



NSW Police Force

Community Language Allowance Scheme (CLAS) Guidelines

**Inclusion & Diversity Team
Effective Workplaces & Culture**

Essential Summary

This document outlines the procedural requirements that must be satisfied under the Community Language Allowance Scheme (CLAS) and includes the following:

- responsibilities of employees receiving the CLAS
- responsibilities of commanders and managers in implementing the CLAS at a local level
- eligibility criteria that employees must satisfy to receive the CLAS
- nomination and approval procedures
- monitoring and review.

Document Control Sheet

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1. Introduction

The NSW Police Force (NSWPF) is committed to delivering accessible and equitable policing services to the diverse communities within New South Wales.

Some members of the community may have limited spoken and/or written English language skills and may prefer to communicate in a language other than English or do not have sufficient command of the language to avail themselves of the services provided by NSWPF.

The Community Language Allowance Scheme (CLAS), administered by NSWPF with the assessment of language conducted by Multicultural NSW, assists the NSWPF to utilise existing language skills of employees to provide immediate language assistance to members of the community where required and within the course of their own duties. This includes AUSLAN, the official sign language of Australia.

The CLAS provides for an allowance to be paid to suitably qualified employees who have a basic level of competency in a language other than English and who work in locations where their language skills can be value added in the provision of policing services both proactively and responsively.

Provision of a community language allowance to an employee must be in accordance with these Guidelines.

2. Scope

This document applies to all NSWPF employees and it is intended to assist in implementation of the CLAS within the NSWPF.

3. Definitions

Employee: a police officer or administrative employee working on a full-time, part-time or temporary basis.

Interpreter: a person who converts words or expressions in a source language verbally into an expression with a comparable meaning in a target language in 'real time'. Interpreter is the term referring to professionals (as opposed to the term Bilingual)

Translator: a person who converts the meaning of written information (source text) in one language translating it into another language (target language). Translator is the term referring to professionals.

Bi Lingual: a person who speaks English as well as a language(s) other than English and has functional use of the language(s) but is not certified to use that language professionally, or in situations requiring certified interpreters and translators.

CLAS Log: a document used by a CLAS recipient to record particulars of CLAS interactions both written and verbal

4. Authority to approve

A commander or manager can approve payment of the community language allowance to an employee who satisfies eligibility requirements outlined in these Guidelines.

5. Guidelines

5.1 Responsibilities

5.1.1 Employees receiving a CLAS allowance

Employees receiving an allowance are responsible for the following:

- recording each occasion of language usage via online platform;
- submitting quarterly reports to their Commander/Manager advising of any changes that would necessitate cessation of the community language allowance; and
- ensuring their language skills are used in accordance with the Performance and Program Support Command policy [Interpreters and translators - NSWPF Intranet](#); and
- retaining CLAS certificate to provide as required.

5.1.2 Commanders / Managers

Commanders/Managers are responsible for the following:

- monitoring and certifying language usage logs of employees on a quarterly basis to ensure there is continued demand for their language skills; and
- ensuring the language skills of employees are being used in accordance with the Performance and Program Support Command policy. ([Interpreters and translators - NSWPF Intranet](#))

5.1.3 Inclusion & Diversity - Organisational Development

Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) Team are responsible for the following:

- liaising between NSWPF recipients and Multicultural NSW
- ensuring CLAS Nomination Forms are forwarded to Multicultural NSW
- conducting an annual review of CLAS activities; and
- providing results of the annual review and recommendations to respective Commanders/Managers

The language usage log will be available through an on-line platform and CLAS recipients must update this log on each occasion of usage. The on-line platform will have the provision to allow CLAS recipients to download quarterly log reports for certification by their respective Commander/Manager (please note, all CLAS recipients will be advised when the new platform is available).

5.2 Eligibility

5.2.1 Eligibility to receive the CLAS allowance

An employee is eligible to receive the community language allowance in the following circumstances:

- they pass the CLAS examination administered by Multicultural NSW and conducted by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI); or
- hold NAATI accreditation at interpreter level or above or have a NAATI recognition award; and
- their commander or manager is satisfied that there is an ongoing business need to utilise the language skills of the employee and approves the payment.

The allowance is **not payable** to employees who are employed as certified interpreters and translators or who work in roles where language skills are an essential requirement of the role.

5.3 Application and Examination Guidelines:

5.3.1 Applying to sit the CLAS examination

The business needs of the command/ business unit will be a key factor in determining whether a nomination should be approved. Consideration will also be given to the number and range of languages within the command/ business unit already attracting the CLAS allowance.

An employee cannot apply directly to Multicultural NSW to sit the CLAS examination. They must be nominated by their commander or manager.

An employee who is interested in sitting the examination must apply to be nominated in accordance with section 5.3.3 of these Guidelines.

5.3.2 CLAS examination

The I&D Team will call for nominations, via state-wide communications, to sit the CLAS examination annually. However, where there is an urgent business need, a nomination may be referred outside of the advertised dates.

5.3.3 Application form

An employee must complete the internal [CLAS Application Form P1182](#) and submit it to their commander or manager for consideration. Those who may be tri-lingual or more (i.e. speak two or more languages other than English) will be required to seek individual approval for each language and subsequently be tested for each language.

The application form (P1182) must include the following information:

- confirmation of the language the employee is seeking nomination for;
- confirmation the employees substantive position requires them to use their language skills on an occasional or regular (refer to 5.4) basis in addition to their normal duties and in the course of their duties;
- confirmation the employee will be available to use their language skills as required by the command or business unit and in those capacities that are non-evidentiary;
- benefits to the command, business unit or organisation and
- command/business unit's cost centre number to which CLAS fees are to be applied.

5.3.4 Lapse of Certificate

Employees who are currently receiving the CLAS and are identified on the [CLAS list](#) will be eligible for continuation of CLAS subject to the commander/managers approval, where their certificate has or will lapse.

Employees must consider the below where their CLAS certificate 10-year expiry date has lapsed or will lapse:

- complete a CLAS Application Form P1182 and attach the certificate for validation;
- Commander/Manager to consider application in accordance of 5.2.1 & 5.3.1;
- the employee is not required to re-sit the CLAS examination if the application is approved.

The application form will workflow to the I&D Team and the CLAS List on the intranet will be updated accordingly.

All CLAS certificates issued post June 2019 will not have an expiry date.

5.3.5 Nomination form

When a commander or manager approves an employee's Application Form (P1182) to sit the CLAS examination, a [Nomination for CLAS Examination form](#) must be completed by the employee. The completed CLAS Application Form P1182 **and** the Nomination for CLAS Examination form must then be referred to the I&D Team for submission to Multicultural NSW.

All nomination forms received by the I&D Team that meet the requirements under these Guidelines will be submitted to Multicultural NSW.

5.3.6 Examination date, time and venue

The I&D Team will send the Nomination for CLAS Examination forms to Multicultural NSW which will then be forwarded to the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). NAATI are responsible for conducting the examinations.

NAATI will contact the employee directly regarding examination times and dates. The employee must inform their Commander/Manager as well as the I&D Team of examination date.

5.3.7 Examination fee

Commands and Business Units are responsible for the payment of the CLAS examination fees for employees. Details of fees are located at [Multicultural NSW CLAS - Policy and Procedures](#).

The I&D Team will arrange to journal the cost of the examination fees to the employees Command/Business Units cost centre.

5.3.8 Cancellation fee

There may be circumstances where an employee may need to cancel a scheduled CLAS examination due to work or personal circumstances. However, cancellation should be avoided wherever possible as a cancellation fee is likely to be imposed by Multicultural NSW.

It should be noted that cancellation fees apply when notification of non-attendance falls within 5 days of the scheduled examination. Commands / Business Units will be responsible for meeting the cost of any cancellation fee imposed by Multicultural NSW.

It is the responsibility of the employee to advise NAATI, their command and the I&D Team of their inability to attend an examination.

The I&D Team will journal any cancellation fee to the employees Command/Business Units cost centre.

5.3.9 Notification of examination results

The I&D Team will notify employees and their commanders, in writing, of CLAS examination results which will be either a pass or fail.

Employees who receive notification that they failed the examination may seek, via the I&D Team, information on the areas of the examination where they were unsuccessful.

Employees seeking a re-mark or to re-sit their examination will need to consult their commander or manager. The commander or manager will consider all information on its merits in deciding whether it is appropriate for the employee's examination to be re-marked or for them to re-sit the examination.

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The employees command will need to meet the additional fees associated with re-marking or re-sitting an examination ([Multicultural NSW CLAS - Policy and Procedures](#)).

5.3.10 Certificate of achievement

Employees will receive a certification of achievement from Multicultural NSW within three months of being advised that they passed the CLAS examination. All certificates issued from 2019 are continuous and do not have an expiry date.

It is the responsibility of the employee to retain their certificate and reproduce a copy when required. This will be critical for employees transferring work locations and seeking approval from incoming Commander/Manager for continuation of CLAS.

5.4 Rate of payment of the CLAS allowance

Generally eligible employees will be paid the base rate under the CLAS. However, in some circumstances a higher rate may be paid.

Base rate

This rate is paid to eligible employees who are required to meet occasional demands for language assistance. (There is no regular pattern for their language skills).

In most cases an employee will be paid at the base rate.

Higher rate

This rate is paid to eligible employees who satisfy the following criteria:

- regularly meet high levels of customer demand involving a regular pattern of usage of the employees' language skills and / or
- have achieved qualifications of NAATI certified interpreter level and above.

Payment at the higher rate will only be considered in circumstances where the above criteria is supported by relevant documentation, e.g.

- CLAS recipients could be utilised in instances where staff may be required to give simple directions or guidance to understand the needs of a person who have limited spoken and/or written English language skills who prefer to communicate in a language other than English, on the intention of an investigation or a police operation.
- CLAS recipients could also be required to assist in an investigation, by giving advice to staff on the nature of a document or material that may require official translation/transcription.

[The NSW Treasury Circular \(C2019-03-Meal, Travelling and Other Allowances for 2019-20\)](#) outlines the rates effective from 1 July 2016.

5.5 Payment of the CLAS allowance

Commanders/Managers must arrange with Shared Services for the allowance to be paid or to be ceased. This will require completion of form "[P1164 Allowance](#)" – this form can be found at [Payroll Services Forms - NSWPF Intranet](#).

5.6 Ceasing payment of the CLAS allowance

Payment of the allowance to an employee will generally cease in the following circumstances:

- a commander or manager determines there is no longer a business need to utilise the approved language skills of that employee;

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- an employee no longer utilises their approved language skills;
- an employee transfers position, duties or location;
- the allowance may be temporarily ceased for extended periods of leave.

An employee should be given four weeks' notice of an intention to discontinue payment of the CLAS allowance.

If an employee wishes to reapply, after their payment has ceased, they must complete the [CLAS Application Form P1182](#) and provide their certificate for consideration to their Command as per Section 5.3.3

6. References

[Crown Employees \(NSW Police Administrative Officers and Temporary Employees\) Award 2009](#)

[Multicultural NSW - CLAS](#)

[National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters \(NAATI\)](#)

[NSW Police Force - Performance and Program Support Command – Interpreters and Translators](#)