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5. What do I write in my cover letter to the Secretary of State for the Apostille of the Hague?
6. Is my Medical Certificate Letter the same as the Health Clearance Form?

General visa application questions:

1. What if I’m traveling after the program?
   You will not be able to extend your student visa in Spain for travel purposes, however if you would like to travel around Spain after your visa expires, you need to leave Spain and re-enter as a tourist. If you are a US citizen, you can travel to most parts of Europe as a tourist, without a visa. Within the Schengen Area, you can travel as a tourist for up to 90 days within a 180 day period. Be sure to check the visa requirements of any country where you plan to travel, to make sure you are prepared. If you plan to travel outside of the EU, be sure to check requirements far in advance. Some countries require visas and possibly proof of finances or medical vaccines.

2. How do I know if I can apply for my visa at the Consulate in Los Angeles or San Francisco?
   You may apply at the Spanish Consulate in Los Angeles if your permanent address or your University address is in one of the following California Counties:
   Los Angeles, San Diego, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura.
You may apply at the Spanish Consulate in San Francisco if your permanent address or your University address is in a California County that is not listed above.

If you live in a county that is under one consulate’s jurisdiction but attend a University that is in the other consulate’s jurisdiction, you may choose which consulate you want to handle your visa application. Keep in mind where you will be during the time of your scheduled visa appointment. If your permanent address and your University address are in the jurisdiction of the same consulate, that is the consulate that you will go to for your visa application appointment. Your address will be verified by ID, which include driver’s license, voter ID, or student ID.

3. When do I apply for my visa?
   You may apply for your visa as early as 120 days prior to your departure date and you must apply at least 40 days before your departure date.

4. What if I don’t receive my visa prior to one week before departure?
   If you do not receive your visa within one week prior to departure, contact UCEAP and contact the Consulate. You may need to pick up your visa in person instead of waiting for the Consulate to mail it to you. Apply early in your appointment window to avoid this issue!

5. I don’t see any available appointments in the Consulate’s online scheduling system. What do I do?
   Only appointments for the current and following month may show on the Consulate’s online scheduling calendar, so you will be able to schedule your appointment 1 to 2 months prior to your preferred appointment date. For example, if you wish to schedule your appointment for May 1st, check the Consulate’s appointment system in March and April to see if the May calendar is available. Appointments fill up fast!

   If you don’t see an available appointment within your application window, take the appointment that is as close to the window as possible and then keep checking back a few times per hour for an appointment that is within the window. Appointments pop up when other people cancel, so keep checking the appointment scheduling system – even in the middle of the night!

6. What do I do if I’m going on vacation, out of the country, during the visa processing time and I need to give my passport to the Consulate at my visa application appointment?
   You may give a clearly printed, color photocopy of your passport to the Consulate with your application materials during your visa appointment. Let the Consulate know that you will be traveling out of the country during the visa processing time and will need to keep your physical passport. When you return to the U.S. and when your visa is ready, you will need to take your physical passport to the Consulate, so they can affix your visa to your physical passport.

7. How do I apply for my visa if I’m going to be out of the country during the visa application appointment window and can’t make it to the Consulate during that time block?
   If you will be out of the country and unable to begin the visa process within the visa application window, you may have your parent begin the application process for you. You must contact the Consulate to inquire about specific requirements for having your parent apply for you. Two items that may be required are a notarized letter from you stating that you give permission to your parent to apply for the visa in your place, and a notarized, clearly printed, color copy of your passport. You will need to make an appointment to appear in person at the Consulate to present your physical passport and receive your visa when it is ready.

8. How do I fill out the National Visa Application Form?
   • “Photo” You may paperclip one of your 2 passport photos here, but do not staple both of your passport photos here. Leave your photos loose and unmarked. Your photo will be scanned and printed on your visa.
• “National identity number, where applicable”: you may leave this field blank
• “Type of travel document”: check “Ordinary Passport”
• “Number of travel document”: input your passport number
• “Issued by”: input the place where your passport was issued (U.S. passport holders: see the section of your passport that says “Authority”)
• “Intended date of arrival in Spain”: input the date that you plan to step foot in Spain
• “Number of entries requested”: check “Multiple Entries” or “More Than Two”
• “Applicant’s address in Spain”: use the address listed in your Arrival Instructions. If your Arrival Instructions are not available prior to your visa appointment, use the Study Center address listed in Your Program guide
• “Data of the individual resident in Spain in case of applying for a residence visa for family reunion” and “Data of the employer or the company in case of applying for a residence visa for employees, self-employed or temporary work”: leave these sections blank, as they are not for the student visa
• “Data of the educational establishment or research centre in case of applying for a student or research visa”: use the contact information for the Study Center Program Coordinator listed in Your Program Guide. The “Intended date of start of studies or research” and the “Intended date of end of studies or research” should match the dates listed in your Acceptance Letter. Leave the section blank for “In case of temporary stay of children…”, as it is not necessary for your student visa.
• “Place and Date”, list the city and state where you will be applying for your visa and the date that you sign the form.

For visa applicants in programs that last 180 days or less:

1. What do I do when I arrive in Spain?
   You do not have to do anything after arrival. Be sure to keep your passport and visa safe. It is recommended that you keep a photocopy of your passport and visa with you at all times and keep your passport and visa in a safe place. Take your originals with you when traveling. Your visa is valid for the length of your program or for a maximum of 180 days. If you plan to travel around Spain after the 180 days, you will need to leave the country and return. When you re-enter the country, you will be allowed to stay for up to 90 days.

2. What if I’m traveling before the program?
   Do not enter Spain prior to the start date on your visa! If you enter Spain as a tourist prior to your visa start date, your visa will not automatically switch to your student visa. You will need to leave the country and then return to Spain to activate your stay with your student visa.

For visa applicants in programs that last more than 180 days:

1. What do I do when I arrive in Spain?
   Do not enter Spain prior to the start date on your visa! Your passport must be stamped by immigration authorities upon arrival in Spain. We do not recommend you travel prior to your program start date, however if you do, be sure to get your passport stamped when you enter Spain. If you do not have your passport stamped, contact the Study Center immediately. You will most likely need to go to a local police station with your plane ticket to show as proof of entry into Spain. Keep your boarding pass or ticket stub to prove your arrival date. Take photocopies of all visa application documents and your original Medical Certificate and Police Clearance with you in your carry-on luggage. These documents are required for your student residence permit application in Spain. UCEAP staff in Spain will assist you in applying for your student residence permit.

2. What if I’m traveling before the program?
Do not enter Spain prior to the start date on your visa! Your passport must be stamped by immigration authorities upon arrival in Spain. We do not recommend you travel prior to your program start date, however if you do, be sure to get your passport stamped when you enter Spain. Keep your boarding pass or ticket stub to prove your arrival date.

3. **How long does the Department of Justice Background Check and Apostille of the Hague take to process?**

   After you’ve done your LiveScan fingerprints at a Public LiveScan site near you, the process time for the record clearance may take 3-30 days, so be sure to get your LiveScan done well before your visa appointment. If you have not heard back from the Department of Justice about the results of your background check within 7 days, contact the Department of Justice to check on the status. When you receive this clearance, send an e-mail to: visa-immigration@doj.ca.gov to let them know you need the Apostille of The Hague. The Apostille of The Hague is an internationally recognized seal, required by the Spanish Consulate. When the Department of Justice receives your e-mail, they will mail you a special letter with a California Department of Justice seal and original signature on it. **Keep a photo copy of this letter and your record clearance.** You must submit your original record clearance, your letter from the Department of Justice, and a cover letter stating your request either by mail or in person, to the California Secretary of State’s office for authentication with the Apostille of the Hague. The Secretary of State may take 5-7 business days upon receipt of your documents to process your request for the Apostille of the Hague, plus mailing time to return the documents to you. It is best to being this process no later than 1 month prior to your visa appointment.

4. **What do I write in my email to the Department of Justice after I receive my background check?**

   After you receive your background check from the Department of Justice, you will send an email to the Department of Justice requesting an Official Background Check Letter that will be sent to the Secretary of State (along with your background check and cover letter – be sure to make copies of everything before mailing the items to the Secretary of State) for the Apostille of the Hague. The email can be simple, stating that you are requesting an Official Background Check Letter that will be sent to the Secretary of State for the Apostille of the Hague. Include your first name, last name, contact information, and any other identifying information to help the Department of Justice reference your record.

5. **What do I write in my cover letter to the Secretary of State for the Apostille of the Hague?**

   The message should be simple and state why you are requesting the Apostille of the Hague. For example:

   I am [insert first and last name], a student of the Education Abroad Program of the University of California. I am writing to request authentication of the enclosed letter from the state Department of Justice explaining my absence of criminal records by issuance of an Apostille of the Hague. This document is a requirement of my student visa application that I will be submitting to the Consulate General of Spain in [insert city - Los Angeles or San Francisco]. You will also find my payment and return envelope enclosed.

6. **Is my Medical Certificate Letter the same as the UCEAP Health Clearance Form?**

   The Medical Certificate is not the UCEAP Health Clearance. The Medical Certificate is for your visa application and you will submit it to the Consulate. The UCEAP Health Clearance will only be submitted to the UCEAP Systemwide Office and does not need to be submitted to the Consulate. Though these are two different documents, you should consider having your UC Health Center or private health practitioner complete both of them at your appointment.