

## English Language Assistants Application – Guidance 2015/16

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### Eligibility criteria

You must:

- Be a native level English speaker – this will be assessed by looking at the quality of your written application, your university reference and your educational background. We will test your level of English at a telephone or face-to-face interview if necessary and we would contact you in advance should this be required.
- Have completed your secondary education in the UK (age 11-18, 12-18 in Scotland). If you spent all of your secondary education abroad you must hold a valid UK passport. You are not eligible to apply if you were educated abroad and you do not hold a UK passport. Those educated abroad who hold a UK passport will have their knowledge of UK culture tested at a telephone or face-to-face interview and we would contact you should this be required. Those who had their secondary education in Ireland are eligible to apply as long as they are currently studying at a UK university.
- Have completed and passed two years of Higher Education (university-level studies) by the time you start your assistantship. If this was outside of the UK please [contact us](#) before applying.
- Have B1 level or higher in the language of the country of application, **except China where there is no language requirement**. Please see the self-assessment table below to determine your level. We may test your language skills at a face-to-face or telephone interview if necessary. It is in your own best interest to hold the required language level as you will be expected to communicate and complete the necessary administration procedures in the foreign language upon arrival.
- Be flexible regarding your preferences (area, environment, age group etc.) and be willing to accept any post that is offered.
- Be available and willing to complete the full period of appointment as detailed in our [country pages](#).

- Apply for an International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) which is a form of criminal record check for UK nationals or non-UK nationals previously resident in the UK, seeking to work with children overseas. You will be instructed to apply for the ICPC if you receive a provisional offer of an assistantship from the British Council. Once received, your ICPC will be assessed on a case by case basis; the British Council retain the right to exclude an applicant from the programme based on the information contained therein. Under no circumstances should you apply for your ICPC until instructed to do so by the British Council.

Please be advised that in line with the British Council's Child Protection Policy and our approach to safeguarding children, if you have ever been convicted of or received a caution, reprimand or warning for a sexual or violence related offence or any offence involving any type of harm (physical, emotional or sexual abuse) to a child or children, your application will not be accepted.

- Meet the following country specific requirements:

Country	Age requirement	Other requirements
Austria	30 and under	Cover letter for those applying for shorter posts (see <a href="#">country page</a> )
Belgium	30 and under	UK or EU passport
Canada	30 and under	UK and Irish passports only
China	60 and under	See Checklist
France	35 and under	UK or EU passport
Germany	30 and under	Cover letter for those applying for shorter posts (see <a href="#">country page</a> )
Italy	30 and under	UK and Irish passports only
Latin America	30 and under for Mexico	UK and Irish passports only for Mexico
Spain		UK or EU passport
Switzerland	21-30	UK or EU passport

### Language Levels - Self Assessment Table (based on the European Language Level Framework)

When self-assessing the level of proficiency of your additional language(s) please bear in mind your understanding and speaking abilities in the language and, choose the level that best summarises your proficiency in these areas.

Level	Description
A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations.

## PLEASE NOTE

If your application is approved by the British Council in the UK, it will be forwarded to our overseas partner agency in the relevant country who in all cases makes the final decision on appointments.

The British Council places 2,500 assistants each year in 14 countries and works closely with overseas partner agencies who are responsible for finding the host schools abroad. The British Council manages the UK side of the programme and has a responsibility for selecting English Language Assistants to recommend for assistantships overseas. **It is important to bear in mind that the British Council is not the employer of language assistants.**

You can only be an English Language Assistant three separate times regardless of whether the posts were in the same or different countries. Both consecutive and non-consecutive years will be counted.

### Completing the application form

- Your application must be word processed / typed on a computer. Handwritten applications will be rejected.
- The application form is **not** compatible with Apple Macs. Using a Mac will mean that you will go over the character limit which will result in you having to resubmit your application by post.
- Please remember that your responses on pages 2-5 of the application have a **character** limit which is indicated in the box. A character is any letter, number, punctuation mark or space and is not the same as a word limit.

### Understanding page 1 of your application form

Page 1 of your application form is automatically produced using information which you provided when you applied online.

**If there are any changes to be made to these details, you must make them by hand on each printout, in red pen and large writing, so that they are clearly visible.**

Check that your family name and forename(s) are in the correct order

Please remember that whilst we do try to take into account your area preferences, it is not possible to satisfy all requests

If you have selected 'Yes' for having dependents you must provide further information in section 19 of the application form

All correspondence with the British Council will be via email. It is therefore essential that you check for errors at this stage. You should also check your junk folder on a regular basis

Please ensure that the duration of your course is correct as we use this to piece together your educational history

Application year	Application ID	Official use only
Family name	Country choice 1	
Forename (s)	Country choice 2	
Date of birth	Country choice 3	
Dependents	Area preferences within first choice country	
Passport	Area preference 1	
Town of Birth	Area preference 2	
Country of birth	Area preference 3	
Pref. Environment	Pref. ranking 1	
Pref. Age Group	Pref. ranking 2	
	Pref. ranking 3	
Permanent address		
E-mail (personal)		
E-mail (university)		
Telephone (home)		
Telephone (mobile)		
Telephone (term)		
Current studies	Previous studies	
University/college	University/college	
Qualification	Qualification	
Course	Course	
Duration	Duration	
Current year		
Lang. component	Lang. component	
Course category	Course category	

Please do not write in this section

This should be your permanent address NOT your university address

This box should only contain previous university level studies. Please do not write in your Sixth Form / College courses

### Pages 2-5 of your application form

The following guidance relates to pages 2-5 of the application form.

Section	Guidance
<b>2</b>	APPLICATION ID – Please enter your application ID which can be found on Application Form Page 1 (PDF).
<b>3-4</b>	Enter your family name and forename(s) – make sure that these are the right way around.
<b>5</b>	PASSPORT – Please provide your current passport number ensuring that it is valid until 6 months after the end of your assistantship. If your passport has expired or will expire during your assistantship, please provide your old/current passport number. Once your new number arrives you should send the number to <a href="mailto:language.assistants@britishcouncil.org">language.assistants@britishcouncil.org</a> . Please see our <a href="#">eligibility requirements</a> if you do not hold a UK passport.
<b>6</b>	NEXT OF KIN / EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS – It is <u>essential</u> that you enter the name, telephone number <b>and</b> email address of your next of kin so that we may contact them in the case of an emergency.
<b>7</b>	<p>SECONDARY EDUCATION – Please provide the dates (MM/YYYY), names and addresses of <b>all</b> schools which you attended between the ages of 11-18 (12-18 in Scotland).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We piece together a candidate's educational background using this information; all years must therefore be covered. Writing the age you were is not sufficient – dates must be given.</li> <li>• If you need more space to provide additional schools please continue on a separate piece of paper and include a copy of this with each copy of your application.</li> <li>• If you had a gap year between leaving school and university please provide a brief description of what you did.</li> <li>• If you were educated abroad at any point, please see our <a href="#">eligibility requirements</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>8</b>	GAP YEARS AND GRADUATES – If you have had a gap of two years where you have not been in full time education please include a CV plus any other documents on the Checklist which are applicable to you. Those who graduated in 2013 must also include a CV. CVs should be two pages maximum.

<b>9</b>	<p><b>FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS</b></p> <p>(a) Please tick your proficiency in the language of your first choice country. The language requirement for all countries except China is B1 level or higher. Please note there are no language requirements for China.</p> <p>(b) Other languages – Please state any other languages that you speak and your proficiency in the language using the criteria provided in section 9a of the application form e.g. Spanish B1 level.</p>
<b>10</b>	<p><b>TIME SPENT ABROAD</b> – Please enter exact dates (MM/YYYY) of any relevant or significant period(s) spent abroad and give a description of the location, nature of your time abroad e.g. working / studying and indicate who you travelled with (alone, with parents etc.).</p>
<b>11</b>	<p><b>PREVIOUS ASSISTANTSHIP</b> – If you are currently or have previously taken part in the Language Assistants or Comenius Assistants programme you must submit 3 copies of a signed/stamped reference from your previous host school on letter headed paper. If you do not have a reference from your previous assistantship you must obtain one from your previous host establishment immediately and include one original and two copies.</p>
<b>12</b>	<p><b>YOUR TEACHING EXPERIENCE</b> - Please provide exact dates (DD/MM/YYYY) and length of any formal or informal teaching experience and explain in what capacity you were involved e.g. planning lessons/activities and delivering to X number of children. Please remember to include any informal teaching experience which you feel is relevant to the role of a language assistant.</p>
<b>13</b>	<p><b>YOUR SKILLS AND INTERESTS</b> - Please provide details of any skills, qualifications, interests and other experience which are <b>relevant</b> to the role of a language assistant (e.g. sport, music, drama, organising clubs/games, youth work, voluntary work, full-time or part-time employment).</p>
<b>14</b>	<p><b>YOUR CONTRIBUTION</b> – Explain how your skills, interests and experience would contribute to your role as a language assistant.</p>
<b>15</b>	<p><b>YOUR MOTIVATION</b> – Give reasons for your interest in becoming a language assistant other than 'course requirement'. Include future career plans, if known. This is your chance to convince us of your reasons for applying.</p>



<b>16</b>	<p><b>YOUR ADAPTABILITY</b> – Give an example of a time when you have had to be flexible and adaptable, describing the situation and your response to it (e.g. experience of a different culture, country or situation in the workplace). Adaptability is crucial to the role of an assistant so please make your example as pertinent as possible.</p>
<b>17</b>	<p><b>REASONS FOR PREFERENCES</b> – If on page 1 of your application you expressed area, environment or age-group preferences, please give brief reasons for your choice. Please note that it is not possible to select regional preferences for Belgium, Canada and Switzerland as we cannot guarantee the number of posts in each region of these countries.</p> <p>We look at the preferences section most closely when matching you to a specific region/age group. Whilst we do try to take your preferences into account we cannot satisfy all requests as this depends entirely on the number of schools who request an assistant and the location/age group of these schools and the number of posts in each region is strictly limited. Flexibility is therefore a pre-requisite to taking part in the programme. Please also remember that for many countries, the area preference that you have stated on your application form does not necessarily mean a specific city but the larger surrounding area. See our <a href="#">country pages</a> for more information. Please also remember that whatever you write here will be read by your eventual host school in whatever region that might be.</p>
<b>19</b>	<p><b>DEPENDANTS</b> – Follow the instructions provided on the application form and continue on a separate sheet if necessary.</p>
<b>21</b>	<p><b>CRIMINAL RECORD</b> – Please give details in this section of any convictions, reprimands, cautions or warnings which you have received or if you have ever been arrested for an offence in England, Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland and for any criminal offences committed overseas. As part of the application process you will be required to apply for the International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) when requested to do so. However, declaring a criminal record will not automatically disqualify you from this programme with the exception of the offences outlined on page 1 of the guidance notes.</p>
<b>22</b>	<p>You must sign and date this section in blue or black ink on all three copies of your application.</p>



Submitting your application

- You must submit three copies of your application in the following order and staple each copy in the top left hand corner:
  - Copy one:
    - Application Form Page 1 (PDF)
    - Pages 2-5 of your application
    - University reference (to be attached by your university tutor if you are applying through your university) or degree certificate if you graduated before 2011
    - **Original** versions of additional documents in any order as detailed in the Checklist (if applicable)
  - Copy two:
    - Application Form Page 1 (PDF)
    - Pages 2-5 of your application
    - University reference (to be attached by your university tutor if you are applying through your university) or degree certificate if you graduated before 2011
    - **Photocopies** of additional documents as detailed in the Checklist (if applicable)
    - Checklist
  - Copy three
    - Application Form Page 1 (PDF)
    - Pages 2-5 of your application
    - University reference (to be attached by your university tutor if you are applying through your university) or degree certificate if you graduated before 2011
    - **Photocopies** of additional documents as detailed in the Checklist (if applicable)

Please only include one version of the Checklist at the back of copy two as detailed above.

Three copies are required as one copy is sent to our overseas partners, one copy is passed on to your host establishment and one copy is kept at the relevant British Council office. **Any candidate who submits only one copy of their application will be rejected and will not be allowed to reapply the same year.**

- All undergraduates and those who graduated in 2011 or after must include a university reference - no exceptions will be made. Anyone who graduated before 2011 must include 3 photocopies of their degree certificate
- If you are required to submit an employer reference (please see checklist) please ensure that the reference is on letter headed paper and comments on your performance as an employee.

- It is not sufficient to include a note explaining why a certain document is missing. You must include all documents which are applicable to you as per the Checklist.
- All undergraduates studying Modern Languages as a main or subsidiary subject, including final year applicants, must pass their application on to their university tutor. All other applicants should submit their application directly to the following address depending on your location and the country for which you are applying:

Country of Residence	First choice country of application	Postal address
England or Wales	Austria, Germany & Switzerland	Language Assistants British Council The Boat - 7 <sup>th</sup> floor 49 Queens Square Belfast BT1 3FG
	Belgium, Canada, France & Italy	Language Assistants British Council Bridgewater House 58 Whitworth Street Manchester M1 6BB
	China, Latin America & Spain	Language Assistants Programmes & Projects British Council 10 Spring Gardens London SW1A 2BN
Scotland	All countries	Language Assistants British Council Scotland Waverley Gate (Fourth Floor) 2-4 Waterloo Place Edinburgh EH1 3EG
Northern Ireland	All countries	Language Assistants British Council The Boat - 7 <sup>th</sup> floor 49 Queens Square Belfast BT1 3FG

**We recommend you send your application by recorded delivery. Your application will only be accepted if it is postmarked on or before the deadline and sufficient postage is paid.**

What happens next?

- The British Council will assess your application for the following criteria:
  - Motivation
  - Skills and Interests
  - Adaptability
  - Expression and Presentation
  - Teaching Experience
  - University Reference and additional references as outlined in the Checklist
- Remember that this is a job application for a competitive process and that you should sell yourself using examples and evidence in order to convince us of your suitability for the programme.
- If your application is not of a high enough standard or the answers provided are too brief it will not be accepted.
- If your application is successful it will not only be read by the British Council but also by our overseas partner agency, local authorities and host schools abroad. You should therefore treat it as you would any job application and make sure that your answers are suitable and appropriate for a job working with children.
- Please see the [Project Lifecycle](#) for information on when you will hear from us. Please note that we receive around 4000 applications every year. All successful applications must be entered onto our database, read, quality assessed, followed up on where necessary, submitted to overseas partner agency and matched to a region. This process takes a long time so please do not be concerned if you do not hear from us for some time and consult the [Project Lifecycle](#) for more specific information on the timescales involved. The eventual process by which you are allocated to a school is **not** coordinated by the British Council in the UK but by overseas partner agencies who liaise with local authorities and schools.
- Applicants who have put a non-EU country (Canada, China, Latin America or Switzerland) as their first choice will be considered for an Assessment Day. Candidates who select these countries as a second or third choice will not be invited to an assessment day, and therefore will not be considered for those posts. Candidates not selected for an Assessment Day might be offered a transfer to another country as long as their application is of a high enough standard and meets the relevant country requirements. For all other countries candidates may be assessed by telephone interview where areas of their application need to be followed up. We will contact you in advance by email if we require you to participate in an assessment day or a telephone interview. These will take place between January and April 2014.
- Once your application has been accepted by the overseas partner agency and you have been matched to a region in your chosen country, you will receive a provisional offer of an assistantship. Please be aware that your assistantship will not be confirmed until we have received and assessed your International Child Protection

Certificate (ICPC).

- Should you need to withdraw from the programme, you must [contact us](#) by email and outline the reasons for your withdrawal. If you withdraw from the programme we cannot reinstate your application that year. Owing to the negative impact that late withdrawals have on the programme, we reserve the right to disqualify any future application from you if you withdraw late on in the process without a valid reason. This is to avoid further damage to the British Council's reputation with overseas partners and schools.
- Any queries relating to the Erasmus grant should be directed to the Erasmus coordinator at your university.
- If your address or contact details change at any time between applying and completing your assistantship you must [contact us](#) so that we can update our records.
- Documents (including original versions) cannot be returned.
- Applications or missing documents that arrive after the specified deadline(s) due to insufficient postage will be rejected.
- If an applicant is rejected from the programme, it is not possible for them to reapply, irrespective of country, for the same academic year.

Thank you for your interest in the programme. We wish you the best of luck with the application process.