



# TaLK FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

TaLK OFFICE



# Accommodation

## Who provides the accommodation?

The schools will provide you with accommodations based on the guidelines from the Provincial Office of Education (POE).

## What are the different types of available accommodation?

Accommodations generally include a one-room/studio apartment.

**Note:** *The TaLK Program does not offer homestay options.*

## Will my accommodation be furnished?

When the POE or elementary school provides housing for the scholar, appliances and furniture **may** be provided. Scholars, however, cannot request or demand more appliances or furniture than those already provided by the school/POE. The settlement allowance provided for new TaLK Scholars is meant to fill in any gaps that may be present, including but not limited to new bedding, cutlery, etc.

## Who pays for the associated accommodation expenses?

Any and all fees, charges, costs, taxes, expenses, etc. incurred in using the accommodation is the responsibility of the TaLK Scholar. This may include water, gas, electricity, internet and/or cable/IPTV bills, monthly maintenance fee of your accommodation, etc.

## Can I bring/have pets?

Pets are not allowed in the provided accommodations.

## I am applying with my significant other/spouse/etc. Are we able to have shared accommodation?

As each applicant is treated as an individual and independent, **regardless** of their marital status, and our program has been designed for young individuals who have recently graduated or are currently in school, the TaLK Program does not accommodate requests for shared accommodations or similar placements.

Applicants are expected to understand that regardless of their situation at the time of their application, if deemed successful they will be evaluated on their own merits and are likely to be placed away from one another, including in differing provinces.



# After Acceptance

## I have just received notification that I have been accepted. What do I do?

- Log into “My Page”, located at the top right corner of the TaLK website, to accept the scholarship offer. If you decline the scholarship offer, the TaLK Office will update your profile accordingly and you will not need to proceed any further. However, should you decline the scholarship, please write an email to [talkkorea@korea.kr](mailto:talkkorea@korea.kr) stating your reason(s) for declining the offer.
- If you accept the scholarship offer, you need to inform us of your arrival flight arrangements via “My Page.” This information is used to arrange for airport pick-up for all new incoming TaLK Scholars. Please make sure that the information you provide is as accurate as possible, especially the date and arrival time.
- Provide the visa type that you have, or will apply for.
  - E-2 - Public Institution Foreign Language Instructor
  - F-4 - Overseas Korean (Korean Heritage)

If you are unsure as to which visa status, you are most likely to be applying for an E-2 visa, unless otherwise noted by the Korean Consulate/Embassy. However, please consult them for additional information regarding the Visa, including confirmation of which type you would be applying for.

## I don't remember my login password. What do I do?

On the “My Page” login window, click on the question “Forgot your password?” and submit the requested information. If you are still unable to retrieve your password, please email [talkkorea@korea.kr](mailto:talkkorea@korea.kr) with your full name, date of birth, city of residence and email address that was recorded on your application account.

## I am having problems logging in to my account. What's wrong?

E-mail [talkkorea@korea.kr](mailto:talkkorea@korea.kr) for guidance after you have considered the following:

1. Please check your password.
2. Please ensure your login is correct.
3. Both password and login are case-sensitive.

## I received my scholarship acceptance package but my school placement has not yet been determined. Am I supposed to accept the scholarship *before* I know where I am placed?

Generally, yes, as there is a 7-day time limit to your decision to accept or decline our scholarship offer. The acceptance package, which is posted in the successful applicant's “My Page”, will provide the name of the applicant's province. However, the specific region within the province and the school name will not be released until during the TaLK Orientation.

Application status notification may take upwards to a month after the TaLK Office receives all of your required documents.



## What type of visa am I supposed to get?

You cannot enter Korea without a valid visa and passport. The TaLK Program accepts the E2-2 and F-4 Visa types.

**Note:** *This does not apply to Korean citizens with Permanent Residency, as they do not require a visa to work in their home country. Dual citizens are to consult with their local Korean Embassy/Consulate for more information on how to proceed.*

## Can the TaLK Office arrange my visa?

**No, you are responsible for arranging your own visa to Korea.** After you receive your acceptance package, be sure to contact your nearest Korean Embassy/Consulate to process your visa. If you experience any problems obtaining your visa, have your Korean Embassy/Consulate contact the TaLK Office.

## I have my visa now. What are the steps to booking my flight?

Successful candidates would be required to book their own flights that would be compatible with the orientation schedule set for that particular generation.

For more information regarding flight tickets, please review the *Flight Ticket* section on page 16.

**Note:** *Successful candidates are required to enter the Republic of Korea before the beginning of the orientation, and are not to be absent from any portion without prior authorization from the TaLK Office.*



# Application

## Do I have to pay for any part of this application?

No, there are no fees for applying; however, applicants will need to pay other fees to obtain Required Documents (ie., Apostilled CRC and Official Transcript). All fees incurred are the responsibility of the applicant, and the TaLK Office will not reimburse the related amounts regardless of the application status.

## I want to apply directly to the TaLK Office in Korea. Will this be okay?

You can apply directly to the TaLK Office in Korea if you meet one of the following conditions:

- Currently living in Korea
- Citizen of Ireland
- Citizen of South Africa
- U.S. Citizen living in Hawaii, Guam, or American Samoa

Otherwise, you are required to apply to the applicable Korean Consulate/Embassy/Education Center in your home country.

## What happens if the application offices outside of Korea are closed?

There are set dates to apply directly to the application offices outside of Korea. Once they close, you can try applying directly to the TaLK Office for early review and will be considered for the waitlist or the next term.

## I am an American citizen but currently residing in Australia. Can I apply at the Korean Embassy in Australia?

Yes, citizens of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom or the United States can apply for TaLK through the Korean Embassy/Consulate at the country of their residence, regardless of whether it is their home country. If you are living in Ireland or South Africa, you **must** apply through the TaLK Office in Korea.

## I wish to apply with my wife. We have two young children. Would it be possible for us to apply?

The TaLK Program does not allow for joint application for spouses with children, as children and other dependents are not permitted to be a part of the preparatory orientation. Beyond that, all other aspects are handled at the sole discretion and burden of the successful candidate. **Housing will not be accommodating for the family, as this program is designed for those without dependents. Please note that the effort and process involved in securing appropriate visas for an applicant's dependents is solely the applicant's.**



## When and how will the interviews be conducted?

Interviews will be conducted at the designated Korean Embassy/Consulate in your home country (TaLK Office is strictly for candidates that meet one of the previously-listed conditions) only after you have successfully submitted your application Parts A and B online. The embassy or consulate will contact you and arrange an interview date. Additional interviews may be conducted by the TaLK Office.

## What do you recommend I do to prepare for the interview?

Here are some suggestions:

1. Understand what our program is about. Do your research.
2. Prepare any questions you may have.
3. Be on time. If you are going to be late, call immediately to inform your interviewer.
4. Dress professionally, even for Skype interviews.
5. If possible, bring with you a hard copy of all your documents to complete your application. If you are interviewed at an application office outside of Korea, it is possible that the TaLK Office will contact you for an additional interview via video conference (Skype) or phone as a part of the final screening process.

## When will I find out if I have been accepted into the TaLK Program following my interview?

You will be notified of the results via e-mail approximately four(4) to eight(8) weeks **after all the requirements have been completed**. You will also be able to check your offer of acceptance through the TaLK Website. To review your offer of acceptance, login to “My Page.”

**Note:** Our login is case sensitive. Contact the TaLK Office via e-mail if, after attempting to retrieve your password, you continue to experience difficulties with signing-in.

## Is the TaLK Program temporary? Will I be able to apply in the future?

The TaLK Program offers positions biannually (February and August).

## I was in the TaLK Program for a year and successfully completed my contract. I am now back home, but I would like to re-join. Can I come back to TaLK?

Yes, the maximum scholarship period for each scholar is a total of two (2) years consecutively. You will need to apply again like the first time, with a new essay, lesson plan, etc. The only differences will be the added requirement of a completed Bachelor Degree and one of the individuals recommending you: One letter of recommendation **must be from your former mentor teacher, and sent directly from the teacher to the TaLK Office**. Recommendation template for returning scholars is available under the Required Documents portion of the website.

**Note:** Returning scholars **must** participate in the National Orientation in addition to the POE training.



### Can I apply two terms in advance? Three terms?

The TaLK Office generally accepts applications for the most immediate term and one (1) term in advance simultaneously, whereas the local application offices will only accept applications for the most immediate term.

### I'm trying to apply for a future term, but the only application office I can choose is Seoul. Am I still able to apply even though it is not my local application office?

The online application is usually open for the current term and one term ahead, but the local application offices only process applications for the current term to prevent confusion on their end. It is okay to apply for the future term with the Seoul office. We will change your application to your local office when they begin processing applications for the chosen term.

### Is there an age limit?

The TaLK Program seeks adaptable and open-minded individuals of all ages to teach English in the rural areas of Korea. As a scholarship program, however, the majority of accepted TaLK participants are students and recent graduates of accredited universities or colleges with a background in education, English or Korean studies. Usually, applicants who have a Bachelor's degree but have not recently graduated are encouraged to apply to our sister program, EPIK (English Program in Korea), which provides a lifestyle that is more compatible with applicants seeking professional opportunities in the teaching field.

**All applicable individuals are required to be at least the age of majority within their own country and Korea (19) before the anticipated program start date.**



# Alien Registration Card (ARC)

## How do I get an ARC?

- For E-2 Visa Holders:

The process of obtaining an ARC is simple, so long as you have all the necessary documents prepared before you register at an Immigration Bureau branch office local to your residence. In accordance with Korean law, you must obtain your ARC within **90 days** of your arrival in Korea. You can obtain an application form (Visa Application Form / 사증발급신청서) at the immigration branch office. In addition, you will need the following items:

- Your Passport
- School Business Certificate (학교사업자등록증 사본)
- Two colored passport pictures (3.5cm x 4.5cm, taken within 6 months)
- Application fee (60,000 KRW + 4,000 KRW shipping fee, as of Spring 2016)
- Your signed TaLK Contract

- For F-4 Visa Holders:

**Please contact your local immigration office for more information on the process of obtaining an F-4 ARC.** The process differs between each individual's case, and isn't as simple as "I was born overseas, so I must be XYZ-ian."

**Note:** The TaLK Office holds no authority in the issuance of Visas and/or the Alien Registration Cards. All ARC-related processes are ultimately the responsibility of the individual applying for it.

## How long does it take to receive my ARC?

It usually takes approximately three(3) to four(4) weeks from the time of application to receive the physical Alien Registration Card. During the application process at the immigration office, or immediately afterwards, you will have to obtain a "Confirmation of Alien Registration" (외국인 등록 사실 증명서), which will have your Alien Registration Number on it. Please obtain this document and submit it to your school as soon as possible to be fully registered and setup for payroll purposes.

**Note:** The time of the card issuance is dependent on the actual immigration office.

## I'm an overseas Korean and I have an F-4 Visa. Should I apply for an ARC?

You may apply either for an ARC (외국인 등록증) or an Overseas Korean Report of Domestic Residence Card (재외동포 국내거소신고증). Possessing this card will be more convenient for F-4 Visa holders to get around Korea as you will be provided with a registration number (등록번호).





**I entered Korea with a Korean Passport and I have permanent residency in my home country. Do I need to register at the immigration office?**

You are required to apply for your Korean Registration Card (주민등록증) at your local district office (동사무소) or city hall (시청).

**Is the TaLK Office able to facilitate my ARC application?**

The TaLK Office does not carry the authority or ability to facilitate any part of the Alien Registration Card application process.



# TaLK Contract / Scholarship

## What should be done if a TaLK Scholar decides to terminate his/her contract before completing the scholarship term?

Take the following procedures with your school and POE:

1. Submit a **written resignation** (30 days in advance) to the school and POE.
2. Go to the local immigration office with your Mentor Teacher and file an official Employment Termination Report.
3. Close bank account(s).
4. Cancel contracts and pay off utility charges, internet, phone bill, cable, and any other services.
5. Clean and tidy your accommodations.

**Individuals who terminate their contract will not be provided with an exit allowance or return ticket. If the termination was done within the first 5 months of their contract term, the individual will be required to return the entrance allowance to the TaLK Office per contract terms.**

## Does the TaLK Program offer any short term contracts and/or different intake periods?

The TaLK Office offers 1-year contract terms, with 6-month terms available after all 1-year applicants have been reviewed and processed. The intake period/contract start dates are at the beginning of February and July. Please note that the TaLK Program does **not** offer any other contract lengths or intake periods aside from that mentioned.

## Am I able to reduce my scholarship term?

Scholars who accept the offer are unable to reduce their scholarship term. Those that must will be considered in breach of the contract.

## Am I able to extend my scholarship term?

The successful Scholar will be provided with the opportunity to extend their term a few months before the end of their current contract period. Scholars may extend up to two(2) years consecutively.

## I was previously a TaLK Scholar, and have since returned home. Can I come back and be a part of TaLK again?

TaLK Scholar Alumni are able to apply to the TaLK Program provided that one of the letters of recommendation is provided by their previous mentor teacher, in addition to **having a completed Bachelor's Degree. This is an absolute requirement, and no substitutes or exceptions will be accepted.**

In addition, as TaLK Alumni have had prior experience, they will be placed under greater scrutiny compared to a new applicant.



# Criminal Record Check (CRC)

## What is a CRC?

CRC stands for “Criminal Record Check”, also known as a Criminal Background Check. It is a document that contains the details of any criminal charges that you have been convicted of.

## Why do we need to submit a CRC to the TaLK Office?

The CRC is a document that is required by the Korean Ministry of Justice. In order to employ foreign individuals, the TaLK Office must receive and process the CRCs.

## What kind of CRC do I need to submit?

The TaLK Office requires all applicants to submit an **Apostilled Criminal Record Check** conducted at the National/Federal Level from the country of their citizenship.

## What do you mean by ‘national/federal’ level?

Your CRC must have been conducted at the “national” level, which means the highest law enforcement authority of your country.

**Starting from the August 2020 intake, state-level CRCs are no longer accepted.** U.S. citizens must submit an FBI background check with the apostille issued by the U.S. Department of State Office of Authentications in Washington, D.C.

## Can I submit a CRC that I received last year?

No. Any CRC submitted to the TaLK Office must have been conducted within six (6) months prior to the day you submit your application.

## I have applied for other jobs and I need to keep my CRC. Can I submit a photocopy of my CRC?

No. The TaLK Office requires the original copy of your Criminal Record Check.



### Can I get my CRC back from the TaLK Office?

No. The TaLK office does not return any documents that have been submitted during the application process, regardless of the outcome.

### I'm an applicant from the USA and I have lived in one state all my life. Do I still have to obtain an FBI-level check?

Starting from the August 2020 intake, we are only accepting FBI-level checks and no longer accept state-level checks.

### I'm applying while I am in Korea. Can I submit a Korean CRC?

A Korean CRC is not considered sufficient for the purposes of the TaLK Program. You will be required to obtain your CRC, along with the appropriate Apostille, from your home country.

### I am a permanent resident/citizen of Canada. How do I get an Apostille?

Canadian applicants do not have to obtain an Apostille, as Canada is not a part of the Apostille convention. Instead, Canadian applicants must have their Criminal Record Checks **notarized** at the nearest Korean Consulate/Embassy before submitting it to the TaLK Program.

### You keep mentioning "Apostille." What is an Apostille?

An Apostille is a certificate that authenticates the origin of a public document. A more detailed explanation of the Apostille Convention is available online.

### Why do I have to get my documents Apostilled?

In order for a public document to be considered legally valid outside of your country of citizenship (or permanent residency), it must be authenticated by an authorized entity; the Apostille is the certificate of authentication. We require your CRC to be Apostilled in order for the Korean government to accept this document as legally valid in Korea.

### How do I get an Apostille?

An Apostille is dispensed by a government/notary agent of the government. Please contact your government for more information. Please note that a **notarization** from the notary agent is **not an acceptable substitute for an Apostille**.

### Do I have to get my document(s) notarized before I get an Apostille?

Your government may require you to get your CRC notarized before obtaining the Apostille. Please contact your state or national/federal-level government for further information.



### **I submitted a CRC to you previously, but I didn't get an Apostille. Can I submit the Apostille separately?**

No. The Apostille must be attached to the original document in order for the submission to be considered valid. Documents that arrive detached or separately from one another (Apostille and the document receiving the Apostille) will be considered invalid, and the applicant will need to obtain another set of documents.

### **I have obtained my CRC and the Apostille. Who do I send it to?**

Please send it by registered, courier or express to your local application office.

### **I'm a late applicant, and my application office is Seoul. Who do I send it to?**

Please send it by registered, courier or express to the TaLK Office.

### **Where can I find the mailing address for my local application office?**

All the contact information for all of our application offices can be found on our website. Please contact and confirm with them the mailing address as it is subject to change.

***Disclaimer: Applicants are responsible for their application documents. To ensure the items arrive safely at their destination, we strongly recommend that all application documents are posted as REGISTERED or by EXPRESS to ensure tracking and prompt delivery.***



# Dual Citizenship (Overseas Korean)

## **I have dual citizenship in Korea and the US. Which passports do I use to pass immigration in Korea?**

Dual citizens should contact their local Consulate/Embassy for information and direction on how to approach their respective situation. Individuals who enter Korea with the incorrect passport will be required to leave and return to the country at their own expense.

## **As a dual citizen, what if I enter Korea with a non-Korean passport to orientation?**

You will be required to leave Korea and return with your Korean passport at your own expense.

## **I am already in Korea with my non-Korean passport. Am I able to apply for Renunciation of Korean Nationality (surrendering Korean Citizenship) while within Korea?**

No, this is no longer possible in Korea. You will be required to apply for Renunciation of Korean Nationality at the Korean Consulate General's office in your home country, outside of Korea. It is only after this has been processed that you will be eligible to apply for either the E2-2 or F-4 Visa (if applicable).

## **I am a dual citizen. Am I still required to fulfill military service in Korea?**

All overseas Korean male scholars, dual citizens or permanent residents in an overseas country are required to fulfill military service in Korea. Hence, you can only apply for the six-month scholarship term.



# Educational Background

## I am a college graduate. Do I still qualify for this program?

Yes, college graduates are eligible for this program, provided they hold an Associate degree (2+ year program) from an accredited program/institution.

## I am in a technical college and will graduate before the intake period I want to join. Can I still apply?

Yes, graduates of a two year degree program from an accredited technical college are eligible to apply to the program. Please note that a final transcript will need to be submitted for confirmation when it is made available.

## I am currently in the second year of my Bachelor program. Am I eligible to apply?

You may apply if you are currently in the second half of the year, meaning you are expected to finish your term without issue and will be eligible to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of education, confirmed by your transcript, before the following intake term is set to begin.

## I attended a four year college for one year and then switched to a two-year program. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes, you can still apply to the TaLK Program if you are in the last semester of school and will graduate at the end of the term **before the anticipated start date**. At least one transcript must be submitted along with the rest of the required documents for evaluation. One sealed, official academic transcript with the date of degree conferment must also be submitted before you depart for Korea. You may be asked to provide a second transcript from the other institution based on the submitted documents.

## I attended three different colleges for a year each. Am I eligible to apply?

You will not be eligible to apply until you have completed at least **2 consecutive years in a single major**. Transfer of credits will be accepted provided the total number of credits reach at least 2 years completed and can be proven in the submitted transcript and/or supporting documents.

## Is there a minimum GPA requirement?

Candidates should have a high level of academic achievement for a competitive advantage when applying for the TaLK Program. However, GPA is not the sole deciding factor for acceptance.

## What is the accreditation designation for schools based on?

An “accredited university” means a university offering degree programs as a higher education institution declared to be an approved standard by a Government or an authorized organization.



### **Do I need to withdraw from school permanently in order to participate in the TaLK Program?**

No, you only need to take a temporary absence from school by taking a semester or two off while enrolled in university.

### **I am not an ethnic Korean and I am in my first year of university. Am I eligible for this program?**

No, only applicants with **Korean** ethnicity (meaning you are able to obtain an F-4 Visa) can participate in TaLK Program with only one year of college/university (higher) education completed.

### **I was originally born in a country that is not designated by the TaLK Program, but have since obtained citizenship. Am I eligible for this program?**

If you have completed a majority of your education in one of the designated countries, you may be eligible to apply.





# Flight Ticket

## Does the TaLK Office provide flight tickets?

Effective for the 9<sup>th</sup> Generation term of the TaLK Program, there has been changes to the TaLK Program's policies and benefits. All new incoming participants will be given an Entrance allowance, with those who complete at least one year or more being provided an Exit allowance as well.

The Entrance allowance will be provided to all eligible TaLK Scholars within the first 5 months of their arrival in Korea.

## What is the entrance/exit allowance?

The entrance/exit allowance is an amount of 1,300,000 KRW (each) provided to scholars to assist in their arrival and departure to/from South Korea.

## I bought a round trip ticket but I want to extend my term in Korea. The extension is going to put me beyond a year. The airline says their policy is that all roundtrip tickets have a maximum validity period of one year. What do I do?

The TaLK Scholar is advised to cancel their ticket sooner rather than later to obtain as much of a refund as possible. The TaLK Program does not provide compensation for lost amounts to those who choose to extend beyond one year with a round-trip ticket, but will provide the 1,300,000 KRW exit allowance to assist in the purchase of their return flight home.

## My ticket cost is more than the entrance/exit allowance. What happens?

The Scholar is responsible for the difference in the cost of the ticket. The TaLK Office does not provide compensation for flights that exceed the amount of the provided allowance.

## My ticket cost is less than the entrance/exit allowance. What happens?

The Scholar is able to keep the difference if their ticket is found to be cheaper than the amount provided.



# Health Insurance

## Do TaLK Scholars receive health insurance as a part of the TaLK Program?

All TaLK Scholars are provided with travel abroad study insurance for the first six(6) months of their contract as a part of the TaLK Program. The premium for this insurance is paid by the Provincial Offices of Education (POE).

In accordance with the change in health insurance laws regarding foreigners put into effect on July 16, 2019, any Scholar that will be in Korea for greater than six(6) months will be automatically registered for the National Health Insurance Service (NHIS) by the Korean government. Scholars will be required to pay 50% of the premium, while the POEs have agreed to cover the other 50%.

## What is the general procedure with study abroad health insurance?

Individuals who encounter situations where medical attention is sought would first have to pay for all costs upfront, and then file for reimbursement after all necessary processes have been completed (visit, consultation, diagnosis, scanning/x-ray/etc., medication, treatment, etc.), ensuring that they retain all receipts and forms.

Typically speaking, the necessary documents to file a claim include the following:

- Clinical Chart (초진차트)
- All related receipts (Actual receipts containing billable items)
- Claim Form (Consult your POE Coordinator)
- Photocopy of bank book
- Photocopy of ARC # (Consult your POE Coordinator)

**Note:** This insurance does **not** cover dental care at all, nor doctors visit without a confirmed diagnosis.

## What is the general procedure with National Health Insurance Service (NHIS)?

Rather than the reimbursement procedure that must be done with the study abroad health insurance, those covered by NHIS only need to present their Alien Registration Card (ARC) to the receptionist. They will confirm your coverage, and then automatically apply deductions to the procedure you are receiving.

**Note:** This insurance covers basic medical-related dental work. Please note that the insurance will only cover costs relating to a visit to a larger hospital (ie., university hospitals) only if you have received a referral from a local doctor.



# Health Requirement

*Note: As scholars are placed in rural areas, there may be limited access to proper transportation and health facilities for participants with moderate to severe physical disabilities, or those afflicted with chronic conditions.*

## Does the TaLK Program accept applicants with disabilities?

Yes, the TaLK Program practices a fair policy of accepting applicants with minor disabilities, should they submit a physician/medical doctor's note confirming that the disability will not interfere with his/her execution of the duties and responsibilities set forth by the TaLK contract.

## Does the TaLK Program provide assistance for individuals with disabilities?

No, the TaLK Program simply recruits, trains, and provides counseling for participants. The program is not recommended for individuals with an unstable mental/physical health condition, as living in an isolated area may intensify and/or exacerbate the condition(s).



# Living in Korea

## What is the average monthly cost of living in Korea?

This number can vary greatly depending on the lifestyle. The TaLK Scholar's monthly stipend should generally be more than enough to cover an average Korean's living expenses.

## What should I do if I don't have any knowledge of the Korean language?

There will be a brief language course provided during the preparatory orientation. TaLK Scholars will have the chance to learn Korean as a second language. In general, there are many useful Korean language sites available on the Internet, so you can find an appropriate proficiency level that best suits you; or, if you are looking for onsite language courses offered in your local community (ex. universities), you should ask for assistance from your Mentor Teacher.

## Will there be public transportation available near my accommodation?

Yes, and bus is the usual mode of transportation in rural areas.

## Would I be able to find Western food in the rural area?

In rural areas, there are very few restaurants that prepare Western food. However, some restaurants offer amalgamations of "Koreanized" Western food (ex. bulgogi burger, or seafood pizza). In order to eat more authentic Western food, scholars may need to travel to the larger cities.

## What should I do on the weekends or during my free time?

On your free time, explore different regions of Korea. Many TaLK scholars look forward to the weekends because they can partake in enriching cultural experience with friends. Make it a challenge and try to visit as many historical sites and metropolitan cities in Korea with the guide of your Korean school teachers, co-teachers, fellow scholars, your student and their parents. It's not every day that you get to travel to Korea on a scholarship, so use it to your advantage. The beauty of the TaLK Program lies in the freedom given to participants in and out of the classroom. When scholars are not traveling, many tend to help out their community, get ahead on their lesson plans, learn about Korea, or study at home for personal enrichment.

Korea is a country located literally halfway across the world, far away from all that you've known and grew up in. This is the perfect opportunity to take the plunge and learn about South Korea: a new culture, way of life and its people.

## Who provides the monthly stipend?

The school will provide your monthly stipend on the 25th of every month. If this day lands on a holiday or weekend, the stipend will be provided on the previous business day.



### Can I get a portion (or all of) my monthly stipend sent to my bank at home overseas?

No, it is impossible for the school to transfer money into your overseas personal account. During the initial portion of your stay in Korea, you will be required to create a Korean bank account into which the monthly stipend will be transferred. If you choose to transfer money back home, you must do so through your Korean bank and remember that you are responsible for paying all fees and/or additional costs resulting from the transfer.



# Military Service

## Who is recruited into the military, and who isn't?

*For male applicants with Korean citizenship **under** the age of 24:*

From January 1, 2007, law permitting exemption from military service has been revoked. Therefore, Korean males who fall into this category may obtain passports expiring on December 31 up until you turn 24 without the need to declare your status with the **Office of Military Manpower Administration** when you enter and depart Korea.

*For male applicants with Korean citizenship **over** the age of 24:*

You must apply for an extension of permission to travel overseas from the designated Korean Embassy/Consulate. Exemption from military service is in effect until 35 years of age.

**Legal Disclaimer:** The TaLK Office does not hold or accept liability for any unintended errors or interpretations. It is your responsibility to verify this information and consult with an appropriate official at the **Office of Military Manpower Administration** in Korea.

## Can a male applicant with dual nationality status, who has not completed his mandatory military service, apply for the TaLK Program?

There is a possibility that a male applicant with Korean citizenship will be drafted into the Korean military if his stay exceeds six months. Male applicants who fall under this category should contact the **Military Manpower Administration** to confirm his length of stay in Korea. Please see if the following applies to you:

*If you have permanent residency status of the country of your residence, and you wish to reside in Korea for more than six months:*

You must choose the six month term contract. Be aware that your stay in Korea before and after the scholarship period are included in the six month limit. This may also apply to male applicants with dual citizenship who enter Korea using a Korean passport.

*If you have dual citizenship:*

Please consult your local Korean consulate/embassy in the country of your citizenship for further information.



# Nationality

## Which countries does the TaLK Program recruit from?

Our program recruits from the following countries:

- Australia
- Canada
- Ireland
- New Zealand
- South Africa
- United Kingdom
- United States of America.

Korean citizens with temporary or permanent residency in one of the designated countries are also eligible to apply to the program provided they've lived and received education within the country of residency from some point at the elementary level onwards for a consecutive 8 years minimum.

## I am temporarily living in a country outside of the designated English-speaking countries, but I am a citizen of one of the aforementioned nations. Can I apply for the TaLK Program?

Yes, but you should send your application to the Korean Embassy/Consulate in your home country. If your current place of residence is in Korea, Ireland or South Africa, please apply directly to the TaLK Office.

## I am not from one of those designated countries, but I speak perfect English. Can I apply?

If you do not have citizenship in one of the designated countries, then you would not be eligible for this program. However, if you are an overseas Korean who has permanent or temporary residency in one of the designated countries, you are eligible to apply.

## I moved to the US when I was in high school and acquired permanent residency there. My English is excellent. Am I still eligible for the TaLK Program?

In order to be eligible for the program, you must have citizenship in one of the designated countries.

**Note:** Overseas Koreans with temporary/permanent residency in one of the designated countries are eligible to apply.



**I am an ethnic Korean candidate, and I have a residency visa in one of the seven countries listed above. Can I apply to the TaLK Program?**

If you have resided in one of the countries listed above for a minimum of eight years including elementary school, and you can provide documents verifying your graduation from every level of school you attended, then you would be eligible to apply to the TaLK Program.





# Orientation

## What is the TaLK Online Pre-Orientation?

Effective the 12<sup>th</sup> Generation, the TaLK Program has created an Online Pre-Orientation training program for our new successful scholars to complete. Its completion is both mandatory, and is provided in order to better prepare our candidates for their new life here in South Korea. Details on how to access this will be emailed out approximately one month before the beginning of the TaLK Orientation in South Korea.

## What is the TaLK Orientation?

The TaLK Orientation is an intensive four-week training session with the purpose of providing tools and methods necessary to successfully teach and adjust to living in Korea. Scholars will spend approximately two weeks in training with the TaLK Office, and possibly up to one week in a regional training with their POE/MOE Supervisors. TaLK Orientation courses cover a wide range of topics such as: teaching methodologies, solo and team teaching, curriculum design, effective classroom management, general overview of the Korean elementary school, the state of English language education in Korea, Korean language courses (offered in the evening), and cultural excursions, to name a few examples.

## Will room and board be provided during the orientation period?

Yes, accommodation and meals will be provided during orientation.

## Is there a set minimum salary during this orientation period?

No, there is no financial compensation for participation in the TaLK Orientation. Aside from personal expenses, other costs incurred during the preparatory orientation will be covered by the Korean Government, including meals and accommodation.

## Is there a dress code for the orientation period?

There is no specific regulation on orientation dress code, but appropriate semi-casual attire is preferable. However, ensuring that you bring a set of formal wear for official, ceremonial events is strongly suggested.

## Are there any specific items that we need to bring for orientation?

Please bring basic items related to personal hygiene (including towels), transformers, or other personal items.



### **When, where, and for how long will orientation take place?**

Orientation venues and schedules vary semester to semester. The TaLK Office arranges the training program for about two weeks in February and August. Information on the venue and the training program is sent via e-mail to successful applicants *only*. In addition, there may be a regional orientation program afterwards arranged by the scholar's Provincial Office of Education (POE) and takes place in the scholar's province.

### **What happens if my arrival to Korea is delayed and I cannot participate in the entire orientation?**

If you are absent during any part of the orientation course(s) for reasons imputable to yourself, your scholarship will be cancelled and the acceptance will not be deferred for the next term. Future applications to government-sponsored programs will be affected by this.

### **Do we need to bring two (2) suitcases?**

We highly recommend bringing two suitcases with you, regardless of your contract term. Please make sure you check the baggage policies with your airline before making a decision, as every airline has different policies regarding checked and carry-on baggage.

Please note that the TaLK Office does not provide any kind of allowance for baggage fees, and that any additional fees will be borne by the TaLK Scholar.



# Placements

## Where are TaLK Scholars placed?

Scholars can be placed in the rural areas of the following provinces or metropolitan cities:

- Incheon
- Chungnam
- Gangwon
- Jeollabuk
- Jeollanam

## Can I apply with a friend/spouse? And can we be placed in the same area?

There are no restrictions preventing you from applying to the program with a friend or friends, however, please note that each applicant is advised to apply with the understanding they will be treated as an independent and can receive one of any available placements if deemed a successful candidate. Joint placements are not provided.

## Can I request a placement area that I want?

We no longer accept placement requests. Applicants, if deemed successful, will be placed largely on a random basis in one of the available locations.

## When will I know the exact location of the school at which I will work?

All successful applicants are able to log into their “My Page” and click on Placements. They will be informed of their final location during orientation.

## My grandparents are living in Korea. Is it possible to be placed near their town?

The TaLK Office will determine the province in which the successful applicant will be placed. However, the successful applicant’s Provincial Office of Education (POE) Supervisor will decide the location and elementary school in which the scholar will work.

**Note:** All applicants are to proceed forward with the understanding that they will receive any possible area that the TaLK Program offers placements at if deemed a successful candidate.



# Required Documents

## I will receive my transcript for this semester after the application deadline. Can I apply for TaLK?

Yes, but only if you submit a document verifying your current university enrollment with your application form. This document, issued by the administration office in your university, must prove that you will have completed two years of education by the time you arrive for the TaLK Orientation (provided that you have been accepted). Sending us an official academic transcript first will assist in speeding up the process, however, the official transcripts must be sealed and provided to the TaLK Office as soon as possible.

## How many recommendation letters do we need?

You must submit two recommendation letters. These letters must arrive at the office sealed, with a stamp or signature of the referrer along the seal to prove that the letter has not been opened by the applicant.

## Who is eligible to write the recommendation letters?

Your application will be most desirable if the two recommendation letters are written by an academic source (Professors, Tutorial Leader, Head Administrator, etc.) and a professional source (Supervisor, Manager, etc.).

Recommendation letters written by individuals who do not fall under any of the aforementioned categories will not be accepted. However, should you have severe difficulties acquiring one, please consult the TaLK Office. Recommendation letters must be sealed and mailed by the author directly to your local application office.

## What is the purpose of submitting an academic transcript?

Your academic record may be used to help distinguish two applicants with similar qualifications and to verify the applicant has completed at least two or more years of education at an accredited post-secondary institution.

## How long should my passport be valid for?

Your passport must be valid for the entire duration of the contract term, or longer, if you plan on extending your contract.



### **Can I still apply even if I am in my fourth semester in university and might not be able to hand in the transcript of the fourth semester?**

Yes, though we will require you to first scan and e-mail an unofficial copy of the transcript to process your application. If you are a successful applicant, you must then submit the final transcript and send it via post before you depart for Korea.

If you are able to obtain an up-to-date official transcript that states you have completed at least 2 years of post-secondary education, this would be the ideal document to submit.

### **What kinds of information should I include in the personal essay?**

Personal essay topics are listed on the actual Application Form B as followed:

- Career and Educational Goals
- Family Background
- Work Experience
- Motive of Application
- Plan of Service and Other Activities as a TaLK Scholar
- Plan for Studies during your Time in Korea
- Etc.

Remember that your writing skills will be evaluated in addition to the essay contents itself, as both are an indication of your communication skills and your English language proficiency.

# School



## Can we teach in a private school?

No, scholars are contracted to teach only at public elementary school(s) designated by the POE. The TaLK contract, in accordance with Korean law, also prohibits scholars from teaching at private institutions/academies, known as “hagwons,” or being employed outside of their designated TaLK elementary school without authorization from the POE and TaLK Office. In addition, the TaLK Program’s purpose is to strengthen English education in the public sector, with a special emphasis on rural areas in Korea, thus a private school would defeat the purpose of the program.

## What is the difference between teaching in a private institute/academy (hakwon/hagwon) and teaching in a public school?

The TaLK scholar experience is definitely something that money can't buy. TaLK scholars are given an invaluable experience through a national public service funded by the Korean Government. As a Government program participant, TaLK scholars are given formal training, sponsorship for cultural experience trips and counseling from a full-time staff. On top of the supplementary resources, TaLK scholars are on a scholarship program that allots ample time for individual growth. This program could be an important stepping stone for those pursuing any field of study, especially in education.

## What are the normal work hours for a TaLK Scholar? Do they work the normal eight hours per day?

TaLK scholars are assigned to teach fifteen hours per week (usually for 5 days a week, from Monday through Friday). Actual time spent at school differs highly based on each scholars’ circumstances, but the teaching hours are often set at 15 hours per week. Please note that class preparation, lunch, break and transportation times are not included in the fifteen hours of instructions. Applicants should be aware that the average 3 hours a day teaching time does not necessarily happen consecutively. You may have one class in the morning and two in the afternoon, for example.

## What should I do if the POE or the elementary school asks me to teach extra classes?

If you agree to teach extra classes, then you will be paid for overtime, depending on whether it qualifies as “instructional” or “activity-related” overtime. This must be discussed and agreed with by both the scholar and the school ahead of the commencement of the extra classes.

## Is there a dress code at school?

There is no specific regulation regarding the dress code, but business casual is always preferred if desired to be taken seriously by teachers and students. It is strongly recommended to keep a conservative mindset when selecting attire.



### **Is there any penalty for a TaLK Scholar who was absent without notice?**

Yes, a scholar who is absent without due notice will have to make-up missed classes, otherwise a certain amount will be deducted from his/her monthly stipend according to the number of absent days (on a “pro rata basis”). Should the scholar miss classes with high frequency, this may result in immediate termination of the TaLK scholarship.

### **What are the roles of the TaLK Scholar?**

The selected candidate will teach practical English with a goal to motivate the students’ interest, lower apprehension in learning a new language, and emphasize conversational/practical English. Depending on the school principal and the students’ demands, scholars may assist and/or teach regular English classes.

### **Is there a curriculum and/or a textbook?**

Some schools require the use of a prescribed textbook, while others will ask scholars to prepare his/her own lessons. Please consult with the school’s mentor teacher.

### **How many students will there be in each class?**

It depends on the size of the school. It can vary from less than ten to more than twenty students per class.

### **If I want to visit home or travel to another country, what should I do?**

Scholars are not allowed to use their vacation days while school is still in session. Vacation days can only be used when the school goes on break during the summer or winter, and if the scholar has completed all assigned duties during that break as well. Before taking any trips, remember that you get seven paid leave days every semester and you must get the approval of your school principal at least fifteen days before your trip. If your trip exceeds the allotted seven days of paid leave, the additional days will be considered unpaid leave. If the number of unpaid leave days exceeds fifteen days, your scholarship will be cancelled.



# Selection Criteria

## What are interviewers looking for in the selection of the TaLK Scholars?

Interviewers are looking for native English speakers, and will base their evaluations on the applicant's overall attitude, reasons for applying, interests in Korea, thoughts on service and teaching, to name a few examples. Preference will be given to candidates who: have a degree in education, English or subjects related to Korea, have excellent school records including good command of English, and have completed primary and secondary education in the countries where English is the national language.

## What criteria will be used in selecting TaLK Scholars?

The TaLK Office considers all aspects of the application. The selections committee and recruitment team will evaluate the applicant based on the following:

- Online application, particularly Application B
- Overall rating of the interview
- Effort placed in devising a lesson plan
- Academic transcript
- Both recommended letters
- Criminal Record History
- All other correspondences (email, calls, etc.)



# TaLK Office



## Who can I contact for advice on living in Korea?

For inquiries, advice or counseling, please contact our coordinators at the TaLK Office via email or phone.

**Email:** [talkkorea@korea.kr](mailto:talkkorea@korea.kr)

**Phone:** +82-2-3668-1399 (Outside Korea), 02-3668-1399 (Within Korea)

## Is there someone who can assist me in English?

The TaLK Office employs a program coordinator who can provide assistance in fluent English. The coordinator has had former teaching experience in Korea, and is authorized to take inquiries about the TaLK Program.

## If I have any questions or problems with my school, accommodation, and/or other emergencies, who should I ask for help?

All TaLK Scholars should contact the school authorities first. If the problem is unresolved or further information is needed, TaLK Scholars should contact their Provincial Office of Education (POE) Coordinator or Supervisor. If you believe that communication with the aforementioned authorities is insufficient, then please contact our office by e-mail or phone.

## What do I do if my school and POE Supervisor cannot help me with my issue?

If your Mentor Teacher, Korean university co-scholar and/or the POE Supervisor cannot assist you, please submit a grievance letter to our coordinators so the TaLK Office can document and help resolve the issue you are facing.



## What is the best way to contact TaLK as an interested applicant?

The best way to contact the TaLK Office is via phone or e-mail (view the first question in this section for contact information). Take note of the following tips:

1. Since our program is seeking native English speakers, we expect you to communicate in English, not in Korean.

**Note:** Being able to speak Korean is **not** a requirement for the application process.

2. Directly contact us if you have any questions or queries regarding the program.

**Note:** Avoid contacting us through any other individual (including your parents, relatives, friends, etc.) as it will bring into question your ability to conduct independent communication and to act independently. It will also be taken into consideration during the evaluation process.

## More Tips:

1. Make sure your email address is valid and working.
2. Proofread your personal essay (in English) and any written communication with the TaLK Office to ensure that it is grammatically correct without spelling errors.
3. Avoid the request for us to reply as soon as possible. We try to respond to all emails on the day it is received.

**Note:** Some requests take longer than others to process.



## Finances (Except Taxes)

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### **Severance Pay - Do TaLK Scholars receive severance pay upon the completion of the TaLK Contract?**

As of the 9th Term (August 2012), all eligible TaLK Scholars who successfully complete their contract term of one(1) year or greater will be given an exit allowance. A separate severance pay is **not** provided as a part of the TaLK Program.



# Sick Leave

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## What is Sick Leave?

If an illness or injury prevents a scholar from performing his/her duties under the TaLK Contract, he or she may request a sick leave. TaLK Scholars are expected to notify their Mentor Teacher directly and immediately if they suddenly fall ill or injure themselves.

**Note:** When you return to work, you will be required to make up the classes you missed teaching.

## How many sick days do TaLK Scholars receive?

Scholars cannot take more than three sick days consecutively without a note from a doctor. The doctor's note must be submitted to your Mentor Teacher. Missed days are to be made up based on discussions with your school staff, or prorated from your monthly stipend.



# Taxes

## Do we have to pay income tax?

TaLK Scholars are eligible for exemption from paying Korean income tax during the contract term on the condition they submit the required documents to their school.

## Is everyone eligible for tax exemption?

No, tax treaties between Korea and foreign countries allow TaLK Scholars to be eligible for income tax exemption during the first two years of employment in Korea, provided that they have never worked in Korea before. Canadian citizens are not eligible for this benefit as there is no tax treaty between Korea and Canada. Korean passport holders are also required to pay taxes in their home country.

## How can I receive tax exemption?

### *Eligibility*

All TaLK Scholars (except those with Canadian and Irish citizenship) are eligible for income tax exemption for the first two years of employment in Korea when in a Korea Government Program.

**Note:** If you have previously worked for two years or more in Korea, you will not be eligible for this exemption.

### *Required Documents*

In order to claim tax exemption, you are required to submit to your school a copy of the “Certificate of Residency” (a Government-certified document that confirms your legal residency status in your home country) after you have been placed in your elementary school.

1. Issued from the jurisdictional taxation department in your home country
2. Submit to your elementary school in Korea
3. Korean National Tax Service Website: <http://www.nts.go.kr/eng>

**Note:** The Certificate of Residency can be obtained from the tax revenue authority in your country.

When applying for your Certificate of Residency, you will be asked to enter the contact information for whom the Certificate of Residency will be issued to. You will enter the contact information of the elementary school in Korea. If you do not know your elementary school's information at the time of application, enter the contact information of your Provincial Office of Education (POE).

**Note:** You will be required to give this document in person to your elementary school. It is required that your school has this prior to your first payday (before the end of the first month at your school).



# Pension Contribution

## Are TaLK Scholars required to contribute into the Korean National Pension?

All TaLK Scholars, except for those with South African citizenship, are required to pay into the Korean National Pension. It is nationally set at a rate of 9%.

*Note: Effective 2014, as mandated by the National Pension Service.*

## Will the Certificate of Residency exempt me from the Pension?

The certificate of residency is only applicable to tax-withholding from their income tax, and does **not** apply to the Pension Contribution. Exemptions from contribution to the pension do not exist except for individuals with South African citizenship, as set by the government between the Republic of Korea and the applicant/scholar's respective countries.

## Where can I find more information about the Korean National Pension?

The National Pension Service website can be found available in English through the following link:

<http://english.nps.or.kr>

*Note: The TaLK Office does not hold authority to address inquiries regarding the National Pension.*

# Visa



## What type of visa can TaLK Scholars receive?

1. E2-2 Visa (Foreign Language Instruction in Public Schools)
  - Native speakers who can perform English language instruction in Korea in public schools.
2. F-4 Visa (Overseas Koreans)
  - Korean descendant whose parent/grandparent was a Korean National but have since obtained citizenship in a foreign country.

## What visa should I apply for?

1. If you are an overseas Korean with two or more years of university education, we recommend that you apply for an E2-2 Visa.
2. If you are an overseas Korean in the first or second year of university, you **must** apply for an F-4 Visa.
3. If you have dual citizenship (Korea + another country), you **must** enter Korea with your Korean passport to legally work in Korea (visa-free).

## I will leave Korea temporarily to travel using public holidays or leave of absence.

### What should I do before departure?

You must obtain permission from your school principal, who must approve of the dates you chose for your leave.

## Do I need a re-entry permit to come back to Korea?

No, as of 2010, registered foreigners with an ARC in Korea with specific foreigner visas (including E2-2) no longer need to apply for a re-entry permit, as long as their intended date of return is **before** the date of expiration on their visa (and by default, their ARC).

## For how long can I stay in Korea after my visa expires?

You should plan your departure from Korea before the expiration date, however, if you obtain a Permission of Extension of Stay from the immigration office, you can extend your stay for up to 30 days.

**Tip:** Apply at the immigration office and submit your air ticket (showing your departure date from ICN), Alien Registration Card (ARC), and passport before your visa expires.

**Note:** There are fees involved with extending your stay. Contact immigrations for more information.



### When should I apply for my visa at the Korean Embassy or Consulate?

TaLK Scholars will receive special consideration in the visa application process. You should apply for your visa as soon as your TaLK Acceptance Package is received, which includes a letter of invitation and your contract. (Please sign your contracts before you go to apply for your visa).

**Note:** To those who are eligible for the E2-2 visa, it is important that you obtain your E2-2 Visa before departing for Korea. If you do not do this, you will need to get your E2 Visa from the nearest Korean Consulate/Embassy outside of Korea **at your own expense** during the orientation. The TaLK Program does not cover costs to obtain a visa.

### What other requirements are needed for the visa application?

Additional requirements include your visa application form, a passport-sized photo, the cost for visa processing, and your passport. You should always contact your local consulate/embassy for more information.





# What is the TaLK Program?

## When does the program start?

The TaLK Program is offered biannually: once in February and once in August. We primarily offer one (1)-year contracts for both terms. The contracts begin at the beginning of the aforementioned months.

## When can I apply for TaLK?

The local application window at the Korean Embassy/Consulate is open from March to July for the August orientation, and from September to January for the February orientation. For specific dates, please refer to the TaLK Application Process & Timeline document during the application period. Also, the TaLK Office has a rolling application system, which means that individuals who apply in advance will be placed with priority for the term for which they are applying.

## What are the benefits of being a part of the TaLK Program?

- Teach an **average** of fifteen(15) classes a week.
- Have rent-free housing provided for you.
- Receive an Entrance and Exit allowance upon successful completion and fulfillment of contract term.
- Expand your network of friends around the world.
- Receive a Certificate of Completion at the end of your contract term from the Korean government.
- Participate in all-expenses paid excursions around the country to learn about Korean culture. These trips are funded by your Provincial Office of Education (POE).

## When is the application deadline?

The specific deadlines to apply through the local application offices vary every term. Generally, they begin accepting applications in early March and September. The TaLK Office accepts applications all-year round.



# Who do I contact?

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## For general inquiries, advice/counseling, or uncertainty as to who to contact:

Email: [talkkorea@korea.kr](mailto:talkkorea@korea.kr)

Within Korea: 02-3668-1399

Outside of Korea: +82-2-3668-1399

**Note:** *As the program is seeking native English teachers, all communications should be in **English**. Korean language proficiency is not a requirement for the program and has no bearing on your application. Please keep in mind that all contact with an applicant (or a third party on behalf of an applicant) with the TaLK Office is taken into consideration during the application process.*

## For press releases, promotional materials, general press inquiries and TaLK

### Website-related feedback:

Email: [talkkorea@korea.kr](mailto:talkkorea@korea.kr)

Within Korea: 02-3668-1399

Outside of Korea: +82-2-3668-1399