

My 1 Year Testimonial

By Gemma Wong

Just over a year ago today I was leaving the life I had in cold, rainy England behind and hopping on a plane to Thailand. I had made the decision to work and live in Thailand for many reasons. Firstly, I have always had that travel bug inside me; my travels included many places around the world, but had never quite reached Thailand. Secondly, teaching has always been my desired career. After applying for a PGCE in England and failing to get on to the course due to the lack of teaching experience, I researched ways in which I could gain experience. Lastly, the life I lived in England wasn't exactly terrible, I enjoyed the job I had and earned good money, but it just wasn't fulfilling my needs, regarding the career I wanted to pursue. So, after some realisation (which didn't take too long!), I figured I could kill two birds with one stone and teach whilst living abroad. With that being said, Thailand was not the first country that came to mind. I went on several websites, forums and spoke with people I had known who'd taught abroad before. Then I came across a job advertisement posted by Super English.

In comparison to the countless job adverts I had come across online, Super English stood out for me. The job description, requirements and benefits were clear and concise; with several benefits that appealed to me! I mean, who wouldn't bat an eye at 2 months free housing, one month's paid holiday, free work visa and full training? There were a few steps involved in the application process, which meant to me Super English were actually taking care in their hiring process and not just relying on someone's resume.

Soon after sending my application, I received an email from Peter. After a few emails back and forth, we arranged a skype interview. The interview couldn't have gone any better. Peter seemed like a genuine guy with a lot passion and enthusiasm for his company and teaching. I was advised to read up on some articles and testimonials on the website to get a better feel for Super English and that, I did. Within a week, Peter offered me the job at Noonoy; I was officially apart of the Super English family. Things were becoming more real.

During the months prior to my move to Thailand, I received copious amounts of friendly emails from current Super English teachers welcoming me and offering me any advice on pretty much anything. This instantly eased any thought of doubt or worry I had about moving my life to Thailand. This comfort continued from the moment I arrived in Surat Thani and still does to this day.

The support Super English has provided me throughout my entire time here has been incredible. Not only have Peter, the Thai staff and the managers been consistently helpful and supportive, fellow teachers in the exact same position as myself, have equally been there for me. I really do consider the Super English team as my family over here in Thailand. I couldn't have got by as easily as I have without everyone's support. One particular thing I feel is worth mentioning is the work visa. Peter has an excellent Thai team working with him and these guys break their backs to ensure all teachers at Super English are supported on the legal side of things. Unlike most agencies I have seen and heard of, we have very little responsibility over obtaining and maintaining our work visas. It really has been hassle free!

Working for Super English and particularly Noonoy, where I am the only English teacher, has given me a lot of freedom. Although I am provided with a curriculum from the school, I can pretty much teach what I want and how I want, as long as the targets are covered. This past year has allowed me to experiment with my ways of teaching and become more comfortable in the teaching environment. Super English has helped me a lot along my teaching journey and has helped me become a better teacher. The teacher training conducted by Peter himself and the managers, Jade and Kristin, was extremely useful. I couldn't have felt any more prepared on my first day of school.

Not one day at school has been the same. Teaching 18 different classes from nursery up to Prathom 6 has provided my year with a lot of variance and fun! Having this opportunity has helped develop my teaching skills in numerous ways. My creativity, confidence, adaptability, patience and organisation has seriously been tested! It has allowed me to find my comfort zones; which ages I enjoy teaching, classroom management, how to plan and conduct lessons. I feel I have constantly been growing as a teacher; teaching feels more and more natural to me. New games and teaching methods are always coming to mind; some are complete fails and others are successful! Ideas that haven't necessarily gone as planned have only made me a better teacher.

I think it's fair to say my past year living and working in Thailand has been one hell of an experience and I do not regret the decision to move here. I have had several opportunities to travel Southeast Asia over the long school holidays and the islands have been easily accessible on the weekends. I'm truly thankful for having this opportunity as Thailand is such a beautiful country. Working for Super English has given me the foundations I need to pursue my teaching career and I couldn't have asked for a better company or school to have worked with. I feel I have been very spoilt with regards to my teaching lifestyle. It will be hard to match! I have grown in so many ways, met some amazing people and have made memories to last a life time.

I am extremely sad to be leaving my school, my students especially, Super English, Surat and Thailand in general. However, Hong Kong is now on the cards, in the hope to develop further

and gain new and different experiences.



Whole school photo celebrating the King's Birthday.



One of my Anuban 1 classes - absolute cuties!



My favourite Anuban 3 class, I am going to miss these guys so much!