

Job Description

Job Title	Teacher/Trainer/Curriculum Developer: DPR Korea Teaching and Training Project		
Directorate or Region	EA	Department/Country	North Korea
Location of post	Pyongyang	Pay Band	ST Salary Scale
Reports to	Project Manager	Duration of job	Until 31 st March 2019

Purpose of job (global standard)

The purpose of the job is to support an improvement in English language skills in DPR Korea, particularly in universities in Pyongyang and to provide a model for good educational practices. This will be done through the direct teaching of English to undergraduates, ongoing training of university English teachers, support to English language curriculum reform in universities and short intensive training courses to middle school English teachers.

Context and environment (see guidance)

The DPR Korea English Teaching and Training programme is the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and British Embassy flagship project in DPR Korea. As such both have a strong interest in the success of the project and take a keen interest in it. The programme is jointly funded by the FCO and the British Council.

The British Council does not have an office in the DPR Korea, so the project receives support from its Beijing office.

The programme has been operating in the DPR Korea for 17 years, commencing with partnerships with three leading universities in Pyongyang. This has subsequently been expanded to nine universities. It has also extended the reach of its training both in Pyongyang and beyond through intensive teacher training events with teachers from other universities and schools. Building on our continuing and expanding engagement with stakeholders in the country, we aim to be a partner of choice at national level for the DPRK government's English teaching and learning developments in the longer term.

The roles of the trainers have evolved significantly over the years, and in 2008 the project team grew to include a Pyongyang-based project manager, which has given the project more focus and direction. The project team is now comprised of three Teacher / Trainer / Curriculum Developers who are line managed by the project manager. The main projects that the team are currently involved with are: direct English teaching to groups of university students; language and methodological improvement for university English teachers; giving advice and support on curriculum development and delivering an annual two-week intensive teacher training workshop.

Accountabilities (global standard)

Support British Council's global English strategy by

- Ensuring teaching is delivered to the highest standards
- Ensuring teacher training and support to curriculum development is delivered to the highest standards
- Enhancing British Council's reputation as a world authority in ELT
- Continuing professional development and sharing of best practices
- Compliance with Global Mandatory policies (H&S, Child Protection, IKM, EOD)
- Ensuring TQS standards are met or exceeded

Responsibilities (global standard)

- Direct teaching of undergraduates up to 9 hours a week (6 double periods).
- Training and development of university English teachers up to 6 hours a week (3 two hour sessions a week).
- Support to a review and development of the English curriculum in universities up to 2 hours a week
- Delivering one two-week intensive teacher training course a year
- Liaising with university English faculties
- Providing information and support to the Project Manager
- Complying with British Council global and regional policies
- Ensuring personal professional development

Main duties (global standard)

1	<p>Direct teaching of undergraduates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration of placement and course content tests. • Keeping registers and work done records. • Teaching up to 9 hours a week • Contributing to the enrichment of the courses taught through feedback on course content and generation of additional teaching material.
2	<p>Training and development of English teachers in universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administating placement and course content tests • Keeping registers and records of work done. • Teaching/training for at least six hours a week • Contributing to the enrichment of the courses taught through feedback on course content and generation of additional teaching material. • Occasional classroom observation of English teachers: Observation plan created and followed, feedback given and reported
3	<p>Support to the Review and Development of English curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend a weekly meeting with university faculty members • Provide advice and guidance to support the development of an effective syllabus • Provide advice and guidance on the selection of teaching materials • Provide advice and guidance on teaching methods to achieve the syllabus and use the materials effectively • Provide advice and guidance on methods of assessing learner's English language skills • Provide advice and guidance on the introduction of a new curriculum
4	<p>Delivering one two-week intensive teacher training course a year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the project team in assembling and transporting resources and materials to the venue • Administration of placement and course content tests • Teaching up to 3 double periods a day for the 10 days of the course • Mentoring two DPR Korean Teacher Trainer trainees – supporting their preparation and delivery of at least two double periods of training, providing a report on his/her activities and achievements. • Supporting the project team in transporting resources and materials back to the Project office.
5	<p>Liaising with university English faculties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending regular meetings with Head of English in universities to keep him/her informed of activities • Attending at least one meeting with the Vice Principal per semester • Providing test scores, registers, records of work done, observation reports on teachers and any other relevant academic records to the Head of English. • Providing a report on activities and progress at the end of each of the two semesters in the academic year • Informing the Head of English of any significant incident that happens in the course of work done at the university

6	<p>Providing Information and support to the Project Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending fortnightly team meetings • Providing test scores, registers, records of work done, observation reports on teachers and any other relevant academic record • Carrying out monitoring and evaluation work as directed by the Project Manager • Ensuring the Project Manager is provided with regular updates on programme activity and clear communications are maintained. • Providing feedback on course content and suggesting improvements • Reading draft reports and other documents created by the Project Manager and giving feedback on them • Providing a report on activities and progress at the end of each of the two semesters in the academic year
7	<p>Complying with British Council global and regional policies Ensure policies are applied and upheld in line with standards and policy for the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child protection • Equal Opportunity and Diversity • Health and Safety
8	<p>Ensuring Personal Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree own personal development plan with line manager and to review it at last four times a year.
<p>Key relationships: (include internal and external)</p>	
<p><u>Internal</u></p> <p>Other two trainers on the project Project Manager</p>	<p><u>External</u></p> <p>Heads of English/Foreign Affairs at the universities University students University English teachers Commission of Education Liaison Officers Attendees of the intensive course British Embassy staff</p>
<p>Other important features or requirements of the job (e.g. travel, unsocial/evening hours, restrictions on employment etc)</p>	
<p>The trainer will be the sole British Council employee in the universities he/she works in and will be the sole British national there. Trainers will be transported to and from the universities in Commission of Education provided cars. They will not spend additional time, beyond their allocated classroom hours in the universities. Therefore, all lesson preparation and administrative work will be done in the trainers' apartments which are provided with work stations and printers for that purpose. There is also a resource room in the Project Manager's apartment that houses a considerable amount of additional material and methodology books and this can be used during office hours.</p> <p>Trainers are expected to respect and uphold the high regard academics are held in the country and be smartly dressed and behave accordingly.</p> <p>The terms and conditions of the post provide for three "breather trips" of seven nights each contract year. These have to be taken. Therefore, there is a requirement for frequent travel in and out of DPR Korea.</p>	
<p>Please specify any passport/visa and/or nationality requirement.</p>	<p>The post is open to British nationals only (a specification made by our partners, the DPR Korean Commission of Education). The trainer will initially need a visa for China to take part in induction activities there and will later need a year-long multiple entry visa for China. Project personnel are currently issued with ninety-day visas to DPR Korea which are renewed on each visit to Beijing. This uses a considerable number of pages in the passport. It would be advisable to have at least eight unused pages in the passport before starting the post. Passports should be valid for a least two years after the commencement of post</p>
<p>Please indicate if any security or legal checks are required</p>	<p>DBS check (formerly CRB) and successful receipt of three professional references</p>

for this role.

Person Specification (see guidance below before updating this section)

	Essential	Desirable	Assessment stage
Behaviours (global standard)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Making it happen (more demanding) ▪ Working together (more demanding) <p><i>Please note: the other behaviours below will <u>not</u> be assessed at interview. However, <u>all</u> behaviours will be used for performance management purposes.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being accountable (essential) ▪ Shaping the future (essential) ▪ Connecting with others (essential) ▪ Creating shared purpose (essential) 		Interview (for the more demanding behaviours)
Skills and Knowledge (all skills = global standard) Level of skills by centre need	<p>Teaching Skills – level 2 = essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom management (2) ▪ Course and lesson planning (2) ▪ Subject knowledge (2) ▪ Understanding your learners (2) ▪ Learning technologies (2) <p>Core Skills</p> <p>Communicating and Influencing – Level 3 Able to use a range of non-standard and creative approaches to inform, and persuade others, extending beyond logical argument to influence decisions and actions in a way which is inclusive and engaging.</p> <p>Planning and Organising – level 2 Organises own work over weeks and months, or plans ahead for others, taking account of priorities and the impact on other people.</p>		2 teaching skills will be assessed at interview All at shortlisting. Managing People, Communicating and Influencing and Developing Business will be assessed at interview
Experience	2 years post-diploma i.e. DELTA/Trinity diploma TESOL experience Experience in teaching relevant age groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adults General English 18+ (800+ hours) ▪ Experience of teacher training (running professional development workshops and training on intensive teacher training courses) 	Experience of teaching in universities Experience of ESP teaching and training ESP teachers Experience of working in challenging countries	Short listing

Qualifications	Cambridge DELTA/Trinity Dip TESOL or equivalent Undergraduate degree		Short listing only
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Submitted by	Eric Atkinson	Date	5 th July 2017
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Section A

Information about the vacancy

Recruitment Responsibility	East Asia Regional Recruitment Team	Date	1 st July 2017
Location	Pyongyang, DPR Korea (North Korea)	DAC code	DPRK-S-1579
Job Title	English Teacher / Trainer / Curriculum Developer	Job Type	Senior Teacher (PB 6)
Start Date	October 1 st 2017	Closing Date for applications	14 th August 2017
Advertise job	Internal & External	Number of posts	1

Job specific skills, knowledge, qualifications & experience

The British Council is recruiting an English Teacher/Trainer/Curriculum Developer for a unique role in DPR Korea.

To be considered, you should be a highly proficient user of English with an undergraduate degree from an English-native speaking country. Please note the original degree transcripts are essential for immigration and registration purposes. You should also have an internationally recognised TEFL-Q qualification (i.e. Cambridge DELTA/ Trinity DipTESOL) and a minimum of 2 years full-time relevant post-diploma experience.

Enquiries about the post can be sent to the [East Asia Regional Teacher Recruitment team](#) based in Singapore.

Interviews are likely to be held one week after closing date.

Internal applicants only - Please include your most recent end-of-year-record and copy in **both** your line and centre managers when submitting your application.

The British Council is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and is keen to reflect the diversity of UK society at every level within the organisation. We welcome applications from all sections of the community. The British Council is committed to a policy of equal opportunity, and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all of our partners to share this commitment. British Council appointments are contingent on thorough checks. In the UK, and in other countries where appropriate systems exist, these include criminal records checks.

Local restrictions on employment

This position is only open to UK passport holders. Employment is subject to permission from the DPRK commission of education and immigration department.

This is an unaccompanied post.

Section B

Information about the context and project

The DPR Korea English Teaching and Training programme is the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and British Embassy flagship project in DPR Korea. As such both have a strong interest in the success of the project and take a keen interest in it. The programme is jointly funded by the FCO and the British Council.

The British Council does not have an office in the DPR Korea, so the project receives support from its Beijing office.

The programme has been operating in the DPR Korea for 16 years, commencing with partnerships with three leading universities in Pyongyang. This has subsequently been expanded to ten universities and schools from 2014. It has also extended the reach of its training both in Pyongyang and beyond through intensive teacher training events with teachers from other universities and schools. Building on our continuing and expanding engagement with stakeholders in the country, we aim to be a partner of choice at national level for the DPRK government's English teaching and learning developments in the longer term.

The roles of the trainers have evolved significantly over the years, and in 2008 the project team grew to include a Pyongyang-based project manager, which has given the project more focus and direction. The project team is now comprised of three Teacher / Trainer / Material Developers who are line managed by the project manager. The main projects that the team is currently involved with are: direct English teaching to groups of university students; language and methodological improvement for secondary and tertiary English teachers; giving advice and support on curriculum development and delivering an annual two-week intensive teacher training workshop.

Section C

Information about the terms and conditions of service (TACOS)

Whilst the information below was accurate at time of writing, specific details and entitlements are subject to change. The offer of employment will be conditional to continued funding availability and successful visa applications to the DPRK immigration department.

Job overview

The bulk of the work is teaching English to undergraduates. You will be assigned to one university for this and you will teach classes in the mornings. Currently, trainers are teaching six double periods a week. The focus is on developing the students' knowledge of UK and other cultures, their critical thinking skills and their speaking ability.

In the afternoons, you will be teaching and training groups of English teachers at three different institutions, one of which will be your core university. Currently trainers are spending three double periods on this work. The focus is on improving the teachers' level of English and increasing their understanding of effective classroom practices. In some institutions, the focus will change in the near future to developing the teachers' English language in one ESP area and developing their ability to deliver ESP classes.

A further duty will be to spend one session a week with partner university colleagues reviewing the English curriculum and working on improving it, which could include improving the syllabus, selecting new materials, suggesting new teaching methods and advising on and supporting the implementation of curriculum change.

A fourth duty will be to train on two-week intensive teacher training courses that take place in the summer

You will also be expected to attend fortnightly team meetings.

Contract Length	2 years (up to March 31 st 2019)	Renewable Period	Dependent on the continuation of the project
Contract Type	Core International	No. of Staff Managed	0
Contract Hours	36.5	Contact Hours	18 hours of teaching and training (higher during short intensive training events)

Annual salary

Core international package minimum - £25,000
 Overseas allowance - £5,000
 Location allowance - £8,250
 Cost of living allowance - £7,182 (this amount is reviewed regularly, with the next review taking place on August 1st)
 Superannuation Compensation Allowance (11% of salary) - £2,750

Income tax & national insurance

The salary will also be subject to British Council's tax equalisation scheme. Additionally, if you are transferring to this post from the UK, you will pay UK National Insurance for the first 52 weeks. Thereafter, a notional NI amount will be deducted by the British Council which will be a similar amount. If you travel from another overseas location, notional NI will be applied from the beginning.

Fares & travel

Flight to post and back to home base at end of posting

1 Fare Paid Leave per year.

3 Breather visits of seven nights each visit to Beijing per year (accommodation provided and subsistence paid).

The British Council will reimburse the cost of all visas required

Baggage allowance

200kg Unaccompanied Air Freight.

The British Council will cover storage costs in the UK for up to 450 cu ft of Heavy Baggage.

Annual leave allowance

35 + 5 leave

14 days (certain local and UK public holidays)

Medical allowance

BUPA Scheme

Accommodation allowance

Accommodation provided

Any Other Allowances

Transfer Grant - £1,500

Section D**Country Overview**

Most historians agree that the Koreans have lived on their peninsula as a distinct though not always unified people for thousands of years. The Korean peninsula was governed by the Korean Empire from the late 19th century to the early 20th century, until it was annexed by the Empire of Japan in 1910. At the end of World War II, following the surrender of Japan and the end of its rule over the peninsula, Korea was divided into two occupied zones, with the northern half of the peninsula occupied by the Soviet Union and the southern half by the United States. A United Nations-supervised election held in 1948 led to the creation of separate Korean governments for the two occupation zones: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in the north, and the Republic of Korea (ROK) in the south. Conflicting interests led to the Korean War in 1950. An armistice in 1953 committed both to a cease-fire, but the two countries remain officially at war because a formal peace treaty was never signed. Both states were accepted into the United Nations in 1991.

The DPRK government follows the Juche ideology of 'self-reliance', initiated by the country's first President, Kim Il Sung. Juche became the official state ideology, replacing Marxism–Leninism, when the country adopted a new constitution in 1972. After his death, Kim Il Sung was declared the country's Eternal President and his son, Kim Jong Il, assumed power styled as the 'Dear Leader'. Under Kim Jong Il, another home-grown principle was pursued alongside Juche, called Songun or 'military first', and in 2009, all references to Communism (Chosŏn'g) were finally removed from the country's constitution. Today, Kim Il Sung's Juche (self-reliance) and Kim Jong Il's Songun (military first) are combined as 'Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism', and politics and military culture are a part of everyday life. There is no true civic society and ideology training plays a very important part in everything from women's group meetings and military training, to school and university curricula. After the death of Kim Jong Il in December 2011, the leadership was handed down to his son, Kim Jong Un.

Some older cultural influences are still in evidence in the country. Culturally Korea has been influenced by Confucianism, and public 'face' is important as is hierarchy. It is certainly wise to ask foreign staff who have been based in Pyongyang for some time for guidance early on about ways to avoid unintentionally giving any offence to Koreans during your daily life.

City overview

Pyongyang is a showpiece city whose inhabitants are the regime's core elite. Its wide, clean streets and monumental buildings are designed to impress and its shops and housing allow a standard of living not enjoyed by Koreans in other towns and regions. Nevertheless, it still cannot escape its 'sovietness'. The commercial billboards, advertising and shop logos that pack the streets of cities elsewhere in the world are entirely absent here. There is still relatively little traffic, though this is changing with every month. The local people still mostly walk, use bicycles or use crowded public transport.

British Council staff have the freedom to walk or cycle around the city (but they are not allowed to drive their own cars, take taxis or use any form of public transport). There are areas that are out of bounds but if you try to walk through them you will be told politely but firmly to walk away. However, this is rare. Local people won't normally try to engage with you and will often avoid making eye contact. Though you can walk into a local shop, you will be ignored and you won't be served. However, there is little reason to go into local shops as you are not allowed to have any DPR Korea currency. There are a very small number of special shops for non DPR Koreans where you can make purchases of "western" food items and high end goods in euros.

Climate

North Korea's climate is subject to seasonal extremes, with hot and humid summers and very cold, dry winters. There is quite a lot of snow between December and February, but flats are comfortable as they are well heated. In summer there is a short very hot and humid rainy season called *changma*, but again trainers' flats are comfortable as modern air-conditioning is installed. May and September tend to be warm and sunny and great for outdoors activities.

Accommodation

British Council staff live accommodation blocks in the Munsudong Diplomatic Area. The flats have been fairly recently renovated and decorated to a reasonable standard. The kitchens are equipped with kettles, fridge freezers, dual gas stoves, but only small portable ovens or microwave ovens. There is also cutlery and crockery.

Furniture, bedding (pillows, duvets and sheets) and towels are provided, but staff often buy their own at Ikea in Beijing en route to the DPRK. All the flats have air conditioners, top-loader washing machines and bathtubs with shower fittings. The living rooms have flat-screen TVs and Blu-Ray DVD players. There are also desks with Dell docking stations, printers and monitors for your work. Please note you will most usually prepare your lessons and do materials development work from home but the British Council has a small teacher's room and resource library at the project manager's flat which is open to staff during office hours.

Power outages have been a significant problem in the past, especially during winter when the growing use of electric heaters puts immense strain on the city's very limited power supply, but recently this has been much improved. The water supply is often switched off overnight and at random times during the day. Sometimes you might have hot water only, sometimes only cold and sometimes neither. There are large water storage tubs in all the flats for times when your water is cut off completely. The flats are heated in the communist style which means no thermostats and no on/off switches, but they are warm in winter.

General living costs & conditions

A key factor governing your life in Pyongyang is that you are not allowed to have any local PDR Korea currency. This stops you from shopping in local shops and going to local restaurants. You will pay for everything in a foreign currency, usually euros (Though Chinese RMB and US dollars can be accepted, but not British Pounds). As there are no ATMs or other means of gaining foreign currency in Pyongyang, you will have to bring in a substantial amount of foreign currency in cash (usually euros) each time you come into the country. With the three breather trips and leave taking you out of PDR Korea at least four times a year, the usual length of stay for each visit is 9 to 11 weeks.

A second factor is that you are not allowed to drive your own car, take a taxi or use public transport in Pyongyang. This restricts your movement around the city to walking, cycling or relying on the good will of others on the compound who do have cars. Most project personnel have bicycles. Local ones, heavy and ungeared, can be bought for a reasonable price and better quality imported ones occasionally become available when an expat on the compound moves to another country.

For work purposes, you will be assigned a car and driver who will collect you from outside your flat, take you to your university, collect you at the end of your time there and return you to your apartment.

A third factor is that there is no socialising with the DPR Korean students or colleagues you meet at the universities, or in fact with any DPR Korean national at all. You are not allowed to visit their apartments and they are not allowed to visit yours. Going to restaurants, cafes etc. with them is also severely discouraged, your colleagues themselves would be extremely reluctant to do this. The only time you are likely to see them out of work is on officially arranged trips to DPR Korea tourist places and the very occasional officially arranged dinners in a Pyongyang restaurant.

Because of these three factors, a very large percentage of your time outside of work will be spent in the Munsudong Diplomatic Area. This is where you have your accommodation and it will be where you do most of your shopping, eating out and socialising.

The Diplomatic Area is rather different to the kind of modern diplomatic compounds with the latest facilities that are found in places like the Gulf. It is actually a number of Embassy and NGO buildings

interspersed by small walled compounds with blocks of residents' flats. Each Embassy and residential compound has a soldier on the gate, mainly to restrict the access of DPR Korean people to the buildings, but also to monitor the comings and goings of foreigners. These soldiers will allow you free access to any building in the compound, but will usually halt and check the ID of any of your Korean colleagues, such as your driver or coordinator who will come round to pick you up. You have complete freedom of movement around the area, but you can be completely sure that the soldiers know where everyone is all the time.

There are two shops on the compound where you will do most of your shopping. Everyday groceries can be bought here. Prices are considerably higher than in the UK (hence the generous cost of living allowance (COLA). It is also possible to shop at a market, which has all the variety of foodstuffs and other goods that you would find at any large Asian market. However, it is a considerable distance from the compound and you will need to find a friend with a car to take you there.

There are three restaurants on the compound, two of which serve predominately Korean food and one Chinese cuisine. They are reasonably priced and some British Council staff have the majority of their meals there. There are a very limited number of restaurants in the city of Pyongyang that will accept foreign currency, but again these are some distance from the compound and you will need to either cycle there or rely on a friend with a car.

There is a small outdoor sports area with a tennis court and a basketball court on the compound and a small gym with the usual weights and running machines, but not of a particularly high standard. It is possible to go to a swimming pool in Pyongyang and there is a ten pin bowling venue in the city, but again you would need to cycle there or find a friend with a car to take you. Cycling is a popular fitness pursuit in all but the winter months and there are a number of residents who jog around the compound.

There is a reasonable social life among the ex-pat community on the compound. The German Embassy host fortnightly beer and food nights in their embassy bar. The Polish Embassy has fortnightly film evenings at their purpose built cinema in the basement of their embassy. Recently, a monthly pub quiz has been introduced. And every Friday night there is a karaoke and disco at "The Friendship". The Friendship houses one of the three restaurants on the compound and also has a cafe, karaoke room, a disco room and small bar with a pool table. And of course, small groups of friends meet informally to socialise.

Though, there are things to do on the compound and there are opportunities to get off it, you will be spending a fair amount of time in your flat. The usual home entertainments that you would expect are very limited. There is no satellite TV, no radio and severely restricted internet (certainly no possibility of streaming anything). However, flats are provided with DVD players and TV screens. So, entertainment at home is reading, listening to music and podcasts and watching DVDs. It is advisable to bring in lots of music and podcasts on the hard drive of your laptop. Be aware all media will be thoroughly checked at Pyongyang airport by DPR Korea border guards and anything deemed to be inappropriate will be confiscated and could cause issues beyond that. It is your responsibility to ensure your possessions are in accordance with rules and regulations. Refer to FCO travel guidelines and double check with the Project Manager in advance of departure.

Transport and Communication

As mentioned earlier, British Council staff are each provided with a personal driver to transport them to and from work and official events in a government car. Otherwise, it is walking, cycling or getting lifts in other expats' cars.

Broadband internet is provided in each trainer's apartment via a data SIM card that can be plugged into any laptop via a USB dongle. It can also be used in iPads or some smartphones. However, this is very expensive in the DPRK meaning there are strict limitations in terms of monthly data usage as well as. The current limit is 5GB per month, to cover work and personal internet usage, which will usually rule out downloading large files or using streaming sites such as YouTube. The 3G service is mostly reliable but online security is an issue to be considered. WiFi is currently banned in Pyongyang to those without special permits.

Each flat has a landline which is useful for local calls, but incredibly expensive for international calls. Trainers are provided with Samsung mobile phones and local SIM cards for use in the DPRK during the duration of their contracts. There are restrictions on bringing some communications equipment such as GPS devices into the DPRK. Devices that are considered unacceptable by the customs officials may be taken from you at the airport and stored there during your stay and will be returned to you each time you leave the country (e.g. during breather trips, holidays or at the end of your posting). The same applies to literature (e.g. guidebooks) that is not approved by the authorities. However, smartphones, tablets and e-readers are usually allowed into the country nowadays after being registered on arrival. E-readers, tablets, portable hard drives and laptops may be inspected to check they do not have any unauthorised material on them. Officials are particularly keen to inspect video content at present.

General health & medical care

Newly arriving members of staff need to be aware that medical care in-country is very limited.

There is a resident UN doctor in Pyongyang operating from the UN dispensary whom non-UN staff can consult in case of emergency. For routine treatment that can wait, it is advisable to arrange consultations with the International SOS clinic in Beijing during breather trips. This clinic has a wide range of medical specialists and testing facilities. For serious conditions and accidents that require immediate attention, the Korean-run Friendship Hospital in the diplomatic area will be the first place to visit followed by emergency medevac to a more modern hospital in Beijing if necessary.

Please be aware that access to many medications may not be possible in the DPRK and it is advisable to consult a GP before departure and bring any recommended medicine with you.

Medical cover via BUPA is provided as part of your contract, although routine dental treatment is not included in the policy.

Any other information (shopping facilities, entertainment, leisure)

Pyongyang may not offer the range of cultural and entertainment options of other capitals in the region but there are things to keep most people occupied and more comes on offer with each passing year. There are three restaurants and a couple of small supermarkets in the Munsudong Diplomatic Area. The Friendship Club also has a bar, cafe, dance floor, karaoke lounge, pool table and fitness room. The German Embassy invites members of the international community to its pub every fortnight while the Polish Embassy has regular film showings at its cinema.

Elsewhere in Pyongyang there is a variety of shops, museums, restaurants (Korean, Japanese, Chinese, pizza, burgers etc), microbrew pubs, pleasure parks, a zoo, a waterpark, and sports facilities such as gyms, a bowling alley, squash courts, skating rinks, swimming pools, saunas, golf and taekwondo classes. There are also hiking possibilities in the hills immediately surrounding the city although foreigners are not allowed to leave the city limits or visit local villages. The Diplomatic Club offers Korean lessons to foreigners.

There is some stunning natural scenery to be experienced in other regions of the country such as the Mount Paektu and Mount Kumgang national parks and there are wide sandy beaches in the vicinity of the cities of Wonsan and Hamhung. You may well get the chance to visit these places during official visits in the company of Korean partners, while organised trips are also arranged by tour groups for members of the international community over weekends at various times of the year (usually spring and autumn).

Particular challenges facing staff in this area / region

The essential thing to remember is that the DPRK is a martial state that is officially at war. It superficially resembles the USSR circa 1953 or China circa 1977, apart from limited imports of modern clothing, technology and other items from China. This 'cold war' footing is used by the regime to justify the restrictions on movement for both locals and foreigners, the restrictions on information flow such as blocked access to foreign media and the internet for locals, and the importance of unquestioning loyalty to the leadership. It is almost impossible to understate the degree of respect that Koreans are expected to show publically towards the leadership in the DPRK. Foreigners are certainly not exempt from this and the golden rule is to never pass any comment that is considered critical of the past and present leaders, i.e. of Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il and Kim Jong Un.

There are very few foreigners in the DPRK so your social circle in Pyongyang is likely to be small. Expect to always stand out in public and have your movements monitored by the authorities. Travel beyond Pyongyang will only be possible infrequently, under special circumstances, and when accompanied by Korean guides or minders.

As mentioned earlier, ideology training plays a very important part in school and university curricula. This does not have a great effect on our day-to-day teaching and training as we are appropriately sensitive to the context. It is important to avoid potentially challenging political areas and ensure we follow mainstream EFL topics. There is a reporting system to ensure lesson content is appropriate and this is maintained with a designated student monitor in each class. There is also a Public Relations Officer who oversees the activities of all foreigners working at their university.

Job Opportunities for Partners

This is an unaccompanied post.

Whilst the above information was accurate at time of writing, specific details and entitlements are subject to change.