



TEFL IBERIA

SPANISH VISA GUIDE

AUSTRALIA

USE THIS GUIDE TO DIRECT YOU THROUGH
EACH AND EVERY STEP INVOLVED
IN STARTING A NEW LIFE IN SPAIN

2027 edition



WELCOME TO TEFL IBERIA

If you're reading this, you're thinking of starting a new adventure in Barcelona! We couldn't be more excited for you, and we hope you feel the same.

Before you set off, there are a few important pieces of paperwork to take care of. But don't worry, we're here to help. This guide walks you step by step through the student visa process, which is essential for your legal status in Spain.

If you have a question at any point, our coordination team is here to help:

Coordination team

coordination@tefl-iberia.com

We'll do our best to make the process as stress free as possible.

¡Hasta pronto!

UPDATED OCTOBER 2026



Let's get
STARTED

tefliberia

Why a student visa?

Australian citizens can visit Spain for up to 90 days without a visa. To live and work there for longer, you need a visa, like everyone else from outside the EU.

A work visa is hard to get: your employer has to sponsor you, which is expensive and complicated, and show that no EU candidate could do the job.

A far easier option is a student visa. You need a course of at least 20 hours a week, and once your employer gets a work permit for you, you can work up to 30 hours a week. We'll help you both with the paperwork.

Our student visa programme starts with the 4-week Trinity CertTESOL in Barcelona, followed by 6 or 11 months of Spanish, 20 hours a week (09:30 to 13:30), at our accredited partner Spanish school, with occasional teacher development workshops. Classes are in the morning, as most English teaching work is in the afternoon.

[See our student visa programmes](#), and our [Dates & Fees page](#) for prices.

The next steps guide you through applying for a Spanish student visa and the documents you need.



STEP 1

Choose your visa type

There are 2 types of student visa. Which one you need depends on how long you plan to stay in Spain and whether you'd like to work.

Short-term (up to 180 days)

- Fewer documents and less paperwork.
- You can't work, or renew your visa from Spain.

Long-term (over 180 days, so 7 months or more)

- You can work up to 30 hours a week once your employer gets a work permit for you.
- You can renew your visa from Spain.
- You also need an AFP National Police Check.

Both our programmes (7 or 12 months) need a long-term visa. We strongly recommend the 12-month option, even if you're not sure you'll stay a full year: most of our students end up wanting to stay at least 12 months.

When to apply: at least 2 months before your course starts. In Melbourne, ask for your appointment at least 3 months before you travel. Some documents have a time limit (see Step 2).

Documents required	Short-term visa	Long-term visa
Passport	✓	✓
Visa application form	✓	✓
Visa fee	✓	✓
Enrolment letter	✓	✓
Passport photo	✓	✓
Proof of funds	✓	✓
Health insurance	✓	✓
Medical certificate	✓	✓
Proof of address	✓	✓
AFP National Police Check		✓

Got questions about your documents?

CONTACT US: COORDINATION@TEFL-IBERIA.COM

STEP 2

Gather your documents

For any student visa

- **Visa application form** ([download here](#)) and a recent passport photo. [Here](#) is an example of a completed form, and we'll help you fill yours in.
- **Your passport**, issued in the last 10 years, with at least 2 blank pages, plus a photocopy of the page with your details. Canberra wants it valid for at least 1 year after you arrive in Spain, and Melbourne for 3 months after your visa ends, so have at least 15 months left when you apply.
- **Enrolment letter** from our accredited partner Spanish school for full-time study (20 hours a week), with your course dates and timetable and proof that your course is paid in full. We send you the letter as soon as you've paid. Melbourne also asks for proof that the school is accredited by the Instituto Cervantes: we include it in your enrolment pack.
- **Visa fee** of AUD 710 in Sydney and Melbourne. Sydney: an Australia Post money order for the exact amount, sent with your application. Melbourne: cash or a money order at your appointment. Canberra doesn't publish its fee: ask the Embassy. Money orders are payable to Consulate General of Spain. The fee isn't refundable.
- **Proof of funds** of **€600 a month** for your stay (Spain's IPREM in 2026), for example €4,200 for 7 months. Canberra asks for a bank statement covering at least 3 months, stamped by your branch. Melbourne asks for your statements for at least the last 3 months, showing the money was there throughout. Sydney gives no number of months. Prepaid accommodation reduces the amount you need.
- **Health insurance** from an insurer authorised in Spain, with the same cover as Spain's public health system and no co-payments, excess or waiting periods, for your whole stay. Travel insurance isn't accepted. *For a quote, contact Lluís López at Atlantida, llopez@atlantida.net.*
- **Medical certificate** from your doctor, stating that you have no disease that could have serious public health consequences under the International Health Regulations (2005) (Canberra's wording is on the next page). Canberra and Sydney want it notarised and apostilled (see page 7).
- **Proof of address** in your consulate's area, such as a lease or a recent utility or phone bill. Not an Australian citizen? Add your current Australian visa from VEVO.

Sydney takes applications by post only. Canberra and Melbourne take them in person, and keep your passport while your application is processed. The visa is a sticker fixed to one of its pages.

STEP 2

Gather your documents

For a long-term visa (over 180 days)

- **All the documents on the previous page**
- **AFP National Police Check** with a name and fingerprint check, from the Australian Federal Police (a state police check isn't accepted), plus a police check from any other country you've lived in during the last 5 years. Canberra and Sydney want each one apostilled (see the next page).
 1. Have your fingerprints taken and apply to the AFP by post.
 2. Get the apostille from DFAT.
 3. Get it translated if your office asks for it. Our sworn translator gives TEFL Iberia students a 10% discount (see Useful links).

AFP check: issued no more than 6 months before you apply.

Medical certificate: issued no more than 6 months before you apply.

Canberra and Melbourne set the limit for the police check, and Melbourne for every official certificate: follow both, wherever you apply.

For a stay of over 6 months, Canberra issues a visa valid for up to 1 year; Sydney's and Melbourne's pages say 90 days. Either way, within 1 month of arriving in Spain you apply for your foreigner identity card (TIE), which you then use for the rest of your stay. With our Premium Visa & Bureaucracy Service, we book the appointment for you.

Applying for a long-term visa? You need one more document, and two of your documents have a time limit.

Tips for your application

- **Check your office's own list** before you apply: the requirements differ from one office to another (see Step 3).
- **Bring the original and a photocopy** of every document.
- **Melbourne:** glue your photo (3 x 4 cm, on photo paper) to the form; don't staple it.
- **Sydney:** keep a copy of everything you post, and use a tracked service.
- **Don't book flights** until you have your visa.

Applying in Canberra? Ask your doctor to use the Embassy's [medical certificate template](#), which says:

"This is to certify that Mr./ Ms. (your name) does not suffer from any disease that could cause serious repercussions to public health according to the specifications of the International Health Regulations of 2005."

The template is in English and Spanish, so you don't need a translation. Your doctor signs and stamps it. Sydney and Melbourne don't prescribe a sentence: follow your own office's requirements (see Step 3).

The AFP check and the apostille

Your AFP National Police Check

Ask for a **name and fingerprint check**, and give a visa for Spain as the purpose. A fingerprint check can't be done online: you apply by post, and it takes 15 to 30 business days, plus time for the post.

1. Have your fingerprints taken: at your local police station, or through ACT Policing's booking platform in the ACT.
2. Post the paper application form, your proof of identity, your fingerprints and a bank cheque or money order for AUD 114 to the AFP.
3. Ask for a hard copy of your certificate: DFAT only accepts a limited range of electronic documents for an apostille.

Send your application to:

Australian Federal Police
Criminal Records
Locked Bag 8550
Canberra City ACT 2601

What is an apostille?

An apostille is a certificate fixed to an Australian public document so that it's recognised in Spain. In Australia, only the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) issues them, for AUD 105 per document in 2026.

Your AFP check: DFAT apostilles it directly. Canberra wants the apostille on the AFP's own signature, not on a notary's.

Your medical certificate: a notary public must notarise it first; then DFAT apostilles it. A Justice of the Peace isn't enough.

Applying to DFAT

1. Fill in DFAT's Document Legalisation Request Form, signed in front of an authorised witness.
2. Book an appointment at any Australian Passport Office (card only), or post your documents by registered post with a self-addressed registered envelope to:

Australian Passport Office
Authentications Section
GPO Box 2239
Melbourne VIC 3001 (or Sydney NSW 2001)

DFAT doesn't publish a processing time, and it's slower at the end of the school year and in the holidays. See [DFAT's page](#).

Does my office want it apostilled and translated?

Canberra: yes, both documents, and it doesn't accept a police check without the apostille. Translation needed unless you use its bilingual medical template.

Sydney: yes, apostilled, with an official Spanish translation where needed.

Melbourne: its page asks for an apostille only on documents from countries other than Australia, and its information sheet accepts documents in English. The consulate reserves the right to ask for an apostille or a translation.

Take aways

The AFP check and the apostilles take the longest, so start them as soon as you've booked your course. But not too early: your AFP check must be no more than 6 months old when you apply.

STEP 3

Submit your application

You apply to the Spanish office that covers the state or territory where you live. Full list: [consular areas](#).

Sydney, Consulate General (New South Wales, Queensland, Northern Territory)

- **By post only:** no applications over the counter, and incomplete ones are sent back.
- Post to: Consulate General of Spain, St Martins Tower, Level 24, 31 Market Street, Sydney NSW 2000.
- Include an Australia Post money order for the fee and an A4 registered or Express Post envelope with your name and address, for your documents to come back.
- To confirm the fee, email cog.sydney.vis@maec.es with your name and your passport's country.
- Requirements: [consulate page](#).

Canberra, Embassy of Spain (ACT and Queanbeyan)

- 15 Arkana Street, Yarralumla ACT 2600. Open Monday to Friday, 9:00 to 13:00.
- In person, by appointment: email emb.canberra.sc@maec.es.
- Its list asks for proof that you live in the area: ask which document it accepts when you book.
- Requirements: [Embassy page](#).

Melbourne, Consulate General (Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia)

- Level 7, 564 St Kilda Road, Melbourne VIC 3004.
- In person, by appointment only (study visas: Wednesdays and Fridays, 10:00 to 13:00). Applications by post aren't accepted.
- Ask for an appointment at least 3 months before you travel, by email to cog.melbourne.visappt@maec.es, with your full name, nationality, phone number, travel date, the type of visa (study) and your enrolment letter with your start date (plus your VEVO if you're not Australian).
- Appointments are first come, first served. The consulate doesn't answer visa questions by email or at the counter.
- Requirements: [consulate page](#) and its [information sheet](#).

Which office?

-  **Sydney**
NSW (except Queanbeyan), QLD and NT
-  **Canberra**
ACT and Queanbeyan
-  **Melbourne**
VIC, SA, TAS and WA

What happens next?

Now your application is in the office's hands. It needs approval from Spain before it can issue the visa. The legal deadline for a decision is 1 month, but it can be longer if they ask for more documents or an interview. You can follow your application online with the code on your receipt. How you get your passport back depends on the office (see the next page). Don't book flights until you have your visa.



Next stop: **BARCELONA!**

Frequently asked questions

Do I have to go in person, or can I post my documents?

It depends on your office. Sydney takes applications by post only. Canberra and Melbourne take them in person, by appointment; someone you authorise can hand them in for you.

How long does it take to get an appointment?

None of the three offices publishes a waiting time. Melbourne gives appointments first come, first served, and asks you to request yours at least 3 months before you travel. Canberra gives them by email, and Sydney doesn't need one. Either way, you must apply at least 2 months before your course starts.

What is the appointment like?

It's short: you hand in your documents and your passport, and the staff may check them with you. Bring everything on your office's list: if something is missing, they'll ask for it, which slows things down.

What happens after I apply?

The office needs approval from Spain before it can issue the visa (Melbourne says this takes at least 15 business days). The legal deadline for a decision is 1 month, but it can be longer if they ask for more documents or an interview. You can follow your application online with the code on your receipt.

Canberra: you collect your passport in person, within 2 months of the decision. Melbourne: you or someone you authorise collect it on a Friday, 10:00 to 13:00, no appointment needed; it isn't posted back. Sydney sends your documents back in the envelope you include.

Which documents need to be translated?

Your AFP check and your medical certificate, into Spanish, in Canberra and Sydney (in Canberra, not the medical certificate if you use its bilingual template). Melbourne accepts them in English, but reserves the right to ask for a translation. *See Useful links for our sworn translator.*



Next stop:
BARCELONA!

Frequently asked questions

How many hours can I work on a student visa?

You can work up to 30 hours a week once your employer gets a work permit for you. We'll help you both with the paperwork. The permit only covers work in Catalonia, the region that issued it.

Do I need to sign up for 7 to 12 months?

If you'd like to work in Barcelona, yes. A course of 7 to 12 months gives you a long-term student visa (legally, a stay of over 180 days, so 7 months is the minimum). That's the visa that lets you work with a work permit and renew from Spain.

You can study for less time and get a short-term visa instead, but you won't be able to work or to renew your visa from Spain.

How long does it take to get a student visa?

We recommend allowing 3 to 4 months to gather your documents, apply and receive your visa, so start about 5 months before you'd like to arrive. The AFP check and the apostilles take the longest. You must apply at least 2 months before your course starts.

Can I extend my student visa from within Spain?

Yes. If you have a long-term visa (7 months or more), you can renew it from Spain by signing up for another year of Spanish with us. A Spanish course visa can be renewed once, and for the renewal you'll need to have passed the DELE or SIELE Spanish exam, or be enrolled for the DELE. If you'd like to stay for 2 years or more, please get in touch.

Any other questions? Email our team at coordination@tefl-iberia.com.



Next stop:
BARCELONA!

Frequently asked questions

Can I leave Europe to reset my time as a tourist?

Australian citizens don't need a visa to visit Spain, but you can only spend up to 90 days in any 180-day period in the Schengen area. Time outside Schengen (back in Australia, for example) doesn't count, but the 180-day window keeps rolling, so a short trip home doesn't reset it.

Can I work as self-employed on a student visa?

Not automatically. On a Spanish course, any work needs an authorisation first, whether you're employed or self-employed. Talk to us before you start.

Do I need a visa for the Trinity CertTESOL course?

No. Australian citizens can stay in Spain for up to 90 days without a visa, and the CertTESOL takes 4 weeks.

Can I apply for a student visa from within Spain?

Not for a Spanish course: you need to apply from Australia. You can't arrive as a tourist and then change to a student visa.

I already have a student visa with a different school. Can I renew with TEFL Iberia?

Yes, as long as your previous course was a Spanish course at a school accredited by the Instituto Cervantes or at an Escuela Oficial de Idiomas. You'll need a certificate of completion (certificado de aprovechamiento) from your old school and an enrolment letter from our accredited partner Spanish school.

What happens if my visa is refused?

First you appeal the decision. If the refusal is confirmed, we refund your Spanish course minus an admin fee. Some refusals aren't refundable, for example if you don't meet the financial requirement. See our [terms and conditions](#).

Any other questions? Contact our coordination team at

coordination@tefl-iberia.com

An aerial photograph of Barcelona, Spain, showing a dense urban landscape with numerous buildings and red-tiled roofs. The text 'Next stop. BARCELONA!' is overlaid on the image.

Next stop.
BARCELONA!

Useful links

- [Sydney consulate: study visa](#)
- [Canberra Embassy: study visa](#)
- [Melbourne consulate: study visa](#)
- [Melbourne: study visa information sheet](#)
- [Which office covers your state](#)
- [Spanish visa application form](#)
- [Example of a completed form](#)
- [Medical certificate template](#)
- [AFP National Police Checks](#)
- [DFAT: how to get an apostille](#)
- [Our student visa programmes](#)

Consulate websites can differ between their English and Spanish versions, and between a web page and its information sheet. If in doubt, follow the stricter rule or ask the office.

Health insurance and translations

We've researched the market for good-value health insurance and sworn translators. Whichever insurance you choose, the insurer must be authorised to operate in Spain.

- [Atlantida health insurance](#): contact **Lluís López** at llopez@atlantida.net
- [Sworn Spanish translator](#): contact **Susana García** at info@traductorjurado.org for a 10% discount for TEFL Iberia students

Our Premium Visa & Bureaucracy Service

An optional extra to take the stress out of Spanish bureaucracy. [See the student visa page](#) for details.

Before you set off

Guidance on gathering your paperwork, help with the application form, a discount on health insurance, a quick enrolment letter, and access to an immigration lawyer (extra fee).

Once you're in Barcelona

We book your TIE appointment, check your documents, pay the local tax and go with you to the foreign office. Help with your padrón, social security number, bank account and a local SIM.



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BARCELONA!

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