

Spain Work Visa — Highly Qualified Professional

Application & Post-Arrival Checklist

Employer-led via UGE-CE • 2026 requirements

For non-EU nationals with a Spanish job offer in a managerial, highly technical or specialist role. The employer usually drives the application through the UGE-CE, and it is one of the faster routes. (Standard employee permits — cuenta ajena — also exist for other roles.)

Key figures at a glance (2026)

Salary — technical / specialist	from ≈ €40,077 gross / year
Salary — executive / managerial	from ≈ €54,142 gross / year
Reduced threshold (under 30 / some SMEs)	from ≈ €30,500 gross / year
Processing at UGE-CE	≈ 20 business days
Consular visa fee (UK)	£555 for UK applicants where a consular visa applies
TIE residence-card fee	≈ €16

1. Documents (the applicant provides)

- ☐ Valid passport — with two blank pages
- ☐ National (type D) visa application form — if applying from abroad
- ☐ Recent passport-size photo — colour, white background
- ☐ Signed employment contract — meeting the salary threshold for the role
- ☐ Proof of qualifications or experience — a relevant degree, or equivalent professional experience for the role
- ☐ Criminal-record certificate (UK: ACRO) — apostilled and sworn-translated, issued within 90 days
- ☐ Signed declaration of no criminal record — for the last 5 years
- ☐ Private health insurance — or proof you will be registered with Spanish Social Security
- ☐ Proof of visa-fee payment — ≈ €80 where the consular visa applies

2. The employer provides

- ☐ Company registration and proof of activity — showing the business is genuine and trading
- ☐ The favourable HQP authorisation — obtained from the UGE-CE before the visa is issued
- ☐ Justification of the role and salary — meeting the highly-qualified criteria

3. After the visa is issued — next steps

- ☐ Enter Spain within the visa validity — if you applied via the consular route
- ☐ Apply for your TIE (residence card) — within 30 days of arrival — this also assigns your NIE
- ☐ Employer registers you with Social Security — from your first working day

- ☐ **Empadronamiento (padrón)** – at your local town hall
- ☐ **Beckham Law election** – file Modelo 149 within 6 months of Social Security registration – a significant tax saving for new arrivals
- ☐ **Open a Spanish bank account** – most banks accept passport plus padrón certificate
- ☐ **Exchange your UK driving licence** – within 6 months of becoming resident

Legalisation note: Foreign public documents need the Hague Apostille, and anything not in Spanish needs an official sworn (jurada) Spanish translation. Build in time – apostille and translation turnaround is the usual bottleneck.

Deadlines that catch people out

Criminal-record certificate	Must be less than 90 days old at submission
TIE residence card	Within 30 days of arrival in Spain
Beckham Law (Modelo 149)	Within 6 months of Social Security registration
UK driving-licence exchange	Within 6 months of becoming resident