

Language Assistants Program 2026

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

About the LAP

The Language Assistants Program (LAP) places language assistants in Victorian government schools from Terms 2 to 4 each year to enrich their languages programs.

Each language assistant is supervised by a qualified language teacher and works across a school cluster comprising a 'base school' and one or two other geographically proximate schools. They are sourced from either overseas or within Australia and are fluent in the target language.

Language assistants support language teachers by sharing contemporary knowledge of their language and culture and helping language students to develop fluency and confidence in the target language. They also promote cultural and linguistic appreciation across the broader school community.

Language assistants are employed as part-time (0.8 FTE) Education Support Staff (range 1.2.1) under the Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2022 (VGSA). The placement runs over three terms, commencing on 20 April 2026 and concluding 18 December 2026.

Language assistants work 7.6 hours daily for four days per week across their school cluster according to a schedule agreed by the schools.

Selection of schools

Program eligibility

To be eligible to host a language assistant, schools:

- are encouraged to apply as a cluster (preference will be given to clusters that include a secondary school), and
- must employ a qualified language teacher teaching the target language (a qualified language teacher must be employed at each school within a cluster).

Application process

A school cluster can apply for an overseas or locally sourced language assistant using the [application form](#) noting the following:

- schools may only apply in respect of **one** language.
- one school must be nominated as the base school, which will be responsible for administering the language assistant's salary and placement.
- applications will need to state a preference for either an overseas or locally-sourced language assistant. Schools are encouraged to apply for overseas-sourced assistants as the recruitment of these individuals is supported through the department's international stakeholder network. Recruitment of locally sourced assistants is entirely administered by the host schools.
- clusters will nominate whether the application is for full (100 per cent) or partial (70 per cent) subsidisation of the cost of employing a language assistant.
- Italian language assistants are funded through the CO.AS.IT. Italian Language Assistants Program and, therefore, are excluded from the LAP.
- Designated Bilingual Schools are not eligible to participate in the LAP.

Placement of language assistants in schools

Applications will be assessed against the criteria for program eligibility and ranked by quality. Shortlisted clusters will then be offered either a fully or partially funded language assistant depending on the preferences in their application (see Funding section below).

Clusters opting for:

- **an overseas sourced assistant** will be supported by the department to identify and onboard a suitable candidate
- **a locally sourced assistant** will need to identify their own candidate (who meets the selection criteria) and undertake all recruitment and onboarding processes at the school level.

The department is solely authorised to appoint overseas sourced assistants. Schools are not permitted to offer employment to overseas sourced candidates until approved to do so by the department.

Selection of language assistants

Language assistants must:

- hold a bachelor's degree (majoring in the relevant target language) and/or possess mother tongue proficiency in the relevant target language
- have a level of English proficiency equivalent to an IELTS score of no less than 6
- hold a valid Working with Children Check at the commencement of their role, and
- be prepared to work a minimum of 7.6 hours daily for four days per week.

Visa requirements

Overseas-sourced assistants hold a [Temporary Activity visa \(subclass 408\)](#) for the duration of their employment. Please note the age-limit set by the Australian Government in respect of this visa.

Locally-sourced assistants must be a citizen or permanent resident of Australia or a temporary resident on an appropriate visa that allows for working privileges for the duration of their employment. Candidates on a Permanent Partner visa (subclass 801) or Temporary Partner visa (subclass 820) are eligible to work as a locally-sourced assistant.

Funding

Language assistants are either fully or partially funded by the department through the Student Resource Package as shown in the table below. Funding will be provided to the base school.

Department contribution	School cluster contribution	Number of assistants available
Full funding (100 per cent) Department pays approximately \$33,700 (excluding on-costs, which are paid for by the department)	Nil	12
Partial funding (70 per cent) Department pays approximately \$23,600 (excluding on-costs, which are paid for by the department)	30 per cent School cluster pays approximately \$10,100	25

Eligibility for full funding

In allocating fully-funded places, the department will consider the cluster's:

- socio-economic disadvantage (Student Family Occupation and Education)
- bank balances (a financial assessment of each school's bank balance, operating reserves, existing financial commitments, and prior year SRP credit balances)
- history of compliance with the language education requirements set by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority, and
- specific languages needs (e.g. schools without a native-speaking language teacher).

Key roles and responsibilities

Language assistants are supported by key school and departmental staff, including school principals, language assistant coordinators, language teachers, school business managers and the department.

Language assistants

- Provide information about current developments in the target language to inform the delivery of their schools' languages program
- Assist with the development of resources, including teacher professional learning
- Participate in planning and delivering languages classes and activities
- Participate in professional development activities provided by the department such as the Model UN program.

Principals at base schools

- Nominate a school staff member as the language assistant coordinator to supervise and guide the language assistant
- Onboard the assistant through a school-based orientation and induction
- Ensure that the assistant does not assume the role of a qualified language teacher or undertake teaching duties without supervision
- Ensure that the assistant is aware of the Child Safe Standards and their mandatory reporting obligations (under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*), and is appropriately trained to undertake mandatory reporting
- Oversee the welfare of the assistant and respond to any issues in a timely manner
- Provide the assistant with a personal workspace at the school.

Language assistant coordinators

- Assist the assistant to apply for a Working with Children Check and complete any forms
- Liaise with the assistant to provide them with information about the school cluster and its communities
- Monitor the welfare of the assistant and respond to any issues in a timely manner
- Coordinate the day-to-day work activities of the assistant, including the establishment of a manageable timetable across the school cluster
- Ensure lesson planning and preparation with the assistant occurs on a weekly basis
- Facilitate opportunities for the assistant to integrate into the broader school community (such as invitations to functions and excursions outside of scheduled language lessons)
- Liaise with teachers at other schools to ensure the assistant is receiving support to perform their role
- Provide feedback to the department at the conclusion of the assistant's placement.

Business managers at base schools

Business managers at base schools are responsible for administering the language assistant's employment, including collecting and appropriately retaining their Working with Children Check. In employing language assistants, business managers must note that:

- overseas sourced language assistants are employed through the department's central office to enable them to be sponsored for a Temporary Activity visa (subclass 408). Base schools will be advised once their language assistant's employment paperwork has been finalised so that they can finalise onboarding using their typical recruitment and onboarding procedures
- locally sourced language assistants may be directly onboarded by base schools using their usual recruitment and onboarding procedures, provided the department has approved their nominated candidate.

Key dates

Activity	Date
Application period commences	29 July 2025
Application period ends	15 August 2025
Notification of application outcome	Mid-September 2025
Language assistants commence placement	20 April 2026
Language assistants conclude placement	18 December 2026

Resources

For queries relating to recruitment, leave and payroll, please contact Schools Recruitment via schools.recruitment@education.vic.gov.au or on 1800 641 943.

Application submissions

Please email your completed application form to languages.query@education.vic.gov.au by **Friday 15 August 2025**.

For further information and enquiries please contact Thi Nguyen via thi.nguyen2@education.vic.gov.au or on (03) 7022 1378.