

K12 ACADEMICS — TEACHING ABROAD SERIES

Teaching in Kenya

A guide for aspiring & qualified teachers — how teaching in Kenya works, the routes and requirements, the work permit, pay, and how to find the right role.



Find Your Community
2026 EDITION

The world's largest education resource.

Online since 2004, K12 Academics has helped millions of families, students and educators **find the right school, college, camp, business and program in their community** — for every kind of learner.

EAST AFRICA'S ANCHOR FOR TEACHING AND DEVELOPMENT

Kenya is **East Africa's anchor** for teaching: English-medium, with a **strong NGO and development presence**, international schools, and a friendly culture. Roles span **schools, NGOs and volunteering, and international schools**. This program-neutral guide covers the **routes, requirements, the work permit, and pay**, and points you to the K12 Academics directory to find roles.

General guidance, not legal, immigration, or employment advice. Kenyan rules, pay, and requirements change and vary by employer. The details here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with Kenya's immigration authorities and each employer**. K12 Academics does not run or endorse any specific program — use the K12 Academics directory to find and compare your options.

Understand Why Teachers Choose Kenya

WHAT TO KNOW

Kenya offers a **strong NGO and development sector**, **international schools**, a **friendly culture**, **moderate urban savings**, and **extraordinary landscapes** — safari, coast, and highlands — making it East Africa's most established and rewarding teaching base.

BY THE NUMBERS

Strong NGO

& development sector

Int'l schools

+ moderate savings

Extraordinary

landscapes

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Kenya's **development sector and lifestyle** against modest pay — for meaningful community work or an international-school role in a stunning country, it's a top East African choice.

WATCH OUT

Because English is the **medium of instruction**, Kenya is more a **qualified-teaching and development** market than a mass ESL one.

Understand the Types of Teaching Roles

WHAT TO KNOW

Route types include: **private and international schools** (the best pay, in Nairobi especially, for licensed teachers), **NGOs and volunteer/development programmes** (a Kenyan strength), **language centres**, and **universities**. Bases include **Nairobi and Mombasa**. Browse and compare options in the **K12 Academics directory**.

BY THE NUMBERS

Int'l schools

best pay (Nairobi)

NGOs/volunteer

a Kenyan strength

Language centres

+ universities

HOW TO HELP

Match the **route to your profile** — an international school if licensed, an NGO or volunteer programme for development work, or a language centre — then find options in the K12 Academics directory.

GOOD TO KNOW

Find and compare **specific schools, NGOs, and recruiters** in the K12 Academics directory — this guide stays program-neutral.

Check the Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

For the more competitive roles, a **degree is often required**; **international schools** also want a **licence and experience**. **NGO and volunteer roles** are more flexible (a TEFL and enthusiasm often suffice). Native English is favoured, but qualified non-native speakers can find work. Because English is the medium of instruction, **subject-teaching skills** are valued.

BY THE NUMBERS

Degree

often required (competitive roles)

Int'l schools

licence + experience

NGO/volunteer

more flexible

HOW TO HELP

Line up your credentials — a **degree** for competitive roles (a licence and experience for international schools), while NGO and volunteer roles are more flexible.

GOOD TO KNOW

NGO and volunteer roles are the **most flexible** — a TEFL and enthusiasm often suffice for community-focused work.

Understand the Visa & Work Permit

WHAT TO KNOW

Teaching legally requires an **employer-sponsored work permit**, arranged by your school, NGO, or programme with your documents. Entry conditions have **tightened somewhat over the years**, so plan carefully and use a reputable sponsor. Secure a role first, and confirm current rules with Kenya's immigration authorities.

BY THE NUMBERS

Work permit

employer-sponsored

Conditions

have tightened

Use

a reputable sponsor

HOW TO HELP

Know your route — an employer, NGO, or programme sponsors your **work permit**; conditions have tightened over the years, so plan carefully and use a reputable sponsor.

GOOD TO KNOW

Entry conditions have **tightened somewhat** — plan your work permit carefully and lean on a reputable sponsor.

Know the Pay & Benefits

WHAT TO KNOW

Pay runs roughly **\$500–1,500/month**, with **international schools paying the most**; language-centre and NGO pay is more modest (some NGO roles offer a stipend and board). Urban roles can allow **moderate savings** given lower day-to-day costs, especially in Nairobi's more affordable areas.

BY THE NUMBERS

Range

~\$500–1,500/mo

Int'l schools

pay the most

Urban

moderate savings

HOW TO HELP

Set expectations — ~\$500–1,500/month (international schools most; NGO roles more modest, sometimes with a stipend and board); urban roles can allow moderate savings.

GOOD TO KNOW

Urban roles can allow **moderate savings** given lower day-to-day costs — more so than in much of the region.

Understand Contracts & What to Watch For

WHAT TO KNOW

International schools offer the **fullest packages**; NGO and volunteer roles vary (confirm any stipend, board, and support). Check **hours, pay, and work-permit sponsorship**, keep sensible **safety awareness**, and choose your area thoughtfully. Favour reputable schools and NGOs, and confirm terms in writing.

BY THE NUMBERS

Int'l schools

fullest packages

NGO roles

confirm stipend/board

Keep

safety awareness

HOW TO HELP

Read every offer for **hours, pay, and work-permit sponsorship** (and any NGO stipend and board), keep sensible safety awareness, and favour reputable schools and NGOs.

GOOD TO KNOW

For NGO and volunteer roles, **confirm any stipend, board, and support** — arrangements vary widely.



STEP 07 OF 10

Get Qualified & Prepared

WHAT TO KNOW

Earn an **accredited TEFL**, and a **degree** for competitive roles (a licence and experience for international schools). For NGO and development work, **community experience** helps. Prepare your documents and references, and secure a role to arrange the work permit. Some Swahili helps you settle and connect.

BY THE NUMBERS

TEFL

accredited

Degree

for competitive roles

Community experience

for NGO work

HOW TO HELP

Get an **accredited TEFL** (a degree and licence for international schools), build community experience for NGO work, and secure a role to arrange the work permit.

GOOD TO KNOW

For NGO and development work, **community experience** helps you stand out — a Kenyan strength.

Plan the Hiring Timeline

WHAT TO KNOW

International and private schools recruit **ahead of the school year**; **NGOs, volunteer programmes, and language centres** hire more **year-round**. Because much hiring is local or programme-based, reaching out directly (or through a reputable programme) helps. Allow time for the work permit.

BY THE NUMBERS

Int'l schools

ahead of the year

NGOs/language

year-round

Reach out

directly

HOW TO HELP

Plan around the calendar — international and private schools recruit ahead of the year, NGOs and language centres year-round — and reach out directly or through a reputable programme.

GOOD TO KNOW

Much hiring is **local or programme-based** — reach out to schools, NGOs, and programmes directly.

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

You **don't need a local language to teach** (English is official and the medium of instruction), though some Swahili helps you settle. Bases include **Nairobi (the hub) and Mombasa (coastal)**. Kenya is friendly and extraordinary — safari, the Rift Valley, highlands, and Indian Ocean beaches — with sensible safety awareness in the cities.

BY THE NUMBERS

English

official (no barrier)

Bases

Nairobi, Mombasa

Extraordinary

(keep safety awareness)

HOW TO HELP

Prepare practically — no language barrier (English is official; some Swahili helps); Nairobi is the hub, Mombasa the coastal option, in an extraordinary country — keep sensible safety awareness.

GOOD TO KNOW

Beyond the classroom, Kenya offers **safari, the Rift Valley, and Indian Ocean beaches** — extraordinary, with sensible city safety awareness.

Find Your Role & Thrive

WHAT TO KNOW

Once you know your route, **find and compare specific schools, NGOs, and recruiters in the K12 Academics directory**. Reach out directly, verify each contract and work-permit sponsorship, and build toward international schools or established NGOs. Confirm current rules with Kenya's immigration authorities.

BY THE NUMBERS

Find & compare

schools & NGOs

Reach out

directly

Build

toward int'l schools

HOW TO HELP

Use **the K12 Academics directory** to find and compare schools, NGOs, and recruiters, reach out directly, verify each contract and work-permit sponsorship, and build toward international schools or established NGOs.

WATCH OUT

Browse **the K12 Academics directory** to find the specific schools, NGOs, and recruiters that fit your route and goals.

Teaching in Kenya: The Essentials

A snapshot — program-neutral. Confirm details with the Kenyan authorities and each employer.

The market

East Africa's anchor: English-medium (relatively high proficiency), so more a qualified-teaching and development market than mass ESL, with a strong NGO and volunteer presence, international schools, and moderate urban savings (Nairobi, Mombasa).

The routes

Private and international schools (the best pay, in Nairobi, for licensed teachers), NGOs and volunteer/development programmes (a Kenyan strength), language centres, and universities — find and compare in the directory.

Requirements

A degree is often required for competitive roles (international schools also want a licence and experience); NGO and volunteer roles are more flexible (a TEFL and enthusiasm often suffice); subject-teaching skills are valued; non-native speakers can find work.

Visa

Teaching legally requires an employer-sponsored work permit, arranged by your school, NGO, or programme; entry conditions have tightened over the years, so plan carefully and use a reputable sponsor; secure a role first.

Pay & move

~\$500–1,500/month (international schools most; NGO roles more modest, sometimes with a stipend and board); urban roles can allow moderate savings; English is official, so there's no language barrier; keep sensible safety awareness.

YOUR TEACHING-IN-KENYA JOURNEY STARTS HERE

Find Your Community.

Explore our other Teaching in [Country] guides, and find and compare programs, schools, and recruiters in the K12 Academics directory — among **1,297 free resources**.

tools.k12academics.com →

