



Managing your money internationally

As the saying goes, money makes the world go around... if you are looking at international teaching it's likely that one factor you'll be thinking about is how much money you have left at the end of it - otherwise you'd just be sailing around in your yacht!

Here's our basic guide to the financial aspects that you should think about when making an international move...

Exchange rates

When changing countries one of the first things you should try to get your head around is the new currency and how much it's worth - that means looking at exchange rates. There are two types of exchange rate you should be aware of:

Market rates - these are the prices currency is traded on the foreign exchange market (forex) and you'll see these on www.xe.com and other similar websites - they are what you should use when working out the value of one currency against another and are affected by the macroeconomics of demand and supply. For most people it's best not to speculate what might happen to these in future - you could decide to wait to exchange money because you think the exchange rate is bad only to watch it get worse, or vice versa... unless you can weigh up all the social, political and economic factors that affect the international exchange rate it's often best to not worry about it!

Currency conversion - this is what you get charged by the service or company you use to exchange money and can vary by a large amount between the various options depending on how much profit they are trying to make from you. Because of this we recommend that you should shop around when transferring money... also remember that places can add a charge for the exchange, adjust the exchange rate in their favour or both. The easiest thing to do is to get them to quote how much of their currency you would get for this much of yours with all charges included and go for the best number.

Taking money with you

The next thing to think about is how you are going to take money with you to get started in your new location - you usually won't get paid until you've completed a month of work in your new school so you should make sure you have access to money when you arrive... here's some of the most common options you may want to explore:



Managing your money internationally

Credit/debit card - taking your existing bank cards with you is something most people do... the most important thing to remember with this is to tell your bank you'll be going overseas so they don't block your cards! It's also worth asking them about the fees and charges for using your card so you know what they are - this can often be an expensive way of accessing your money so it may be worth treating these as an 'emergency only plan'.

Local currency - you can convert money before you arrive and take cash with you. Most countries have immigration rules limiting how much cash you can carry through customs so check what these are and don't go over the limit. If you shop around and order this in advance you can get a much better exchange rate for the currency conversion.

Cash passport - these are pre-loaded cards that can be topped up with the new currency and used like a regular debit card - there are a variety of them offered by banks, the post office and other institutions.

Travel-friendly bank account - there are a variety of bank accounts available from both traditional banks and newer companies that are aimed at travellers with a range of perks and benefits that can be good to set up before you leave... we really like Monzo which has a user-friendly app and allows fee-free payment internationally and free cash withdrawals (up to £200 per month, 3% charge after that).

Travellers cheques - this is the classic way of accessing your money abroad, a number of providers have phased them out in favour of the pre-loaded cash passports but they are still available to buy and use from various institutions - it's worth double checking the exchange rates on them as some may work out more expensive than the other options.

Bank accounts

Your school will usually help set up a bank account in your new country to pay your salary into as part of your induction process. In most countries you need to be there in person and have an address to open an account so it's often impossible to set one up before you leave - don't worry about this and do it with the school's help upon your arrival... they'll often help with setting up phone, internet etc. too!



Managing your money internationally

Cost of living

This gets mentioned a lot through our candidate process but it's hard to understate the importance of cost of living. Not only is it highly important in the next step of working out your budget but it's also worth familiarising yourself on what things should cost so you don't find yourself getting caught in a tourist trap and paying over the odds for something... to see what you can expect prices to be like we'd recommend using www.expatistan.com as it's our preferred tool.

Set a budget and savings goal

This may well be something you are already doing in your current job, but if not it's a technique that will make all the difference - it is often the difference between people who are good at saving and people who never have any money left at the end of the month!

Work out a budget for yourself of how much you want to spend each month and when you get paid transfer the extra to a savings account or somewhere you'll have to think twice before spending it. Check on the savings account occasionally and you'll be impressed to see how much money you have!

Maximise your savings

If you are serious about saving money then one of your hobbies is about to become being thrifty and getting a good deal... often the best guides to the deals are people who've lived there all their life! It's worth working out whether bartering over prices is part of the culture and if it is try and get good at it as quickly as you can. Another good thing to do is shop where the locals do and avoid the Westernised places as much as you can (even though they are great if you get a bit homesick) because they are often more expensive - eating and drinking like the locals will likely be much cheaper.

Sending money home

When you are saving well you'll likely want to send the money home at some point. This, like your initial money exchange, is something you'll get charged to do... with most banks you may get charged a set fee per transfer (that's another thing to check with them) so it's often better to send in bulk rather than regularly - i.e. transferring money every month can work out hundreds of pounds more expensive than sending the same amount once per year.



Managing your money internationally

Stock up

The final thing we'll cover is that it's also often worth stocking up on certain things when you first go out to your new location - what you want to take would be an individual thing but anything that you aren't sure if you will be able to find or think might be more expensive would fit into this category. Some examples are toiletries and sanitary products, your favourite tea bags, books and clothing. Take a look at our [packing and preparation tips](#) for more on this.

So that's all our advice and hopefully you are feeling more knowledgeable about all things financial now. If you are already working with Teachanywhere you can talk to your consultant or go [back to our candidate journey](#) and if you aren't working with us yet but are excited by all this money talk [get in touch with us](#).