



## 30<sup>th</sup> & 66<sup>th</sup> Hungarian Scout Groups, Homebush West

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Hungarian Scout's Hall - Cserkésztotthon  
Melville Reserve, Hampstead Road  
Homebush West NSW 2140  
Ph: 9764 1687 Website: [www.3066.org](http://www.3066.org)

Postal Address:  
32 Wiseman Road, Castle Hill NSW 2154  
Phone: 9614 3080 Mobile: 0427 221 537  
Email: [scouts@3066.org](mailto:scouts@3066.org)

### **Admissions Policy and Hungarian Language Skills Assessment**

Our Hungarian language skills have weakened over the years and English is being spoken with increasing regularity at our Saturday meetings. So, how do we proceed?

Although we have been struggling with this problem for many years, the Hungarian language issue was raised when we received parental complaints that according to their observations English is being spoken more and more often and that there's no point in sending their children to Hungarian Scouts if the activities are held in English. We also received a contrary complaint that we are too strict with our Hungarian language policy and if we don't loosen our stance many may be alienated and Hungarian Scouts may die out in Sydney.

The fact is that more and more applicants/members do not speak Hungarian or even understand adequately for the scout programme to flow smoothly. Therefore, during the Saturday meetings the leaders and patrol members are increasingly speaking English so that they can understand each other. When you have to constantly translate because someone can't understand, eventually everyone switches to English because it's just easier to communicate and even the leaders eventually tire from the constant translating. This does not help the weak, but weakens everyone's Hungarian language skills and makes the leaders' job that much more difficult. Note that in many cases we are talking about teenaged patrol leaders/youths who sacrifice their time, eagerly and free of charge to be with and take care of our children. We do not want to make their work so hard as to discourage them.

To begin with, Hungarian Scouts is NOT a Hungarian school. Yes, we help develop Hungarian language skills but teaching Hungarian should be done principally in the home and at Hungarian school. The original objective of scouting is **youth education**: to develop a capable, honest, virtuous, faithful, helpful and able to help young person; the creation of good and useful members of society. But we, Hungarian Scouts in Exteris, have been given a second mission, **Hungarian Custodians**: to preserve for Hungary those youths that were raised abroad and preserve in them their Hungarian culture and ancestry. In fact, this gives legitimacy to our Hungarian Scouts in Exteris, as the first, youth education goal can also be achieved at Australian Scouts. Hence, the preservation of Hungarian is in essence an integral part of Hungarian Scouting in Exteris.

Considering the above, and as a result of our leader discussions we have developed guidelines for membership and an assessment system i.e. the 'Admissions Policy and Assessment System'. This indicates that part of the regulations issued by the Hungarian Scouts Association in Exteris that deals with membership, which guides our scout endeavours and details our group's expectations and assessment process. We VERY strongly recommend attendance at the weekend Hungarian School, even for those who speak Hungarian well – language education can only be good for everyone. We understand that there are situations, other activities that may prevent attendance at Hungarian School. In such cases, if in our opinion the child's Hungarian language skills are acceptable and every other assessment point is met then we may not make Hungarian School mandatory.

With the understanding that the Admission Policy document is not final and that refinements may still be made, for now this is what we will be working towards and moving forward with. Please read it!



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## Admissions Policy and Assessment System

### Guidelines

According to the Hungarian Scouts Association in Exteris 2011 revised statutes:

*11.b. In regards to membership, no racial, religious or social discrimination will be made. Given that in their every activity they also wish to cultivate the Hungarian culture, **members can only be those who can speak Hungarian.***

During enrolment, the parent or parents will sign the Application Form which includes the following text:

...Furthermore, we understand that the activities are held solely in the Hungarian language and we will do our utmost to ensure our child understands Hungarian at an acceptable level so as to not disrupt the work of others.

All applicants will be accepted on a 6 month trial basis and their situation and progress will be assessed after 3 months. The child's ability will be judged on a progressive scale, according to age. At Joey scout age only an elementary level of speech is required. From there the requirements increase. The meetings, activities, performances will take place in Hungarian only – no translation or sandwich method will be employed. Members will be committed to speak Hungarian only or not at all! A runic or points system may be employed to encourage the Hungarian language. Leaders will speak **ONLY** Hungarian among each other.

### Assessment

Discuss with the parents how much the child knows Hungarian and whether they are willing to undertake the Hungarian scouting related duties.

Talk with the child to assess directly how much the child knows.

#### Young Scouts

Joey Scouts (5-7 years) we expect basic understanding and speech.

Question examples:

- What is your name?
- How old are you?
- Do you have siblings? What are their names?
- What is your favourite animal?
- What is your favourite colour?

Other requirements:

- Attends weekend Hungarian school.
- Hungarian language at home mediated by parents/grandparents.

Cub Scouts (7-10 years) we expect a little more than just basic understanding and speech.

- Can communicate in Hungarian, understands the leaders' instructions and takes active part in activities and performances.
- Has completed the Hungarian Reading Proficiency System first level 'Starter'.
- Attends weekend Hungarian school.
- Hungarian language at home mediated by parents/grandparents.

#### Scouts (10+ years)

A much higher level of Hungarian language skills is expected.

- Aside from speech, can read & write basic Hungarian.
- Has completed the Hungarian Reading Proficiency System second level 'Walker'.
- Attends weekend Hungarian school.
- Hungarian language at home mediated by parents/grandparents.
- Actively and regularly participates in group performances, recitations, etc.