

Quick Tip: 5 Considerations When Accepting a Position Abroad

by [John C. Zinck](#)

Securing a new teaching position abroad is an exciting proposition—experiencing a new culture, working with new students and colleagues, making new friends...but in addition to the regular considerations you would take into account before accepting a job in the United States, there are some additional matters that future expat teachers need to think about.

1. Getting Legal

Initial visa and work permits will likely be arranged by your employer, but you might want to confirm that renewals will also be organized and paid for by your employer. Accomplishing these required tasks on your own can prove to be time consuming, cumbersome, and costly.

2. What Goes Up Must Come Down

Do some research into the exchange rate of your new country's currency. Don't just check today's rate, but go back more than a few years to try and determine its stability against the U.S. dollar. It's nearly impossible to predict fluctuations in currency markets, but taking a look at past valuations will give you a better frame of reference. This is particularly important for those paying off student loans or credit card debt.

3. Learning the Lingo

Sure, you'll be teaching in English and many of your colleagues will speak English, but what about life outside the classroom? Will your employer provide language lessons for you? If not, are there language teaching professionals available nearby? Will interoffice documents be available in English? Forms, such as for getting copies made or requests for leave, are difficult enough in one's own language, much less a language in which you're not yet proficient.

4. An Apple a Day

Most jobs will include basic health/medical insurance, but is that all you'll need? Care from doctors and nurses who speak English can be more costly than what your new employer's plan will cover. You might want to think about purchasing a supplemental policy to the coverage provided by your employer. You might also want to consider a worst case scenario in which you need to fly back to the United States for medical care, so check to see if repatriation coverage is included in your policy.

5. Don't Forget to Keep in Touch with Uncle Sam

Despite working abroad, you're still required to file a U.S. tax return. The good news is that currently, foreign earned income under US\$97,600 is not taxed by the U.S. government. Something else that is important to keep in mind: If your bank accounts abroad have an aggregate value of US\$10,000 or more, you must file a [Report of Foreign Bank and Financial Accounts](#) (FBAR) with the U.S. Treasury Department.

The experiences you have teaching abroad will undoubtedly create memories that will last a lifetime. But before you pack your bags, consider the points above to help make your immersion into a new culture as smooth as possible.

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