

## GETTING READY

# Spain Student Visa Document Checklist

Every document you need for the 2026 Spanish student visa application, in the order you should prepare them. Updated for the May 2025 reform (RD 1155/2024).

**How to use this checklist.** Most visa rejections come from one of five preventable mistakes: travel insurance instead of a DGSFP-registered policy, background checks older than 90 days at submission, unapostilled or non-sworn translations, proof of funds in a third party's name without notarised sponsorship, and enrolment in an under-20-hour-per-week course. Work through this list in order and you avoid all five.

## 1. Core documents (every applicant)

These are required regardless of which consulate you apply through.

### National Visa Application Form (Solicitud de Visado Nacional)

Download from your specific consulate's website. Do not use the EX-01 form (that's for the Non-Lucrative Visa, not the student visa). Complete in black or blue ink. Sign on the day of submission. As of the May 2025 reform, language school students can no longer apply from inside Spain. The application must be submitted at your home-country consulate.

Complete 1-2 days before appointment

### Valid passport + photocopy of the data page

Must be valid for at least one year from your application date (post-May 2025 rule, RD 1155/2024 Art. 53). Must have at least two blank pages. Passports issued more than 10 years ago are not accepted.

Check now - renew if needed

### Two biometric passport photographs

Size 3.5cm x 4.5cm. White or light background. Taken within the last 6 months. No dark glasses. Not digitally retouched. Bring loose - do not staple or paste to the form.

Get taken 1-2 weeks before appointment

### School acceptance letter from an Instituto Cervantes-accredited school

Must include: your name, course name, start and end dates, hours per week (minimum 20), and (post-May 2025) explicit confirmation that fees have been paid. Instituto Cervantes accreditation is mandatory under RD 1155/2024 Art. 52.1.e.

Request from school on enrolment

### Proof of financial means

Bank statements covering the last 3 months (6 months for Montreal consulate). Minimum EUR 600 per month of planned stay - 100% of IPREM 2026. Must be originals stamped by the bank, not screenshots or printouts. Add EUR 450/month for first dependant, EUR 300/month for each additional.

Request stamped statements 2 weeks before

**Health insurance certificate from a DGSFP-registered Spanish insurer**

The certificate must be in Spanish and include the phrase 'cobertura completa sin copagos ni carencias'. Must cover from one month before course start to 15 days after course end. Travel insurance is always rejected. UK applicants: the GHIC is accepted by the London consulate as sole insurance.

Purchase 4-6 weeks before appointment

 **Medical certificate**

Signed by a registered MD. Must state in Spanish: 'Este certificado medico acredita que el Sr./Sra. [name] no padece ninguna de las enfermedades que pueden tener repercusiones de salud publica graves de conformidad con lo dispuesto en el Reglamento Sanitario Internacional de 2005.' Valid for 90 days from issue.

Book GP appointment 6-8 weeks before

 **Criminal background check (apostilled and sworn-translated)**

Required for all applicants over 18 applying for stays over 180 days. Must cover every country you've lived in during the last 5 years. Must be issued within 90 days of submission. US: FBI Identity History Summary. UK: ACRO Police Certificate. Canada: RCMP check. Australia: AFP National Police Check (purpose code 33). Then apostilled by the relevant government office and translated by a sworn translator (traductor jurado).

Start 8-12 weeks before appointment

 **Proof of accommodation in Spain**

Any one of: a rental contract in your name, a confirmed housing letter from your school, or a notarised invitation letter from a private host in Spain (the host option also requires a copy of their Spanish ID). Must cover at least the first 4 weeks of your stay.

Arrange before submitting application

 **Visa application fee payment**

Varies by nationality: USA \$160, UK GBP 74.65 (up to 180 days) or GBP 345 (over 180 days), Canada CAD 145.50, Australia AUD 710, most others approximately EUR 80. Payment methods vary - check your consulate's page. Cash and personal cheques are usually rejected.

Prepare on day of appointment

## 2. Conditional documents (only if applicable)

Some documents are only required depending on your situation. Check which apply to you.

 **Notarised parental authorisation (under-18 applicants)**

If you are under 18 on the application date: a notarised letter signed by both parents authorising your travel and stay in Spain, plus copies of both parents' ID. The letter must be apostilled and translated into Spanish.

Organise 4-6 weeks before

 **Proof of legal residence (non-nationals of the consulate's country)**

If you are applying from a country where you are not a citizen (e.g. a US national applying in the UK), you need proof of legal residence in that country - typically a residence permit or visa valid for at least six more months beyond your planned Spain arrival.

Check requirement with your consulate

**BLS International appointment confirmation (UK, USA, Canada, Australia)**

Applications in the UK, USA, Canada and Australia are submitted through BLS International, a third-party visa application centre, not directly to the consulate. You need a printed BLS appointment confirmation plus payment of the BLS service fee (~GBP 15 / USD 20 / CAD 25).

Book as early as possible

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**Family reunification documents (accompanying family members)**

Partners and children travelling with you do not qualify for a student visa - they must apply separately for a family reunification visa (visado de reagrupacion familiar) once your student visa is granted. Plan for them to arrive after you.

Apply after your student visa is approved

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### 3. Timing cheat sheet

When to start each document, counting backwards from your consulate appointment. The background check is the long pole in the tent - start it first.

Weeks before appointment	Document	Why this timing
12 weeks	<b>Criminal background check</b>	Processing + apostille + sworn translation all take time
8 weeks	<b>Medical certificate (GP booking)</b>	Getting the appointment, not just the certificate
6 weeks	<b>Health insurance policy</b>	Need start date at least 1 month before course
4 weeks	<b>Apostilled documents</b>	Some apostille services have long queues
3 weeks	<b>Bank statements (request originals)</b>	Must be stamped - not online printouts
2 weeks	<b>Passport photos</b>	Fresh photos, not last year's
1 week	<b>School acceptance letter (re-check)</b>	Make sure fee payment is confirmed
1-2 days	<b>Fill out the application form</b>	Sign on the day you submit

### 4. The five preventable rejections

If you avoid these five mistakes, your application is 95% of the way to approval.

**1. Travel insurance instead of a proper policy.** Travel insurance is rejected in every consulate. You need a policy from a Spanish DGSFP-registered insurer with 'cobertura completa sin copagos ni carencias' printed on the certificate in Spanish.

**2. Background check older than 90 days.** Processing plus apostille plus translation can take 8-12 weeks. If you request it too early, it expires before you submit.

**3. Documents not properly apostilled or translated by a sworn translator.** Unapostilled documents and translations by non-official translators are both rejected. Use a traductor jurado listed by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**4. Funds in a family member's account without proper sponsorship.** If a parent is paying, you need a notarised sponsorship letter plus their bank statements, plus proof of relationship. Just 'using mum's account' is rejected.

**5. Enrolled in a course under 20 hours per week.** The minimum threshold is not a suggestion. Schools sometimes sell 'student visa compatible' courses that fall short - check the hours on the acceptance letter.

## Save EUR 500 on your Spanish course

Enrol through us at any Instituto Cervantes-accredited partner school and we negotiate a EUR 500 discount.

[studentvisaspain.com/enrol](https://studentvisaspain.com/enrol)