



VISA APPLICATION GUIDELINES: FRANCE

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Introduction

Students studying in France for more than 90 days must obtain a student visa prior to departing for France and French Overseas Departments. The student visa requirements for France are extensive, and students should begin collecting the required documentation and preparing their applications as soon as they have been confirmed by their host university in France. The student application visa for France can take three months from start to finish.

European citizens and most students studying in France for less than 90 days (summer programs) DO NOT need to obtain a visa before arrival.

Once a visa application is submitted, it can take four to eight weeks for the consulate to issue the visa depending on your jurisdiction. Students should verify estimated wait times with their [specific consulate](#) and plan accordingly. The visa processing time may take longer for students studying in the French Overseas Department (DOM) of La Réunion.

You will be required to appear in person at a consulate or a visa application center to apply for the visa. Remember, your local French Consulate or visa application center is the official source of all visa information. If you have questions regarding the status of your student visa application, you must contact your French Consulate. ISEP cannot contact consulates on behalf of students. **Visa fees and any visa-related travel costs are the responsibility of the student.**

STEP 1: Submit your Campus France Application

Before submitting your visa application, **students from the following countries are first required to enroll in Campus France.** If you are applying in one of the countries below, NO visa will be granted without prior enrollment through the Campus France website.

Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, South Africa, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Vietnam.

Students from all other countries can jump to [Step 2](#).

- 1) Go to CampusFrance.org, and then to the Campus France website for your home country or country of residence. The list of countries can be found by clicking on the Countries/Sites button in the upper-right part of the homepage.
- 2) Once on the webpage for your home country, navigate to the application page for students and then to the page for those "already accepted," and/or the page for those applying for a "long-stay visa" (depending on your country-specific website).
- 3) You can register with Campus France and create an [Études en France account](#) immediately, but you cannot submit your Campus France application until you formally sign your ISEP Acceptance Package AND receive at least an electronic copy of the Official Acceptance Letter from your host university in France, as you will need to upload both documents as part of the application process.

➔ Review [this video to see how to create an Etudes en France Account](#)

- 4) A scanned copy of the **Official Letter of Acceptance from your host university in France** AND the **ISEP Letter of Certification** (available for download in your ISEP Acceptance Package) should both be uploaded to your Etudes en France account prior to your Campus France payment. The ISEP Letter of Certification in your Acceptance Package is NOT the same as the official Letter of Acceptance from your host university in France and BOTH documents are required to be submitted.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please be sure to complete any required internal application for your host university as soon as possible to ensure you receive your acceptance letter with enough time to start the visa application process. These letters are *generally* issued by the **end of April or early May for Fall and Full Year students, and in **October** for Spring semester students, provided the student has completed any required internal application procedures.**

It's best to submit your Campus France materials as early as possible to avoid delays, which often occur just before the start of each semester. **The Campus France application should *ideally* be submitted by early May for Fall and Full Year students, and before the end of October for Spring semester students.**

Campus France offers a guide on how to complete the Etudes en France application. [2023-2024 application guidelines can be found here](#). Watch [this video for step by step instructions](#). ALL ISEP Students fall into the 'Study Abroad/Exchange/Dual-Degree (SA/DD)' category in this guide. Instructions for this category are on page 26-32 of the document above.

Students and advisors have the opportunity to schedule a phone appointment with a Campus France USA agent to receive assistance with the Etudes en France pre-consular application. Appointments available on our [phone assistance calendar](#).

STOP – CampusFrance application tips for ISEP students:

- If possible, it is recommended that you set your native language on the Campus France site (upper righthand corner of the page) as your default language to avoid any misunderstandings in working through the application.
- When filling out the Campus France application, all ISEP students are considered exchange/study abroad students. Follow the instructions as such.
- Education term: "Bac + number" is used to indicate the number of years after the completion of your secondary school (high school) education. For example, Bac+1 = first year after you complete secondary school, Bac + 2 = second year after you complete secondary school, Bac + 4 = fourth year after you complete secondary school, etc.
- You are NOT a "boursier" (French government scholarship holder), even if you might receive financial aid at your home institution or from your home country.
- Do not worry about sections/questions dealing with DALF/DELF exams, internships, or your resume. The aim of the Campus France application for study abroad students is to have you provide as much demographic and educational information as possible. Fill out as much as you can so you can complete your Campus France application.
- ISEP students are NOT required to take a language test or have an interview with Campus France. You may note "Exempt" from interview on your Pastel account. This DOES NOT mean you are exempt from an interview at your consulate or visa application center. This simply means that you are exempt from a Campus France interview.
- If you don't receive a response after your submission, wait 3 weeks from the time of your application submission (or 3 days if you have selected expedited processing) to contact Campus France. It's recommended students contact Campus France through the Campus France messaging portal where you complete your application. Some Campus France offices can also be reached over the phone - check the "Contact Us" section of your home country's Campus France site for more information.
- Be sure that you have correctly completed and submitted your Campus France application and have correctly paid the required the processing fees. Campus France will not start processing your application until they have received BOTH your application materials AND the required payment.

STEP 2: Schedule Visa Appointment

Go to the [FranceVisas website](#) to start your visa application. When starting their application on the France Visas site, ISEP students should list their plans as "Study" and their main purpose of stay as "Student." **All French Consulates will require that visa applicants apply in-person, either at the consulate or at a visa application center, as the collection of biometrics is a requirement of the France visa application process.**

All students should schedule their visa appointment within 90 days of their departure date – ideally between 60 and 30 days before the program start date.

STOP – Frequent Questions Regarding Visa Appointments

- Historically, in order to get a visa appointment, students needed an EEF confirmation code in order to verify their appointment (for applicable countries). However, ISEP has recently seen that students have been able to schedule their appointment without confirmation from EEF. This may vary by consulate.
 - o **Note for students from countries that require a CampusFrance application:** You MUST complete the CampusFrance (Etudes en France or EEF) application and receive confirmation from EEF before attending your visa appointment. Under no circumstances should you attend your appointment without first receiving EEF confirmation. A visa will not be issued without the EEF Confirmation, nor all the documents listed in STEP 3.
- When booking your appointment, if at first you do not see any available appointments, you should check the website regularly as more appointments are often added on a daily basis.
- It is not required that you schedule your visa appointment in one particular location. You may elect to schedule your visa appointment at the consulate or VFS center closest to you or at an alternative location that you are able to travel to.
 - o Note: once you schedule your appointment at one location you can often change the date or time of the appointment, however, it has been difficult/impossible to change the LOCATION of your appointment after booking.

STEP 3: Submit Student Visa Application

STOP – A Note about French Student Visa Types:

There are two types of visas that can be requested for study abroad in France:

VLS-TS “CESEDA R 311-3 6°” – REQUIRED FOR THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS:

- ALL students who will be staying in France for more than **six months/180 days (full year students)**
- Students who will be staying in France for a period of time between three and six months (for a total duration of 91-180 days) who wish to be able to **extend the visa once they are in France**
- Students who will be staying in France for a period of time between three and six months (for a total duration of 91-180 days) who wish to be allowed to **work or intern in France while studying**
- *Pros:* Possible to extend the visa once in France; possible to get a part-time job (max. 964 hrs. per year); access to French social services
- *Cons:* OFII validation required once in France (simplified online validation procedure now available); requires an **additional fee of €60**, paid during the validation process

VLS-T “dispense temporaire de titre de séjour” – OPTION for SEMESTER STUDENTS ONLY

- *Pros:* Temporary residence permit which prevents students from needing to complete immigration procedures once in France; ideal for students studying abroad for one semester
- *Cons:* Only valid for students studying in France for less than 180 days (semester students); impossible to extend your stay once in France; impossible to work, even part-time; no access to French social services

Keep these elements in mind when completing your visa request. **It is recommended that any students unsure of their plans complete the OFII form and submit an application for the VLS-TS visa.** Once in France, it will be too late to change the visa type.

In addition to the standard visa application, the [French immigration \(OFII\) form](#) should be completed by students applying for the VLS-TS visa and submitted with the rest of your visa paperwork.

Students applying for the VLS-TS visa should bring the OFII form to their consulate appointment and should make sure to print their e-mail address very carefully on the form to avoid any risk of confusion or error.

SAMPLE VISA APPLICATION MATERIALS:

For your visa application, most students will need the following documents, but you should verify application and documentation requirements with [your specific consulate](#).

NOTE: In addition to the copies of original documents listed below as part of the required application materials, it is important that you **make an additional copy of EACH document submitted for your records before submitting your paperwork at the consulate or visa application center.**

- ORIGINALS: 2 printed visa [application forms](#) for a Long Stay student visa (Demande de visa pour un long séjour), completed and signed.

STOP – Frequently Asked Questions about the visa application form:

- Use European date format - DD/MM/YYYY
- National Identity number - leave blank
- In “Your Plans,” select “study” from the drop-down menu and “student” as your main purpose of stay
- Select “Ordinary Passport”—this type of passport is for ordinary citizens and travel (vacation, study, business, etc.)
- In “Your Information”: Current occupation is “Student”
 - o List University name, city, country, and email address of your outgoing coordinator
- In “Your Stay”: Indicate the dates you are planning on arriving and leaving from France
- Your CEF number is your Etudes en France (CampusFrance) number (if applicable)
- **IMPORTANT:** In the section of “Your Contacts” please select “A company or organization” will be accommodating me. Then, you will use your host university’s address (as found on your letter of acceptance)
- Students should request a “multiple-entry” visa

- COPY: France-Visas Receipt
 - This is the receipt of your visa application generated by the France-Visas platform when you complete the visa application online. This documents includes an application reference number, your name and DOB, and a bar code.
 - You’ll also see a checklist of what you need to bring with you. **If you see additional items on the France-Visas checklist other than what you see on this Guidelines document, you should always bring those items.**

- ORIGINALS: 2 recent photographs in passport photo format.

- ORIGINAL + 1 PHOTOCOPY: **Original passport in good condition**, with a date of expiration at least 3 months after the end of the student’s proposed stay in the Schengen area, issued within the past 10 years and containing at least 2 blank pages. **Photocopy of the pages containing the passport holder’s personal data (“face page”).**
 - **Citizens of third countries:** (i) Passport in good condition, with a date of expiration at least 3 months after the end of the student’s proposed stay in the Schengen area, issued within the past 10 years and containing at least 2 blank pages. (ii) Photocopy of the pages containing the passport holder’s personal data plus photocopy of the pages containing the student’s proof of legal presence in the country (green card, visa, I-20 or other immigration

paperwork, etc.). Nationals of other countries must be in possession of a valid visa to re-enter the country where they study full-time after their program in France.

- COPY: The e-mail confirmation message (“Attestation”) from Campus France** if your home country requires the Campus France Application
 - This confirmation email will be sent to the email address used to create your Etudes en France account, and will have the subject line: USXX-XXXXX / Your Campus France file has been processed OR USXX-XXXXX / Etudes en France: l’instruction de votre dossier est terminée.

NOTE: This message should not be confused with the earlier message from Campus France notifying the student of the creation of their Campus France account, or with the message indicating receipt of payment.
- COPY: Receipt for payment issued by Campus France** if your home country requires the Campus France Application
- COPY: Pre-registration certificate generated by EEF-Pastel**
 - This PDF is generated when Campus France has processed your Etudes en France application.
 - Depending on your application type, this will be entitled ‘Confirmation d’acceptation’ or ‘Accord préalable d’inscription’.
 - To find this document, log-in to your Etudes en France account. From the Welcome page, click on your application tab (either ‘Not Yet Accepted’ or ‘Already Accepted’ depending on your application type), and click on 1 – Finalize the procedure. The PDF icon will be under the « Select a Program » section.
- ORIGINAL + 1 PHOTOCOPY: Proof of accommodation.**
 - o In most cases, ISEP students may submit their Letter of Acceptance from their host university in France, ISEP Letter of Certification and ISEP Contract (specifics of housing benefits) as proof of accommodation in France.
 - If proof of accommodation is not specifically noted in their Letter of Acceptance from the host university, students should also provide the confirmation documents from CROUS proving that they have registered for housing.
- ORIGINAL + 1 PHOTOCOPY: Proof of sufficient means of support.** *NOTE: The requirements below are for students applying from the U.S. If you are applying from another country contact your local consulate for their specific requirements.*
 - o **Copies of bank statements** (savings or checking) for the last 3 months showing full name of the account holder. Personal accounts only, no business accounts. It is a requirement that the bank statements contain a monthly minimum of 615€ x the number of months you are planning on staying in France. Provide all the pages of the bank statement, not just the first one.
 - If the account is not the student’s but rather that of a parent, guardian or other sponsor, they must complete, sign and have notarized a [Financial Guarantee for Student Visa](#) form. The original of this form should be submitted with a copy of the sponsor’s driver’s license.
 - o If the student receives financial aid and/or a scholarship at their home university, they may instead submit a **letter from the university’s financial aid office** that shows the estimated cost of attendance (outbound tuition fee charged by your home university for ISEP Exchange, or the ISEP Direct fee) and the total financial aid awarded. The letter must explicitly state that difference between the financial aid amount and the cost of attendance is least 615€ per month of stay in France.
- COPY: A copy of the student’s official acceptance letter from the host university in France**, addressed to the student and mentioning their full name, printed on institutional letterhead, specifying the exact dates (day, month, year) of the academic program, and including full contact information for the individual issuing the offer or acknowledgment, as well as the full address of the educational institution, and be signed and stamped.
 - o *NOTE: The university address listed on this letter may serve as the student’s temporary address in France for the purposes of the visa application.*
- ORIGINAL + 1 PHOTOCOPY: [French immigration \(OFII\) form](#)** (only for students applying for the VLS-TS visa)

- ORIGINAL: An **airline reservation** showing date of departure from France or a handwritten and legible statement from the applicant indicating the intended date of departure, as well as a formal commitment not to depart before that date. It is not possible to modify the dates on a visa once the application is made.
- Visa Processing fee** (nonrefundable). The visa processing fee is 50 € as of October 2023. Check the FranceVisas information for your home country to verify the fee amount and payment procedures, as the fee and the rate of exchange changes frequently and can vary depending on where you are applying for your visa.
- Mailing envelope** if applicable. Check the FranceVisas information for your home country to verify whether it is an option to have your completed visa and passport returned via mail and the preferred shipping method.
 - Do not use metered postage – certified mail or shipping service (Certified USPS, UPS, FedEx, etc.) only. The Embassy or Consulate General is not responsible for lost items during shipping.
- U.S. Students ONLY: **Service fees collected by VFS** when you submit your application to the external service provider. The basic service fee is 31.50 € as of October 2023.*

STOP - IMPORTANT NOTES FOR U.S. STUDENTS:

*U.S. students applying for the French student visa will submit their visa applications at one of nine Visa Application Centers across the U.S. (Washington D.C., Boston, New York City, Atlanta, Houston, Miami, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco) rather than at the local Consulate. Students **MUST** apply for the visa in-person but can schedule a visa appointment at any one of the nine Visa Application Centers, regardless of their state of residence. Appointments will be made via the France-Visas website.*

*It is strongly recommended that students begin their visa process at the **earliest possible time** in the event of unforeseeable delays. The in-person visa application appointment can occur no sooner than 90 days before the departure date, but students should schedule their appointment for a date for at least a month (30 days) prior to their departure to France. Students may start to collect required documents and begin the online Campus France and FranceVisas applications immediately and can submit the Campus France application as soon as they have received the official acceptance letter from their host university in France.*

At the end of the France-Visas process an acknowledgment letter along with a checklist of required supporting documents will be displayed. Save and print the letter and checklist. Assemble your documents in the order listed on the checklist. Your visa application form will be available for printing - save and print a copy. The page indicating how to book an appointment will then be displayed; click on the link to VFS Global appointment booking module to make your appointment.

STEP 4: Once in France

VLS-TS visa-holders will have to complete the OFII process. The steps will generally be explained during your onsite orientation or contact your host coordinator to help you navigate the process. Long stay visa holders who need to complete the OFII process will have to register with the French Office of Immigration and Integration (OFII) within a few days of arrival in France. Students will register their arrival [online](#), pay the € 60 fee, and submit any required paperwork.

Students who choose to go through the OFII procedure are expected to limit their travel to the Schengen area after their first 90 days in France if they have not yet received their OFII vignette.

- 1) If you wish to travel outside of France but within the Schengen zone: a valid multiple-entry long stay visa will suffice to travel in the [Schengen Area](#).*
- 2) If you wish to travel outside of France and the Schengen zone or return to your home country:
 - A. Within the first three months of your arrival in France, travel is authorized without the OFII sticker or proof of paperwork submission (“*attestation de dépôt de dossier*”) provided you have a valid multiple-entry long stay visa

B. Beyond three months, the OFII sticker is mandatory or, in its absence, proof that you have submitted your paperwork to the OFII ("*attestation de dépôt de dossier*") to leave France. If you have not submitted your paperwork to the OFII in the indicated timeframe (3 months), you will need to apply for another long stay visa in your home country.

Please note that you should consult your local OFII and your host coordinator to verify the correct process and documents necessary for registration upon arrival.

***A Note Regarding the Schengen Area**

France is a member of the Schengen area. Students should review the [important regulations](#) that dictate travel and visas within the Schengen area.

Current Schengen signature countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland. *Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Republic of Ireland, Romania and, most notably, the United Kingdom are NOT part of the Schengen zone.*