

Foreign Language Assistant Scheme – FAQ's

What is the period of assignment for the Foreign Language Assistant?

- The Assistants (French, Spanish, Italian and Austrian) duration of Assignment will be from the 1st October to the following 31st May
- **German Language Assistants ONLY** will have the option of 6 or 8 month assignments as part of the Foreign Language Assistant Scheme. The start date for both assignments is the 1st October, the 6 month assignment will finish on the 31st March and the 8 month assignment will finish on the 31st May.

How many hours should the Assistant work/ be timetabled for?

- The Assistants should be timetabled for 12 hours per week. They should have one day off per week, preferably Monday or Friday – this is an arrangement between the school and the Assistant.
- The timetable form must be returned to the Department (this can be sent to the Department in September) when the school has finalised the timetables for all teachers.

How are the Assistants paid?

- Assistants in Secondary, Comprehensive and Community schools are paid by the individual school
- Assistants in Community Colleges and ETB schools - The ETB's pay the living allowance to the Assistant
- All Assistants should be paid on or before the 10th of each month
- In all cases, the schools / ETB's submit a claim form to the Department to recoup monies on a quarterly basis in arrears.
- The claim forms will be available on the Departments' website – they will also be emailed to the address the school provided on the application form for applying for an Assistant.

How much is the monthly allowance?

- The monthly allowance is €918 irrespective of the location of the assignment, provided full attendance is given for the full period of the scheme. This allowance is exempt from Tax, PRSI and other usual deductions.

Do the Assistants require a P.P.S. number?

- The Assistants do not require a PPS number to receive their monthly allowance as their monthly allowance is exempt from taxation and other usual deductions.
- However, the PPS number will be required if the Assistants do any substitution work in the school - earnings from this work **will** be liable for tax and the usual deductions that apply to all workers in the State.
- A PPS number will be required to open a bank account or to apply for a medical card.
- To obtain a PPS number you must have an address in Ireland.
- The Department of Social Protection is responsible for the issue of PPS number. You can apply online at www.welfare.ie

Can the Assistants do Substitution work in the school?

- Teachers in Ireland must be registered with the Teaching Council of Ireland.
- Under the Education Act, 1998, employment of unregistered persons in exceptional can only be allowed if:
 - (a) The classes were offered to all appropriately qualified registered teachers for that sector and subject
 - (b) Any persons registered with the Teaching Council
 - (c) Classes can then be offered to an available person (Language Assistant) if the school cannot find a teacher at (a) or (b) above.

(for payment, see above at **Do the Assistants require a P.P.S. number?**)

Induction Course for Foreign Language Assistants

- The Induction Course is always held on the 1st Thursday in October
- It is held in Dublin – the venue is confirmed each year
- Reminder letters to the schools and invitation letters to the Assistants issue in September each year. These letters contain information on expenses the Assistants may claim for attending the Induction Course
- It is compulsory for all Assistants to attend the Induction Course
- The Embassies/Cultural Services provide In-service for the day following the Department's Induction Course.

Expenses for attending the Induction Course:

- Assistants may be entitled to an overnight allowance of €50.25, this will only be considered where public transport was not available to ensure timely attendance at the 2nd day of in-service.
- Subsistence rates of €13.71 is payable only to Assistants that do not qualify for an overnight allowance.
- You will also be entitled to receive transport costs, but it is essential to attach all receipts in respect of your travel costs
- Travel costs will only be refunded for public transport i.e. mileage rates will not be given if you use your own car.
- The expense claim form will be given to all Assistants at the Induction Course.

Garda Vetting (NVB)

Organisations

An organisation that requires Garda vetting of individuals must register with the National Vetting Bureau. The organisation must appoint a liaison person to apply for and receive vetting disclosures. Details of the procedure for registering an organisation are on the National Vetting Bureau website <https://vetting.garda.ie/>

The school is the relevant organisation. In the case of a school in an ETB, the ETB is the relevant organisation. If a school is unsure or has never completed Garda Vetting, they can contact the managerial bodies who will commence the process for them e.g. JMB, ACCS.

Vetting applicants

If you are applying for a position that requires you to have Garda vetting, you will be sent a Garda vetting application form (electronic or paper). You apply to be vetted using e-Vetting but you may apply using a paper form instead. If you are aged under 18 you must submit a signed parent or guardian consent form.

E-Vetting

To use e-Vetting you must be aged over 16. You must have a valid email address and complete the “proof of identity” process.

The e-Vetting procedure is as follows:

1. You will be sent a vetting invitation form by the registered organisation where you are applying for a position. You must complete the form and return to the organisation together with proof of your identity.
2. The organisation will validate your proof of identity and send you an email with a link to the vetting application form.
3. You complete the vetting application form online and submit it to the organisation.
4. The organisation reviews your vetting application form and submits it to the National Vetting Bureau.
5. The National Vetting Bureau processes the application and sends a vetting disclosure to the organisation.
6. The organisation reviews the disclosure and will send you a copy of it.

You can track your e-Vetting application.

Ensuring the protection, health and welfare of children is a key concern so appropriate supervision and monitoring is always necessary.

Health/medical entitlements

Assistants are advised to contact the Irish national health authority, the Health Service Executive at www.hse.ie, to ascertain any entitlements they may have under the Irish medical service.

Schools wishing to apply for a Foreign Language Assistant

- Application forms are emailed to all schools on the 6th January each year- the email address used is the email address used by the school when they sent the October returns back to the Department
- The application forms will be available on the Department's website For the period 6th January to the 3rd February (these dates may vary slightly each year).