



PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

# Extension, change of studies and change of permit

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How to stay on in Spain: extend your stay, move from a language course to higher studies, or switch to a residence and work permit.

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Updated under  
RD 1155/2024 (in force 20-05-2025)

When your student stay nears its end, you have several paths: keep studying, change the type of studies, or move to a residence and work permit. First, it helps to clear up three terms that are often confused.

## 1 Extension, renewal and change of permit

| Concept                                | What it is                                                                                              | In studies                                                              |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Extension (prórroga)</b>            | Extend the <b>same</b> student stay to keep studying.                                                   | This is what you colloquially call "renewing the student card".         |
| <b>Renewal (renovación)</b>            | A term proper to <b>residence</b> authorizations, not to stays.                                         | In studies you don't "renew": technically you <b>extend</b> (prórroga). |
| <b>Change of permit (modification)</b> | Move from the student stay to a <b>different type</b> : residence and work, job-seeking or internships. | You change regime: from "student" to "resident".                        |

### The difference that matters most

The **student stay does not count** toward the nationality period. **Residence** (after a change of permit) **does count**. That's why moving to residence and work, when possible, has medium-term advantages.

## 2 Extension: keep studying

This is the route to continue your studies while keeping the student stay.

### When to apply

- From **2 months before** to **3 months after** the expiry date of your authorization or TIE.
- While the application is on time and in process, your situation is considered **extended** until resolution (max. 2 months; negative silence).
- Filing late may trigger a penalty procedure and leave you in an irregular situation until it is resolved.

### Requirements

- Valid passport (minimum 1 year validity).
- Be **admitted and enrolled** in valid studies, with tuition paid.
- **Academic progress**: having passed the previous course (you don't need to pass 100 %, but a reasonable advance) and continue the studies.
- Financial means (100 % of the IPREM: 600 €/month) for the requested period and the return, and valid health insurance.
- Not having abandoned or interrupted the studies without justified cause.

## How and how long

- Electronic, through the platform (Mercurio), addressed to the Immigration Office of the province of your initial authorization. A fee applies.
- The extension lasts as long as the enrolled course, with a **1-year limit** each.
- They count **per authorization: up to 2 extensions** for higher studies and post-compulsory secondary education, and **only 1 extension** for language courses and other training activities.
- After a favourable decision, request the **new TIE** within 1 month.

## 3 Changing studies: from language to higher studies

If you come with a Spanish course and want to continue with a higher-level vocational programme (Grado Superior) or a master's, you don't need to start over from your country. Since you are changing the type of studies, it is not processed as an extension of the language course: you apply for a **new student stay authorization for higher studies**, which can be requested **from Spain** while your stay is still valid.

Because it is a new authorization, the **extension counter resets**: higher studies allow **up to 2 extensions**, versus the single one of the language course. That's why moving up is the way to extend your stay.

- Prove the **new admission and enrollment** in the higher studies.
- Provide the usual requirements (100 % IPREM, health insurance, etc.); having completed the language course with a **DELE or SIELE** strengthens your file.
- Apply while in a **regular situation**, with your student stay in force.

### Bear in mind

The change must have **academic coherence** and be requested in advance. If you abandon the studies without continuity or file late, it can get complicated.

### The BCNLIP → IBP path

You can start with a Spanish course at **BCNLIP** and continue with a **higher-level vocational programme (Grado Superior) or a master's at IBP Formación Profesional** (Grupo MONLIP). We help you coordinate admission, enrollment and the documentation for the new authorization so the transition is smooth.

## 4 Change of permit: from studies to residence and work

Regulated in **article 190** of the new regulation. It is the move from the student stay to a **residence and work permit**, and it brings an important change: **3 prior years are no longer required**; it is enough to have finished your studies.

## Who can access it

- Having **passed and obtained a qualification** in: official higher studies (degree, master's, doctorate, higher-level vocational training / Grado Superior), post-compulsory secondary education, professional certificates (levels 2 and 3) or specialized health training.
- A language course on its own **does not give access** to this change: that is why the language → higher studies path opens this door.

## Requirements

- **Employed:** a job offer or contract in line with labour regulations, with the company's details (which must be up to date with its obligations).
- **Self-employed:** a business plan, proof of investment and of financial means.
- **Not having received a scholarship** or grant under development cooperation or humanitarian aid programmes (Spanish or from your home country); this can be proven with a responsible declaration.
- Having healthcare coverage. A criminal record certificate is only required if the studies lasted less than 6 months.

## When, deadlines and effects

- Apply from **2 months before** to **3 months after** the expiry of the stay or the obtaining of the qualification.
- **Provisional authorization:** once the application is admitted for processing, you can **work full-time** while it is resolved.
- The first authorization lasts **1 year** (with "renewed" effects) and its validity depends on registration with Social Security (or RETA, if self-employed). It is then renewed for longer periods.
- Filed through Mercurio (forms EX-03 employed / EX-07 self-employed). This residence **does count** toward nationality.

## 5 Other paths after finishing your studies

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- **Residence for job-seeking or to start a business** (1 year): for those who have finished higher studies and don't yet have an offer; it lets you look for work or prepare a project.
- **Residence for internships:** linked to the higher studies completed.

## 6 In summary

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- ☐ **Keep studying** (same regime) → extension, 2 months before to 3 after, with academic progress
- ☐ **Move from language to higher studies** → new authorization for higher studies (resets the counter: up to 2 extensions)
- ☐ **Start working** after qualifying → change of permit (art. 190): you work from the moment it is admitted for processing
- ☐ **Still no offer** after a higher qualification → residence for job-seeking or internships

## **Plan your next step with us**

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*Guidance information updated under Royal Decree 1155/2024 (Immigration Regulation, in force since 20 May 2025) and SEM 3/2025 instructions. Deadlines, requirements and extension limits may vary depending on your studies and the Immigration Office's criteria; always confirm your specific case with the official sources before applying.*