for their GCSEs.

Pupils will take SATs (Standard Assessment Tests) when they are 10-11 years old (key stage 2) and sometimes around age seven (key stage 1). GCSEs are taken at ages 15 and 16, and A Levels are taken at ages 17 to 18.

Here's how the school year is structured...

Term 1	Starts: Early September Half term: Mid/Late October Ends: Mid-December, before the Christmas holidays
Term 2	Starts: Early January Half term: Early/mid-February Term ends: Late March/early April
Term 3	Term starts: Mid-April Half term: Late May/Early June Term ends: Late July





7. Do I need a license to work in UK education?

You may not need Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) immediately, depending on the role and your visa. However, many overseas qualifications are eligible to be converted to QTS. If you're a fully qualified teacher registered with your local teaching council, your teaching degree likely qualifies. Our team can guide you through the application process for QTS if needed.

Accelerate your education career



myprogression



We mentioned My-Progression earlier in this guide, we really believe this is a great tool to help you prepare for your UK adventure! From breaking down the UK education system to managing challenging behaviour in the classroom, planning your lessons or marking your papers, My-Progression is designed to give you knowledge, advice and support in bite-sized videos, all for free!

Get started with our international playlist by clicking on the images below. Don't forget to subscribe to **My-Progression** to keep your career in motion. Get instant access to a suite of CPD content right in your pocket. **Download our TeacherActive App** to learn when you want, learn when you can!

**KEY STAGES IN
ENGLISH SCHOOLS**
ENGLISH EDUCATION
SYSTEM
#1



ALL ABOUT
**EMERGENCY
BOOKINGS**



**TYPES OF ENGLISH
SCHOOLS**
ENGLISH EDUCATION
SYSTEM
#2





8. Visas and immigration

It is a requirement to have the right visa to stay and work in the UK. Your visa will need to be dated within three months of your intended arrival, so start applying between three to six months in advance. You can do so by heading to **the GOV.UK website**.

TeacherActive accepts the following visas:

- Youth Mobility (YMS) visa
- British/Irish passport
- UK Ancestry visa
- Family visa (spousal, dependent)
- British National Overseas (BNO) visa
- Indefinite Leave to Remain
- EU Settled Status



eVisa & Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)

In 2024 Biometric Residence Permits were replaced by an eVisa. An eVisa acts as digital proof of your immigration status and can be accessed by creating a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account. To create an account, you will need:

- Your passport
- Via application number
- Email address
- Phone number
- Access to the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app
- A valid BRP number
- Your BRP card (if you were issued one) - this can be expired

More information on creating a UKVI account can be found on this **Gov.UK video**.

Once you have obtained your eVisa, you will need to send your share code to your international consultant to confirm your right to work and immigration status.





9. National insurance and NHS

National insurance

National Insurance covers fire, police, ambulances and healthcare services, and is automatically deducted from everyone's wages. To pay for this you need a National Insurance number.

Check to see if your National Insurance number is already on your eVisa. If not, you will be able to apply for one on the [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk) when you arrive to the UK. You will need your passport, eVisa, and a fixed address to apply.



Healthcare and the NHS

The NHS stands for the National Health Service. After you have registered with a GP and have an NHS number, you can:

- Visit a doctor or nurse
- Get emergency medical help
- See a midwife if you are pregnant
- Get treatment or help from a hospital

Eye tests, dental appointments and prescriptions incur extra charges depending on the service.

How to register with the NHS:

1. Find out where your local GP (General Practitioner) surgery is.
2. Go there with your proof of identity and address and tell them you would like to register.
3. Fill out the forms provided and return them to the GP surgery.



10. Banking and accommodation

Money makes the world go around, and opening a UK bank account will make payments easier. We can help you set up your UK bank account when you arrive and have a fixed address. Initially, you may want to use an online bank like Monzo or Revolut, but you should open a UK bank account as soon as possible.

Your payments will be processed by our payroll provider, WorkWell, and you will be paid weekly (a week in arrears) using a timesheet system.

About to book your flights?

We offer reimbursement on standard flights up to a specified limit once you have worked 20 days or more with us. To find out more and apply, speak to your international consultant.



Accommodation

Home is where the heart is, and to help you get settled into the UK, you need to find a place to call home. Most people who come to the UK decide to rent privately or share with housemates.

We can help you decide where to lay your head and give you valuable information on your local area. Different parts of the UK will vary in cost, so do some research on sites like [Zoopla](#), [RightMove](#) and [SpareRoom](#) to get an idea.

Our top tip:

Don't sign on the dotted line before heading to the UK. Stay in temporary accommodation or an AirBnB instead so you can explore the area in person.





11. How to get around

With all the natural beauty and greenery, you'd want to travel all over the UK by foot. But at 600 miles long from the tip of Scotland to the South Coast of England, you're going to need some help getting around!

National Rail



The UK is well connected by train, and you can find your local rail network on [the National Rail website](#). You have to buy a train ticket before you travel, or risk a fine. You can buy tickets at the station, or online. We recommend downloading the [TrainLine app](#). Check if you are eligible to purchase any [rail discount cards](#), saving you 1/3 off tickets.

By bus



Most cities and towns will have well-connected buses, take a look online to see what buses run in your area. You can also buy a combination train and bus pass for some journeys.

Other transport available



- Uber, Bolt and Ola taxis (most towns and cities).
- Local taxi ranks (call up to pre-book).
- London Underground (also known as the Tube).
- Metro trams (Manchester, Nottingham, Tyne and Wear, Sheffield and Birmingham).
- Rentable bikes and scooters (some cities).





12. Your life in the UK

Sights you need to see

- **London** - Including Big Ben, Houses of Parliament and Buckingham Palace.
- A castle or ruin - we recommend **Warwick**, **Dover** or **Kenilworth Castle**, however, most major towns and cities will have one nearby.
- **Stone Henge** - No one really knows why Stone Henge exists, but the 5,000-year-old neolithic monument is worth the visit.
- **Stratford Upon Avon** - The birthplace of Shakespeare is a place to catch a play and soak up the sights of an old English town.
- **The beach** - A trip to the UK wouldn't be complete without a seaside holiday.
- **Liverpool** - The birthplace of The Beatles is a bustling city of music, shopping and culture.
- **Portmeirion** - The village in Wales feels like stepping into Southern Italy with rainbow houses, plush gardens and beautiful beaches.

Your foodie checklist

- A full English breakfast.
- A cup of tea (make sure you put the teabag in before the milk).
- Fish and chips, with a side of mushy peas.
- A pork pie (bonus points if it's from Melton Mowbray).
- A pastry from Gregg's.
- A curry, either takeaway or from a traditional curry house.
- Pie and mashed potatoes.
- Heinz Baked Beans (delicious on toast).
- Scones, with clotted cream and jam (which way round you put the cream and jam is up to you).
- Eton Mess.

Other British stables

- Head down to the pub for an after-work pint or tippie of your choice.
- Shop 'til you drop on the local high street, a city's shopping centre or a designer outlet.
- Tune in to the UK's unique comedy on TV.
- Head to a forest, nature reserve or national park for a refreshing walk.





More about your life in the UK

For a relatively small island, you may be surprised to hear so many different accents, phrases, and dialects from the locals. Each region has their own unique way of speaking so you may need some help understanding just what everyone means!

Our cheat sheet

- Some regions will call lunchtime dinner, and dinnertime tea. If someone asks you what you had for your tea, they mean your evening meal.
- Each region will have slang and dialect, such as “alright bab” is a greeting in Birmingham. Research before you visit to get to know the lingo.
- There are over 50 accents in the UK, so don’t expect everyone to speak like the King!
- In Britain, we have different spellings for words like colour (color) organise (organize) and behaviour (behavior) compared to American spelling.



British slang

Alright/You alright?	Hello
Turrah	Goodbye
Rubbish	Something bad/not very good
Quid	British pounds/cash
Tad	Small/a little bit
Bob’s your uncle	There you go/it’s done
Gutted	Disappointed/sad
What are you on about?	An impolite/informal way of saying ‘what are you talking about?’



13. A community waiting for you

Throughout your UK adventure, you won't be alone. We will introduce you to a network of other teachers and education staff through our local social events, the perfect chance to network and socialise.

Follow us to keep up to date with news, announcements and events.



@TeacherActive



myprogression

Tune in to My-Progression on YouTube every week for new training videos on the UK education system, designed to keep your career in motion.

Hundreds of educators tune in every week, so why not join in the conversation by subscribing and commenting too? Don't forget to hit the notification bell to never miss a video.





Thank you

If you have any questions please get in touch.

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