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Bilateral Mobility

Incoming Students – Campus Santiago de Compostela

Academic year 2023/24

The International Office (Oficina de Movilidad), in charge of managing your exchange procedure since you are nominated by your University of origin, welcomes you to the University of Santiago de Compostela. We will try to answer the most frequent questions about your mobility in this document; if you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at bilateral.exchange@usc.es. Our contact details, location and staff are available on this [link](#) but you are kindly requested to read carefully this guide and use it as your main source of information.

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1. Arriving in Santiago

Please check [here](#) how to arrive in Santiago through different transportation means. The city of Santiago de Compostela has an airport, as well as the nearby cities of [Vigo](#) and [A Coruña](#). Another good option is the international airport of [Oporto](#), in the North of Portugal.



2. The USC Campus in Santiago de Compostela



There are two USC Campus in Santiago de Compostela: **Campus Vida** (popularly known as Campus Sur, the International Office is located there) and **Campus Norte**. Both are open campus; they are part of the city and they appear signed with red numbers [here](#) (Campus Vida in the left of the map and Campus Norte in the right). You can walk from one to another in about 30 minutes.

That link also shows some buildings marked with purple numbers, that is our Historical Campus, some Faculties (Philosophy, Geography and History, Medicine and Odontology and Social Work School) are located there. On the bottom of the map you can find all the Faculties following the numbers.

3. Academic Calendar

You can check our academic calendar in [our website](#). The academic course is divided in two semesters: the first one goes from September to January and the second one, from January to June. The subjects taught in the first term are indicated with 1SG and the ones taught in the second term with 2SG under the column named *Period* in each [Degree](#). Please have this in mind to elaborate your learning agreement: you only can attend subjects taught during your exchange period.

We strongly recommend that you arrive one week prior to the beginning of the lectures. The acceptance letter will include a few days before and after the starting and finishing dates.

| Period | | Beginning | End |
|-------------------------|---|------------|------------|
| First semester | Classes | 11/09/2023 | 22/12/2023 |
| | Exams | 18/12/2023 | 05/02/2024 |
| Second semester | Classes | 29/01/2024 | 16/05/2024 |
| | Exams | 13/05/2024 | 17/06/2024 |
| <i>Recovery exams *</i> | <i>Exams (for classes from both 1st and 2nd semester)</i> | 13/05/2024 | 22/07/2024 |

*For courses not passed.

Master degrees may start a bit later year or a bit earlier in the second semester. If you have been accepted to take Master’s courses please check the dates on the programme’s site or ask us.

In addition, classes at the 4th year of Psychology, second semester, start two weeks earlier, (around the 15th January), so bear that in mind if you have chosen any of those classes.

The exams will be published in every [Faculty's](#) web, so you will have an orientation about the dates when you will be taking them according to the courses selected for the learning agreement. However, due to the more than possible modifications in your learning agreement, we suggest that you do not have into account the exam dates at this stage of the process, as you might attend different subjects once you are here. We do recommend that you stay in Santiago until the end of the exam period, so that we are sure you do not miss any of your exams.



4. Available courses

The courses you can attend are those taught during your exchange period (see [Academic Calendar](#)).

Some subjects are taught yearly and signaled with ANG under the column *Period*. If you are not going to be in the USC during the whole academic year, those subjects might not be available for you. Nevertheless, contact us to ask if it possible attending to those courses before adding them on the learning agreement. Follow the same advice in the case of subjects such as *Prácticas/Practicum/ Trabajo de fin de grado (dissertations)*, as it is usually not possible to take those programs.

5. Timetables

The timetables for the next academic year are usually publishes around May. You can check the [instructions to understand the timetables that we have in our website](#).

The existence of two Campus must be accounted in order to select the subjects, as you will need time to move from one to another. It is possible to combine subjects from different Grades and/or Faculties, although the more diversification you have, the more complicated can be elaborating a proper timetable.

The Degree subjects are divided in two groups of lessons: a group of *expositivas*- theoretical lessons in bigger groups - (CLE) and *interactivas* (CLI) - practical lessons in smaller groups to facilitate the students' participation. Both types are compulsory. By default, the groups are organized by alphabetical order according to the last names, but the international students can change groups very easily to adjust their timetable. Any inquiries relating to the class groups will be asked in the Faculty once you are here.



6. Documents needed and enrollment

The documents that you will upload to the online platform before coming are your **cover letter**, **passport**, **academic transcript** and **learning agreement** (signed by your home University coordinator(s)).

The learning agreement will be reviewed prior to your arrival, by your academic coordinator at USC, with whom you will meet after visiting us (we will inform you about your first visit to the USC some weeks prior to the start of the year). A month prior to your arrival our registration offices will enroll you at the classes signed in your Learning Agreement and they will send you an email with the copy of your enrollment, instructions to pay the student insurance and your username and password to access our digital services. Then you will be an USC student with access to all of the services available in the University (see [University Services](#))



7. Health insurance

The USC offers a compulsory health insurance, as we said in the welcome e-mail. There are three options to hire it:

- a) You can pay it [here](#), where the outlines of the policy can also be found. Please select the *University Students* option, *Universidade de Santiago de Compostela*, and follow the instructions. Once the payment is confirmed you will receive the policy document by e-mail. It should be enough for the Consulate proceedings. The payment can be done by bank transfer or credit card (Visa, Mastercard). Do not forget to **print out the receipt** of the payment; you will need it for your enrollment.
- b) You may pay it in advance with credit card. Around a month prior to your arrival you'll receive an email with a copy of your registration and the instructions to pay the insurance through our secure online system. In case you already pay it on the website just send us back the payment receipt.
- c) Paying it once you are in Santiago (You can do the payment at any Bank of Santander Office once you're in Spain)

This is a basic health insurance, but it is compulsory because it covers civil responsibility as well. The coverage is limited to Spain, so you cannot use it if you are travelling abroad. It is recommended to hire an additional good health insurance, with a greater coverage, especially if you need to apply for a student Visa, because our insurance not always is enough for some Embassies. In the same [website](#) you can get a Health insurance to complement the student's one, or you can pick any other company of your choosing.

8. Accommodation

Santiago is a small city full of students and many available houses. The USC has a [Residence Service](#) on Campus which offers some rooms for international students, although there are only a few vacancies. The conditions of the accommodation are indicated in the annual call for international students. If you would like to try to get a room, you should apply online. You can find the call in the “Access” menu at the Residences website.

In any case, the most common accommodation option among our students is in shared flats. The most popular area is the *Zona Nueva* or *Ensache*, a centric area that offers many services (shops, supermarkets, cafés...) located between the streets Romero Donallo, Rosalía de Castro and Hórreo [here](#) (area inside blue circle). It is an area very near to the Campus Sur and well communicated with the Campus Norte. The easiest way to find accommodation is the [Tablón de anuncios](#) of the University, where the students can announce their available rooms or you can ask for one. Another option, is contacting [ESN Santiago](#) (international students association), which offers a program to help you find accommodation.



We strongly advise you to spend some days in a hostel to personally see the different houses and meet your flatmates. Please, do not pay or sign anything prior to your arrival.

9. Languages: Galician and Spanish

Our official languages in Galicia, where we are, are Spanish and Galician (learn more [here](#)). Galician sounds very similar to both Spanish and Portuguese and it is the language of many people here and in any case, it is easy to understand after a few weeks if you pay a little attention. The University of Santiago de Compostela is a public entity and as such it has to represent its society and guarantee that their members can communicate in the language of their choice; that is, some lessons can be taught in Galician if the teacher chooses to do so. International students have then an opportunity to learn a new language, and if you would like to learn Galician more thoroughly, the Modern Languages Center offers a [course](#) for foreigners. Contact them if you want more information at



clm@usc.es. There are also semester courses in *Galician language, literature and culture* (the three courses at the bottom) in the [Degree in Galician Language and Literature](#) at the Philology Faculty.

Spanish courses for non-Spanish speakers

If you are also interested in studying Spanish in the Modern Languages Center, do not hesitate to contact them in clm@usc.es. The first course will cost 50€ and if you take more than one, the following will cost 100€ each.

When you complete initial the online registration with us you will be asked whether you will be attending a Spanish course. This is only for information purposes and in any case implies a reservation of the course. The proper registration for the level test and enrollment must be done through the [Modern Languages Center](#). The Center will activate a link in this [page](#) to register in this specific course **10 days before starting**. In the very same link you will find the information about the dates to the level tests and any other necessary details.

10. Services

- Modern Languages Center (<http://www.usc.es/en/servizos/clm/index.html> –n.39 in the map)
- Libraries of the University (there is one in every Faculty in addition to the libraries Biblioteca Xeral – num 16 in the map – and Concepción Arenal – n. 40 -).
Libraries Web <http://www.usc.es/gl/servizos/biblioteca/busc/centros/index.html>
- Sports Services (<http://www.usc.es/en/servizos/deportes/index.html> offices at n.51)
- Culture Services (<http://www.usc.es/en/servizos/cultura/index.html>) - Check the USC cultural agenda here (<http://www.usc.es/en/servizos/cultura/axenda/index.html>)

The University of Santiago de Compostela has an [Information Office](#) (OIU), at the second floor in the building number 55 in the map, where you can ask for general information about the University, and some student associations offer services for the international students. If it is of your interest to start to know the details about the student life here, you can visit their pages: [ESN Santiago](#) and [Erasmus Compostela Association](#).

Because of the pandemic, the information contained in this guide may be modified, if the national or regional authorities establish any regulation that may affect classes or mobility. We will inform you by email of any change.

We hope this document has helped you have a better idea of how your life will be in a while. If you need assistance or something is still not clear, please do not hesitate to contact the International Office. We will be more than happy to help!

[International Office – Oficina de Mobilidade](#)
[Universidade de Santiago de Compostela](#)