

VSA Assignment Description

Assignment Title	English Teacher Mentor
Assignment Modality	In-country
Assignment Number	42014
Country	Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea
Location	Buin
Partner Organisation	Buin High School (through the Autonomous Bougainville Government Department of Education)
Duration	12 months
Sustainable Development Goals	

1. Partner Organisation Overview

Buin High School (BHS) was established in 1968. It is located on the edge of Buin town centre in South Bougainville. It is a boarding school with student population of 700 and teaching staff of 34.

Under particularly difficult circumstances during and after the Crisis (including the ongoing Konnou crisis), Buin was largely cut off from other main towns. Despite this BHS has become one of the leading secondary institutions in the ARoB, with places for students highly sought after.

VSA has been working with BHS since 2018, with volunteers previously supporting in administration and finance. The leadership and staff of BHS are motivated and highly receptive to VSA support.

2. Assignment Overview

BHS has identified that their students have low understanding and application of English. This has resulted in low English results for BHS on the PNG national secondary school academic scale. A long-term goal of BHS is to improve this rating by improving written and oral/conversational English. Central to this goal is upskilling the current English teachers at BHS so that they are better equipped to support students.

A skilled volunteer with experience in teaching English would provide a significant opportunity for knowledge transfer and capacity building, supporting BHS with their goal of improving student's English results.

3. Goal/Outcomes/Outputs

Goal

BHS teachers provide effective English teaching and learning experiences for their students, supporting students to confidently communicate and utilise English in their studies.

Outcome 1

The BHS English Department develops their own action plan on how to raise English use and results at BHS.

- Undertake a basic knowledge and capacity assessment of BHS English Department Staff (including assessing their confidence in teaching delivery)
- Identify actions and initiatives that support and provide opportunities to students to learn and apply their English skills

Outcome 2

BHS students have the confidence to communicate clearly in English, with both their peers and teacher

- Support the development of teaching and learning experiences to facilitate the use of spoken English
- Provide opportunities to improve public speaking including debating and speeches
- Provide on the job training and mentoring for teachers to improve students' confidence in public speaking

Outcome 3

BHS English teachers confidently teach the English curriculum, offering effective teaching and learning experiences for students

- Provide on the job training and mentoring to support teachers in implementing the action plan to strengthen their teaching
- Provide on the job training and mentoring to improve the Teachers' confidence in the use of English within their teaching

4. Reporting, Working Relationships and Capacity Building

The capacity and capability building and strengthening will take place through a variety of activities, including training, hands-on experience, mentoring, coaching, collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the sharing of experiences, best practices, and lessons learned.

The volunteer will report directly to the BHS Principal and will be accountable to the Principal. On a day-to-day basis, the volunteer will predominately work with the BHS English Department teachers.

The volunteer and Buin High School will have an ongoing relationship with the VSA Programme Manager in terms of assignment monitoring, reporting, professional advice and personal support.

As needs on the ground may change over time, the volunteer is encouraged to review and update the Assignment Description on arrival in consultation with the partner organisation and VSA Programme Manager. By their very nature, development situations can involve significant change, so it is advisable that the volunteer periodically reviews and reflects on the Assignment Description throughout the Assignment to ensure the best development outcomes are being achieved.

5. Selection Criteria/Position Requirements

Professional Specifications

Essential

- Experience as an English teacher
- Experience in a capacity building, mentoring, and/or coaching role

Desirable

- Experience as an English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher
- Experience working in a High School
- Experience running speech or debating events
- Experience with providing ICT and technology support
- Experience working in a developing country
- Experience working in the Pacific, or with Pacific communities

Personal Specifications

Essential

- Community-minded, with a willingness to learn about, and respect Bougainvillean values and protocols
- Ability to work in a cross-cultural environment
- Experience living in a remote location with few services
- A willingness to learn the local language (Tok Pisin)
- Ability to exercise initiative, work independently, and solve problems
- The ability to adapt to changing situations, and be flexible to change where factors may be beyond your control
- High level of patience

Desirable

- A willingness to become involved in wider-community initiatives
- Sense of humour

6. VSA Essential Attributes

- Commitment to volunteering, to VSA and to the partner organisation
- Cross cultural awareness
- Adaptability and a willingness to approach change or newness positively
- Able to form good relationships, both personally and professionally, with work colleagues and in the community
- Resilience and an ability to manage setbacks
- Initiative and resourcefulness
- An ability to facilitate learning through skills exchange

7. Country Context

Autonomous Region of Bougainville – Papua New Guinea

Bougainville is a warm and vibrant Autonomous Region within Papua New Guinea (PNG). It is the easternmost region of PNG and sits on the border with the Solomon Islands. Going back many decades, the region has a strong sense of identity and culture, that is distinct from other parts of PNG, and something that Bougainvillians are very proud of.

The region was been passed between colonial powers for many years, until being passed from the Australian-administered Territory of New Guinea, to the newly independent nation of Papua New Guinea in 1975. By this time the opencast copper and gold mine at Panguna has started operation, which was one of the largest in the world at the time. The mine quickly came to account for nearly half of PNG's export revenue, underlining the economic importance of Bougainville. However, the mine brought significant environmental and social issues that had not been seen in Bougainville before. By the late 1980s, what begun as a low-scale sabotage campaign to bring about dialogue on compensation for landowners, descended into a complete breakdown in law and order, accompanied by the closure of the mine. In the decade that followed, The Bougainville Crisis became complex in nature, with elements of internal conflict emerging alongside the desire for independence. The signing of the Peace Agreement in 2001 brought the conflict to an end, and in the years since Bougainville has been steadily rebuilding it's public and private sectors.

While Bougainville does still have its challenges as it continues to recover from The Crisis, it provides a unique opportunity for dedicated and adventurous volunteers who are skilled in their respective fields to work alongside their local Bougainvillean counterparts to achieve locally-identified development goals. The region is rich in culture and is unbelievably beautiful, with volunteers finding ample opportunities to immerse themselves in all aspects of the local environment.

VSA has been working in Bougainville since 1998, when it entered into Arawa towards the end of the conflict. In the years since, VSA has supported local organisations across a range of sectors including health, education, agriculture, and tourism. VSA has built a strong reputation in Bougainville, and is committed to continuing to work in the region

8. Living and Working Situation

Buin

Buin town is the main town in the Buin District of Southern Bougainville. It is accessed by two roads that lead south from Arawa on both the western and eastern sides of the island. The drive to Buin from Arawa is around 100km takes around 4 hours, depending on the road conditions.

The area around Buin was the focus of significant fighting during World War II, with numerous sites of interest and wrecks still visible today - including the famous aircraft wreckage of Admiral Yamamoto.

After the war, the present-day town of Buin was established inland to the north from its original location. In the late 1960s Buin became the centre of government, commercial, and education activity in Southern Bougainville.

From the 1960-90's Buin was slower to develop than the rest of Bougainville. Road access to Buin was via Panguna and Siwai districts, although a road over Santos pass was eventually constructed. Although large cocoa and copra plantations were established from Arawa north along the north-east coast to and including Buka, such activity did not occur in the Buin region. Further, while the Panguna copper and gold mine brought prosperity to many in central Bougainville and facilitated the development of a modern town in Arawa, Buin did not receive any substantial investment.

During the Bougainville crisis Buin saw some particularly fierce combat, including the 1996 Kangu Beach massacre, which began a chain of events leading to the ceasefire and signing of the peace agreement. Even after the signing of the Bougainville Peace Agreement in 2001, the neighbouring area of Konnou continued to experience its own localised conflict up until 2011.

Prior to the Crisis, Buin was serviced by a small airfield outside of town. Now there are no commercial air services to Buin, although an airstrip on land owned by the Catholic Church is located approximately one kilometre north of the town has recently been upgraded with an occasional

charter flight. Volunteers based in Buin travel north to either Arawa or Buka when they are due to fly out of Bougainville.

These days Buin is still a small and quiet town, but there continues to be new ongoing development. Buin has a Police Station and small holding cell, a Courtroom, a Secondary School, a Health Centre, a number of guesthouses and petrol stations. Buin has a small number of stores that stock basic imported groceries (e.g. rice, canned foods, and some frozen foods). The town has a vibrant market that runs on a Thursday and Saturday, and has a plentiful supply of fresh fruit, vegetables, and seafood. There is a small Bank of the South Pacific (BSP) rural branch in Buin, however there is no ATM.

Buin town continues to host a small number of New Zealand Police as part of a joint Community Policing Project that has operated since the signing of the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

Public Motor Vehicles (PMVs) ply the coastal highway to and from Arawa most days (where the nearest VSA volunteers would be based), except Sunday, and costs K50 each way. The trip takes three to four hours or longer depending on the state of the road.

Buin runs a diesel generated town power service which runs for regular hours per day, although power outages for up to a week are still common. The town has mobile phone coverage, with a 3G service on the Digicel network, although network outages are also common. The Buin Urban Council in its infancy and provide few services. There is no town water supply or reticulated sewage collection, and volunteers water supplies come from a roof-collected tank.

Buin has some fascinating attractions that have been seen by few outsiders, including Lake Loloru (a crater lake in the mountains above Buin, which has spiritual significance to the Buin people), the remains of 'little Toyko' (an underground military base that the Japanese Forces, who held Bougainville for much of WWII, wanted to resettle a larger number of civilian Japanese; several pristine island islands boarding the Solomon Islands; and of course, Admiral Yamamoto's crash site.

On the whole, Buin is a quiet town. With the sorts of sensible precautions applicable to any town almost world-wide, Buin is a safe community.

Additional Information

Standard Assignment (12 months or more)

Residency status

VSA volunteers must be New Zealand citizens or have New Zealand permanent residency status, and currently living in NZ.

Pre-departure briefing

As part of the volunteer's contract, successful candidates will be required to take part in a pre-departure briefing course run by VSA in Wellington and complete all required pre-reading.

Final appointment

Final appointment will be subject to satisfactory medical and immigration clearances (costs covered by VSA), partner organisation acceptance, and successful completion of the pre-departure briefing course.

Family status

VSA supports partners to accompany volunteers on assignments of six months or longer. However, volunteers with accompanying dependents will not be considered for this assignment.

Fundraising

VSA funding stakeholders are both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and donors. We ask volunteers and accompanying partners to fundraise to help cover the cost of sending

volunteers throughout the Pacific and beyond. Fundraising can be as simple as doing something you enjoy with a group or friends, and our Fundraising team is available to help you every step of the way.

Vaccination requirements

Potential volunteers are advised that VSA's insurers require volunteers to be vaccinated, prior to departure, in accordance with the instructions of VSA's medical adviser. VSA covers the cost of any required vaccinations.

Children's Act

While on assignment, VSA volunteers may be required to work with children and/or may choose to participate in informal activities in their own time that involve interactions with children (such as coaching teams or teaching English). VSA is committed to the protection of vulnerable children and adults, which also includes meeting our commitment under the Children's Act 2014.

The information requested during the application process is necessary to assist VSA to determine applicant suitability to work and/or interact regularly with children, and is part of a series of pre-selection checks undertaken on all applicants for VSA assignments.

Volunteer package

The volunteer's package includes the following:

Reimbursements and grants

1. The volunteer may be entitled to an establishment grant to help them set up in their country of assignment, and a rest and respite grant after a specified period of active service in-country to encourage the volunteer to take a break away from the immediate assignment location. These grants depend on the length and location of the assignment. The volunteer's contract will specify any grant entitlements.
2. A resettlement grant of NZ\$200 will be paid for each month the volunteer is on assignment. This is payable on completion of the assignment.
3. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of PGK 2,100.

Accommodation

Basic, comfortable furnished accommodation will be sourced by VSA. In some circumstances volunteers may be asked to share accommodation.

Airfares and baggage allowance

VSA will provide the volunteer with economy airfares to and from New Zealand for their assignment plus a baggage allowance.

Insurance

VSA will provide travel insurance to cover baggage and personal property, and non-routine medical expenses for the duration of the assignment. Further details of the insurance cover will be provided during the volunteer pre-departure briefing.

Utilities

VSA will reimburse volunteers reasonable expenses for household utilities while on assignment.

Final terms and conditions relating to the specific volunteer assignment will be confirmed in a personalised volunteer contract