



# identità

## Central Visa Unit Student Visa Guidelines

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**Table of Contents:**

*01 Changes in the Visa Process* ..... 3

*02 Benefits* ..... 4

*03 Booking/Appointment System*..... 5-6

*04 Courier Services*..... 7-8

*05 Passport Photo Specifications* ..... 9

*06 FAQs*..... 10-12

## 01 Changes in the Visa Process

Updates that Identità has made to the study visa application process, including the introduction of the new "Standard/Extended Service" system.

### 1. Short-term student (less than 90 days) - no changes to the procedure:

Countries requiring a pre-arrival study visa	Students can book and pay for their course for less than 90 days and follow the current visa application procedure outlined by their country.
Countries with 90-day visa exemption	Students can book and pay for their course for less than 90 days and enter Malta as a student with a simple booking confirmation and school letter.

**Note:** The normal student visa extension process applies if the student decides to extend their studies in Malta.

<https://identita.gov.mt/central-visa-unit-extension-of-stay-in-malta-requirements/>

### 2. Long-term student (105+ days) – Standard/Extended Service (New Procedure):

Countries requiring a pre-arrival study visa as of 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2024	<p>A long-term study visa is required for stays of 105+ days.</p> <p>Prior to arrival, students must apply for a long-term visa.</p> <p>This process can be completed by the school, student, or agent through the VFS Global website. The visa process usually takes 4-8 weeks from the time of application submission and incurs a cost of €100 or €150 (appointment fee) plus VFS administration fees which must be paid upon submission of documentation.</p> <p><b>A checklist of required documents is provided - attached.</b></p>
Countries with 90-day visa exemption as of 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2024	

**Note:** Rescheduling or cancellation of appointments is not allowed.  
 The visa fee, once paid, is not refundable.

## 02 Benefits of Applying for a Long-Stay Visa (Before arrival)

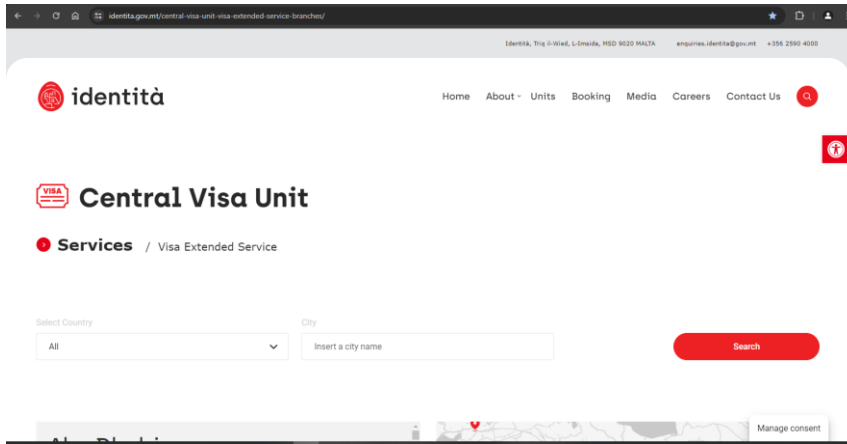
- **Expansion of the visa market:** Streamlining the student visa process creates an opportunity to add more countries in the application process for study periods longer than 105 days.
- **Immigration check:** Holders of long-stay visas enjoy freedom of movement to travel to other Schengen countries, provided that the general entry conditions are fulfilled. Students entering with a long-term study visa will have a reduced risk of being denied entry at the border of another Schengen country.
- **Travelling:** When entering with a long-term student visa, the 90-day visa exemption remains unused, allowing students to use those days as holidays after their student visa period ends. To use the 90-day visa exemption the student must leave the Schengen area upon visa expiry and re-enter.
- **Visa extension:** Students who are legally residing in Malta and have a valid visa may submit an application to the Central Visa Unit for an extension of their authorisation to reside in Malta (The course must be extended by a minimum of 8 weeks from the visa expiry date).

**Disclaimer:** A long-stay visa does not guarantee an automatic entry into the Schengen zone. Entry may be refused if the conditions of stay are no longer met, or if there is a risk of abuse of procedure.

### 03 Booking/Appointment System

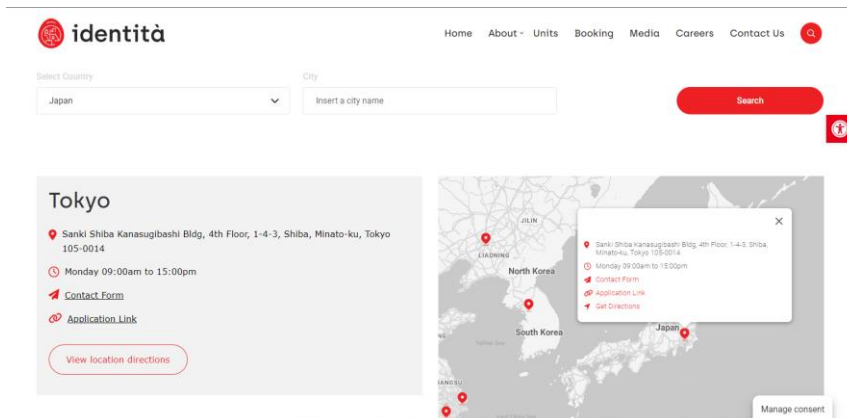
#### 1. Access the following link:

<https://identita.gov.mt/central-visa-unit-visa-extended-service-branches/>

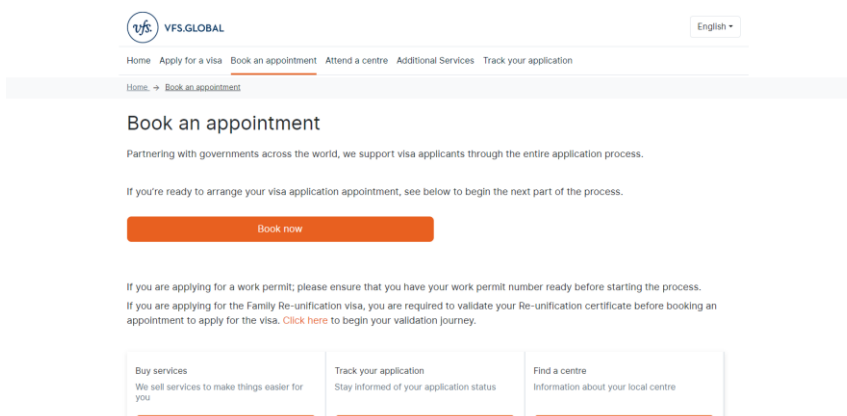


#### 2. Select the respective country and click on search.

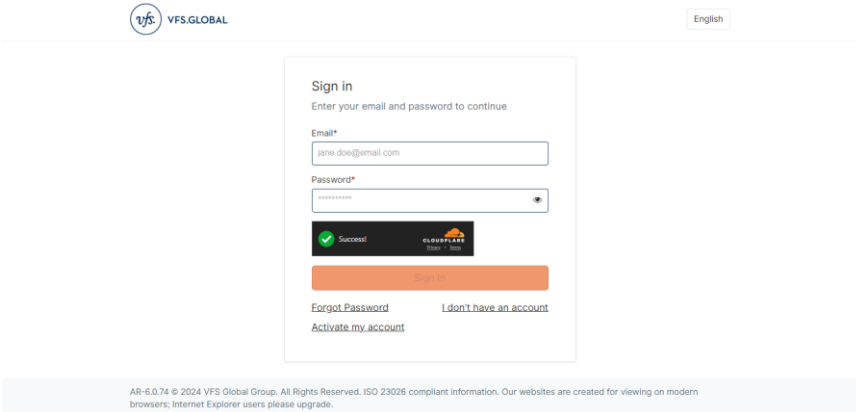
#### 3. Click on the application link.



#### 4. Click on *book an appointment* and *book now*.



**5. You will be redirected to the following page. Create an account and login with your credentials.**



The screenshot shows the VFS Global website's sign-in page. At the top left is the VFS Global logo and 'VFS.GLOBAL' text. At the top right is a language selector set to 'English'. The main content is a 'Sign in' form with the instruction 'Enter your email and password to continue'. It contains two input fields: 'Email\*' with the placeholder 'jane.doe@email.com' and 'Password\*'. Below the password field is a 'Sign in' button. A green success message with a checkmark and the text 'Success!' is visible above the button. Below the button are three links: 'Forgot Password', 'I don't have an account', and 'Activate my account'. At the bottom of the page, there is a small copyright notice: 'AR-6.0.74 © 2024 VFS Global Group. All Rights Reserved. ISO 23026 compliant information. Our websites are created for viewing on modern browsers; Internet Explorer users please upgrade.'

- 6. A step-by-step guide on how to book an appointment is attached to this document.**
- 7. The students must go to the VFS office with their appointment letter, documentation, and passport.**

**NOTE:** Since the appointment letter will be issued based on the information provided by the applicant, it is imperative that all applicant details are entered accurately and without errors. If the information on the appointment letter and the passport do not match, the student might not be allowed to attend his appointment.

**Standard or Extended:** The only difference between Standard service and Extended service is the visa fee and appointment availabilities, while the visa processing time will remain the same.

**Standard service:** Costs €100 and the appointment will be available within three weeks from the date of the appointment.

**Extended service:** Costs €150 and appointments will be available on a day-to-day basis.

## 04 Courier Services

Applicants may choose to opt for the courier service, and send their passport via postal service, at an additional fee.

The courier service is currently available in the following countries:

1. Argentina
2. Brazil
3. Canada
4. Chile
5. Colombia
6. Japan
7. USA
8. Venezuela

ment Details 2 Your Details 3 Book Appointment 4 Services 5 Review

Choose your Application Centre\* 2 Centre(s)

Courier Submissions

Choose your appointment category\*

Long Term Extended

Choose your sub-category\*

Study

Earliest available slot for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Applicants is : 17-05-2024

Continue

### Procedure (must be carried out by the applicant)

1. Please ensure that you have received the confirmed VFS appointment letter and the visa payment confirmation.
2. Ensure that your documents are in order before starting the process. Keep your appointment letter (with visa payment fee confirmation) ready along with scanned copies of your application form and supporting documents.
3. **Applicants from Brazil** - Email all the documentation to [infomalta.sp@vfsglobal.com](mailto:infomalta.sp@vfsglobal.com) and mention the Visa type in the subject line. **With reference to all other countries, kindly click on the instruction links below.**
4. Once the documents are received by the VFS application centre officers; you will be asked to pay €150 service fee and a two-way mandatory courier fee (in local currency) to the VFS Bank account.
5. Once the payment confirmation has been received, the VFS officer will begin the vetting process and guide you through the application submission process until your application is complete and accurate.

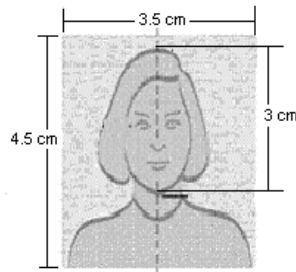
6. Your application will then be submitted to the Central Visa Unit, at Identità for further processing.
7. The process will take at least 4 weeks and not more than 8 weeks after the applicant submits a complete and accurate application.

<b>Country</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Instructions Link</b>
Argentina	Buenos Aires	<a href="https://visa.vfsglobal.com/arg/en/mes/apply-visa">https://visa.vfsglobal.com/arg/en/mes/apply-visa</a>
Brazil	Sao Paulo	<a href="https://visa.vfsglobal.com/bra/en/mes/apply-visa">https://visa.vfsglobal.com/bra/en/mes/apply-visa</a>
Canada	Vancouver	<a href="https://visa.vfsglobal.com/can/en/mes/apply-visa">https://visa.vfsglobal.com/can/en/mes/apply-visa</a>
Chile	Santiago De Chile	<a href="https://visa.vfsglobal.com/chl/en/mes/apply-visa">https://visa.vfsglobal.com/chl/en/mes/apply-visa</a>
Colombia	Bogota	<a href="https://visa.vfsglobal.com/col/en/mes/apply-visa">https://visa.vfsglobal.com/col/en/mes/apply-visa</a>
Japan	Osaka	<a href="https://visa.vfsglobal.com/jpn/en/mes/apply-visa">https://visa.vfsglobal.com/jpn/en/mes/apply-visa</a>
USA	Washington	<a href="https://visa.vfsglobal.com/usa/en/mes/apply-visa">https://visa.vfsglobal.com/usa/en/mes/apply-visa</a>
Venezuela	Caracas	<a href="https://visa.vfsglobal.com/ven/en/mes/apply-visa">https://visa.vfsglobal.com/ven/en/mes/apply-visa</a>



## 05 Passport Photos Specifications

Applicants are requested to submit 2 passport-size photos as specified by the **ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization)**



- Use plain light-white background.
- The photo must be no more than 6 months old.
- Picture should not be tilted (portrait style) showing both edges of the face clearly.
- Close up of the head and top of the shoulders so that the face takes up 70–80% of the photograph.
- The person photographed must have a neutral expression and keep their mouth closed.
- The eyes must be open and clearly visible.
- Photo in sharp focus and clear.
- The photo must be printed on high-quality, high-definition paper.
- The photo must show the person alone, with no other objects or people in the background.
- The picture dimensions must be 240 pixels wide by 320 pixels high at least. A smaller picture will be rejected. For instance, a photo being 235 pixels by 320 pixels is not valid.
- On the other hand, the photo should keep a proportion of 3.5 cm x 4.5 cm (width x height) within limits. However, a 250 x 340 pixels picture would be valid, but not 290 x 340 pixels one.
- Finally, the image weight (size in Kbytes) can never be bigger than 120 Kbytes.
- Photos resolution should be 300 dpi.

**Photos with a headdress are not permitted unless justified by religious reasons; in this case, the contours of the face must be clearly shown, from the base of the chin to the forehead, along with both sides of the face.**

## 06 FAQs

### 1. Does a student have to apply for a long-term visa if they book a long-term course?

Yes, if a student books a course lasting more than 105 days, they must apply for a long-term study visa before arrival.

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### 2. Can a non-visa-exempt student apply for a visa through a Maltese Mission after the 1st of March 2024?

No, all appointments made after the 1st of March 2024 must be processed using Identità's new system.

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### 3. If a student has his visa application refused, can he appeal the decision?

Yes, the student can appeal the visa decision. One may access the following link for information about the appeal process.

<https://identita.gov.mt/central-visa-unit-sec-page-visa-appeals-procedure/>

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### 4. Will return flight tickets still be requested?

For courses longer than 6 months (180 days) return flight tickets are not requested.

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### 5. What is the financial proof that the student must provide when applying for a student visa?

€26 per day – when the student provides us with an accommodation that has not been paid for the whole duration of the course, such as lease agreements (paid monthly);

€18 per day – when the student provides us with paid accommodation covering the whole duration of the course, such as school accommodation.

**If a student provides accommodation through an online platform for the first 14 nights, the daily rate needs to be calculated at €26.**

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### 6. In case a student gets a job offer in the first 4 weeks, will he/she be allowed to work?

Students are allowed to work for a maximum of 20 hours per week once their employment license is issued by JobsPlus.

## **7. Do students from visa-exempt countries have to attend their visa interview at the VFS office?**

Interviews are currently being conducted at the VFS office or online, via Microsoft Teams.

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## **8. Is it possible for students from visa-exempt countries who will be attending a course lasting more than 105 days, to apply for a visa while in Malta?**

All students following a course of more than 105 days must apply for a visa via the extended service, before arrival.

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## **9. Is the procedure the same for visa-exempt countries with no VFS offices?**

Students from visa-exempt countries with no VFS office, may enter with their exemption and apply for a visa upon arrival (**Identità cannot be held responsible if the applicants encounter any problems with border control in other Schengen countries**), or the student may travel to a neighbouring country and apply for a visa via the extended service. Premium service can be provided upon request on a case by case basis.

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## **10. What is the procedure for countries that require a visa to enter the Schengen area and do not have a VFS office in their country?**

Identità may provide other services on a case-to-case basis. Applicants may also travel to a neighbouring country and apply for a visa via the extended service.

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## **11. What is the procedure for students who enter Malta with their visa exemption for a short-term course and wish to extend?**

The student must enter Malta with the intention to study a short-term course (minimum 8 weeks) and extend the course by a further 8 weeks to be eligible for a visa extension. It is important that both LOA's are submitted during the visa extension process.

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## **12. Are students allowed to book their appointment three months before the course commencement date?**

Yes, students may book their appointment up to six months before the course begins.

### **13. When is a student eligible to apply for a Study Permit?**

**MQF Level 4 & Below** – The student must apply for one consecutive year of visas before applying for the study Permit.

**MQF Level 5 & Over** – If the course duration is longer than six months the student can apply for a study permit upon arrival in Malta.