



Frequently Asked Questions 2019-20

When does the application period start and end?

The first round of applications will open on the 30th of November 2018 and close on 31st of January 2019.

We **may** open applications again in April/May

How do I submit my application?

Please apply online through our website: <https://ecmadrid.org/es/auxiliares-conversacion/solicitudes/81-formacion/1425-language-assistant>

Do I have to have a TEFL certification?

No, it is not a requirement to be TEFL certified.

Do I have to be a native speaker?

Phonetics and phonology are important parts of the language assistant's role; native speakers are the best model for this. However we are happy to accept applicants with a native level of spoken English regardless of nationality/origin

Do I need a University Degree?

It is a requirement to present a University bachelor's degree at orientation in September; however it does not have to be in the field of teaching. This can be the original degree certificate, a notarized copy, or the original transcripts.

****Unless you come through an agreement with one of our collaborating Universities and are currently studying.**

Do you accept half yearly placements?

No the duration of our program and the academic course with Comillas is 9 months. This commitment is important in order to establish a stable relationship with both students and fellow teachers.

What are the program dates?

The program runs September 16th 2019-June 12th 2020. Please bear in mind, orientation is within the first weeks of September and everyone is required to attend.

****These dates are subject to change**



Can I apply from within Spain?

Yes you can apply from within Spain or outside Spain.

Can I apply if I am currently teaching in China, Japan etc?

You can, although you must check the time it will take to expedite your visa application. You will need to allow enough time for this process. Pay special attention to required background checks from those countries.

Can I come to Spain before orientation and travel?

In principle this is possible but it is something you should consult with your Spanish consulate. Please bear in mind that you need to apply for a TIE card within 30 days of arrival in the Schengen zone.

Do I get a work contract and work visa?

BEDA is a student program so you apply for a **long term student visa**.

What if I am from the EU?

All language assistants are students of the University of Comillas however Europeans do not need a student visa.

Do I need to speak Spanish?

Some basic Spanish is useful, although not obligatory. At the completion of the two year University course you will be tested and need to have reached a B1 level to pass the course.

When you arrive, you will also take a test; if your level is low, you will be placed into Spanish classes as part of your Comillas course.

Can I choose where I am placed?

No you cannot choose your placement although you may provide preferences that we will try to follow. Flexibility is a premium.

Can I choose the number of hours?

No, hours are determined by the schools; they range from 18 to 24 and are assigned at random.

(In some rare cases, due to the schools needs, placements of more than 24 hours are possible)

What is the age of the students?

Infants 3-5, Primary 5-11, Secondary 11-16, Bachillerato 17-18. There are also some placements with university age students and adults in vocational training. In some cases there are pre-infant groups from 0-3.



Is there an age limit for applicants?

Currently we have no age limit.

What is next after I submit my application?

If successful you will be contacted for an interview. This can happen any time between December and April. Feel free to contact us if you have not been contacted within a month of your application.

Please check your junk folders regularly as it seems our interview requests can be directed there!

Interviews can be via Skype or in person. Please indicate clearly at the start of your cover letter if you are available in Madrid for the latter.

Do I have to pay anything for the University course?

The school covers the cost of tuition but there is a €175 non-refundable enrolment fee payable upon acceptance into the program.

When are the University classes?

Classes are usually during the week after school with the exception of a few Saturdays during the year. They are not every week. In Madrid, there are around 15 classes from September to March with the greater proportion placed in the 1st half of the year. On average, 2 per month. Classes are usually in the evening and can be any day of the week. Part of the course will be online.

Outside Madrid the course is developed through blended learning, both online and in your region.

What do we study?

The Specialist course for the first two years in the program is called 'Curso de Metodología y evaluación de la enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés en el aula'. After two years in the program you can go on to complete another two year course 'Innovación educativa en el area de lengua extranjera inglés'.

Can I be a Cambridge Examiner?

Currently the Cambridge department is not training any more examiners.

How long can I stay in the program?

Maximum of 4 years total. You may only stay at any one school for 2 years maximum.



Where are your schools?

Most of them are in Madrid and its surrounding areas but we also have assistants in A Coruña, Albacete, Alicante, Asturias, Badajoz, Cadíz, Castellón, Cordoba, Ciudad Real, Guadalajara, Huesca, Las Palmas, Lugo, Murcia, Navarra, Pontevedra, Sevilla, Tenerife, Toledo, Valencia and Zaragoza.

Do you cover the costs of our travel and visa?

No we don't. Assistants have to pay for their own travel and visa costs.

Do you provide accommodation?

No we do not. Assistants are responsible for their own accommodation.

Do you help us with TIE's/NIE's etc?

Yes we do.

Do you help us with TIE's/NIE's for dependants/family members?

We can only process visas for BEDA participants.

When will I be assigned my school?

We hope to have everyone assigned by June 2019. We start sending placement offers in May but it is a long process.

When should I contact my school?

Once the assignation is confirmed you will receive the school contact details and they will receive yours; you should contact your school as soon as you receive these contact detail (**not before**). The schools are busy with final evaluations in June and then on vacation in July and August. For this reason they may take some time to respond, but this is normal.

Can I be placed at more than one school?

Yes it is possible to be placed at two schools so you'd normally go a couple of days to each depending on the hours.

I have been in Spain for a couple of years; do I have to attend orientation?

Yes it is very important that all assistants attend. All documentation is completed here and important information given out.

I am from the EU; can I have a work contract?

No everyone, regardless of nationality, is a student with the University and therefore there is no work contract.



Can I work outside my hours in the school?

Members of the European Union are free to do so. Non EU citizens need a special work permit which the employer (Academy etc) must apply for.

What should I do prior to my arrival?

You need to apply for the student visa if you are a non European citizen.

Everyone should also apply for the working with children background check. US citizens will have to provide a full FBI check as there is no children specific check in the US. A state background check is not sufficient.

When should I arrive in Madrid?

You should arrive in Madrid a couple of days before orientation so you can find and settle into accommodation.

Where should I look for accommodation?

Outside Madrid, your school is a good place to start to help you regarding information about the area; otherwise, there are also a lot of websites such as idealista.com, fotocasa.es and also the various language assistant facebook pages where past and present assistants can help you.

How long am I expected to be at the school?

The schools have various timetables from 8am-5pm. It will depend on your hours as to how long you are at the school. You do not have to stay at the school when you don't have class; you may leave the school premises. While we ask schools to block hours as much as possible, please understand that you will probably have gaps in your timetable in the same way the other teaching staff do. Please remember schools can have a 2 hour lunch break during the day.

When are the holidays?

Language assistants are entitled to the same Christmas, Easter and national/regional holidays as the school staff. You must comply with the set school calendar unless due to unforeseen circumstances you need a day off. Any extra days off should be duly justified and any requests must be made well in advance in writing to the Principal.

Any unauthorized absences can result in the loss of your student grant.

Travel plans should be made around your class schedule and school calendar.



Will I know my schedule in advance?

No the schools usually do not organise schedules until September so they will give the schedule to you in your first week.

When will I be paid?

Assistants are paid between the 1st and the 5th of the following month. Please bear this in mind when renting apartments and signing contracts. Grants are calculated from your first day at the school.

Do I need to open a Spanish bank account?

Yes you do, we can only pay into a Spanish account.

Do I need to provide a background check?

Yes all EU and Non EU citizens need to provide a working with children background check from your country of origin and also the specific check from Spain that we will provide information for at the beginning of the academic year.

Will I be covered by medical insurance?

Yes, you will be fully covered by private medical insurance. You will also have access to the (very good) Public Health System via the Social Security contributions both you and BEDA make. The process for this will be explained at orientation.

I have other commitments that may affect the length of my placement or the hours that I can participate. To whom and when should I relay this information?

Please include any information that may affect your placement (applying with friends/partners, family commitments, etc) in your cover letter **AND** mention it during the interview.