



SPANISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE COURSE FOR CIVIL SERVANTS FROM THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN ONLINE EDITION 2023-2024

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Course name

Spanish as a Foreign Language Course for Civil Servants from the English-Speaking Caribbean, taught by the Department of Spanish for Foreigners of the Universidad de Chile (U Chile).

2. Chile – English-speaking Caribbean International Cooperation

This Call for Applications provides an opportunity to build technical capacities among professionals and technical staff from the countries invited to participate. The initiative is a result of the collaboration between the Chilean International Cooperation Agency for Development (AGCID) and the Universidad de Chile, and is an example of Chile's commitment to the Caribbean region.

To that end, the South-South Cooperation programme promotes technical and professional knowledge sharing that seeks to strengthen the development of countries according to their own characteristics and needs, and is aligned with meeting the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfilling the 2030 Agenda. In this regard, AGCID, in collaboration with different institutions of higher education and other organisations, has led the Chilean initiative to create opportunities for academic and technical cooperation that directly relate to the needs and diverse yet unique realities of the Americas.

In view of the above, this academic programme has been developed through a partnership between AGCID and the Universidad de Chile for the purpose of providing the English-speaking Caribbean region with the support necessary for civil servants from these countries to learn and develop Spanish as a second language. It is aimed primarily at civil servants working within the public sector who need to improve their Spanish skills.

3. Background

The Government of Chile, through the Chilean International Cooperation Agency for Development (AGCID), promotes a cooperation policy that extends to the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as to Asia and Africa, and is implemented through the Human Capital Development component of the South–South Cooperation Programme.

This year, the programme continues to offer scholarships to strengthen the knowledge and skills of professionals from Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, with the express purpose of developing and improving their Spanish oral and written comprehension and expression skills, through a collaborative and interactive approach.

4. Course objectives

This edition of our Spanish as a Foreign Language international courses is designed for civil servants with or without previous knowledge of the language, who hail from one of the English-speaking Caribbean countries specified in the current Call for Applications.

The primary objective of these courses is to develop the appropriate communication and socio-cultural skills needed to successfully interact in Spanish, in both social and professional settings and according to one's level of proficiency.

The specific objectives for each of the proficiency levels offered will be described in the course programmes, once participants have undergone the diagnostic assessment process.

5. Expected outcomes

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- Verbally interact in social and professional settings at a proficiency level consistent with the course they have taken.
- Understand different simple written texts that use the language in context.
- Use simple phrases and expressions to write about basic issues using the language in context.
- Grasp social and cultural concepts that are important in intercultural communications.

6. Reasons to take the course

- To communicate effectively in a foreign language, specifically in Spanish, in cultural and economic exchange contexts.
- To learn Spanish vocabulary specific to professional/work contexts.
- To acquire different communication and learning strategies that are useful in interactions with individuals whose first language is Spanish.
- To interact with native teachers and learn about the culture first hand.

7. Course description

The programme will offer a total of six courses organised into two proficiency levels (Beginners' and Advanced levels) and taught in three divisions, one for each of the following embassies and their respective offices of the diplomatic missions of Chile: i) Guyana; ii) Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis and St. Lucia; and iii) Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname.

Country with a Chilean Embassy	Participating Missions	Number of Courses
Guyana	–	2 (Beginners' and Advanced levels)
Jamaica	Antigua and Barbuda Bahamas Dominica Saint Kitts and Nevis Saint Lucia	2 (Beginners' and Advanced levels)
Trinidad and Tobago	Barbados Grenada Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Suriname	2 (Beginners' and Advanced levels)

Two courses will be offered for each country: a Beginners' level, for students with no previous knowledge of Spanish; and an Advanced level, designed for students who demonstrate previous knowledge of the language. For the Advanced course, the level will be determined more precisely once the participants have each completed a diagnostic assessment, so we can offer a course that best fits the entrance proficiency of the participants.

Each course is designed for a maximum of 20 participants. Drop-outs in the first four weeks of the Beginners' course and in the first six weeks of the Advanced course may be filled by new students who have participated in the initial pre-selection process. After this period, no new students will be permitted to join and the courses will continue with the remaining participants. This is to ensure they benefit appropriately from the learning processes.

The courses will be held in a synchronous online format via Zoom, at a time that suits the availability of each country and of the selected participants. To facilitate classes and improve distance learning, the Universidad de Chile's "U-Cursos" digital platform will be used to support teaching. Participants will be able to find audio-visual and other materials on the platform, as well as their records of attendance and grades. Participants will be shown how to use the platform in the first class of each course.

8. Contents

The specific contents and development of each proficiency level will be described in the respective course programmes once participants have completed the diagnostic assessment

process. What follows are the learning outcomes expected to be achieved at the end of the courses.

Beginners' course

- Identify people, places and things
- Describe people, places, things and states
- Compare people, places, things, actions and situations
- Express likes and preferences
- Express wants and needs
- Refer to habitual actions and actions in the present tense
- Express and ask opinions about someone or something
- Express and ask for agreement and disagreement
- Refer to the past
- Express plans and intentions

Advanced course

The specific contents and lessons for the Advanced courses will be adjusted based on the results of the diagnostic assessment of all applicants to the courses.

- Narrate events in the past
- Give directions and describe locations
- Give instructions for activities
- Indicate procedures
- Give recommendations and suggestions
- Assess experiences
- Express opinions and arguments on different topics
- Express the consequences of problems and everyday situations
- Express emotions and moods related to a fact, information or situation
- Express and ask about possibilities

Likewise, participants will receive the proposed schedule once their proficiency levels have been determined and the exact dates of the course have been confirmed.

9. Academic staff

Prof. Claudia Flores Figueroa

Prof. Moisés Llopis i Alarcón

Prof. Lucas Araya Araya

Prof. Ingrid Núñez Vásquez

If any of these professors is unavailable at the time of the courses, he/she will be replaced by another professor from the Department of Spanish for Foreigners of the Universidad de Chile.

10. Duration

The Spanish as a Foreign Language courses for public sector civil servants from the English-speaking Caribbean are programmed to begin 15 April 2024 and run to 28 June 2024. This edition is 100% online, with one week of in-person classes expected to take place in the second half of July in the participating countries, subject to the availability of the professors.

The academic programme requires 40 hours of synchronous class work through Zoom (distributed in two sessions of 1.5 hours each), plus 20 hours of asynchronous, out of class hours work by students, which will consist of the preparation of exercises, assignments and individual study hours.

11. Methodology

Each course follows a communicative methodology that includes the use of various didactic techniques, such as working with peers, oral presentations, role playing, written assignments (short essays), conversations, grammar reviews, listening and pronunciation exercises using audio and video source materials, etc.

The course will be taught remotely via Zoom and with the use of the Universidad de Chile's U-Cursos platform, which will serve as the official communication channel between professors and students, as well as the repository for the academic materials. Students will have access to the course contents via the virtual platform.

The classes will be taught via live synchronous sessions that will take place in the afternoons on a weekly basis (Monday to Thursday, from 18:00 to 19:30 or from 19:30 to 21:00, Chilean time GMT-3, depending on the level and distribution of the participants by invited country). Students must be available to connect to the synchronous sessions, which will be hosted by the professor in charge of the course.

12. Language

The course will be taught entirely in Spanish.

13. Evaluation method

Each course includes written and oral exercises to evaluate students' progress towards achieving the course objectives. At the end of each course, students will take an oral and a written exam to assess their proficiency in the communication skills corresponding to each level.

Each student will receive a digital certificate of completion of the course (for the level completed), provided they meet the following requirements:

- Minimum course attendance of 85% (or less, with justification)
- Final grade point average of 4.0 or higher*

– *The grading scale ranges from 1.0 (lowest grade) to 7.0 (highest grade); the minimum grade required to pass the course is a 4.0, which translates to 60%.

The digital certificates of completion will be issued by the Faculty of Philosophy and Humanities of the Universidad de Chile.

14. Scholarships and funding

The programme will finance:

- The tuition and programme fees.
- The digital certificate for the Spanish as a Foreign Language Course for Civil Servants from the English-Speaking Caribbean.

15. Application requirements

The course is intended for individuals who meet the following requirements:

- Civil servants at different levels of government; professionals in NGO or international organisations; or general professionals working in the field of public policy or its management.
- It is preferable that applicants work in public institutions where they have to interact in Spanish as part of their duties.
- They must have the institutional sponsorship of their employer.
- They must be appointed by their respective government in accordance with the procedure outlined in Section 18 below.
- They must have access to the internet to attend the online classes on the dates and hours established for the course.
- They must hold citizenship in one of the countries invited to the course and reside in that country.

16. Invited countries

The governments of the following countries will be invited to submit applicants to the international courses: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

17. Total number of students

The maximum total number of participants in the courses is 120, divided into 6 courses. However, to ensure course enrolment is met, it is expected that a maximum of 140 individuals will be evaluated during the application process and diagnostic assessment.

18. Application and selection process

Those who are interested in participating in the course must submit the application containing all

of the required information (including all signatures and respective stamps) in digital format via email to the Embassy of Chile in their respective country (see Annex IV) for it to be officially registered. The following documents must be presented:

- 1) Application form (Annex I), with all of the requested information duly completed and signed by the applicant as well as by his/her direct supervisor.
- 2) Applicant's Letter of Commitment (Annex II).
- 3) Labour Certificate (Annex III).

19. Diagnostic assessment

Before the courses begin, each applicant will participate in an online diagnostic assessment to determine his/her oral and written comprehension and production skills in Spanish.

The diagnostic assessment will consist of an oral interview and a written test. Each participant will have to answer a written test via a Google Form to determine their Spanish written expression and comprehension skills, their lexical knowledge and their knowledge of the different grammatical structures of the language. The oral interview will consist of a 20-minute individual interview conducted with each participant over Zoom, which will also be used to learn about his/her field of work or professional activity and the time he/she has available to take the course. In addition, the oral interview will provide an opportunity to assess certain communication strategies, independent of language use, which will be addressed in the course.

The diagnostic assessments are compulsory for each participant, regardless of their initial declared level of Spanish proficiency, as the assessment also provides the opportunity to register each participant's initial proficiency level at the start of the course.

A total of approximately 140 participants will be assessed (although only 120 will participate in the courses). This will provide us with a list of potential participants in the event one of the original students is unable to continue to participate due to personal or work reasons or time constraints.

The dates and times of the diagnostic assessments will be arranged with the participants and take place during a period of time agreed with the Universidad de Chile. The results of the assessment will determine which course each participant will attend.

20. Application timeline:

Please refer to the following application timeline:

First Call for Applications

Stage	Date
First pre-selection of candidates and submission of application to the AGCID Platform (Focal Point)	Until 28 December 2023
First scholarship selection committee	10–12 January 2024

First publication of results and notification of accepted participants	1 February 2024
First diagnostic assessment period	09–31 January 2024

If spaces/slots remain in the courses, a second Call for Applications will be opened and the following timeline will apply.

Applications submitted in the first round will not be accepted in the second call for applications.

Second Call for Applications

Stage	Date
Second pre-selection of candidates and submission of application to the AGCID Platform (Focal Point)	Until 29 February 2024
Second scholarship selection committee	12–15 March 2024
Second publication of results and notification of accepted participants	29 March 2024
Second diagnostic assessment period	01–29 March 2024

21. Contacts

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