

**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).

The overall expenses incurred by host institutions will depend on the length of time that an assistant spends in the UK, and we therefore provide 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.

Every attempt has been made to make these notes as clear as possible, and all information is correct at time of writing (January 2024), however, please note costs detailed below are subject to change.

Hosting an MLA: Costs Involved

Visa costs and Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)

All non-UK/non-Irish nationals coming to the UK require a visa for their time as a Modern Language Assistant. Every MLA needs to apply for a Temporary Worker - Government Authorised Exchange visa. The British Council sponsors the visa, meaning institutions are not required 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 are subject to a **general visa application fee** (currently £298). In addition, those coming to the UK for more than six months are subject to an **Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)** (currently £1035).

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.

Long/Short Posts: Periods of Appointment

| Language | Period of appointment | Costs involved |
|--------------------|--|--|
| French German | Option 1: Short post (November – April) | Salary |
| Italian Spanish | Option 2: Long post (1 September / October – 31 May) | Salary + Immigration Health Surcharge (£1035) |
| Irish | 1 October – 31 May | Salary |
| Mandarin Chinese | Mid-September – 30 June | National Living Wage + Immigration Health Surcharge (£1035) |

Periods of Appointment Explained

Long Posts

Costs

If an institution chooses to host a French, German, Spanish or Italian- speaking 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 the start of September or October to the end of May. For long posts only, it is possible to extend the assistant's period of appointment, upon mutual agreement between the assistant and their host institution.

Short Posts

Costs

If an institution chooses to host a language assistant for the **short period of appointment**, costs are significantly reduced as the institution does not have to reimburse the cost of the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) to their assistant and is only required 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 to 30 June (41 weeks).

A shorter period of appointment from 01 October 2024 – 31 May 2025 is also available for Mandarin Chinese language assistants.

Funding for the programme means that UK host institutions only pay Mandarin Chinese language assistants the **National Living Wage** (£11.44 from April 2023) 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 £6663.48. This cost includes the one-off £1035 Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) which should be reimbursed directly to the assistant by the UK host institution(s) involved in the sharing arrangements.

Salary Rates

| | |
|---|---|
| England (excluding London areas) Northern Ireland Scotland Wales | Gross monthly salary - £1,013.05 for a standard 12 hours per week Standard fixed hourly rate - £15.26 for additional hours beyond the standard 12-hour period. |
| Inner London | Gross monthly salary - £1,270.45 for a standard 12 hours per week Standard fixed hourly rate - £19.21 for additional hours beyond the standard 12-hour period. |
| Outer London | Gross monthly salary - £1,200.76 for a standard 12 hours per week Standard fixed hourly rate - £18.15 for additional hours beyond the standard 12-hour period. |
| London Fringe | Gross monthly salary - £1,078.72 for a standard 12 hours per week Standard fixed hourly rate - £16.31 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.