

D3 HQA: THE RESIDENCE VISA FOR HIGHLY SKILLED PROFESSIONALS

The HQA VISA is intended for third-country nationals wishing to obtain a residence permit in Portugal to teach at a higher education institution or to carry out a highly qualified or cultural activity.

The Applicant, in addition to his higher education diploma, must also have an employment contract of at least one year's duration and an annual salary of at least 1.5 times the average gross annual monthly salary (1,5x750€=1.125€) or three times the social support index value, which in 2023 was set at 480.43 euros, so the salary must be at least 1442.00 euros.

Whenever there is a doubt as to the nature of the activity and for the purposes of verifying the suitability of the applicant's professional experience, the ministries responsible for employment and education and science will issue a legal opinion prior to granting the visa.

The applicant should obtain a visa in order to enter Portuguese territory and obtain the corresponding residence permit.

The visa application must be made at the Portuguese Consulate of the respective country of citizenship or, failing that, at the Consulate that has jurisdiction over the applicant's country.

In this moment, the applicant can apply for a residence visa for their family members at the same time, under the residence permit for family reunification.

REQUIREMENTS

The Applicant must fulfil the following requirements:

- Contract for the provision of services or an employment contract for the exercise of a highly qualified activity.
- Proof of sufficient means of subsistence.
- Proof of registration with the Tax Administration and Social Security.
- Proof that the applicant has suitable accommodation.

Thus,

- The HQA Visa is valid for 4 months, and is valid for two entries in Portugal, for subsequent application for a residence permit.
- Within 90 days after arriving in Portugal, the applicant must apply for a residence permit at SEF.
- The temporary residence permit is valid for a period of 2 years as of the date of issue of the respective title and is renewable for successive periods of 3 years.
- Holders of a temporary residence permit can apply for a permanent residence permit after 5 years of legal residence in Portugal.

Rights of the residence permit holder:

- Access to education, teaching and vocational training, including allowances and scholarships.
- Access to health care, to law and courts.
- Travelling to other Schengen countries.
- Possible tax optimization through the non-habitual resident regime;
- Possibility of obtaining Portuguese nationality after 5 years.
- Family reunification.



Catarina Afonso Margarido
Lawyer