

Immer Qi

TEACH | INTERN | VOLUNTEER | MANDARIN

Teaching Internship Program Information

Summer 2020

CONTENTS

TOPIC	PAGE
1. INTRODUCTION & KEY DATES	3
2. ARRIVAL	3
3. TRAINING PERIOD	4
4. TEACHER TRAINING	5
5. SUPPORT	5
6. VISA	5
7. FLIGHTS	5
8. TRAVEL INSURANCE	6
9. PACKING FOR CHINA	6
10. MONEY	7
11. HEALTHY & SAFETY	8
12. PHONES & ELECTRONICS IN CHINA	8
13. INTERNET	9
14. TRANSPORTATION	9
15. HOUSING	10
16. TRAVELING IN CHINA	10
17. PUBLIC HOLIDAYS	10
18. LEAVING CHINA	11

1. INTRODUCTION & KEY DATES

Welcome to the ImmerQi Teach & Travel Program!

We are sure that you have already begun to prepare for your China experience, but we just want to make you aware of some key items. The following document will refer to all of the immediate questions you may have both before your departure and upon your arrival.

KEY PROGRAM DATES	
Arrival Date	23 rd August 2020
Orientation & Welcome Dinner	24 th August 2020
Transport to school placements	28 th August 2020
Commence internship	1 st September 2020
Program Completion	January 15 th 2021

2. ARRIVAL

The following details are provided to assist you with your arrival at Beijing Capital International Airport (PEK).

When you arrive at the airport, you will need to complete an 'Arrival Card' to proceed through customs, which will ask for the following:

- Surname
- Given Name (first name)
- Nationality
- Intended address in China (our sponsored university)
- Passport Number
- Date of Birth
- Visa Number
- Place of visa issuance
- Flight Number
- Purpose of visit: Tick 'Study' (as this is an internship)

Meeting points

All meeting points will be in the 'Arrivals' areas. ImmerQi staff will be station at the meeting points all day clearly visible in ImmerQi t-shirts or hoodies and holding pink ImmerQi signs (below):





When it is closer to the arrival date, we will send a Pre Departure Guide which will contain detailed information on exactly where to meet us in the airport (which terminals, etc.)

Transport to the training center: Shuttle buses will transport you to the training center at set times, which will be approximately 8:00, 11:00, 13:00, and 15:00. Times may be adjusted according to yours and others flight details as well as unexpected delays. Once at the training center, you will be shown to your allocated room.

Early arrivals: If you are arriving early and staying in the city, please note that you will be responsible for your own transportation to the training center on the arrival day.

3. TRAINING PERIOD

The training period itself will be a busy time for you, as you will partake in several classes training you in how to teach English in a foreign environment. However, there will also be ample opportunity to experience China and we will take you on some group excursions so as to make the most of your experience. Highlights of the training period include:

China Orientation: Find out about Chinese customs, behaviour, work culture, dress, food, history, geography, and travel

Mandarin lessons: Learn some basic Mandarin to help you with your everyday life in China

Orientation on Schools: Information on what is expected of you as an English Teaching Intern in Chinese schools and the systems in place to assist you once you are placed in a school.

Cultural Lessons: Fun lessons based on Chinese cultural pursuits such as calligraphy and Tai Chi

Excursions: There will be excursions to places of local interest

4. TEACHER TRAINING

During the orientation period, you will learn about English language teaching methodology, acquire practical classroom techniques, improve your own language awareness, observe classes in action and have the opportunity to apply your knowledge in supervised teaching practice. By the end of the program you will feel confident in your role as a teaching intern at your school in China.

5. SUPPORT



If you have any questions regarding your application, acceptance, or pre-departure, please contact your applications advisor (the person who has handled your application and corresponded via email).

6. VISA

When should I apply for my visa?

Once you have received your invitation letter, you can go to your nearest Chinese Embassy/Visa Processing Center to apply for your X2 visa.

When do I get my Invitation Letter?

These documents will be physically mailed to you via courier in the oncoming months. When this date draws closer we will send a series of emails to you informing you if there are any steps that remain to be taken as well as in depth explanations regarding the next steps to take.

Which visa do I apply for and how long is it valid for?

You will be coming to China as an intern so you should apply for an X2 visa with either a single entry or multiple entries. We cannot guarantee that you will receive multiple entries on your visa as this is determined at the discretion of the Chinese embassy. Dependant on the laws of China at the time you will either get a visa that will be for 180 days or a shorter visa that will be extended while in country at no cost to yourself. Your program advisor will give you more information once we are at the processing stage.

7. FLIGHTS

When should I book my flights?

To be safe, you should not book your flights until you have obtained your visa. Some embassies may ask for a flight plan so we recommend you print a schedule of your intended flights including return dates, but do so without making any financial commitment. When you purchase your flights we advise you to buy flights that allow you to make date changes for a reasonable fee.

8. TRAVEL INSURANCE

What travel insurance should I buy and when should I buy it?

It is important that you buy insurance to cover your entire time outside of your home country. We recommend you purchase Comprehensive Travel Insurance, which includes emergency medical expenses, lost baggage, delays and other costs. You should purchase your travel insurance after you have been accepted onto the Program as it can cover you for an unexpected illness or accident that could prevent you from taking up the internship. You must purchase travel insurance before you leave your home country.

9. PACKING FOR CHINA

What you bring should be a personal choice, with the following information provided as a guide only.



Please ensure that you have any essential things you need with you (medication, etc), and try to avoid bringing expensive items.

While travelling, you want to be able to travel as lightly as possible. With train travel, it is best not to have too much luggage, especially in the crowded China transport system. Despite its developing status, most items imaginable can be bought in China if needed – and generally at a low price.

The weather will vary from being quite cold in the winter to hot in the summer. If you are in the north of China, the weather will be very cold. However, buying clothes in China is relatively inexpensive. Do be aware that large sizes are not easy to purchase in most areas.

What are recommended items?

- Travel with a backpack rather than a suitcase if possible
- A range of clothing for both warm and cold weather. You don't know where you may be placed
- Toiletries – all items are generally available, although deodorant is not common
- Footwear – both casual and suitable for teaching
- Mobile phone - ensure it is unlocked and can take an international SIM card

What electrical sockets are there in China?



Here is an image of the electrical sockets used all over China. For those from the UK and US, adaptors should not be necessary. However, adaptors can be purchased locally at low cost.

10. MONEY

What is the currency in China?

Chinese currency is Renminbi (RMB), which is also called Yuan. As a currency, it can only be used in China and is of no value overseas, although it can be easily obtained in your home country prior to arrival.

How much money should I bring with me?

You will need to bring (or have access to) enough money to tide you over for six to eight weeks; approximately 5000-7000RMB is recommended. The reason for this is that allowances are paid on the 15th of each month for the days taught the previous month. So as teaching does not begin until September

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1st, the first payment will be on the 15th October, which will be for all the days taught in September.

How can I access my money in China?

ATM's are widely available in China and typically allow access to foreign accounts, although not all of them do. Withdrawing money from an overseas account from most ATM's will incur a small fee for this service, which is determined by your bank at home. When using ATM's, we suggest using the ATM booths rather than wall ATM's. These booths provide 24 hour security, a door lock, and are usually attached to bank branches in case of any difficulties such as the ATM swallowing your card.

How do I exchange foreign currencies into RMB?

To exchange cash, take your foreign currency and passport to a Bank of China branch, the main state Bank that handles foreign currencies. Other banks like the China Construction Bank, Agriculture Bank of China and Industrial & Commercial Bank of China also offer exchange services, however, they do not hold all currencies.

As a foreigner, can I open a bank account in China?

Yes, it's possible for a foreigner to open a bank account. We recommend opening an account with the 'Bank of China' as it has an easier procedure for transferring money. Your school contact person can assist with opening an account when you arrive at the school.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY

What are some important emergency phone numbers I should know?

ImmerQi Program coordinators are available 24/7 in-country. Please contact them immediately if you require urgent advice or assistance. Their contact information will be given to you prior to your arrival in China. Other helpful numbers are below:

- Police: 110
- Ambulance: 120
- Fire Department: 119

What about hospitals? Do they speak English there?

Although it may be the last thing you would like to do in China, sometimes a trip to the hospital is unavoidable. Don't expect English to be widely spoken at very many hospitals. Whilst at the placement schools during the internship, the school's local contact person will be on hand to assist with any emergencies.

How do I report an incident to the police?

To report a theft (particularly for insurance purposes, which usually require a report within 24 hours of the incident) you must go to the Police station closest to where the incident occurred and ask for an Incident Form to fill out. You must have your passport on you. Most Police Stations are open 24/7.



English ability can vary, but generally there will be at least one officer with a basic knowledge of English available.

12. PHONES & ELECTRONICS IN CHINA

Mobile phones: Your phone should work in China (it is worth checking prior to arrival especially if you are locked to a network, e.g. iPhones). You can purchase a pre-paid SIM card at the training center for 100 RMB. Credit for these is simple to purchase and they can be used anywhere in China. They will be able to receive international calls and text messages, but cannot make international phone calls. If you bring an international phone with roaming, be aware that overseas calls are expensive in China and with a mobile you will pay to both receive and make calls. A local number is highly recommended. We also recommend downloading Skype and Whatsapp so that you can call your friends and relatives for free!

Laptops, iPads, etc: We do not recommend purchasing these items from within mainland China as they will often have Chinese operating systems.

13. INTERNET

You will discover that access to many foreign websites is restricted in China. Common websites and apps currently blocked in China include:

- Facebook
- Youtube
- Google
- Gmail
- Twitter
- Certain Blogging websites (blogspot, wordpress)
- Dropbox
- Flickr
- Instagram
- Many news websites, e.g. New York Times, The Independent, etc.
- Soundcloud

Should you wish to access these websites from China, we recommend purchasing a VPN (Virtual Private Network). This circumvents Chinese restrictions by making your location and internet content invisible, thereby allowing you to access blocked websites. This will need to be set up **BEFORE** you come to China as VPN websites are inaccessible within China without a VPN. We suggest downloading Astrill from www.astrill.com. Currently, a six-month subscription can be purchased for around 40 USD.



14. TRANSPORTATION

How do I get around?

The most common forms of transport for interns are Metro and taxi, which are both inexpensive. During rush hour, the Metro can be very busy, however, the trains are frequent. Most local Chinese travel by metro, private car, scooter and bicycle. 

Do I bargain with taxi drivers?

Official taxi fares always start at around 10 RMB as a fuel surcharge and increase incrementally. There are unofficial taxis that will offer their services to you unsolicited. Do not trust their services and wait for the official taxis, which are easy to come by.  To go by taxi, you should either have the exact address written in Chinese characters or be able to speak Chinese. Please note it is very uncommon for taxi drivers to speak English.

15. HOUSING

Accommodation at the placement schools is commonly a shared apartment or dorm style room, with shared bathrooms/laundry, a living area, a kitchen and a balcony. The apartments are usually small, with narrow kitchens and limited outdoor space.

- Bathroom: Shower (sometimes enclosed, sometimes just a shower head over tiles) and a toilet.
- Bedroom: Common items: single/double bed (Chinese mattresses can be tougher), air conditioning, wardrobe.

16. TRAVELING IN CHINA

Can I take one or two days off of my internship to travel?

We suggest that you travel either before or after your internship program. It is possible for you to take one to two days off (Friday or Monday) from your internship. This will, however, be up to you to organize and obtain permission from your school.

How much does a hostel/hotel room cost in China?

Prices vary according to the quality of the hostel/hotel. For hostels in Shanghai and Beijing, you can budget for 100 RMB+ per shared room. For hotels (3 stars) in Shanghai and Beijing, you can budget 200 -



400 RMB.

17. PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

China has many public holidays. Before you come, you should check whether there are any holidays during your stay. This is important not only for travel purposes but because it is common in China for businesses to work on weekends (meaning a 7 day plus work week in the days leading up to a holiday) to make up for the days lost to holidays.

When travelling during the two 'Golden Weeks' – Spring Festival and National Day – be warned that hotels and train/air tickets are more expensive and major attractions are also very busy! It is best to pre-plan your travel to get the best prices. For example in 2018 the public holidays were:

2020	PUBLIC HOLIDAY
30 Dec – 1 Jan	New Year
24 – 30 January	Chinese New Year
8 Mar	Women's Day
4 -6 April	Tomb Sweeping (<i>QingMing</i>)
29 April – 1 May	May Day
25 – 27 June	Dragon Boat
1 – 8 October	Mid-Autumn Day

*Note: Christmas and Easter are not considered Public Holidays in China. Most offices, schools and shops remain open on these days.

All of these public holidays have their own cultural significance and influence on people. For more information check out our website: <http://www.immerqi.org/article/chinese-holidays-festivals>

18. LEAVING CHINA

My initial visa only has a single entry, what does this mean? Why is this important?

The Chinese visa process is complicated and it is imperative that you honour your visa duration & terms. If your initial visa is single entry, this means that after you enter China's mainland you cannot exit the mainland, and re-enter on the same visa. If you go to Hong Kong or Taiwan on a single entry visa and attempt to return, you will be denied entry if you only have a single entry.

However, if you have a multiple entry visa, you can enter and exit the mainland more than once. This is important because it determines whether you can travel outside of the mainland during your internship.

