

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS PROGRAMME
CHILE

CHILE COUNTRY NOTES 2019-20

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NOTES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS APPOINTED TO CHILE IN 2019-20

This document is Country Notes for the 2019/20 English Language Assistants Programme in Chile. Any previous country notes relating to previous years should be ignored for the 2019/20 academic year.

Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in these notes. However the British Council cannot accept responsibility for any errors which may exist or for any subsequent change.

FOREWORD

Congratulations on your recent allocation to a post as an English Language Assistant in Chile. Every year, around 2,500 Language Assistants from the UK support the teaching of English in 14 countries around the world. Each one is taking part in a programme that traces its heritage back to 1905. It began as an exchange programme to allow graduates from France to help English students learn French, with 'young Masters in English secondary schools' heading to France to perform a similar role. Shortly afterwards, a similar agreement was reached with the government of Prussia.

Since those early days, the programme has endured major global events, two World Wars, and the Great Depression, to name a few. But while the global political, social and economic landscapes may have changed over the years, the Language Assistants initiative has remained committed to increasing language skills across the world.

This document contains important information and advice regarding a variety of practical and administrative matters affecting UK assistants in Chile. This document should be read carefully, retained for reference and considered in conjunction with any papers issued by British Council Chile or the Ministry of Education. It is important that you take this information with you whilst undertaking your year abroad in order to be able to consult it at all times when problems/questions arise.

If your permanent (UK) home address, personal e-mail or phone number should change at any time from now, please inform us immediately by sending an e-mail to languageassistants.uk@britishcouncil.org. We may need to contact you during the year with updates to these notes, invitations or urgent messages.

We hope that you find the following information useful and that you enjoy the year ahead.

Best wishes,

British Council Language Assistants Team

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FOREWORD

If you are expecting rumba, salsa, constant tropical heat and the clamour and noise that distinguishes some of the very 'Latin' South American countries, then you will be surprised by what you find in Chile. Chile is not a stereotypical Latin country and in many ways has more in common with its European counterparts.

What this means is that you get an infrastructure that works, less poverty than is unfortunately characteristic of much of the continent, services, shops and bars of a standard equal to the UK, and far less crime, muggings or shootings than are a daily feature in much of Latin America. In this respect Chile is not as daunting or likely to produce such a tremendous culture shock as some of the 'harder', less developed countries on its doorstep.

Physically, Chile is a stunning country with a number of great cities and its own specific charm; glaciers and lakes in the South, the Atacama Desert in the North, and all this combined with some of the friendliest people in the South American continent. During your assistantship you will experience this first hand, and become familiar with both Chile as a country and the Chileans as a people.

1.0 CO-OPERATING PARTNERS

1.1 BRITISH COUNCIL

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of [arts and culture](#), [English language](#), [education](#) and [civil society](#). Each year

we reach over 20 million people face-to-face and more than 500 million people online, via broadcasts and publications. Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body.

Our work in English aims to bring high-quality language materials to every [learner](#) and [teacher](#) who wants them. In developing and post-conflict countries, we teach English and train teachers through radio, web and TV broadcasts. We offer more than three million UK [examinations](#) worldwide, helping people gain access to trusted qualifications to support their career and study prospects.

Our work in [education](#) and [society](#) helps transform national education systems, builds more inclusive and open societies and increases [young people's opportunities](#). We encourage international students to come and study in the UK, and British students to experience life abroad. We bring [schools](#) around the world together, so young people and teachers from different countries can learn from each other.

Our work in the [arts](#) involves the very best of British and international artistic talent. We help increase audiences for international work in the UK and for UK work globally. We bring artists together and support the development of skills and policy in the arts and creative industries. Through this work, we ensure that culture in its broadest sense plays a vital role in helping people to connect with and understand each other.

In these ways, the British Council builds links between UK people and institutions and those around the world, helping to create trust and lay foundations for prosperity and security around the world.

1.2 COOPERATING PARTNER

The Language Assistants Programme in Chile is administered by the British Council in Santiago, Chile. British Council UK liaises with the British Council in Chile who administer the programme in Chile.

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2.0 ROLE OF A LANGUAGE ASSISTANT

The role of a language assistant is a very important one and one that we hope you will enjoy. Remember that you are a paid member of staff with responsibilities and required professionalism that this entails. Assistants will be based in universities, often providing support to the teacher training programs. You will be expected to take your teaching duties seriously and be committed to the demands of the role. Please refer to our website for more information on your role as an [English Language Assistant](#).

As a language assistant you are also an **ambassador for the UK and its culture**. The way you behave will influence how those around you view the UK so you should endeavour to be a positive example. If you set a bad example, you could damage the reputation of the programme and adversely affect the experience of future assistants.

Your first-hand experience of life in the UK is an excellent resource and you should draw on this during your lessons. Please see the section entitled 'Teaching Resources' for classroom tips and resources.

2.1 TEACHING ENGLISH

It is important to be resourceful and use your initiative. If you do not think that you are being used sufficiently, make suggestions of topics that you could discuss with the students or activities that you could get involved with. This document contains a whole chapter about teaching English, but to get started the following links are useful.

- http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teaching/files/pub_whole_manual.pdf
- www.teachingenglish.org.uk/language-assistant/essential-uk

In order to ensure a positive professional experience and avoid potential problems, consider these steps:

- Try to form a good working relationship with other members of staff
- Introduce yourself to all members of the English department
- Be patient and polite, and be aware of the work pressures of others
- Do not correct the teacher in front of students
- Be punctual, responsible and prepare adequately for your lessons
- Meet regularly with your mentor teacher. This gives them the opportunity to provide feedback about your performance and for you to raise any concerns or issues.

Do tell people if you have any issues or if you need information, as otherwise they will assume everything is okay. Should any difficulties arise in relation to teaching, you should follow the lines of referral outlined in section 9.4.

2.2 OBSERVATION PERIOD

When you first arrive, you should ask for a period of observation of 1-2 weeks. It may not be offered to you automatically. Observation will allow you to familiarise yourself with the environment, to experience classroom management techniques

as well as to get to know the names, faces and personalities of your pupils and gauge their level of English.

Try to note the following:

- how the teacher starts and ends the lesson
- how the teacher speaks to pupils
- how the teacher involves all pupils, including shy ones, in the class activity
- what the teacher's attitude is to pupil errors and error correction
- how the teacher controls disruptive behaviour, lateness and lack of effort.

The size of the class can vary from approximately 25 - 50 students depending on the institution.

3.0 ALLOCATION

3.1 PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT

The period of appointment for UK assistants in Chile will be from the end of July or August 2019 until the end of June 2020. This will depend upon your university allocation. Approximately 20-30% of the posts will begin in July. The rest will begin in August. In general, the number of hours of the assistantship will be between 18-20 hours per week, but please check your agreement carefully to find out the exact number you will be expected to work at your institution. Please check whether or not you will receive additional allowance for any extra hours worked.

3.2 HOLIDAYS

Remember that the academic calendar in the UK and Chile is different (Chile runs from March - December) so you will probably teach two sets of students. All ELAs are entitled to a holiday of approximately 2-4 weeks during January - February and you will receive your payment during this time. Although students may be on holiday during this time, ELAs may be required to carry out administrative tasks during some of this period. Please note that this can also vary from institution to institution, often even within

the same town, and should be agreed in writing upon arrival.

You should not be absent on other occasions without prior written permission.

3.3 STAYING FOR A CONSECUTIVE YEAR

It is possible for ELAs to stay for a consecutive year in Chile, however they **must** return to the UK over the summer to collect a new visa from the consulate in London. Visas cannot be arranged from Chile and the assistant must therefore return to the UK in between assistantships.

4.0 PRE-DEPARTURE

4.1 FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) has a wealth of resources we recommend you utilise. Before travelling to Chile, you should:

- Check the FCO's travel advice pages and subscribe to updates so that you receive any important changes to the FCO's advice. During a crisis, advice for British nationals will be published on the travel advice website and updated regularly, so by subscribing you will ensure that you are aware of any updates.
- Read the 'Support for British National Abroad' documentation provided by the FCO, which can be found [here](#)
- Follow the FCO social media pages for up-to-date alerts and information.

4.2 PASSPORTS & VISAS

Before leaving the UK Language Assistants must be in possession of a passport, valid for the duration of their stay in Chile.

Assistants will be granted students visas (valid for one year, in accordance with the duration of assistants' placements. Assistants will be required to provide a completed application form for their courtesy visa, a passport-size photo and their passport. You will also need to submit a certified medical check, academic record and a certified police certificate. We will provide you with the Health Report which must be completed by your GP. These documents must be certified at the cost of approximately £30 per document via the FCO website [online](#).

Please bear in mind that visa procedures may vary from year to year. The British Council tries to obtain the latest information on your visa requirements but we are unable to accept any liability if the information provided here differs from what the Consulate requires from you.

4.2 INSURANCE

You are required to take out comprehensive insurance cover for the duration of your time in Chile. It is important to cover medical and other expenses, personal accident and personal liability, luggage and personal possessions and cancellation charges.

The British Council will not be responsible for you while you are in Chile, although we will offer support when necessary.

If you do fall ill, make sure you keep copies of all medical bills, receipts or other documents, as you will then need these to make a claim.

The British Council is unable to advise on private insurance packages, so you are recommended to consult an insurance broker for professional advice and to check whether you are covered by your parents' insurance policy. Undergraduate assistants may find that a "study abroad" policy purchased online is an option. Please be aware that some insurance policies, usually 'backpackers' insurance, do not allow for trips home during the year and it is important to check the small print of your policy to be clear on the coverage provided. We recommend you research the various options available and consult other/ former assistants before purchasing a suitable policy. **However, any insurance you purchase should include cover for emergency treatment and repatriation.**

4.3 DOCUMENTS TO TAKE

We recommend that you scan important documents before leaving the UK and email these to yourself so that you have access to them while you are away. Documents you may need access to include; birth certificate (although you should not need the original) and scanned copies of the photo page of your passport, visa and driving licence (take this with you). You should carry a photocopy of the photo page of your passport rather than the original and always have this on you as a means of ID. We also recommend learning your passport number as you may need it to fill in multiple forms. It is also worth having a couple of passport sized photos to take with you as you may need these for various ID cards or in the event of losing your passport.

5.0 MONEY MATTERS

5.1 MONEY MATTERS

All assistant's experiences will be different, and you should check the terms with your host institution. All participating institutions are independent bodies, meaning that the allowance varies from institution to institution, and should be confirmed in your contract. This year the average salary is 412.000 Chilean pesos. It will provide a reasonable basic standard of living for one person. Try not to react negatively if you receive less money than another assistant.

Based on the information we received from your predecessors in previous years, it is advisable to leave the UK with a minimum of £1000 plus access to funds in a UK bank account to cover expenses for the first few weeks. Please note that you may experience a delay in receiving your first salary payment. This will arrive by post when you have been in Chile after approximately six to eight weeks. You should therefore not count on this money being received at the end of your first month.

5.2 ADDITIONAL INCOME

Unfortunately, the visa you receive is a student visa and so does not permit you to work, other than at your allocated institution, in Chile. Therefore, you should take into consideration that acquiring any type of formal job in Chile will affect your migration status and you could be dismissed from the programme.

5.3 BANKS

We recommend having access to your UK bank account throughout the year, making sure that you have sufficient funds in case of delays to your allowance payment. ATMs are very common in Chile and they are the best way to get money. Credit cards are widely accepted, but when using these please keep in mind that some businesses add a surcharge of 5-10% onto your purchases. The actual amount you will have to pay is also dependent on the exchange rate. Many ELAs use a cash card that often doesn't charge for using your card abroad and isn't linked to your British bank account.

Be aware that you are often charged for using your UK debit card to withdraw money abroad. You may wish to check what your bank will charge you to use this service. Your monthly allowance is adequate to survive on, but you will need more if you intend to travel. Please remember to inform your British banks that you will be living in Chile for six months so as to avoid your British cards being blocked when you try to use them.

5.4 LOST OR STOLEN CREDIT CARDS

If a credit card is lost or stolen, you should call your bank immediately to cancel it. If stolen, the theft should be reported to the police.

5.5 GRADUATES WITH STUDENT LOANS

If you will be overseas for more than 3 months, you will need to let student finance know. Complete an Overseas Income Assessment Form to enable the Student Loans Company to

calculate how much you need to repay. On the Overseas Income Assessment Form, you should provide them with details of your circumstances and prospective income.

Whilst in Chile the money you receive is considered a monthly allowance or grant, rather than a salary. This means you are officially taking part in a grant funded mobility programme rather than formal employment. Previous assistants who declared their Language Assistant role as formal employment rather than a grant funded mobility programme faced challenges with the student loans company, who requested copies of employment contracts.

You will be required to provide evidence of income or means of support. They will then send you a repayment schedule showing how much you need to pay each month. Your monthly payments will be based upon the earnings threshold for your destination country. More information can be found online [here](#). Please note that the British Council cannot advise further on student loans matters.

6.0 HEALTH & WELLBEING

Please visit the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) website for more information regarding healthcare in [Chile](#).

For information on **insurance cover**, please see section 4.2 of this document.

6.1 VACCINATIONS

We strongly recommend that you consult your GP and get information on the vaccinations needed for Chile before you travel. The NHS website, [Fit for travel](#), is also a useful starting point. Please note the British Council is unable to pay for your vaccines.

6.2 MEDICATION

Make sure that if you need specific medication you bring a large enough supply to cover your time abroad. Label it clearly before boarding a plane. If you have to carry syringes or needles, please remember to get a letter from your GP

explaining their medical necessity. We also recommend checking your airline's website to see whether any other documentation is needed. Country specific information and advice can be found on the National Travel Health Network and Centre [website](#).

6.3 MENTAL HEALTH

Although working abroad can be enjoyable, it can also be challenging. Lack of familiar support systems, disrupted daily routines, language barriers, culture shock and unexpected situations can intensify stress levels rather than alleviate them.

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. You are advised to read the leaflet emailed to you even if you are not currently suffering from mental health problems.

The Foreign Commonwealth Office provides information about mental health and travel via the following links. The advice contains guidance on travelling abroad and mental health, and information about how the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) is able to assist British nationals with mental health needs abroad. The leaflets detail the type of assistance you may find in the country. The leaflet also explains some of the differences between English law and practice and that of other countries.

[Mental Health: Travelling Abroad](#)

[Mental Health: Travelling Abroad Checklist](#)

7.0 ARRIVAL

7.1 INDUCTION

There is no centralised induction in Chile. You will be given a full induction at your host institution on arrival. If this is not offered to **you**, you should request one from your mentor teacher.

7.3 ACCOMMODATION

You should contact your mentor to ask about temporary accommodation for the first two weeks of your assistantship; accommodation for these two weeks may be paid by your host institution. They may also be able provide advice about longer-term accommodation.

Temporary accommodation may be arranged for the first 1-2 weeks in your town/city, but this will depend on the institution and you will have to sort out permanent accommodation yourself. Please check this with your mentor teacher who should be able to tell you what to expect and give advice and help. You may also wish to check with your predecessor if applicable. Past assistants have emphasised the need to look for accommodation as early as possible. The first weeks of your assistantship will be busy as you will be finding your way around an unfamiliar town, dealing with bureaucracy and trying to make a good impression at school. Having accommodation lined up can make this easier. For temporary lodgings while you look for something permanent, investigate the possibility of staying in a youth hostel. Do not take out a contract on your accommodation until you know the location of your institution. Please note that the British Council is not able to provide or help find accommodation.

Once you get to Chile, the following suggestions may be of interest:

- advertise on the school/staff notice board and ask around the staff; do NOT advertise in local papers or public places
- ring the local university halls of residence or check their flat share adverts and notices, or advertise on their notice board that you are looking for a room
- ask local friends'/acquaintances' landlords if they have any further accommodation to let
- contact any student or youth organisation in the area that might have details of available lodgings: the local tourist office may have a list of such organisations
- find out about local religious organisations as they often know of rooms to let

- accommodation agencies may be able to help but you should be very wary of paying large fees and deposits, and always read the small print in any leases or agreements to be signed. Look for small agencies as their fees are often lower
- search for a room or flat on the internet

We recommend that you take photos of your room and the flat when you move into your long-term accommodation and when you leave to help you get back any deposit you may have to pay, which is usually dependent on the accommodation being in the same condition as when you first arrived. When you do find accommodation, please ensure that you have checked health and safety issues (temporary and long term) such as fire alarms and exits, gas leaks, electrics, water etc. Once you have found somewhere to live, even if it has been arranged for you, do not sign any agreement you are not comfortable with and make sure that there is a period of notice written in the contract to avoid problems should you decide to change your accommodation. When you leave your accommodation, remember to cancel any personal contracts e.g. internet or utilities.

8.0 SETTLING IN

In Latin America there is often a culture of informality which might give the impression of a lack of organisation and forward planning. Things may tend to happen at the very last minute and many assistants from the UK find it hard to adjust to what they consider to be a disorganised society. Usually what is lacking in forward planning is made up for in making newcomers feel welcome. However, you will need to prepare yourself for potential frustrations particularly at a bureaucratic level, even prior to departure, for example when it comes to finding out specific details regarding your post and visa applications.

Showing an interest in Chilean culture, especially football, nature and music will certainly endear you to the locals. We recommend you read up as much as possible before you go as this will help you make conversation and talk knowledgeably to people you meet in the first few weeks.



8.1 CULTURE SHOCK

Even if you have travelled to non-European destinations before, you might feel slightly overwhelmed in the beginning by your experience. Some areas can be very poor and you might struggle to accept this. Latin America is also known for its alleged chaos. Be open to changes of plans (social and at work), lessons cancelled at the last minute etc. A different climate and location as well as feeling jet lagged after the long flight and struggling with speaking Spanish all day long might lead to temporary disorientation, self-consciousness and exhaustion. This usually leads to feeling homesick but please be assured that this is a very common and normal feeling which usually disappears after a few weeks or even days.

There are some ways which might help you to overcome this initial culture shock. Try not to be too hard on yourself; yes, you have come to Chile to live and work there but that does not mean that you have to be like one of the locals within a week. Give yourself time to get over the jet lag and to explore your area. Do not stay in contact only with UK assistants during your assistantship as this might lead to your feeling alienated for the whole time of your appointment. However, it is

important that you contact them and your family and friends back home in the beginning to tell them about your experiences. Other assistants can be a great support, as they are going through the same process. Once you have met local people and have tackled bureaucracy, you will realise that life in Chile gets much easier and you will have an enjoyable time. Religion and family play an important role in everyday life so, although you may at first feel like an outsider, once you have proved your interest in local people and their culture, you are likely to be welcomed into these tight-knit groups.

The way you behave and represent the UK will shape the view of the UK of those Chileans with whom you are in contact. There are a number of frustrations that Language Assistants to Latin America frequently feel; attitudes towards timekeeping in Latin America can be somewhat lax, particularly in social settings (although you will be expected to be punctual to your classes) Machismo and general gender issues might be something which female assistants, in particular, struggle to manage, and unwanted attention in the street should be expected by female assistants. Discourage this by dressing appropriately and trying to blend in. Bureaucracy can also be very tiresome. Do not get angry as this usually does not lead to any results – especially when dealing with people in authority. Ultimately, remember that you are an ambassador for the UK – do not criticise what you cannot change and, above all, keep your sense of humour!

While Chile has traditionally been a male dominated society, this does not seem to affect the business world greatly as some women hold leading positions in local and multinational companies. Although Chile is relatively safe, and women's safety is not a particular problem, caution should be exercised in quieter places, in the street, in bars and generally at night, as in any city.

Politeness and respect are seen as important everywhere in Latin America. In Chile, the typical form of greeting is to kiss each other on the cheek.

8.2 PRACTICALITIES

The electrical current is 220 Volts and there are two different types of plugs used (the European and the Australian style) so make sure that you take adaptors.

At the time of writing (June 2019), UK £1 is the equivalent to about 863.03 CLP (Chilean Peso)

Please note that the exchange rate may change considerably between now and the start of your placement. You can find bills of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 pesos, and coins of 1 and 2 pesos, and 5, 10, 25 and 50 cents.

Chileans use the metric system for weights and measures. Distances are measured in kilometres.

- Chile is five hours behind GMT
- Government offices and businesses are closed during public holidays.

Important Numbers:

Country code 0056
Directory assistance 103
Fire 132
Police 331
Medical emergency 131

8.3 CREATING SOCIAL NETWORKS

Even if you have been to Chile before it is possible that you will find some things strange at first and will need a little time to settle in. On arrival, the thought of making friends and mixing with the locals can seem like a daunting task, but as long as you are prepared to put yourself out there, it is a part of the experience which previous assistants have found the most enriching. Give yourself some time to adjust – you don't need to feel like a local within a week and in the beginning you'll have a lot of administrative matters to deal with.

The best way to start is with colleagues at your host institution. Make sure you always seem positive, enthusiastic and willing to learn. Socialise as much as you can with colleagues and accept all invitations to events, dinner etc. Tell people

what your interests are and ask them to let you know what's going on in the local area. Do keep in mind that teachers can be very busy, especially during exam periods.

Apart from your work in the classroom, you may be able to attend other classes in subjects which interest you. You will find that you become much more integrated into university life and gain considerably more from your stay if you become involved in activities organised by the university, such as sports days, theatre, music productions or modern language societies. If you hear about something happening which interests you, ask if you can become involved. Don't wait to be invited as people may assume that you're not interested.

It is also a good idea to get in touch with other people in the area before you arrive in Chile. One useful way to do this is to get in contact with a previous assistant in your region and ask them to give you any email addresses or numbers of contacts they made.

Here are some other ways to meet people in Chile:

- Enrol for an evening class/join a sports club/music group/choir etc
- Volunteer for a charity, society, festival etc
- Join a Facebook group. There are often Facebook groups for people who are new to the city/town, which organise different events to help people make new friends - just search for 'new in "city name"'

Former assistants have recommended not spending all of your time with other assistants, as you won't be able to integrate into your community and life in Chile. On the other hand, don't feel that you must cut yourself off from them – assistants can provide a very good support network for each other, as you understand each other's experiences. Don't forget that there may be language assistants from other countries in your area. You may wish to ask your mentor if they have contact details.

As a golden rule, try to say yes to every social opportunity presented to you that does not compromise your personal safety. Accept invitations to places and activities even if they do not sound interesting as you might meet other people there who do share your interests.

9.0 TEACHING ENGLISH

9.1 ABSENCE FROM WORK

Please remember that you are a member of staff and must therefore adhere to the holiday dates set by the school. If you cannot work because of illness you should inform your host institution immediately by telephone. You may be asked to provide a letter from your doctor. This should cover the entire duration of the absence and must be sent to your institution as soon as it is issued. Any prolonged absence on account of illness should be reported as soon as possible to your host institution, the Ministry of Education, and to the British Council.

Requests for leave of absence for any other reason should be made in advance to your referente who is within their right to refuse it. You are reminded that if you are absent from your institution without prior authorisation, your salary will be discontinued from the first day of your absence.

If for any reason it becomes necessary to resign from your post, you must give sufficient prior notice in writing of your intended departure to the school, British Council Chile and British Council UK, setting out your reasons in full. If you are an undergraduate you must also inform your university/college in the UK.

9.2 DRESS CODE

Teachers usually dress reasonably informally at schools in Chile but you should check with your mentor teacher what the dress code is at your teaching centre. Shorts will likely not be acceptable, but jeans may be.

9.3 LINE OF REFERRAL

Conditions in universities in Chile differ from those in this country. Should any difficulties related to teaching arise, these should be discussed with the teacher of the class concerned in the first instance, or your mentor. If the problem cannot be solved in this way, you should contact British Council Chile (Please see section 1.2 for contact details). Satisfactory

solutions can usually be found through such consultations. The British Council in the UK will be happy to offer advice, but should only be contacted when all other attempts to solve the issue locally have been made. Problems are dealt with most quickly and effectively locally and the British Council will instruct you to take the steps mentioned above. **Please see the provided 'Line of Referral' document for information on who to contact.**

Do tell people if you have problems or if you need information, as otherwise they will assume everything is okay. Your institution will not appreciate it if you suffer in silence and complain six months later. A lot of past assistants may tell you that their assistantship in Chile was the best year of their lives. This can raise expectations and often leads to people feeling low, especially during the first few weeks until they settle in.

- You should be very careful about how you use social networking sites while you are an ELA. Keep your profile private so that it can only be seen by people you intend to see it. If you invite other teachers to be 'friends', remember to remain professional in what you say on social media and be careful what you say about your employer.
- You should not exchange personal contact details with students, invite them to be 'friends' or accept similar invitations from them. This is likely to be regarded as inappropriate behaviour. Check with teachers about the school's internet policy, particularly regarding any online communication involving students either in or outside school.

10.1 BRITISH COUNCIL RESOURCES

The British Council produces and co-produces a range of resources specifically for Language Assistants. Making use of these will help you greatly to deliver interesting and useful classroom activities and will support you in solving problems in the classroom.

- [TeachingEnglish.org](https://www.teachingenglish.org) is an online resource centre produced jointly by the British Council and the BBC:
- The British Council Learn English website is an excellent free online resource for students of English with lots of games, stories, listening activities and grammar exercises:

This may be a useful tool for you to use for your teaching but also to pass on to your students for them to access from home.

Some other websites which may be useful are listed below:

- <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk>
- <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org>
- <https://go.edmodo.com/teachers>
- <https://www.teach-this.com>
- <https://en.islcollective.com>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/uk>
- <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJsSEDFnMFvW9JWU6XUn0Q>
- <https://premierskillsenglish.britishcouncil.org/>

10.2 TEACHING MATERIALS

One way of making language learning real for your pupils is bringing authentic materials from the UK into the classroom. Take the opportunity to collect a variety of resources while you are still at home. Past assistants have found that the following materials worked well: photos of family and friends and your home town, postcards, examples of UK coins and notes, train tickets and timetables, stamps, posters and tea towels to decorate walls, posters and games, UK TV programmes and listings, magazines and local newspapers, CDs, photos of school uniforms, a school timetable and school report, flashcards, word searches, maps, tourist brochures, UK food (marmite, jelly, chocolate, custard, mince pies, gravy granules, etc), adverts, menus, cartoons, comic books, DVDs, simple recipes e.g. scones, recordings of the weather forecast, London tube

map, recordings of friends' accents and conversations, bingo, Taboo etc. The more materials you can find the better. Think about what worked well for you as a language student and about which items you find interesting when you are in a foreign country. You can also ask your host institution whether there is something specific they would like you to bring and to find out about topics you are likely to be asked to cover during your assistantship.

11.0 TRAVELLING AROUND CHILE

You should check the FCO's advice on travelling in [Chile](#). You must inform your mentor about your travel plans, even for short trips.

Most international flights fly into Santiago. The national carrier is LAN, but most major European and North American airlines also fly into Chile regularly. It is up to you to carefully research and compare each airline before booking your flights. Other airlines that have been previously used include Swiss Air and Delta airlines.

Most cities and towns have a central bus terminal. A lot of Chileans travel long distances by bus and year on year assistants tell us that the bus system is fast, punctual and comfortable and the preferred method of travel. Fares are cheaper if booked in advance but vary depending by company and season. Ofertas are often promoted both on buses and flights with Sky often being cheaper than LAN. In the past, assistants have used [turbus](#) to book bus travel around Chile and South America. Although they are hard to get hold of, having a student card may also entitle you to some good discounts. Ask at your institution.

If you intend to rent a car in Chile please keep in mind that you must have an International Driving Permit. You will also need to check the age requirements to rent a car in Chile. It might be worth checking locally which renting agencies are recommended. Please also make sure that you are adequately insured.

Santiago is the only city in Chile with an underground system (metro) but taking the bus is a much better way of getting to know the area to which you have been appointed. Buses should

be clearly numbered and should also show their final destination. To travel by bus you now have to use a pre-paid public transport card, known as BIP. You can buy the card in any Metro station and charge it with the amount of money you need (cards can also be charged in BIP points in local stores). Please check this with your mentor teacher.

Ask your teaching centre to provide you with a credencial de Estudiante/Profesor, with which you will be able to claim discounts on flights/bus travel and entrance fees.

An International Student Card (ISIC) might also be helpful to obtain discounts, for example on public transport and admissions to museums. Information can be found at www.isic.org

¡Buen viaje!

We hope you enjoy your assistantship in Chile