

**Modern Language Assistants  
Programme**

---

# **Long / Short Posts Explained**

---

## Long/Short Posts Explained

In order to minimise costs as far as possible for UK institutions hoping to host a language assistant, we have made some changes to the Modern Language Assistants (MLA) programme.

The overall expenses incurred by host institutions will depend on the length of time that an assistant spends in the UK, and we have therefore introduced new options for the period of appointment which an assistant can be employed for.

Institutions applying for German, French, Italian, or Spanish speaking MLAs have the option of hosting an assistant for a **long post** or a **short post**. Read on to find out more about these different options and the costs entailed.

---

# Hosting an MLA: Costs involved

## *Visa costs and Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)*

All non-UK/non-Irish nationals coming to the UK from the 2021-22 academic year onwards will require a visa for their time as a Modern Language Assistant. Every MLA will need to apply for a Tier 5 Temporary Worker Government Authorised Exchange visa. The British Council will sponsor visas, meaning institutions will not need to apply to become a UK Visas and Immigration licence holder.

The overall visa costs depend on how long the language assistant comes to the UK for. MLAs will be subject to a **general visa application fee** (currently approximately £189-£244). In addition, those coming to the UK for more than six months will be subject to an **Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)** (currently approximately £624).

## *Whose responsibility is it to pay the IHS and visa application fee?*

Language assistants are responsible for paying their own visa application fees.

If the host institution requests a French, German, Italian or Spanish-speaking MLA for a long post, or a Mandarin Chinese language assistant, the host institution agrees to reimburse the IHS in full to the language assistant.

## *What if our institution cannot afford to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge?*

If you are still seeking to employ a language assistant but are unable to pay the IHS, please consider hosting a language assistant for a **short post of up to six months**.

We also recommend you look into the option of sharing a language assistant with other institutions, which can reduce costs. **Find out more** about sharing a language assistant.

---

In some rare cases, the Modern Language Assistant may be in a position to pay the IHS themselves. If you are unable to pay the IHS but still wish to host an assistant for the long period of appointment, you will be able to indicate this in your application. This will help us greatly during the allocation process, as we want to ensure we allocate the most suitable candidate to your institution. Please note however that such an allocation cannot be guaranteed.

---

# Periods of Appointment Explained

## Long Posts

### *Costs*

If an institution chooses to host a language assistant for the **long period of appointment**, the host institutions must reimburse their assistant the cost of the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) as well as paying their monthly salary. Full information on the IHS and further costs can be found [on our website](#).

### *Duration*

MLAs on long posts will work from either the start of September or October to the end of May. For long posts only, host institutions may reasonably offer a longer period of appointment e.g. an additional month during the same academic year. This should be upon mutual agreement between the assistant and their host institution and the dates agreed should be confirmed (included) in the offer letter. In most cases, extending the period of appointment after an assistant has received their visa is not possible. This is because extending a visa comes at significant expense to the assistant.

## Short Posts

### *Costs*

If an institution chooses to host a language assistant for the **short period of appointment**, costs will be significantly reduced as the institution will not have to reimburse the cost of the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) to their assistant and will only have to pay the assistant's monthly salary.

### *Duration*

The maximum stay in the UK for language assistants taking up the short posts is limited to 6 months overall due to visa regulations. It is the responsibility of the host institution or local authority to ensure that the assistant's period of appointment falls within these 6 months. This period should also include reasonable time for assistants to settle into life in the UK and should allow enough time for leaving the UK at the end of the assistantship.

---

## Mandarin Chinese Language Assistants

The official period of appointment for Mandarin Chinese language assistants in the UK is from mid-September 2021 to 30 June 2022 (41 weeks). It is not possible to host a Mandarin Chinese assistant for the shorter period of appointment.

Funding for the programme means that UK host institutions only pay Mandarin Chinese language assistants the **National Living Wage** (£8.72 from April 2020) for a minimum of 12 hours a week worked, reducing costs dramatically. This wage remains the same regardless of UK region.

The minimum annual cost for a Mandarin Chinese language assistant is £4,914.24. This cost includes the one-off £624 Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) which should be reimbursed directly to the assistant by the UK host institution(s) involved in the sharing arrangements.

## Long/Short Posts: Overview

Language	Period of appointment	Costs involved
German French Italian Spanish	Option 1: Short post (November 2022 – April 2023)	Salary
	Option 2: Long post (Recommended 1 September or 1 October 2022 – 31 May 2023)	Salary & Immigration Health Surcharge (£624)
Irish	Recommended 1 September or 1 October 2022 – 31 May 2023	Salary
Mandarin Chinese	Mid-September 2022 – 30 June 2022	National Living Wage & Immigration Health Surcharge (£624)

## Salary Rates

England (excluding London areas) Northern Ireland Scotland Wales	Gross monthly salary - £914.05 for a standard 12 hours per week  Standard fixed hourly rate - £13.77 for additional hours beyond the standard 12-hour period.
Inner London	Gross monthly salary - £1,150.39 for a standard 12 hours per week  Standard fixed hourly rate - £17.34 for additional hours beyond the standard 12-hour period.
Outer London	Gross monthly salary - £1,085.75 for a standard 12 hours per week  Standard fixed hourly rate - £16.38 for additional hours beyond the standard 12-hour period
London Fringe	Gross monthly salary - £974.65 for a standard 12 hours per week  Standard fixed hourly rate - £14.72 for additional hours beyond the standard 12-hour period.

You can also read the terms and conditions for participating in the Modern Language Assistants programme [here](#).

For any further queries, do not hesitate to contact our team on [LanguageAssistants.UK@britishcouncil.org](mailto:LanguageAssistants.UK@britishcouncil.org).