

The Middle East



Be prepared to immerse yourselves in a very multicultural society. The Middle East attracts ex-pats from around the world including Great Britain, the US, India, Australia, South Africa and France. The official language of most Middle Eastern countries is Arabic, though you will find English, Urdu, Hindi and French are spoken as well. Arabic is the official business language but you will find in the larger cities that many road signs, shop signs, restaurant menus are often in English as well.

Select Education has placements in many countries throughout the Middle East including Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait, Qatar, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Egypt in private, international English speaking schools. You can enjoy small class sizes, free accommodation, flights and medical coverage along with an atmosphere that is supportive to international teachers.



The Middle East has various landscapes from the dry, arid desert that you might expect, to the beautiful beaches on the Arabian Sea, to the shallow water pearl fields of Bahrain and the lush hills of Oman. You can even snow ski in the Middle East at a new indoor facility in Dubai or the open mountains of Lebanon! In the Near East – Jordan,

Syria and Lebanon – you can expect hot arid summers but cold winters with snow whereas the Middle East – UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia – you will find hot sunny days most of the year. As you would hope, air-conditioning is very common!

The currency used in the Middle East varies by country and in most cases you will be paid in local currency into a local bank account that the schools will assist you to set up upon your arrival. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) uses the Dirham, Kuwait uses Dinars, Oman uses Rials and Lebanon uses Lebanese pounds. You can find all the currencies and the current exchange rates online at www.xe.com.



Safety and security are topmost on the minds of many teachers. We have all seen news footage of women in black habiyas, unable to drive or leave home without an escort. However, this is the exception and extreme case, as most countries in the Middle East and Near East are very safe and accepting of ex-pats both women and men, provided you show respect for their religion and traditions. The crime rate in most Middle Eastern countries is very low and women are allowed to drive and walk unescorted in all countries except Saudi Arabia. Whilst traditional Muslim women may choose to 'cover' themselves, you need not do so in the countries in which we place with the exception of Saudi Arabia. You will find snooker halls in Dubai, along with wine lists at the hotels in Oman, Qatar, Abu Dhabi and Bahrain. The Near East is quite open and



relatively liberal, being more influenced by Turkey and Europe than by their Middle Eastern neighbours. In general, as with travelling abroad anywhere, it is important to be aware of and respect the culture and sensibilities of your new host country. If it's stupid to do in Liverpool, it will be stupid in Lebanon as well.

Every country has different rules, and each should be looked at independently. Some countries in the Middle East are 'dry' and do not serve alcohol publicly, such as Kuwait or Sharjah. However, women are not required to cover their hair, are allowed to drive and enterprising shopkeepers will sell all the ingredients to 'brew your own' such as grape juice and yeast next to each other on supermarket shelves. In dry countries you will usually find a lively expat social scene, and you will probably save more money at the end of the day. In other countries you will find wine served at local hotel bars and other establishments frequented by expats. Saudi Arabia a more restrictive country, with women being unable to drive or walk in public with a man who is not her husband. However, some schools will go so far as to buy private beach houses for their teaching staff so that they can relax privately with other expat staff and Saudi schools pay exceptionally well.

Many countries in the Middle East have restrictions on couples living together who are not married, and many are not accepting of homosexuality, so make sure you give your Select Education Consultant accurate information about your personal situation so that we can find the best match for you.

The Middle East is an exciting place to work with a good climate, interesting culture and thriving expat population. Schools provide free furnished accommodation and tax-free salaries. Those who enjoy the Middle East and Near East are accepting of foreign cultures and sensibilities, adaptable, flexible, outgoing and willing to see everyday things from another viewpoint. If this sounds like you, many exciting opportunities might await you in the sunny Middle East.