

# Education & Further Education In Portugal

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Portugal has several mainstream education options including state schools, private schools, (monitored) home schooling & most recently, bilingual.

It's perfectly understandable that any parent is going to worry about their children's education at any time & immensely more so when bringing them to a new country (probably) with a language that is new to them but the good news is children soak up new languages like a sponge soaks up water & the younger they start, the faster they learn & most children under 10 years of age will be reasonably fluent (for their age) within a year or so.

Class numbers in state schools tend to be relatively small & often even smaller in the more rural areas simply because of the dwindling populations in those areas.

Most, if not all state schools offer immense help & support including free, extra Portuguese language lessons to new immigrant children & such children are encouraged to integrate into the culture & population of their host country & most, if not all offer a range of extra curricular activities.

Entry into state schools is a relatively easy process & they can only refuse a place if they are full or if you do not live in their particular area. However, it is not unusual (and perfectly understandable) for new pupils to be held back a year for their first year to allow the school to assess their previous education standards.

Ordinary State schools teach all subjects in Portuguese simply because this is Portugal & English is taught as a foreign language from an early age & in some cases, pre-school or Junior School.

The bilingual School project is limited in numbers & areas but is now available within the realms of that criteria.

[https://www.dge.mec.pt/programa-escolas-bilinguesbilingual-schools-programme?fbclid=IwAR3z3-0nC1q1A7L65fqwTPY0qpdU2GxLQ\\_9Zv\\_bSpyWQULnylTeIsqq1VLA](https://www.dge.mec.pt/programa-escolas-bilinguesbilingual-schools-programme?fbclid=IwAR3z3-0nC1q1A7L65fqwTPY0qpdU2GxLQ_9Zv_bSpyWQULnylTeIsqq1VLA)

Private schools in Portugal are mostly based in or near the big cities & understandably tend to have more facilities but are relatively expensive & would usually require the student to sit an entry exam. For information of school fees you would obviously need to contact the school of choice directly.

There are also foreign & international schools in Portugal that teach in a more familiar language & there are also a number of (private) national schools that follow the national curriculum of that country which enables the student to

continue their education where they left off.

Homeschooling is legally allowed in Portugal but children are expected to sit set exams at set times & locations.

All children are required to be educated at least until 18 years of age & English, History, Geography, Portuguese (language), French, Natural Sciences, Physics, Chemistry, PE, IT & several other subjects are all mandatory & education stages are 6-10, 10-12 & 12-18 years of age & school changes for 10-18 years of age. From 15-18 it is likely the child will transfer to college or similar.

In the case of state schooling, parents are requested to enrol their children in the school nearest to them & students living in more rural areas usually are able to use a free school bus service to take them to & from school.

If the child's birthday was before 15<sup>th</sup> September then you should enrol him/her in the school of that school year & if after that day then you can request registration if you wish but probably best to consult that particular school about your particular child.

To enrol your child in a state school you will need:

ID card, passport or certificate from the Embassy of or from the country of origin.

Copy of previous educational records from previous country of residence & this may possibly be need to have a Portuguese translation.

Proof that the child has received all necessary vaccinations & tests etc & this may well require a visit to the local Centro De Saude.

Primary school pupils sit exams at the end of each year & may possibly be required to resit a year if it is felt necessary & exam grades are rated in a 1 to 5 categories with 1 being the lowest, 5 the highest & 3 an average & grade 3 & above is a pass mark.

Secondary school pupils are graded on a system of 0-20 points with 0 being the lowest & 20 the highest.

Higher education is not compulsory and is split into 2 basic systems with one being University & the other Polytechnic & fees are often payable & you need to check current costs for the individual situation.

The Erasmus program is sometimes available for some courses in some Universities/Polytechnics for some students & this offers either partly or wholly EU funded courses for those that qualify & are also sometimes available for students to study abroad.

Some Universities & Polytechnics teach some courses in non Portuguese languages including English & again, you need to check the individual situation.

Please also look at the info piece in the files section of this group entitled 'How To Get Your Children's school books.

Hopefully, this piece will serve as an introduction to the basics of education & higher education in Portugal but I'd advise you to research further if you feel the need simply because every situation is so different from every other one.