



TEFL IBERIA

SPANISH VISA GUIDE

UNITED KINGDOM

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?

Since Brexit, UK citizens need a visa to live and work in Spain for more than 90 days, 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 ACRO police certificate.

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. Apply as early as your documents allow: BLS Edinburgh warns that processing can take up to 3 months. 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 or GHIC	✓	✓
Medical certificate	✓	✓
Proof of address	✓	✓
ACRO police certificate		✓

Got questions about your documents?

CONTACT US: COORDINATION@TEFL-IBERIA.COM

STEP 2

Gather your documents

You hand in your passport with your visa application, and the visa is a sticker fixed to one of its pages. UK applications go through [BLS International](#), which keeps your passport while the visa is processed.

For any student visa

- **Visa application form** ([download here](#)) and a recent passport photo (no more than 6 months old). [Here](#) is an example of a completed form, and we'll help you fill yours in.
- **Your passport**, valid for at least 1 year, with at least 2 blank pages and issued in the last 10 years, plus a photocopy of the page with your details.
- **Enrolment letter** from our accredited partner Spanish school for full-time study (20 hours a week), with proof that your course is paid in full. We send you the letter as soon as you've paid.
- **Visa fee** of £345 for a stay of over 180 days (£79 for 90 to 180 days), plus £14.85 for the BLS service. Optional extras: £29.99 to have your passport sent back by next-day delivery, £1.95 for text and email updates. You can pay in cash or by card, and fees aren't refundable.
- **Proof of funds** of **€600 a month** for your stay (Spain's IPREM in 2026), for example €4,200 for 7 months: your 6 most recent monthly bank statements, originals stamped by your bank. They don't need to be legalised. Prepaid accommodation reduces the amount you need.
- **Health insurance**: a valid [GHIC](#) is accepted for every student visa. Otherwise, a policy from an insurer authorised in Spain, with no co-payments or waiting periods. Travel insurance and the old EHIC aren't accepted. *For a quote, contact Lluís López at Atlantida, llopez@atlantida.net.*
- **Medical certificate** from a registered doctor in the UK, stating that you have no illness that could have serious public health implications under the International Health Regulations (2005), in the consulates' exact wording (see the next page). Issued no more than 3 months before you apply, with the Hague Apostille and a sworn translation into Spanish.
- **Proof of address** in your consulate's area, such as a bill, a bank statement or a driving licence.

STEP 2

Gather your documents

For a long-term visa (over 180 days)

- **All the documents on the previous page**
- **ACRO police certificate**, plus a police check from any other country you've lived in during the last 5 years. Each one needs the Hague Apostille and a sworn translation into Spanish. A DBS check isn't accepted.
 1. Apply for your [ACRO police certificate](#).
 2. Send it to the FCDO for an [apostille](#) (the same service legalises your medical certificate).
 3. Get it translated. Our sworn translator gives TEFL Iberia students a 10% discount (see Useful links).

Medical certificate: issued no more than 3 months before you apply.
ACRO certificate: issued no more than 6 months before you apply.

Ask your doctor to write this sentence
(the wording all three UK consulates ask for):
"This health certificate states that Mr./Mrs. (your name) does not suffer from any of the diseases that may have serious public health repercussions in accordance with what is stipulated by the International Health Regulations of 2005."

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

Tips for your appointment

- **Check your consulate's own list** before your appointment: the requirements differ slightly from one consulate to another (see Step 3).
- **Bring the original and a photocopy** of every document.
- **Get your medical certificate in the UK:** the consulates only accept certificates issued in the UK or in Spain.
- **Allow time for apostilles:** both the medical certificate and the ACRO certificate go to the FCDO before they're translated.
- **Don't book flights** until you have your visa.

For a stay of over 6 months the visa is valid for 1 year. 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.

STEP 3

Submit your application

You apply in person, by appointment, at the BLS centre for the consulate that covers where you live (or where you study in person). [Book your appointment with BLS.](#)

London (Greater London; South East; South West; East of England; Jersey, Guernsey and the British Overseas Territories)

- In person, by appointment, at **BLS**, 20 St Andrew Street, London EC4A 3AG.
- Requirements: [BLS page](#) and [consulate page](#). Full area list: [jurisdiction](#).

Manchester (Wales; Isle of Man; North West England except Cumbria; Yorkshire and the Humber; East and West Midlands)

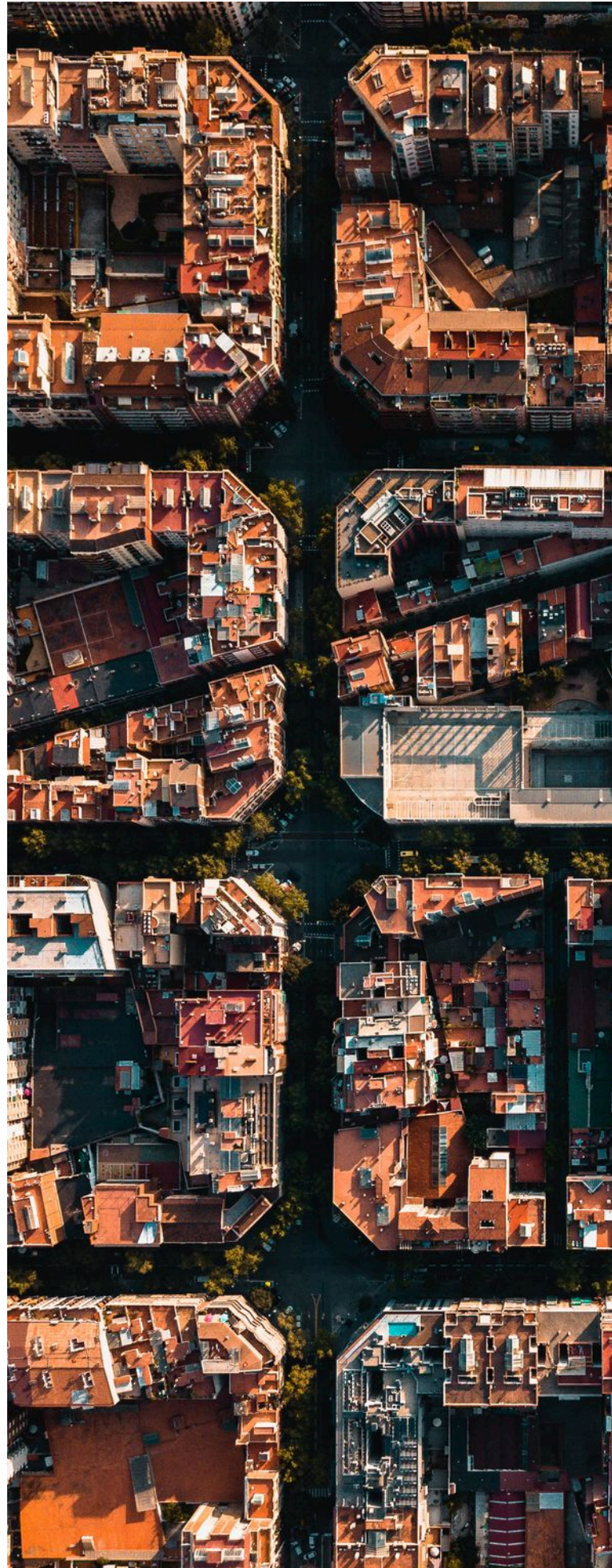
- In person, by appointment, at **BLS**, Unit 1, 205 Chapel Street, Salford M3 5PF.
- Requirements: [BLS page](#) and [consulate page](#). Full area list: [jurisdiction](#).

Edinburgh (Scotland; Northern Ireland; Cumbria, Durham, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear and the Tees Valley)

- In person, by appointment, at **BLS**, 6 Dock Place, Suite 1A, Edinburgh EH6 6LU.
- Requirements: [BLS page](#) and [consulate page](#). Full area list: [jurisdiction](#).

What happens next?

Now your application is in the consulate's hands. The legal deadline for a decision is 1 month, but it's often longer, and BLS Edinburgh warns it can take up to 3 months. You collect your passport and visa in person at BLS, or pay £29.99 to have it sent back by next-day delivery. Don't book flights until you have your visa.



Frequently asked questions

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

You go in person, by appointment. A duly authorised representative can hand in the application for you, but the London consulate then asks you to collect the visa in person at the consulate.

How long does it take to get an appointment?

It varies from month to month. Check the BLS booking page often, as new appointments are released at random times. Book early: 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 consulate's list: if something is missing, the consulate will ask for it, which slows things down.

What happens after my appointment?

The consulate needs approval from Spain before it can issue the visa. The legal deadline for a decision is 1 month, but it's often longer. When your visa is ready, you collect your passport at BLS, or pay £29.99 to have it sent back by next-day delivery.

How long does it take to get my visa after the appointment?

Often around a month, but allow longer: BLS Edinburgh warns it can take up to 3 months. You can follow your application online with the code on your receipt. Don't book flights until you have your visa.

Which documents need to be translated?

Your medical certificate and your ACRO certificate each need the Hague Apostille and a sworn translation into Spanish. *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, attend your appointment and receive your visa, so start about 5 months before you'd like to arrive. 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.

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.

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?

UK 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 the UK or in Ireland, 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. UK 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?

No, you need to apply from the UK. You can't arrive as a tourist and then change to a student visa.

Can I switch to a work visa later?

It's very difficult. Your employer would need to sponsor you, which is expensive and complicated, and show that no EU candidate could do the job. Students on a Spanish course also can't switch to a work permit from inside Spain.

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

- [London consulate: study visa](#)
- [BLS London: study visa](#)
- [Manchester consulate: study visa](#)
- [BLS Manchester: study visa](#)
- [Edinburgh consulate: study visa](#)
- [BLS Edinburgh: study visa](#)
- [BLS International: book an appointment](#)
- [London jurisdiction \(PDF, Spanish\)](#)
- [Spanish visa application form](#)
- [Example of a completed form](#)
- [ACRO police certificate](#)
- [Apostilles \(FCDO legalisation\)](#)
- [Apply for a GHIC](#)
- [Our student visa programmes](#)

Consulate websites can differ between their English and Spanish versions, and the Spanish version is often more detailed and more up to date. If in doubt, use your browser's translation tool on the Spanish version.

Health insurance and translations

We've researched the market for good-value health insurance and sworn translators. A GHIC is accepted for student visas; if you choose private insurance, 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.



Next stop:
BARCELONA!

tefliberia

TEFL Iberia

Carrer d'Aragó 403, 08013 Barcelona, Spain

www.tefl-iberia.com

coordination@tefl-iberia.com

Spanish Visa Guide: UK, updated October 2026