

K12 ACADEMICS — TEACHING ABROAD SERIES

Teaching in the Philippines

A guide for aspiring & qualified teachers — how teaching in the Philippines works, the routes and requirements, visas, 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.

A HIGH-ENGLISH MARKET WITH A HUGE ONLINE SECTOR

The Philippines has **very high English proficiency**, so general ESL demand for foreign teachers is limited and competitive — but it's the world's biggest **online** English-teaching hub, and foreigners find niche roles at **private academies, international schools, universities, and in corporate English**. This program-neutral guide covers the **routes, requirements, visas, and pay**, and points you to the K12 Academics directory to find roles.

General guidance, not legal, immigration, or employment advice. Philippine rules, pay, and requirements change and vary by employer. The details here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with the Bureau of Immigration, the Department of Labor and Employment, 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 the Philippines Reality

WHAT TO KNOW

The Philippines has **very high English proficiency**, so foreign ESL roles are **competitive**; the distinctive opportunities are the huge **online** sector and **niche in-person roles** (private academies serving international students, international schools, universities, and corporate English).

BY THE NUMBERS

Very high English

competitive for foreigners

Huge

online sector

Niche

academies, int'l schools

HOW TO HELP

Reframe your goal — in the Philippines you target **niche in-person roles or the online sector**, not a mass ESL market — local English proficiency is very high.

WATCH OUT

Because **most locals speak fluent English**, foreigners are hired for a "native accent" or for qualified roles — not general ESL.

Understand the Types of Teaching Roles

WHAT TO KNOW

Route types include: **private language academies** (serving international students from Korea, Japan, and China who come to study English), **international schools** (the best pay, for licensed teachers), **universities** (strong pay, often needing advanced qualifications), **corporate/business English** (multinationals in Manila and Cebu), **exam prep (IELTS)**, and the vast **online sector**. Browse and compare options in **the K12 Academics directory**.

BY THE NUMBERS

Private academies

int'l students (native accent)

Int'l schools / universities

best pay

Corporate / online

+ exam prep

HOW TO HELP

Match the **route to your profile** — a language academy or corporate English if experienced, an international school if licensed, or the online sector — then find options in the K12 Academics directory.

GOOD TO KNOW

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

Check the Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

For most roles: a **bachelor's degree (required for the 9(g) visa)** and a **120-hour TEFL certificate** (required by the government for a work visa). A **native accent (US/UK/Australia) is preferred** — non-native speakers can find work, but often at local pay rates. Well-paid roles usually want **1-2 years of experience**; international schools require a **teaching license**.

BY THE NUMBERS

Degree

required for the 9(g) visa

TEFL

required for the work visa

Native accent

preferred (non-native at local rates)

HOW TO HELP

Line up your credentials — a **degree and a TEFL** (both needed for the work visa); a native accent is preferred, and well-paid roles want experience (a license for international schools).

GOOD TO KNOW

Non-native speakers can find work, but **often at local pay rates** — schools hire foreigners specifically for a native accent.

Understand the Visa & Work Authorization

WHAT TO KNOW

There are two routes. For permanent roles (e.g., international schools), you need a **9(g) Pre-Arranged Employment Visa plus an Alien Employment Permit (AEP)**, sponsored by your employer. Alternatively, you can enter on a **tourist visa and convert it to a Special Work Permit (SWP)** after arrival — valid for up to about six months — without flying home. Confirm current rules with the Bureau of Immigration.

BY THE NUMBERS

9(g) visa

+ AEP (permanent roles)

Or

Special Work Permit (after arrival)

Flexible

interview in person

HOW TO HELP

Know your route — a **9(g) visa plus AEP** for permanent roles, or a **Special Work Permit** (convert a tourist visa after arrival) for shorter contracts — so you can interview in person.

GOOD TO KNOW

You can **enter on a tourist visa and convert to a Special Work Permit** after arrival — handy for interviewing in person in Manila or Cebu.

Know the Pay & Benefits

WHAT TO KNOW

Pay ranges widely by role: roughly ₱40,000–100,000/month (~\$670–1,670), with **universities and international schools paying the most (~\$1,500–2,000+)** and private academies less. Public/local-standard roles pay **local rates**. The cost of living is very low, so a modest salary funds a comfortable lifestyle — and international-school teachers can save meaningfully.

BY THE NUMBERS

Range

~₱40,000–100,000/mo

Highest

universities & int'l schools

Very low cost

comfortable

HOW TO HELP

Set expectations — ~₱40,000–100,000/month (universities and international schools most, private academies less); the very low cost of living makes even a modest salary comfortable.

GOOD TO KNOW

International schools and universities pay the most; private-academy and local-standard roles pay considerably less.

Understand Contracts & What to Watch For

WHAT TO KNOW

Be clear on whether an offer is an **expat package** or a **local-rate** role (non-native speakers are often offered local rates). Confirm **hours, pay, and which visa applies** (9(g)/AEP vs SWP), and note that **Filipino work culture is formal** (professional dress and punctuality matter). Favour reputable, accredited schools and written terms.

BY THE NUMBERS

Clarify

expat vs local-rate

Confirm

hours, pay, visa route

Culture

formal & punctual

HOW TO HELP

Read every offer for **whether it's an expat or local-rate package, the hours, and the visa route**; Filipino work culture is formal, so professionalism matters.

GOOD TO KNOW

Clarify whether an offer is an **expat package** or a **local rate** — It makes a large difference to your income.

Get Qualified & Prepared

WHAT TO KNOW

Ensure you have a **bachelor's degree** (for the 9(g) visa) and an **accredited 120-hour TEFL** (required for the work visa). Experience and niche skills (**IELTS, business English**) strengthen applications, and a teaching license opens international schools. You can **arrive and interview in person** (converting to a Special Work Permit) for many roles.

BY THE NUMBERS

Degree + TEFL

required for the visa

Niche skills

IELTS, business English

Can arrive

& interview in person

HOW TO HELP

Get your **degree and TEFL** (both required for the work visa), build niche skills (IELTS, business English), and note you can arrive and interview in person for many roles.

GOOD TO KNOW

Niche skills in **IELTS or business English** strengthen applications in the Philippines' competitive foreign-teacher market.

Plan the Hiring Timeline

WHAT TO KNOW

International schools recruit **ahead of the school year**; **private academies, corporate English, and the online sector** hire more **year-round**. Because you can convert a tourist visa to a Special Work Permit after arrival, many teachers **interview in person in Manila or Cebu**. The market is competitive, so present yourself professionally.

BY THE NUMBERS

Int'l schools

ahead of the school year

Academies/online

year-round

Interview

in person (Manila, Cebu)

HOW TO HELP

Plan around the calendar — international schools recruit ahead of the school year, academies and online roles year-round — and many teachers interview in person after arriving.

GOOD TO KNOW

The foreign-teacher market is **competitive** — present yourself professionally, and consider interviewing in person.

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

There's **no language barrier** — English is an official language and spoken almost everywhere. Popular bases include **Manila (the biggest market and highest pay), Cebu (relaxed, with beaches nearby), Quezon City, and Baguio**. The Philippines is tropical, warm, and welcoming, with a very low cost of living and thousands of islands to explore.

BY THE NUMBERS

English

official (no barrier)

Bases

Manila, Cebu, Quezon City

Tropical

very affordable

HOW TO HELP

Prepare practically — no language barrier (English is official); Manila has the most roles and highest pay, while Cebu offers a relaxed, beachside alternative.

GOOD TO KNOW

With **English an official language**, daily life is easy — and the very low cost of living stretches a modest salary far.

Find Your Role & Thrive

WHAT TO KNOW

Once you know your route, **find and compare specific academies, international schools, and recruiters in the K12 Academics directory**. Target roles matching your credentials, verify each contract (expat vs local rate) and the visa route, and consider the large online sector. Confirm current rules with the Bureau of Immigration.

BY THE NUMBERS

Find & compare

academies & schools

Verify

package & visa route

Consider

the online sector

HOW TO HELP

Use **the K12 Academics directory** to find and compare academies, international schools, and recruiters, verify each contract and visa route, and consider the large online sector.

WATCH OUT

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

Teaching in the Philippines: The Essentials

A snapshot — program-neutral. Confirm details with the Bureau of Immigration, the DOLE, and each employer.

The reality

Very high English proficiency (English is an official language) means limited, competitive general ESL demand for foreigners; the distinctive opportunities are the world's largest online sector and niche in-person roles.

The routes

Private language academies (serving international students from Korea, Japan, China), international schools (best pay, licensed teachers), universities, corporate English, and the vast online sector — find and compare in the directory.

Requirements

A bachelor's degree (required for the 9(g) visa) and a 120-hour TEFL (required for the work visa); a native accent (US/UK/Australia) is preferred, and non-native speakers often work at local rates; international schools require a license.

Visa

A 9(g) Pre-Arranged Employment Visa plus an Alien Employment Permit for permanent roles, or a Special Work Permit (convert a tourist visa after arrival, valid up to about six months) — so you can interview in person.

Pay & move

~₱40,000–100,000/month (~\$670–1,670); universities and international schools pay the most (~\$1,500–2,000+), private academies and local roles less; very low cost of living; English is an official language.

YOUR TEACHING-IN-THE-PHILIPPINES 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 →

