FAQ.

When the teacher reaches China, What to expect & the requirements to Teach in China

We work with a great number of reputable private schools in China, however, our teachers must meet the following requirements laid out by the Chinese State Administration for Foreign Expert Affairs. There are different procedures for various nationalities and for different locations around China.

**Teachers must meet the following requirements to teach in China:**

First-tier cities like Beijing and Shanghai require classroom based TEFL certifications or combined TEFL certificates that include online and classroom hours. If you are unsure about a TEFL course, go with a TEFL provider that will provide you with a certificate that does not have ‘online’ stamped across the front of it. Your 120 TEFL hours must be listed on the same certificate. The Chinese government will not accept multiple certificates from multiple courses.

* Degree with transcripts & SAQA verification
* TEFL certificate
* Police Clearance Certificate
* Valid Passport
* Medical reports

Document Process

After you’ve [aced your interview](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/ESL-job-interview-tips) and been offered a position at a school of your choosing, you will move through the following steps to obtain the proper paperwork to teach legally in China.

While you are in your home country, you’ll need:

* **A valid passport** with at least 12 months on it from the date of expiration
* **A formal letter of invite** from your school, otherwise known as a Foreign Expert Invitation (Note that this documentation is not provided by your school. They have to apply for your ID, and they have no control over how quickly your paperwork is processed. Some bureaus process paperwork quickly while others don’t. The waiting period is typically two to six weeks.
* **A Foreign Expert ID** (Your school will send this to you by post.)
* **YOU visit the nearest Chinese Consulate in your area** to apply for a Z visa (work visa) – Don’t forget to bring your letter of invite!
* **A**[**Z visa**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visa_policy_of_China) (Employment visa) – Although this can take a few months to get, it is by far the safest and easiest way to go to China. We don’t recommend that teachers go to China to teach on a tourist visa or another kind of visa unless they really want to arrive quickly and they are prepared to make extra trips to complete their document work for their Z visa. If you go to China on anything other than a Z visa, you must be prepared to do a visa run on your own.
* **A health check in your home country/medical forms are available to download.**

**Once you are in China:**

* **You’ll need to do a full health check in China the school will take you. The school will pay for this.**
* **You’ll register with the local police station** so they know where you’re living. Your school will help you do this.
* **Your school will help you get your Residence Permit**
* **The school will assist you to open a Chinese Bank account**
* **The school will assist you to obtain a Chinese sim card & VPN for home**

The Benefits of Teaching English in China

From the moment you land in China, your host school will begin helping you adjust to life in your new home. The benefits of an ESL job teaching English in China include :

1. A monthly salary of between 15,000-30,000RMB + depending of experience
2. Flights re-imbursement after completion of a year’s contract
3. Airport pickup
4. Free housing at most schools
5. Work Visa (working visa to legally teach English in China)
6. Health insurance coverage
7. Many of our schools provide a housing allowance or free accommodation
8. Contract completion bonus
9. Sign up bonusses
10. Performance bonus

Salaries are typically related to the cost of living in your preferred location in China.

Where Can I Teach in China?

Deciding where to teach English in China can be a difficult and stressful decision.

There are a myriad of ESL teaching jobs available in Chinaand they don’t always appear to be of the most reputable variety! That’s where Reach To Teach comes in. We carefully screen any school we work with.

As you experience our interview and screening process, you will find we are very careful in accepting teachers to the Reach To Teach program. If you are one of the few we accept, you can be sure we apply the same strict standards to the school locations and ESL teaching jobs we discuss with you!

**Different Tiers in China?**

Check out our China City Guides to get a better understanding of teaching locations in China. Whether you want to live in a big, bustling city like Shanghai or a third-tier city like Changchun, we have the right school for you!

Keep reading to learn about the differences in first-, second-, and third-tier cities in China.

Salaries are typically related to the cost of living in your preferred location in China. This means that even though you might be earning less in a smaller city, your salary and salary package are comparable to what you are earning in a large city like Shanghai or Beijing. Smaller city packages tend to pay less, but they include more salary perks and the cost of living is cheaper, which means you’ll still be able to save a large portion of your pay check each month. Larger city packages do pay more, but salary perks are typically built into your monthly salary.

No matter where you go, you’ll have access to everything you need to make you comfortable for your year abroad, including access to other expats in the area.

**First-tier Cities in China**

Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen are first-tier cities. They are known as the Big Four. The cost of living in these cities is much higher than in other cities in China. These cities also have the strictest requirements for teachers.

A full university degree, a 120-hour TEFL certification, and at least two years of post-graduate work experience and two years of teaching experience are needed to teach in these cities.

[**Beijing City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-beijing.html)

[**Guangzhou City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-guangzhou.html)

[**Shanghai City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-shanghai.html)

[**Shenzhen City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-shenzhen.html)

**Second-tier Cities in China**

Second-tier cities include capital cities of each province or coastal cities like Beihai, Changchun, Changsha, Chengdu, Chongqing, Dalian, Fuzhou, Guiyang, Haikou, Hangzhou, Harbin, Hefei, Huhhot, Jinan, Kunming, Lanzhou, Nanchang, Nanjing, Nanning, Ningbo, Qingdao, Sanya, Shenyang, Shijiazhuang, Suzhou, Taiyuan, Tianjin, Urumqi, Wenzhou, Wuhan, Wuxi, Xiamen, Xi’an, Yinchuan, and Zhengzhou.

[**Chengdu City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-china/teach-english-in-chengdu/)

[**Guiyang City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-guiyang)

[**Nanjing City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-English-Nanjing)

[**Ningbo City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-china/teach-english-in-ningbo/)

[**Shenyang City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-shenyang)

[**Tianjin City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-tianjin)

[**Xi’An City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-xian)

Third-tier Cities in China

Third-tier cities are usually medium-sized cities of each province. Note that third-tier cities still have millions of people living in them.

[**Changzhou City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-changzhou)

[**Jilin City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-jilin)

[**Taizhou City Guide**](https://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/teach-english-in-taizhou)

Expand Your Horizons – English Teaching Jobs at Reputable Schools

If you have decided to move forward in applying for an ESL job teaching English in China, congratulations! You have taken a unique step forward in making the decision to expand your horizons and challenge yourself. Your travels will soon lead you to discover many people who share your passion for exploration, travel and for broadening your horizons.

While you are teaching in Chinayou will find yourself making lasting connections with locals and other expats from around the world with fellow westerners as your co-workers. Chinese people often go out of their way to make teachers feel comfortable in their new surroundings. You will also have fellow westerners as your co-teachers.

Job Duties of an English Teacher in China

Your ESL job duties will include the following:

1. 18-25 in class teaching hours per week (Depending on school this will be provided by school in the job description)
2. 10-15 office hours per week. (Depending on school this will be provided by school in the job description) This will primarily be spent in the preparation of lesson plans
3. Teacher training is also provided and your school will have materials for use during ESL lesson preparation

Being in front of a classroom full of children can be a real challenge. It takes careful preparation and real caring for your students. Teaching English to young students is an important responsibility.

On a day-to-day basis a teacher’s job includes preparing proper lesson plans. An active and interesting classroom atmosphere is always encouraged! In addition to time spent in the classroom you will administer tests, grade papers and participate in school meetings with your Chinese co-teachers.

**Applications for PCC from teachers abroad:**

1. Applicants must courier their fingerprints accompanied with a clear copy of your passport or ID, to our office in Johannesburg 90 Rivonia Rd, Second Floor, North Wing, Sandton via POSTNET door to door.
2. Please, send a return addressed envelope with the fingerprints.

Can a PCC be reprinted?

Yes, Reprints are allowed for request before 3 months of date stamp on the PCC. Applicant will need to redo fingerprints and reapply once the 3 month validity has expired.

Document Attestation

What is the general procedure for stamping documents?

**Understanding the requirements of the country you wish to travel to. Do you require apostille or attestation?**

Documents needing to be attested will be sent directly to the Embassy of the country you wish to travel to. Middle Eastern embassies provide stamps and authentication that are higher than the Notary Public, High Court, Department of Basic & Higher Education, HPCSA and DIRCO & SAQA verified.

Documents needing apostille will be sent to the relative offices for stamping/authentication. This will add to your processing timeline.

What is the processing timeline for stamping documents?

The processing timeline is solely dependent on which Embassy you require stamping from and the documents in question.

Which documents can I send for attestation to proceed?

You may only send your original educational qualification, unabridged birth, marriage, diploma, TEFL/TESOL/SACE and death certificates.

Where can these documents be legalised and attested?

The majority of documents that are required to be attested can only be attested in Pretoria as this is where DIRCO (The Department of International Relations and Cooperation a.k.a Foreign Affairs) is located.
In order for documents to be attested they have to go to one or more of the following places:

* Notary Public and the High Court
* Departments of Basic and Higher Education as well as Umalusi
* HPCSA (Health Professions Council of South Africa)
* DIRCO
* SAQA
* The Relevant Embassy / Consulate

Should I apostille my documents or authenticate instead?

An Apostille is a form of authentication issued for documents that will be used in countries that participate in the Hague Convention.

Authentications refer to countries that are not members of the Apostille Convention and require different forms and certifications. The process is similar to obtaining an apostille; however it requires the additional Embassy Legalization by the Embassy of the country in which the document is to be presented and in use.

APPLYING FOR A VISA

United Arab Emirates Visa

Is it mandatory for me to obtain a visa to enter Dubai as well as UAE?

Yes, an entry visa is mandatory for all non-UAE citizens to travel to UAE. It is not applicable for citizens of the GCC nations, such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and Oman.

Do infants and children under the age of 18 require visa to enter UAE?

Yes, all children and infants traveling with their non-UAE citizen parent will require a visa to enter the UAE. All Dubai and UAE visa application forms for persons aged less than 18 years must be signed by a parent or legal guardian.

Who are eligible for visa on arrival in Dubai?

No prior arrangement for visa is required for nationals visiting to Dubai from certain European, North American, and Far East countries. These include Australia, Austria, Belgium, France, France, Germany, Iceland, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, Malaysia, Portugal, UK, and USA, among others. Since the list of visa-waiver countries is subject to change, be sure to inquire with your local embassy or airlines service provider to update yourself on the latest visa policies, before your visit to Dubai.

How should I apply for a Dubai visa from another country?

The simplest and most effective way would be to use a visa facilitation company like Visa Logistics, where you can apply online, and let them do the work for you. Alternatively, your relative or friend in the UAE can also apply for a visa on your behalf.

What are the different types of visa that I can apply for in UAE?

Depending on the duration or number of days you wish to spend in the UAE, as well as the purpose different types of visas include tourist visa, transit visa, work, student, medical, exhibitions/festivals/conference/government and visit visa.

What are the documents required to apply for and eVisa to the UAE?

For your electronic visa, you’ll have to submit passport-size colour photo, along with a scanned copy of your Bio Page of your passport with minimum six months validity at the time of travel.

How many days prior to your intended visit to Dubai, must you apply for visa?

Even though it will take only 3 to 4 working days for the processing of your visa, it is recommended you apply for your visa in advance. This will help for on-time processing of your visa while assuring you of a hassle-free trip to Dubai and the UAE.

Can I book my ticket before applying for a visa?

Yes, you can book your tickets to Dubai before applying for a visa.

How many days will it take to get a visa?

At Visa Logistics we issue eVisa’s which are much quicker than traditional paper visas stamped into your passport. As a result, Visa processing usually take 3 to 4 working days. But this largely depends on the prompt submission of required documents as well as the meeting of eligibility norms.

How much will a Visa to Dubai cost?

Costs quoted by Visa Logistics are inclusive of our Visa Facilitation Fee as well as the cost of the actual visa. The cost will vary depending on the length of our stay and whether it is single or multiple entries.

Is it possible for me to track the status of my visa application?

Yes.

Once we have received all your documentation and payment, we will send you a confirmation email. We will also keep you up to date with the status of your application every step of the way. You can also get in touch with our visa agents to know your visa application status.

Is visa fee refunded in case my application is rejected?

This is not possible, as the UAE immigration authority do not recompense for the rejected visa applications.

Can I know the reason of visa rejection?

No. The UAE immigration authorities, at most, do not reveal the reasons for the refusal of a visa.

Can I reapply for visa?

Yes, you can apply for visa again, provided you carefully meet qualifying criteria.

How will I receive my visa?

Once your visa is processed, it will be sent to your email.

What are the consequences of extended stay without the renewal of visa in UAE?

Apart from facing legal actions and payment of hefty overstay penalties, you will not be eligible to reapply for UAE visa in future.

Saudi Arabia Visa

How long does my passport need to be valid for?

You must be in possession of a valid US passport and have at least 6 months of validity from the time you will enter Saudi Arabia in order to be eligible for a KSA work visa.

What if my passport has been renewed since starting the visa application process?

* You must submit the passport which your employer in KSA has on file to process the visa
* If you need to change/renew your passport, please notify one of our Saudi Arabian Specialists ASAP

All the visa pages in my passport already have stamps on them, what do I do?

* Your passport must have TWO side by side adjacent pages AND they cannot be the amendment pages
* We can assist you in having additional pages added to your passport; this will not affect any of the information need to process your application, however additional services fees may be applied.

Do I need to write in any of the information in the first four (4) pages of my passport?

Your passport must be signed on the line above “signature of bearer.” If it is unsigned, it will be returned back to you for signing

What if my passport has been damaged?

Your passport MUST be in good condition and if we deem it unacceptable for processing, you will be required to renew your passport

Do I need to send my actual passport or just a copy?

You need to send your actual passport as your visa will be affixed to the passport pages

Turkey Visa

Do I need any vaccinations before going to Turkey?

There are no mandatory vaccinations before traveling to Turkey.

Do I need to enter Turkey on the exact date specified in my application?

No. The validity period of your e-Visa begins from the date specified in your application. You can enter Turkey on any date within this period.

Are all visas Multiple-entry visas?

No. Depending on which passport you hold. Some passport holders get single entry visas and others get Multiple-entry visas.

What are the Entry and Exit Formalities for Turkey?

You need a passport and visa to travel to Turkey. Passports should be valid for at least 90 days from the date of entry into Turkey. If you are traveling as a tourist, you can purchase a tourist visa at a Turkish Embassy or Consulate in the United States, or you can purchase a sticker visa at the Turkish airport or other port of entry for $20 (U.S.) cash. There is one exception: foreigners who are traveling to Turkey by cruise ship are allowed to enter Turkey without a visa for a maximum period of 72 hours, with the permission given by the local security authorities at the port of entry.

Effective February 1, 2012, a new law took effect allowing a maximum stay of 90 days within a 180-day period. The new regulation will not make any changes to the visa requirements for travel to Turkey, but it will affect how long U.S. citizens can remain in Turkey. If you are planning to stay in Turkey for more than 90 days within a 180-day period, you must get a Turkish residence permit. U.S. citizens who enter Turkey with a tourist visa and who wish to stay in Turkey for tourism purposes for longer than 90 days are now able to get a residence permit for tourism purposes for a maximum period of six months. This will allow U.S. citizens to stay in Turkey for tourism purposes for up to a total of nine months.

In order to obtain a tourist residence permit or any other class of residence permit, please contact the nearest Foreigners Police office in Turkey. The U.S. Embassy strongly urges U.S Citizens to not overstay their visas and to maintain valid residence permits at all times. Turkish authorities do enforce the laws, including those stipulating fines, deportation, and bans on future travel to Turkey for people who overstay their visas or do not maintain valid residence permits.

Foreigners who have overstayed their visas, residence permits, or visa-exempt periods and are subject to a fine can also benefit from the residence permit procedure as long as they pay the related fines.

Is it safe to drink tap water in Turkey?

Turkey practices safe sanitation standards & tap water is suitable for bathing & regular tasks such as brushing teeth. However, as it is heavily chlorinated (especially in summer) it is advisable to drink bottled water. Locals also drink bottled water delivered in 20 - 25 litre containers to their homes -workplaces. We recommend that visitors follow local custom & drink bottled water.

How should visitors dress in Turkey?

Casual wear is appropriate for most tour excursions. Women wear pants or skirts, but when visiting mosques it is recommended that they cover their heads with a scarf & both sexes should not wear shorts out of respects for religious customs.

What is the best time to travel in Turkey?

The most favourable season for travel in Turkey generally runs between early April & late October. During the off-season, temperatures are much cooler & snow is possible in mountainous areas. Many visitors enjoy the spring & fall, with their mild weather & small crowds. Coastal regions are particularly popular during the summer. These include resort areas along the Aegean & Mediterranean coast with beaches & yachting facilities. The coastline, especially between Izmir & Antalya, features numerous coves & bays & many nearby ancient cities & is perfect for yachting.

Turkey also enjoys many spectacular rivers. They are ideal for canoeing, skiing & rafting. Mountaineering is also popular in mountain ranges throughout Turkey in spring & summer. The high plateaus of the Eastern Black Sea Region are covered by colourful flowers & green pasture during spring & summer. Naturists will enjoy the diversity of fauna & flora as well as the heart-stopping splendour of the surrounding landscape. Central & Eastern Turkey can receive large accumulations of snow & snow skiing is a favourite winter pastime. Turkey has several ski centers, which are generally open from December through April depending on snow conditions.

Kuwait Visa

Will the visa fee be refunded if the visa is rejected?

This is not possible as the Kuwait Embassy will not refund for a rejection station

Do I have to appear in person for the visa appointment?

No, you do not we can have your passport stamped on your behalf at the Embassy.

Does your passport require 6 months validity?

You require a valid passport with a minimum of 12 months validity & passport should have at least 3 blank pages.

What additional documents are required for Minors?

Unabridged Birth certificate, certified copies of parent’s ID’s + consent letter from each parent not accompanying the minor.

Processing time?

5 to 7 business days once the applications have been submitted at the Embassy.

Chinese Visa

Do I need a visa to visit China's mainland?

Foreign citizens generally need a visa to visit China's mainland with the exception of visa-free entry according to relevant agreements and regulations. (See Exemption of visa for more information.)

I am a U.S. citizen, can I apply for a Chinese visa at the port of entry?

U.S. citizens must obtain a visa before arrival in China. You are not eligible for a landing visa.

I have received my visa, but there will be a change in my trip plan. Do I need to apply for a change of the visa type or validity?

Once your visa application is processed and approved, you will not be able to change a visa type or validity unless you request the visa be voided by the Visa Office and apply and pay for a new one. If you have entered China, you should apply to the local Public Security authority for a change in visa type or an extension of stay or validity. Your application will be considered by the Public Security authority in accordance with relevant Chinese Laws and Regulations.

I get a new passport, but I have a valid Chinese visa in my old passport. Can I travel with both passports to China without applying for a new visa?

Yes, you may travel with both passports provided that your visa is still valid and the personal details including your name, sex, date of birth and nationality on both passports are exactly the same.

I have received my visa. Is there a guarantee that I will be allowed to enter China?

A visa is not a guarantee to enter China. The decision on whether or not you will be allowed to enter China is made at a port of entry by Chinese Border Control authority in accordance with Chinese Laws and Regulations. Why I was granted a different type of visa with what I applied for?

The consular officers will determine whether or not to grant a visa and its category, validity and permitted duration of stay. The decision is final unless there is an technical error on the visa.

Do you provide express visa service?

Yes. Express service is available for an additional fee. You need to make such request to our staff while submitting your application. Please note that not all applications can be expedited as some requires longer processing time.

I need to apply for a Chinese visa, what documents should I submit with my application?

You need to prepare your valid passport, duly completed and signed visa application form, a passport photo, and supporting documents based on the purpose of your trip.

What are the requirements for passport, visa application form and photo?

Your passport must valid at least for one year, and not altered/damaged/smudged in any way. Make sure you TYPE to complete and sign an up-to-date version of visa application form (V2013). You must provide true, complete and accurate answers to each question on the form. The form needs to be signed by the applicant (or a parent /guardian in case of a minor). Only original signature is accepted.

You must provide one color, passport-type photo that meets the following criteria: be taken within the last six months against a white background and printed on high-quality photo paper; 2'x2' in size; showing the full frontal view of you head without any headwear.

What are the requirements for an invitation letter?

The invitation letter may be in the form of fax, photocopy or computer printout, and must be signed by the inviter and/or company seal in case of a business invite. An applicant may be required to provide the original invitation letter as deemed necessary by a consular officer.

Do I have to provide Physical Examination Form to apply for a visa?

No.

I will be traveling to China on company business. I will also meet my friends in China. What type of visa is most appropriate for me?

If you travel to China on multiple purposes, you may submit your application based on your main purpose and provide supporting documents accordingly.

What should I do if I lose my passport during my stay in China?

You should report the loss to local public security authorities as soon as possible and go to your country's embassy or consulate in China to apply for a replacement passport or travel document. After that, you must go to the local public security authorities to apply for a new entry and exit visa.

I am currently in China on a visa and the permitted time of stay is almost up, but I need to stay longer. May I send my passport back to a friend in U.S. in order to get a new valid visa?

No. You must leave mainland China if you need to apply for a new visa. Or you may apply for an extension of visa from the local public security authorities in China.

I am planning to travel as a tourist to Hong Kong, Macao and other cities in China. Do I need different visas?

If you are a U.S. citizen, you need to apply for mainland China visa only. For non-U.S. citizens, if you are not eligible for a short-term visa-free visit to HKSAR/Macao SAR, you will need to apply both mainland China visa AND HKSAR/Macao SAR visa.

I am now in China on a Z visa and have received my residence permit. Can I leave China and come back as often as I wish?

You may use your residence permit (placed on your passport and similar to a visa) issued by the local public security authority to enter and exit China during the validity of the residence permit. No other visa is needed.

If you are a Chinese Permanent Resident Card holder, you don't need a visa to enter China during the validity of your Permanent Resident Card.

Unabridged Birth Certificates

On the 1st of June 2015 the South African Department of Home Affairs introduced new travel regulations, requiring all passengers under the age of 18 to travel in and out of the country with an Unabridged Birth Certificate, along with the consent of both parents.  Failure to do so, would lead to the minor being prevented from boarding a flight.

Prior to 2013, every child born in South Africa, would have been issued with a standard abridged birth certificate, showing only their mother's name. An Unabridged Birth Certificate shows both parents names.

The updated travel regulations may seem unnecessary, and excessive but in fact the law was introduced to combat child trafficking and to improve the safety of children. According to the Department of Home Affairs, 30 000 minors are trafficked through South African borders every year. 50% of these minors are under the age of 14.

What is an Unabridged Birth Certificate?

An unabridged birth certificate is a document that contains the first name and surname, date of birth, place of birth, ID number, sex and country of birth of the individual. It also includes information of both biological parents or legal guardians.

In terms of the Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1992 all children born in South Africa must be registered within 30 days of their birth. Once the child’s birth has been registered, an unabridged birth certificate is issued free of charge.

Who needs an Unabridged Birth Certificate?

The South African Immigration Act’s requires all minors travelling into and out of South Africa be in possession of an Unabridged Birth Certificate, including South African citizens and travellers who are not South African citizens.

Whether travelling minors are accompanied by a parent or guardian it is the responsibility of passengers to ensure their children have the correct documents or stand the risk of being denied boarding. In all cases, an Unabridged Birth Certificate is required for minors departing and arriving in South Africa ... they are not allowed to travel without it. The law is strictly enforced by airlines and immigration officials across the board.

If the child was not born in South Africa, and if the original unabridged birth certificate is not written in English, then a sworn English translation performed by an accredited authority in the minor’s country of origin must be provided.

How do you apply for an Unabridged Certificate?

If you are not already in possession of your child’s Unabridged Birth Certificate, and still need it, then you can apply at your preferred Department of Home Affairs branch or a South African embassy, mission or consulate.

**The documents you will need include:**

* The Identity Documents of the parents and the child’s ID number
* All documents need to be original or certified copies
* Completed [BI-24 Form](https://www.sahc.org.au/pdf/bi-forms/BI-24_Birth_Registration.pdf), (filled in with black ink only) to register child’s birth

If your intended travel date is within this period, inform the Department of Home Affairs of this, and they will give you an official letter to use in place of the Unabridged Birth Certificate.

*Please note*

* Certified copies of documents are usually only valid for six months.
* Minors travelling in school groups or with their grandparents are not exempt from the requirement
* After April 2016, the Department of Home Affairs changed the term Unabridged Birth Certificate to Birth Certificate.
* All birth certificates issued after April 2016 contain the information travellers require to exit or enter South Africa.
* Unabridged Marriage Certificate
* You can attempt to apply for the Unabridged Marriage Certificate directly at Home Affairs, but this can take up to 8 weeks from the date of application. And let’s not forget the time taken to stand in the queue, fill in the correct forms and taking off time from work to do so.
* At Visa Logistics we have offices in Pretoria and have access to all Government departments in South Africa's Capital City.
* We help and assist all South African citizens, local or abroad by providing a quick and 100% genuine Unabridged Marriage Certificate Service.

How do you apply for an unabridged marriage certificate?

The following documentation must be submitted for an application for an unabridged marriage certificate:

* A fully completed [**BI-130 form**](http://www.dha.gov.za/images/PDFs/Marriage/bi-130.pdf)  in black ink, dated and signed by the applicant;
* a letter from the applicant requesting the marriage certificate; the letter must also include the applicant’s contact details (residential address, mobile phone number and email address);
* both spouses’ original passports (and / or identity documents), and photocopies of the page with the applicant’s biometric data / photograph;
* the applicant’s South African abridged or unabridged marriage certificate, if available, and a photocopy of it;
* in the case of a marriage within the last six (6) months, a copy of the form BI-30 from the marriage officer, which he or she would have submitted to an office of the Department of Home Affairs to register the marriage – may be attached to the application as a fax or scan;
* What is the difference between an abridged and unabridged certificate and which one should we apply for?
* When you get married in South Africa, you’ll be issued with a handwritten marriage certificate on the day of your wedding at no cost, by the marriage officer. It is advisable to apply for your unabridged certificate from the Department of Home Affairs soon as possible, as all marriages are registered at the Department.
* **Abridged Certificate**
* Soon after your wedding an Abridged Typed Marriage Certificate, issued by Home Affairs will be sent to you. This Abridged Marriage Certificate will contain both your personal details such as full name and ID number as well as the date of the marriage. It is sufficient for couples who are living in South Africa, as proof of marital status, and it will be accepted in certain countries abroad with an apostille/authentication.
* **Unabridged Marriage Certificates**
* An unabridged certificate, also known as a full marriage certificate, contains more detailed information about both spouses, in addition to verifying that the nuptials are permissible and also documenting that the marriage has been witnessed by eligible spectators. This formal certificate is generally required if you plan to travel extensively, emigrate or obtain a foreign passport.
* If one or both spouses are not South African, an unabridged marriage certificate will be required to register the marriage their home countries.

Letter of No Impediment



An example of Letter of No Impediment for South Africa (click to enlarge).

Often, South African nationals are asked to present a Letter of No Impediment when travelling internationally. On this page, we will be taking a closer look at what exactly this legal document is and how we can help you obtain your letter of no impediment.

**What exactly is a Letter of No Impediment?**

A Letter (or Certificate) of No Impediment is requested from foreign authorities when South African nationals want to get married in foreign countries. The certificate is issued by the South African Department of Home Affairs to confirm the current marital status of an individual. The certificate is valid and can be used for six months from the date of issuing. Although we call it a letter of no impediment, the certificate goes by various names, including:

• Non-Impediment Letter
• No-Impediment Certificate
• Declaration of Non-Impediment to Marry
• Certificate of Freedom to Marry
• Statutory Declaration of Single Status
• Single Status Letter / Certificate
• Statement In-Lieu of Certificate of Non-Impediment to Marriage Abroad
• Affidavit of Intended Marriage

If you were married in the past, you would need a Letter of No Impediment (together with a decree of divorce) to prove that you are not currently married. In most foreign countries, you will need this legal document, or you might not be allowed to marry within their borders or have your marriage registered in that country.

If you have an original Letter of No Impediment, you can have it legalised. It will then be done on an official Home Affairs letterhead after which it will be signed and stamped by an authorised Home Affairs official.

The South African Department of Home Affairs is able to confirm that a Letter of No Impediment is issued, stamped, and signed by authorised Home Affairs officials. If you have a Letter of No Impediment that was issued by a Regional Home Affairs office, the letter cannot legally be used. The only letters of no impediment that can legally be used to get married abroad are those that have been issued by the Department of Home Affairs Head Office.

**Who needs to apply for a Letter of No Impediment?**

If you wish to get married outside of South Africa, you might be required to submit an apostilled letter of no impediment to foreign authorities. The purpose of the letter is to confirm that you have the right and the freedom to get married legally. If you are getting married in a country that is a signatory of the Hague Convention of 1961, you are going to use an Apostilled letter, which makes the legalisation of documents much easier.

The process can be much more complicated if you plan to get married in a country which is not part of the Convention. If this is the case, your Letter of No Impediment will have to be authenticated as part of a three-level process. But regardless of whether or not you are getting married in a signatory country, the Letter of No Impediment is still essential for you to obtain your visa and permits.

**How can you apply for a Letter of No Impediment in South Africa?**

At Apostil.co.za, we dedicate our time and effort toward helping South African nationals apply for and obtain their legal documents for use abroad. When applying for a letter of no impediment, applications can be lodged with the Department of Home Affairs or a SA High Commission office (very, very long waiting period).

When applying for a letter of no impediment, there will be a form that you need to complete and an application fee that you will need to pay. Depending on how many applications the High Commission Office has to process at any given time, it may take longer than six months for your application to be processed and your letter to be issued.

It is advisable to double check your South African marital status before you apply for your Letter of No Impediment. Fraudulent marriages are reported to the South African Department of Home Affairs on a daily basis. You want to ensure your identity was not used as part of a scam and that your records might already indicate that you are married before applying for this official letter. We can help you verify your legal marital status too, so before applying for a Letter of No Impediment, get in touch with us.

**How long does it take to obtain a Letter of No Impediment?**

Depending on how easily accessible your records are within the Department of Home Affairs’ archives, processing times for these certificates may vary. It can take up to six months for you to receive your Letter of No Impediment through a SA High Commission or consulate. We are able to assist you in either 4-6 weeks or 2-3 weeks

**Why Letters of No Impediment are important**

Letters of no impediment are official government documents that provide information indicating that a thorough search has been conducted on your personal credentials and that no record of marriage could be found on your name. Otherwise, people would be able to marry people in different countries without each country knowing about the other marriage!

Officially issued by the South African Department of Home Affairs, certificates of no impediment serve to confirm the marital status of a South African national. Once issued, these certificates are valid for a period of six months and may be used for legal processes both inside and outside of South Africa, including visa and residency applications, as well as marital procedures.

**How we can help you obtain a Letter of No Impediment**

If you need to obtain a Letter of No Impediment, but do not wish to stand in queues at Home Affairs, or are unable to, we can take the stress out of the situation. Apostil.co.za is an agency in South Africa, specialising in legal document assistance.

You will need to send the following to us:
• **Mandatory:**Your ID document or passport in a clear PDF scan
• **Mandatory:**A completed form – filled in with black ink and PDF scanned to us. Download the [DHA Letter of No Impediment DHA-1155 Form](https://apostil.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Letter-of-No-Impediment-Application-Form-DHA-1155.pdf) for us to assist you.

Here at Apostil.co.za, we can help you apply for and obtain your Letter of No Impediment if you wish to get married in a foreign country. We can help take the hassle out of the process for you. We have a range of pricing options available. Feel free to [get in touch with us](https://apostil.co.za/pricing/) today for all your legal document requirements.

The TEFL Apostille pack for teaching English

A lot of young South Africans are living the dream, teaching English to non-English speaking students across the world. If you have your hopes set on teaching English, just having a TEFL certificate won’t cut it, you will need to have your documents apostilled (e.g. for South Korea) or authenticated and attested (e.g. for China or Thailand) before you can even start applying for a job. But exactly what is required for TEFL authentication and which processes will you have to follow? How you can simplify the whole process? All this is answered below and also on our [attestation](https://apostil.co.za/attestation/) page.

**Why do TEFL certificates and other documents need attestation or apostilles?**

When working overseas or abroad, South Africans (or any nationality for that matter) have a number of documents that are requested of them, to prove and verify their identity, qualifications, clear criminal record and so on. These documents are usually issued by a South African institution, which means that another country may not “trust” their validity right away.

**Why do you need a TEFL for teaching English abroad?**

If you plan to teach English abroad, you will need a variety of personal, professional, and academic documents ranging from passports to transcripts to apply for a job, as mentioned above. While there is some documentation that can only be done once you reach your destination country, there are a few important documents that you will need to have ready before you depart from your home country.

Depending on the destination and specific job you are applying for, the documents required to land a job might vary. Although there will always be variations, here’s a brief rundown of the type of documents you will usually or often need to teach English abroad:

• A passport (valid for the correct time period)
• A work visa/s (valid for the correct time period)
• An International CV or Résumé (which might need to be translated into the local language for the country where you plan to teach)
• Your TEFL/TESOL/CELTA/DELTA Certification (which might have to be notarised, authenticated and/or apostilled)
• A SAPS Police Clearance Certificate (which might have to be authenticated, attested and/or apostilled)
• Verified (or apostilled) [academic qualification certificates](https://apostil.co.za/apostille/academic-qualification-apostille/) such as degrees or diplomas
• Authenticated or [apostilled health certificates](https://apostil.co.za/apostille/health-certificate-apostille/)
• Reference letters from various institutions

**Understanding the difference between notarisations and certifications**

Notarisations and certifications both require the authentication of official documents that are intended to be used outside of the Republic of South Africa. Although the [difference between notarisation and certification](https://apostil.co.za/the-difference-between-apostilles-authentications-attestations-and-notarisations/) can often seem blurry, there is a line between the two. Notarisations are done by a Notary Public. Certifications (or verifications) have to be done by the government department or authority that issued the certificate.

Top 8 Reasons Why Your China Visa Gets Rejected

It's not unusual for your China visa application to be rejected. China is known for its strict [visa policies](https://www.travelchinaguide.com/embassy/visa/introduction1.htm) and the visa approval rates are not that high. Frustrating as it is, the consular officers may seem indifferent and may be unwilling to give a reason for visa denial. Here are still some clues that may help you avoid visa rejection or figure out why your application was rejected.

1. Mistakes in the [China visa application form](https://www.travelchinaguide.com/embassy/pdf/visa-application.pdf). The application form is very important because it is what the consular officer who decides to grant you a visa or not will look at. Hand-written forms are no longer accepted. Inaccurate information such as spelling errors, wrong passport numbers, or invalid addresses may lead to your visa being rejected. To avoid trouble, do not mention any plans to travel to Xinjiang and Tibet in your form.

2. The submitted photo does not meet the specifications. Inappropriate sizes, background colors, texture of the photographic paper, etc. all contribute to an unqualified photo.

3. Missing documents. Before submitting your application, check the latest [application requirements](https://www.travelchinaguide.com/embassy/visa/requirement.htm) for your visa type and collect all of the required documents. If any of them are missing, your application may get turned down.

4. The applicant is from a country where war, terrorist attacks, or political unrest frequently happen, or whose nationals frequently overstay their visa, or a country with strained relations with China.

5. The applicant has a criminal record. It does not mean that the application will be automatically denied, but if the applicant has committed a serious crime then there is a good chance of visa refusal. Minor offences usually do not make a difference, especially when you are just applying for a [tourist visa](https://www.travelchinaguide.com/embassy/visa/tourist.htm).

6. The applicant overstayed their visa or was blacklisted in China or any other foreign country.

7. The applicant has some kind of contagious disease like AIDS or Hepatitis B. In most cases, it is not a big deal for short-term visa application such as tourist visa and [business visa](https://www.travelchinaguide.com/embassy/visa/business.htm). However, for a [work visa](https://www.travelchinaguide.com/embassy/visa/work.htm) or a [student visa](https://www.travelchinaguide.com/embassy/visa/student.htm), it might be an issue, though not explicitly regulated by Chinese laws.

8. Applicants who work in media, religious or military industries may expect a higher visa refusal rate as these are considered sensitive professions by the Chinese government.

Apart from the above possibilities, there are all sorts of reasons for a China visa application to be rejected. The most important thing to remember is to prove that you will obey Chinese rules and you are capable of bearing your expenses for the intended China trip. If you show this through the documents and information you provide, your visa is very likely to be approved.

What to Do after Your China Visa Was Rejected?

Calm down and don't lose your head. If permitted, you can make an appeal of the rejection and submit more details to update your application. Consular officers may decide whether to review the application on a case-by-case basis. Alternatively, you can reapply for the China visa. If you are reapplying, we recommend that you use a visa agency this time as they are more professional and familiar with the whole process.

Can I Get a Refund If My China Visa Is Denied?

Generally speaking, you cannot get a refund if your China visa is denied. The visa fee is not refundable because it is paid for the processing of your application. In spite of the results, the consular officers have spent efforts and time on the processing.

How Long to Wait before I Can Reapply?

Usually there is a cooling off period before you can reapply, often three months. However, this is not fixed. If you are in a hurry, you should contact a visa agency to help you reapply as soon as possible.