BRITISH COUNCIL

Language Assistants in Austria
2026-27 Programme

ELA in Austria: The Guide

12 August 2026

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How To Use This Guide

Section 1 provides an overview of Austria and key Austria information

Section 2 indicates key contacts for your assistantship and their roles

Section 3 provides detail regarding the assistantship role and what this involves

Section 4 and 5 helps you to prepare the essentials before you arrive in Austria

Section 5 to 9 covers all core aspects and documents you will need once you arrive in Austria

Section 10 is for you to consider at the end of your placement.

Each section includes a recap at the end to highlight the key actions. These are not exhaustive but highlight the main takeaways.

You can consult this at any point in the year. Some assistants prefer to read it all in one go or you can focus on the specific section that applies to you. We encourage you to read the sections in full and do additional research on any aspects that are relevant to your assistantship.

Please ensure you have read through this document and carried out research yourself before contacting the Language Assistants team with any questions.

This guide should be read in conjunction with the Handbook for Assistants 2026-27 produced by the OeAD.

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 changes.

Date checked: 17 August 2026

Austria Overview

1. Spotlight on Austria

Did you know that the British Council Language Assistants Programme first began back in 1905 with English masters heading over to France?

You are joining the next generation of this legacy, strengthening educational and cultural links between the UK and Austria through the British Council and our partners the Team *Weltweit Unterrichten* at the *Österreichische Austauschdienst* (OeAD).

By this point, you should have fair knowledge about Austria. However, here are key points to take on board.

1.1 Emergency Contacts

1.1.1 Emergency services in Austria

- In any emergency: call **112**
- Medical assistance: call **144**
- Fire Brigade: call **122**
- Police: call **133**
- For general enquiries, contact the British Embassy: Tel. +43 (1) 716130
  The British Consular Emergency Service is available 24 hours a day for emergency assistance. Leave a message and a member of staff will normally respond within one hour.

1.1.2 British Embassy

For up-to-date British Embassy details in Austria and what they can and can't help with, please refer to the GOV.UK website British Embassy in Vienna.

Please take note of the address and contact details of the British Embassy in Austria below in case of emergency or loss of your passport. Assistants who do not hold British citizenship should check with their own Consulates/Embassies in Austria.

British Embassy

Jauresgasse 12, 1030 Vienna, Austria

Emergency number:

In Austria: +43 (1) 716130

In the UK: +44 (0)20 7008 5000

Fax: +43 (1) 71613 2900

1.2 Life in Austria

If you're keen to do some more research of Austria or your region, check out these sites:

General	News
Public Holidays Calendar	BBC's Austria Profile
Rough Guide to Austria	Austria Government Website
Lonely Planet Austria	Österreichischer Rundfunk

1.2.1 Personal Safety and Travel

Your personal safety is of paramount importance while living overseas and we strongly advise that you spend some time looking at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office website and check it regularly as there is a lot of useful and up-to-date information provided.

As mentioned in section 3.1 of this document, ensure you regularly check the GOV.UK Austria travel advice page: and are aware of these key sections:

Safety and Security Page

Sexual Assault Support

FCDO advice for women travelling abroad

Lost Passport recovery

You can find more details on travel in section 4.4 Travel to and around Austria.

1.3 Local Laws and Customs

As well as the information on the government site for Austrian laws and customs, make sure you are aware of the following:

1.3.1. Laws

Drugs & political demonstrations

Co-operating partners abroad have requested that the attention of British visitors be drawn to the severe penalties imposed for the following:

- Drug offences which may result in heavy fines and prison sentences.
- For taking part in unlawful political demonstrations which may result in heavy fines and prison sentences.

You are therefore strongly advised not to become involved in these activities.

Face covering in Austria

Since 1 October 2017, it is illegal in Austria to wear in public any form of clothing or object which conceals the face and makes facial features unrecognisable. This includes national/ethno-religious clothing and costumes which conceal the face. It does not include head coverings where facial features can be easily discerned. The ban does **not** apply in certain circumstances, including:

- for health reasons (for example, medical or protective face masks);
- for occupational health and safety requirements;
- during artistic, cultural or traditional events;
- when participating in certain sports; or
- for protection against weather conditions such as extreme cold.

Anyone who violates the ban may be fined up to **€150**. If a person refuses to remove a face covering when requested by the police, repeatedly commits the offence, or cannot be identified, they may be taken to a police station

1.3.2 Internet and Phone

- The Austria code for Austria is +43. When phoning Austria from abroad the first 0 of the standard number must be omitted (as when dialling an area code in the UK from abroad).
- To phone abroad from Austria the code is 00 followed by the Austria country code.
- Previous assistants have recommended using pre-paid phone-cards to reduce costs phoning the UK. For mobiles, previous assistants have recommended pre-paid SIMs or esims as contracts are usually for 24 months. Check the conditions of phone and internet contracts carefully before signing – and check the cancellation costs!
- You could take an unlocked handset to Austria and buy a new SIM once in-country. There are deals for calls and messages between phones on the same network so you might want to check which networks your closest contacts use so that you can avail of these deals.
- To avoid internet contracts, you may want to explore other options of internet access such as dongles.
- Be aware that calls to the UK from a mobile can be expensive. Previous assistants have recommended using Skype, WhatsApp and Facebook messenger as alternatives.

1.4 The British Council in Austria

Please note: The British Council in Austria is ***not*** responsible for the administration of the Language Assistant programme in Austria - this is the role of the OeAD.

The British Council develops and participates in many different projects themed around society, science, education and the arts. However, we encourage you to sign up for their Austria Newsletter to keep up to date with activities which may interest you.

Section 1 Recap



Language Assistants Programme Overview

2. Key Contacts

2.1 UK British Council Language Assistants Team

The Language Assistants programme has a dedicated team to provide support during the application and pre-departure process for each destination. Please note the British Council is not the employer of participants of the Language Assistants programme while abroad.

2.2 Overseas Partner Organisation

Team *Weltweit Unterrichten*, part of the *Österreichischer Austauschdienst* (OeAD), administers the Language Assistants Programme in Austria (*Sprachassistenz in Österreich*) on behalf of the *Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung* (BMBWF). They liaise with the schools and the local educational authorities in Austria on the British Council's behalf. They will contact you throughout the year regarding your placement and other opportunities. The programme team are active on Facebook.

2.3 Educational Authorities

During your time as a language assistant, you will be paid directly by the responsible educational authorities (*Bildungsdirektion)* in your *Bundesland* or directly by the BMBWF as they are your employers during the assistantship.

The British Council are *not* your employer and do not administrate our assistants' payments. Any issues or queries surrounding pay are therefore best resolved by getting in direct contact with the relevant party within Austria.

2.4 Mentor Teacher

Your host school should identify a mentor teacher for you, usually in the English department. This mentor should provide pastoral care and support during your time in Austria. Your mentor teacher can become an integral part of your support network and you should invest time in building this relationship.

If a mentor teacher is not identified at the start of your placement, you should try asking for one and then contact the OeAD for support as soon as you can.

Application, Allocation and Pre-Departure	**Sending Organisation: British Council** **Leah Coffey**, Consultant **Tamsin Hunt**, Assistant Consultant LanguageAssistants.UK@BritishCouncil.org Responsible for: Application and pre-departure processes
Arrival and Asssistantship	**Partner Organisation: Österreichischer Austauschdienst (OeAD)** **Brigitte Stockinger-Resch**, Project Coordinator sprachassistenz@oead.at Responsible for: Programme in Austria and liaising with educational authorities and schools
Assistantship in School	**Employer: Bildungsdirektion/ BMBWF** Responsible for: school Contract, salary and HR admin **Support: Mentor Teacher** Responsible for: In-school support and first contact

Section 2 Recap

- Understand role of the British Council, the OeAD and the educational authorities
- Establish and connect with your mentor teacher

3. The English Language Assistant Role

The role of a language assistant is a very important one and one that we hope you will enjoy. Please remember that you are a paid member of staff with the responsibilities and required professionalism that this entails. Please refer to the British Council websites Responsibilities of an English Language Assistant and What will a language assistant do 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, influencing how those around you view the UK. You should endeavour to set a positive example and avoid any potential damage to the reputation of the programme and adversely affect the experience of future assistants.

Your first-hand experience of life in the UK is a key part of the cultural exchange and an excellent resource you should draw during your lessons.

3.1 Posting Information

You should write immediately to your school(s) confirming acceptance of the post. If you do not receive a reply by mid-August, it is a good idea to ring the school(s) to ask about accommodation and give them an idea of your anticipated arrival date. You should also ask them for some information about the school(s) that you will be working in. For example, it may be useful to know the age range of pupils, the average class size, the general level of ability, the social background of pupils, the facilities available and if you should bring any specific materials from home. It is also important to enquire about the dress code for teachers and any other general school information.

3.2 Period of Appointment

The period of appointment for UK assistants in Austria will be: 01 October 2026–31 May 2027.

You **must** confirm your exact start and end dates with your host school directly.

Assistants are expected to work 13 hours a week. Those who have been appointed to more than one school will be asked to divide their time between the schools concerned. You can request information regarding how your timetable will be arranged from the head of the host school.

3.3 Holidays and Sick Leave

Assistants are entitled to the usual school holidays. The Austrian government's website Schulferien in Österreich im Schuljahr 2026/2027 has further details regarding the school calendar. You should not be absent on other occasions without prior permission. Attending the induction course does not give assistants the right to take leave at a later date.

If you cannot work because of illness, you should inform your school(s) and local education authority (if applicable) immediately. You may be asked to provide a letter from a doctor. This letter should cover the entire duration of the absence and must be sent to the school and, if applicable, local authority as soon as it is issued.

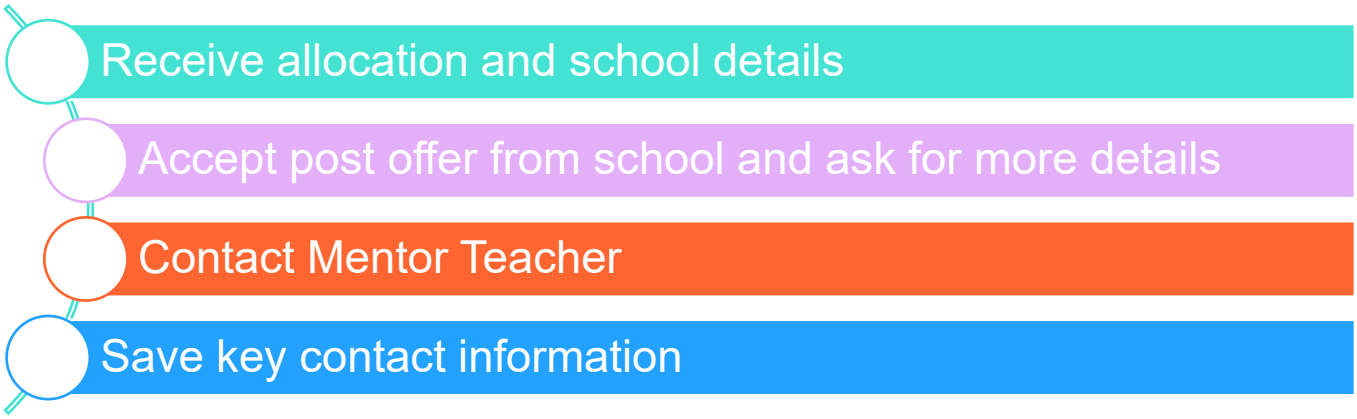
Any prolonged absence on account of illness should be reported as soon as possible to the OeAD/ BMBWF and to the British Council. Requests for leave of absence for any other reason should be made in advance to the head of the school(s), who is within their right to refuse it. You should ensure any permission of absence is provided in writing as evidence.

If it becomes necessary to resign from your post, you must give sufficient prior notice in writing of your intended departure to the school, the OeAD and the British Council, setting out your reasons in full.

3.4 School Allocation

The maximum number of schools to which you can be appointed is three. Please contact us if you have been appointed to more than three schools. If the different schools are several miles apart and you have to travel between two on the same day, you are entitled to ask for help towards travel expenses. Under no circumstances should an assistant be required to buy a car just to get to their schools. After contacting your school, if you establish that there is no regular public transport which serves your school(s), and there are no lifts available to your school(s) please inform us of the situation. Please do not contact us without contacting your school first.

Section 3 Recap



Preparation Before You Go

4. Read Before You Go

4.1 Costs to Prepare

You should prepare for the following costs:

ICPC: £103 + postage and legalisation

- Residence Permit: €218 (if applicable)
- Travel costs including additional requirements (if applicable)
- Accommodation costs
- Insurance costs
- €2500+ to cover initial costs

4.2 Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Advice

During a crisis, official advice for British nationals will be published on the GOV.UK travel advice website and regularly updated. For your safety and to stay well-informed, we **strongly recommend** you subscribe to receive FCDO email updates for Austria so that you are immediately notified of any important changes to the FCDO's advice.

FCDO provide important information about particular topics, including but not limited to:

- Women travellers
- Disabled travellers
- LGBT+ travellers
- Solo and independent travel
- Volunteering and adventure travel

As international issues and subsequent advice can change often and rapidly, ***you must take responsibility for your own health and safety*** by staying informed of any changes to such advice. When responding to an immediate in-Austria danger or threat to your health and safety, you should always prioritise your own health and safety and make decisions in the best interest for your personal circumstances – do not wait for advice from the British Council.

The FCDO have published a comprehensive guide for Living in Austria. The guide sets out essential information for British nationals residing in Austria, including advice on health, education, residence requirements and more. We recommend you read this guide thoroughly.

You can also contact the British embassy for advice in event of an emergency.

4.3 Passports and Visas

You must meet the passport requirements for Austria before leaving the UK and must check these on the GOV.UK travel advice website. These may vary depending on the type of passport you will be travelling on.

Those who are not in possession of a passport, or need a new one, should complete the application procedure as soon as possible either through a regional Passport Office or online, see GOV.UK Passports.

If you have a non-EU passport, or do not already have the right to live and work in Austria, you will require a Residence Permit (*Aufenthaltstitel*) to carry out your assistantship in Austria.

This process requires your own investment of time and money. The OeAD will provide step-by-step guidance on the process when the time comes to apply. Assistants are expected to cover the costs of this, which can include sourcing documentation, attending visa appointments and travel to and accommodation in London, and paying service fees to the Austrian Embassy.

4.4 Travel to and around Austria

You are responsible for the upfront cost of your own travel and any travel to and from your place of appointment during the year.

The British Council strongly advises against booking your travel until you have received your ICPC and are certain that you will be able to travel on your chosen date. In some instances, you may be able to pay the airline a small fee for flexible dates if you wish to book further in advance. The British Council is not responsible for arranging your travel.

Past assistants have advised that you check the baggage allowance for both outbound and return journeys when travelling by plane.

The most widely used travel site in are:

Flights		**Train, Bus and Ferry**	
Skyscanner	Expedia	Eurostar	In Austria:
British Airways	Ryanair	Rail Europe	ÖBB
easyJet	Lufthansa	Eurolines	Postbus
TUI	Austrian	Interrail	
opodo		Direct Ferries	
		Flixbus	

Other travel pointers:

- You'll find a lot of information on how to get around Austria on their website How to Get to and Around Austria.

Former Assistant recommendations:

- International Student Identity Cards or for non-students International Youth Travel Card can be used to obtain cheap entry into certain museums, theatres, cinemas and art galleries throughout Europe.
- Explore the idea of getting a Klimaticket which allows you to use public transport services in all nine Bundesländer or getting a ÖBB Vorteilscard.

4.4.1 Taking a Car Abroad

You will need to research the laws on driving in Austria, including adapting your head lights for driving on the right and driving licenses. The GOV.UK website Driving abroad provides useful information about motoring abroad. It's also worth considering insurance and additional documentation you may require.

4.4.2 Taking Pets Abroad

You need to consider insurance, pet passports and health certificates. The GOV.UK website Taking your pet to an EU country details more.

4.5 Travel Insurance

The British Council will not be responsible for you while you are in Austria, although we will offer support when necessary. You are therefore required to take out comprehensive insurance to cover you during your whole time abroad.

The British Council is unable to advise on insurance packages; you are recommended to consult professional advice, or to check whether you are covered by any existing family policy. Booking insurance should be carried out before any travel.

Undergraduate assistants should consult with their university to check what cover is provided for. It is important to check the small print of your policy.

Personal Accident Travel insurance is ***strongly*** recommended to cover medical expenses, air ambulance, repatriation, personal accident & civil liability, luggage & valuable items, and cancellation in extreme cases.

Personal Accident Travel policies are readily available on price comparison websites, or by using a search engine to search for 'travel insurance'. The UK Foreign & Commonwealth website offers additional advice on the GOV.UK website Travel Insurance.

4.6 Graduates with Student Loans

If you have a student loan, you will need to let student finance know that you are going to Austria. Complete an Overseas Income Assessment Form to enable the Student Loans Company to calculate how much you need to repay.

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 Austria. The British Council UK team are not able to advise on student loans matters. For all questions relating to student loans please contact Student Finance directly.

4.7 Benefits and Universal Credit

If you are in receipt of government support in the UK, you must inform the authorities that you are moving to work abroad. Tell your local Jobcentre Plus or the office that pays your benefit if you're going abroad. If it's a temporary move, tell them when you're coming back. You must also tell HMRC if you're leaving the UK.

Section 4 Recap



5. Health and wellbeing

Before you go

5.1 Planning

At least 8 weeks before your trip, check the latest Austria-specific health advice from the National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) on the TravelHealthPro website. Each country-specific page has information on vaccine recommendations, any current health risks or outbreaks, and factsheets with information on staying healthy abroad. Guidance is also available from NHS (Scotland) on the FitForTravel website.

General information on travel vaccinations and a travel health checklist is available on the NHS website. You may then wish to contact your health adviser or pharmacy for advice on other preventive measures and managing any pre-existing medical conditions while you're abroad.

Make sure you have comprehensive travel and medical insurance covering healthcare and medical evacuation and repatriation for the duration of your stay.

5.2 Medication

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or purchased in the UK can be different in Austria. If you're travelling with prescription or over-the-counter medicine, read this guidance from NaTHNaC on best practice when travelling with medicines. For further information on the legal status of a specific medicine, you'll need to contact the embassy, high commission or consulate of the Austria or territory you're travelling to.

If you're on prescription medication, make sure you either bring enough with you or have access to a supply once in Austria. Certain medicines may not be available there (including major brands readily available in the UK), and you may be prohibited from bringing some medicines into the country. For more information and advice, check with your GP and the Embassy of Austria before travelling.

5.3 EHIC/GHIC

If you already have a UK-issued European Health Insurance Cards (EHICs), ***please check the expiry date***. If your EHIC expires while you are abroad, you should obtain a GHIC ***before*** you leave the UK.

The Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) gives you the right to access state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in the European Union (EU). ***The GHIC is not an alternative to travel insurance*** but gives you access to healthcare which becomes medically necessary during your stay, and you cannot reasonably wait until you're back in the UK to get it. If you are a student, you may wish to contact your university for advice surrounding the Student GHIC. You can find out more online about the free UK Global Health Insurance Card from the NHS.

In Austria

Please see the Foreign Commonwealth Office website for more information regarding healthcare in Austria. The FCDO details more on the Healthcare for UK nationals living in Austria page.

If you require urgent medical attention, dial **144**.

5.4 Medication

If your medicine is available from suppliers in Austria, doctors may first want to conduct their own diagnosis before repeating a prescription issued elsewhere. It is also important to find out where your nearest doctor, dentist and hospital are as soon as you arrive. You should ask your school for information about the facilities in your area and advise staff and your landlord/landlady of any medical conditions.

5.5 Medical Services

You are covered for all necessary medical and dental expenses under the Austrian Social Security Scheme. On your first day at school, you should ask the school secretary for help in completing the necessary forms to apply for your *Versicherungsnummer* (insurance number) and accompanying *Versicherungskarte* (insurance card), also known as the e-card. You will need this card should you ever require medical assistance or if you visit a GP.

Your health insurance will not cover you for care administered by private clinics or hospitals. If you wish to use private services, you will be liable to pay for any examinations or treatment.

Assistants working in Austria will be covered from the first day of their contract until the last day of their contract.

More information can be found on the Austrian government's website Österreichische Sozialversicherung.

5.6 Visiting a Doctor

If you require medical assistance, you should go to your local health centre in Austria. It is likely that registration will be required, so it is a good idea to look into registering with a local doctor soon after you arrive in Austria to avoid having to go through this process when you're ill. Health centres in Austria will have different processes and requirements when registering new patients.

If you need to see a GP or specialist, you can access services administered by the registered providers in your *Bundesland*. You should consult the Austrian government's website to find out more about the services in your area. We also recommend you ask your mentor teacher(s) for more information on where to access medical care. You should bring your e-card, or *Versicherungskarte*, with you, and inform your mentor teacher at the earliest convenience if you are going to miss work because of illness or an accident.

If your medicine is available from suppliers in Austria, doctors may first want to conduct their own diagnosis before repeating a prescription issued elsewhere. As well as registering with a local doctor, it is important to find out where your nearest dentist and hospital are as soon as you arrive.

After being examined you will receive a prescription for any necessary medication. You can then buy the medication from any pharmacy with your prescription. You may be required to pay a prescription fee when collecting prescription from a pharmacy.

You will be liable to pay for certain services including orthodontic treatments and non-emergency dental treatment. However, you may be able to have part of those costs reimbursed by the health insurance fund (*Krankenkasse*).

If you need to stay in hospital for any amount of time, you may be asked for a contribution to the hospital bill. This is generally a fixed cost per day spent in hospital.

Please note, all of the above information is liable to change at any time so please do check with your local service provider about any recent changes if you do need to access healthcare in Austria.

5.7 Additional Cover

Your health insurance will cover you for accidents however you should check with your school(s) whether there is additional workplace accident cover available.

It is highly recommended you take out additional accident insurance cover, or *Freizeitunfallversicherung* (leisure time accident insurance), if you intend to ski/hike extensively during your time in Austria or if you are involved with any other high-risk leisure activities. This cover can be expensive so please shop around to find the best option for you.

In addition to health insurance, it would be wise to consider insuring your personal possessions. You should also check your parents' household insurance as this sometimes covers possessions away from home. Furthermore, cover for personal liability is often overlooked but it is extremely important. If you were the cause of an accident of any kind – e.g. cycling on the road – the resulting costs, practical and legal, could be prohibitively high.

5.8 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.

It is important to remember that culture shock affects everyone. There is no shame in admitting that you are having a difficult time. Austria is a very culturally distinct place. If you do feel homesick or frustrated, please talk to your fellow assistants on the programme as they will understand how you are feeling better than anyone else. Also, be sure to keep up to date with your family and friends back home.

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. It is advised to read this information even if you are not currently suffering from mental health problems.

The websites hyperlinked below contain guidance on travelling abroad and mental health, and information about how the FCDO can assist British nationals with mental health needs abroad.

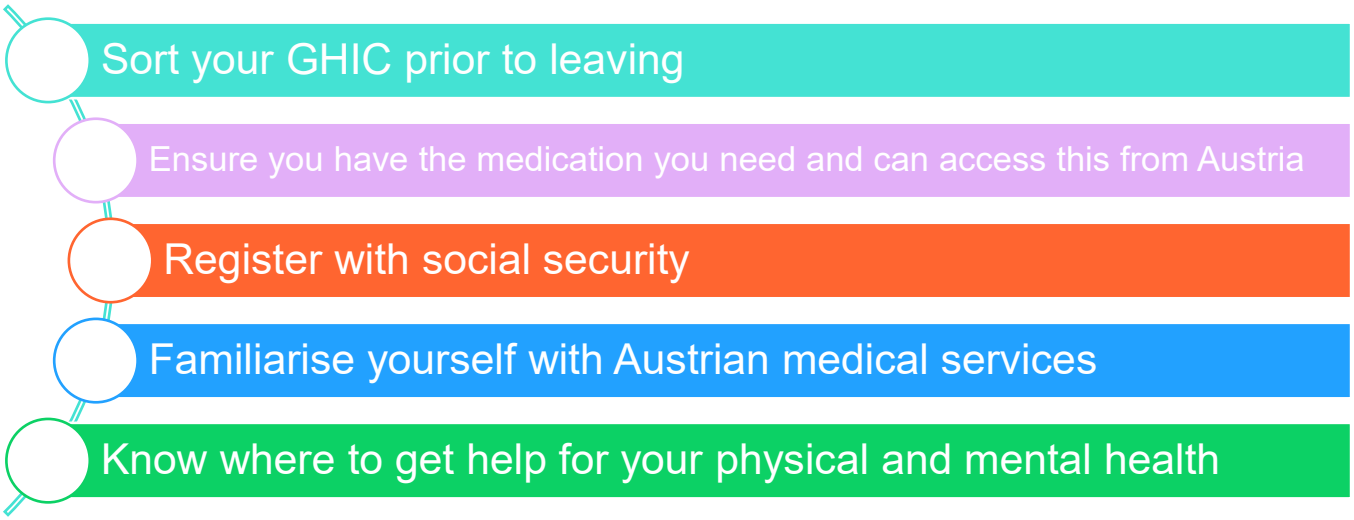
- FCDO Guidance: Mental Health and wellbeing abroad
- NHS: Mental Health and Travel
- The NHS website Mental Health lists a couple of helplines that can offer expert advice to people with different mental health needs.
- Another useful resource is Better Help, but be aware that they charge for their services, with a possibility to apply for financial aid
- International Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers (IAMAT) provide useful resources for Travel and Mental Health.

There is also local support available in Austria:

- Telefonseelsorge: call 142, emotional support help line, they are available 24/7 and free of charge if you call from an Austrian phone service. Also available via chat (16:00-23:00) or email.
- Ö3 Kummernummer: call 116 123, emotional support help line, they are available from 16:00-00:0, and free of charge if you call from an Austrian phone service.
- Frauen Helpline: call 0800 222 555, confidential support for women and girls who have been affected by sexualised, physical, domestic and/or psychological violence: they are available 24/7 and free of charge, also available in English

- Männernotruf: call 05 76 77, confidential support for men, they are available 24/7 and free of charge. Also available via email.
- Suizidprävention: Suicide prevention website of the Austrian Health Ministry.
- Other suicide hotlines and crisis lines in Austria

Section 5 Recap



6. Outside of School: Arrival and Settling In

6.1 Accommodation

The British Council is not in a position to help to find nor to provide accommodation. Equally, your school(s) are not obliged to provide or find you accommodation, but they may be able to offer advice, somewhere temporary to stay for the first few days or weeks, thus giving you some time to look for permanent accommodation. You should, however, not assume that your school will do this and should discuss your arrival and initial accommodation arrangements with them in advance. Please note that if your school does offer you accommodation, you are not obliged to accept it but remember, if you do accept it, you will have to abide by the school's rules.

6.1.1 General Advice



Some websites you may find useful are:

Temporary Accommodation	Permanent Accommodation
Hostelling International	Wohnungsbörse
Junge Hotels Austria	ÖH Wohnen
Hostelworld	WG gesucht
AirBnB	Housing Anywhere
	Easy Apartments

When you go out looking for accommodation, take a dossier of papers with you including as many of the following as possible:

- Your confirmation of appointment/your work contract
- Proof of your salary (which you should be able to get from your school)
- Your passport or ID
- Work and residence permit/Visa

6.1.2 Before Signing an Agreement

- Always ask about additional fees such as Agency charges
- Property owners may ask for 1 month's rent as a deposit and 1 month's rent paid in advance.
- Get any agreements in writing, and obtain receipts for any transaction, keeping them secure.
- Confirm your period of notice you must give to move out. You may also have to give this notice in writing by registered mail.
- Enquire about the possibility of including a 'diplomatic clause' in the rental agreement to allow for a shorter notice period in case of early termination of your placement.
- Our Austrian partners have provided us with the following wording to be included in your rental contract. Please also refer to the partner's Handbook:

„Für den Fall des vorzeitigen Abbruchs des Fremdsprachenassistenzprogramms nachweislich von offizieller Seite (insbesondere wegen höherer Gewalt, u.a. im Falle einer Pandemie oder einer offiziell von einer Regierung ausgesprochenen Reisewarnung), oder sollte die/der Benutzer/in des Mietobjekts aus anderen triftigen Gründen Österreich dauerhaft verlassen müssen (etwa aus medizinischen Gründen), kann das Mietverhältnis mit einer Kündigungsfrist von 30 Tagen von der Mieterin/vom Mieter gekündigt werden."

- Take photos capturing the condition of your room and the flat before moving in to prevent unfairly losing any of your security deposit.
- Check health and safety issues (temporary and long term) such as fire alarms and exits, gas leaks, electrics, water etc.

When 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 during the year.

6.2 Registration

All assistants **must** *anmelden* (register) with the *Meldestelle* at your local *Gemeindeamt* (or *Magistratischen Bezirksamt* in Vienna) within three days of moving into your accommodation. Please be aware that the office may only be open in the mornings.

You will find more information about the process on the Austrian government's website Anmeldung eines neuen Hauptwohnsitzes oder "Nebenwohnsitzes" Registration of a new main residence or 'secondary residence'

You will need to take with you the following:

- A completed certificate of registration (*Meldezettel*) signed by your landlord/landlady;
- Your passport.
- If applicable: Any certificates of academic qualifications

If you change accommodation at any point during your assistantship, you must *ummelden* (re-register) by following the same process.

You must retain all relevant registration documents until the end of your assistantship as you will also be required to *abmelden* (de-register) at the *Gemeindeamt / Bezirksamt.* You must do this this up to three days before, or three days after, you move out of your accommodation.

PLEASE NOTE: Failure to register, re-register and de-register your accommodation properly can result in a fine of up to €726 for the first offence, and up to €2.180 for any repeat offences.

6.2.1 Anmeldebescheinigung

Assistants with an EU passport **must** apply for a **registration certificate** (*Anmeldebescheinigung*) at the *Magistrat* or *Bezirkshauptmannschaft* within 4 months of your arrival in Austria.

When applying for a registration certificate, you must bring with you the following:

- Your valid passport
- A copy of your passport
- Your contract of employment
- Proof that you are covered by Austrian health insurance (e.g. e-card)
- Proof of address, or rental agreement from your landlord
- A completed registration form (*Antragsformular*)
- Your *Meldezettel* from when you registered your accommodation (*see above*)
- Registration fee (€44)

Further information on how to do this is found on the Austrian government's website Application for a registration certificate and certificate of permanent residence

6.3 Bank Accounts

It is advisable to open a bank account once you arrive, and your mentor teacher can help you do this. More information can be found below in Section 8 Money Matters.

Section 6 Recap



7. In School: Arrival, Settling In and Support

7.1 Induction

The BMBWF/OeAD will organise a four-day induction course from Monday 28 September 2026–Thursday 01 October 2026. The course is not compulsory but highly recommended.

Please note: the British Council has no involvement in the organisation of the Austrian induction. You will receive an invitation directly from BMBWF.

Depending on the Bundesland you will work in, the location of the course will vary:

- For assistants working in **Wien, Niederösterreich, Burgenland and Steiermark**, the induction course will take place at:

  Bildungshaus St. Hippolyt, Eybnerstraße 5, 3100, St. Pölten

- For assistants working in **Vorarlberg, Tirol, Salzburg, Kärnten and Oberösterreich**, the induction course will take place at:

  Bundesschullandheim Saalbach/Hinterglemm, Dorfstraße 38, 5754 Hinterglemm

The course will provide you with incredibly useful information about your placement, the Austrian educational system, school life, and information and advice on administrative matters and teaching methods. It is also an excellent opportunity for you to meet other assistants working in Austria, so you are encouraged to network at the course, too.

Please note that you will be required to pay approximately €130 upon arrival for your accommodation and board. We recommend you bring this in cash to the induction course. Upon completion of the course you will receive a Teilnahmebestätigung (confirmation of participation) which you may be required to give to your host school.

You are expected to travel directly to your host school after the course is finished to start your placement from the first date of your contract.

Please note: Assistants who are working for a second year in Austria are not required to attend the induction course again; however some may be invited to the course for their input and to provide advice to the new assistants. Please contact BMBWF if you are particularly interested in attending the induction course.

7.2 Observation Period

When you first arrive at your school(s) you should ask for a period of observation. It may not be offered to you automatically. Observation will allow you to familiarise yourself with the school 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

This can also be a valuable opportunity to discuss with your mentor teacher about the following:

- How you are finding your experience and settling in
- If you have any additional requirements which may facilitate your placement

7.2.1 Settling into School Life

You can hear tips from former assistants in our settling in podcast.

Starting any new job can be a daunting experience, no matter how confident a person you are. It's completely normal to be unsure of where to go, what to do or who to talk to at the beginning.

Remember – it is not good practice to correct another teacher in front of students.

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 school life and gain considerably more from your stay if you become involved in activities organised by the school, such as sports days, theatre or music productions or modern language societies. Go to school 'open days' or parent evenings as these are also a good way of meeting people.

Teachers who are proactive and take the initiative often settle into school life much faster. Being a self-starter is a great way to make a strong first impression. Teachers are often very busy and will certainly appreciate your efforts to help and try to make an impact.

7.3 Absence From School

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 school(s) and local education authority (if applicable) immediately. You might be asked to provide a doctor's note.

Any prolonged absence on account of illness should be reported as soon as possible to the OeAD and to the British Council. Requests for leave of absence for any other reason should be made in advance to the head of the school(s) who is within their right to refuse it. You are reminded that if you are absent from school without prior authorisation, your allowance will be discontinued from the first day of your absence.

If it becomes necessary to resign from your post, you must give sufficient prior notice in writing (usually 4 weeks) of your intended departure to the school, the OeAD and the British Council, setting out your reasons in full. If you are an undergraduate, you must also inform your university/college in the UK

7.4 Social Media

You should be very careful about how you use social networking sites while you are a teacher in Austria. 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 post 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. Check with teachers about the school's internet policy, particularly regarding any online communication involving students either in or outside school. It is exceptionally important that you understand issues around child protection, both to protect the students and to protect you from any damaging and potentially serious accusations.

7.5 Support Networks

Give yourself some time to adjust – in the beginning, you will have a lot of administrative matters to deal with. Former assistants have recommended that you don't spend all your free time with other programme participants, as you will not be able to integrate into your community and life in Austria. On the other hand, don't feel that you must cut yourself off from them – your programme peers can provide a very good support network for each other, as you understand each other's experiences.

Here are some other ways to meet people within the area:

- Enrol for an evening class, join a sports club, music group, choir etc.

- Join or set up a language exchange
- Enquire about joining the local university and attending lectures
- Get involved in the local culture and join clubs that you couldn't join in the UK
- Volunteer for a charity, society, festival, etc.

Start at school

- Showing that you are enthusiastic and keen to get to know staff will go a long way. Start with a simple hello or ask how their weekend went. Remember, though, that you will be working in a school environment therefore staff may not have a lot of free time.
- Try introducing yourself to staff you may not directly work with, for example teachers in other departments, lunch time staff, receptionists, caretakers etc. If there are social occasions or team meetings try to make an effort to attend.
- 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.

Rural posts

It should be noted that a number of posts in Austria are in rural areas. Past assistants to rural areas have had very positive experiences as they have been able to see "real Austria". Sometimes assistants posted to rural locations find it can be more challenging to adapt, especially at the start, however it can be a very enriching experience on a personal development level and a real immersion in culture and language. Often assistants in rural postings comment that they receive much more support from their school which can help with setting into life in Austria.

7.6 Concerns and Queries: Who to Contact?

Conditions in schools in Austria differ from those in the UK. We have come up with a who-to-contact guide to assist you with who to ask if you have a query or concern regarding your placement. Please consult this guide for help on who to contact if you have a query or an issue. The British Council has a zero-tolerance policy approach to discrimination of any kind. If a serious incident occurs and the who-to-contact sheet is not appropriate, please contact us.

> Meeting regularly with your mentor gives the opportunity for them to feedback about your performance and for you to raise any concerns or issues. Do tell people if you have problems or if you need information as otherwise, they may assume everything is fine.

A lot of past assistants may tell you that their assistantship in Austria was the best year of their life. This can raise expectations and often leads to people feeling low, especially during the first few weeks until they settle in.

The assistantship year is a wonderful opportunity to absorb Austrian language and culture and gain much in life experience and transferable skills. However, it is perfectly understandable that when abroad in a completely different environment there may be times when you feel homesick, have trouble with pupils or colleagues, or with your living situation and so on.

Section 7 Recap



8. Money Matters

8.1 Bank Account

It is essential that you open a bank account soon after arriving in Austria order to receive your salary. We recommend waiting until you arrive in your town of appointment allowing you to research all the local options, seek recommendations and receive help from your school.

Things to consider:

- Assistants are usually entitled to open a normal 'salary account' (*Gehaltskonto*) which provides a cheque book and cash card. Some banks also offer a 'student account' which can be cheaper than usual accounts.
- It may not be possible to receive your salary in an online account.
- Do not open a savings account (*Sparkonto*) as your school will not be able to pay your allowance into this.
- Wise gives some advice on How to open a bank account in Austria although it is not specific to language assistants
- Check with local banks in advance to find out what kind of documents will be required (f.e. Meldezettel, Austrian phone number)

8.2 Tax

Our team cannot assist you in this area because we are not trained in tax, cannot give advice on how your personal circumstances will affect your tax, and for data protection reasons.

Enquiries regarding UK income tax should be addressed to a local Inspector of Taxes. Please check HMRC for information about who to contact.

8.3 Monthly Salary

You will typically be paid **€2079.32** per month (before deductions) on the 15th of each calendar month by the *Bildungsdirektion* (local educational authority) or the BMBWF.

Each month social security contributions will be deducted from your wages (around **€320**per month) as well as income tax (around **€83** per month) leaving you with around **€1676.97** net salary.

Please note that you will not receive your first payment **until 15 November**, provided you have fulfilled all administrative requirements, so you should ensure that you have access to around **€1.500–€2.500** to cover initial costs (although some assistants can manage with less). This amount may differ depending on your location and how much rent you are required to pay in advance.

You may wish to consider taking a credit card to cover initial costs. Be aware that you are often charged for using your British 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.

8.4 Additional Income

Non-EU applicants (those that require a Residence Permit) are not permitted to take on secondary employment.

For EU Applicants: if you wish to supplement your income by giving private tuition in English, you are strongly advised not to advertise in local papers or public places. In general pupils are easily found through school or private connections, i.e. by word-of-mouth. However, it is essential

to check that the other English teachers in your school(s) do not mind, so that you are not perceived to be ‘stealing’ their private pupils.

Please ensure that any additional work does not conflict with your school timetable. Should you wish to obtain paid work in any other educational institution e.g. teaching work in the public or private sector, you must clear this with your education authorities.

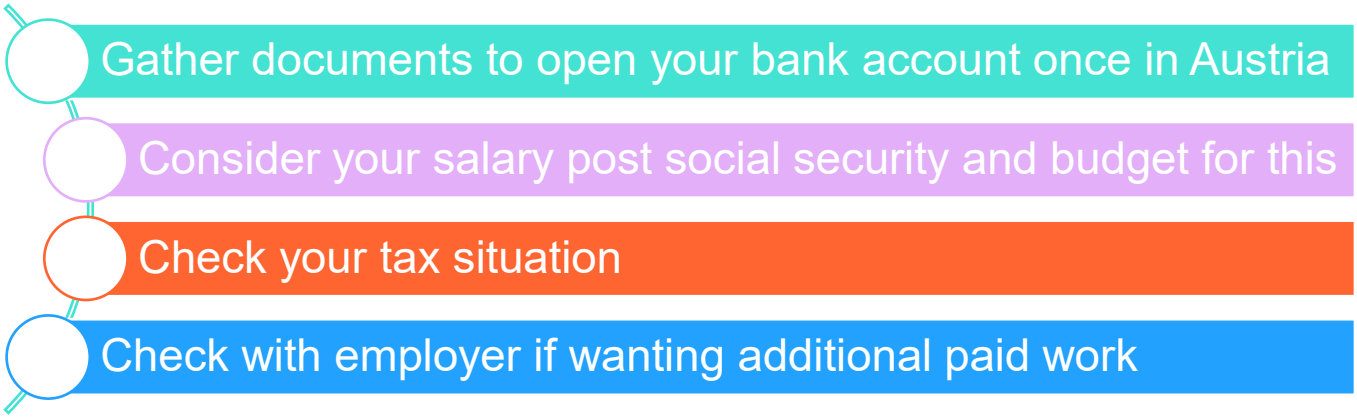
Each has slightly different rules on what type of extra work you are permitted to take on, so it is imperative that you check with them before you accept any other work. If they do not allow it, you must abide by this ruling.

Document Recap

Prepare copies and documents:

Prior to leaving	When in Austria
• Passport • Photographs • Insurance cover • Contract • Another valid form of photographic ID • Bank statements from your UK bank • Birth Certificate • Certificates of school exams • Passport sized photos	• Proof of residence • Your visa and/or work/residence permit • Payslips • Rental agreement

Section 8 Recap



9. Language Learning and Studies

9.1 For Language Learning

- BBC - Learn German. Offers a wealth of resources for learning German, including short guides, videos and the BBC World News service in German.
- Memrise: A sophisticated platform for language learning, with a large online community. App also available.
- Duolingo:. A simplistic platform for language learning which is very easy to access. Bite-size lessons allow the user to practice for anywhere from 5 minutes a day. App also available.
- Anki: An online platform for learning, focusing on memory-recall. Packs for specific levels of German available

10. End of Your Placement

10.1 Administrative Matters

Bank: Make sure you do not close your Austrian bank account until you have received any final payments you are due. You are advised to keep your account open for a month or so after the contract with your school has ended to ensure that all outstanding payments have been received. Please do check on the conditions for transactions relating to your account. For example, it might be that you can only close your account in the same branch in which you opened it.

Accommodation: Please make sure that you leave a good impression with the property owner – a future assistant may be depending on this:

- Leave a forwarding address with the property owner so that they can forward any mail on to you.
- When you leave your accommodation, remember to cancel any personal contracts, e.g. internet or utilities.
- Discuss with the property owner what you need to do for them to return your deposit and terminate your rental agreement, as well as arranging the return of your belongings if you have already left.
- If you rent your flat through a property agency, they may want to carry out an inspection before returning your deposit; if possible, you should make sure that you are present during the inspection to avoid any potential disagreements at a later date. Alternatively you may wish to take photos of your accommodation before leaving to document how it was left.

Reference: If you haven't already done so, please liaise with your host school to ask for a reference.

- This will be invaluable when it comes to an official record of your assistantship and for any future applications to be an ELA. This should ideally be on headed paper, stamped and comment on your performance as an assistant.
- Please note that as the British Council is not the employer, we are unable to provide references for language assistants, only a certificate certifying participation upon request.

10.2 Staying a Consecutive Year

To stay for a consecutive year as a British Council language assistant in Austria, you must apply through **the OeAD** and not through the British Council. The OeAD will be in touch with you regarding this option at a later date.

You will have the opportunity to request a change of school or *Bundesland*, or you can remain at your school(s) for a second year, where possible. Further information is available on the website Sprachassistenz in Österreich Tätigkeit in the section *Verlängerung um ein zweites Jahr*.

Consecutive year assistants are not required to attend the induction course the following year, although you may be invited to attend as a former assistant. You are otherwise asked to travel directly to your school to start on the first day of your contract.

10.3 Ambassador

Ambassadors play an essential active part in promoting this opportunity. By representing a British Council programme, former assistants will be able to develop their creative, organisational and professional skills and network with the future generation of assistants. To have an opportunity to be involved with this, you must have filled out our end of year survey.

10.4 Getting into Teaching

If you want to take your assistantship to the next level, find out more from the links below of how to get into teaching and inspire future linguists:

England: Get into Teaching

Wales: Educators Wales

Scotland: Teach in Scotland

Northern Ireland: GTCNI – Getting into teaching