

Guidelines for International Students – by Eduitalia

In recent years, the process for obtaining a study visa for Italy has become more rigorous and requires greater attention from applicants. Recent changes — including the removal of prior notice of visa refusal and the introduction of mandatory biometric data collection (with some exceptions) — make it essential to be fully prepared from the very beginning.

This short guide outlines key recommendations to help you avoid common mistakes and delays.

Key Updates

No prior notice of refusal: if your application is incomplete or does not meet requirements, it may be rejected immediately.

Mandatory fingerprint collection: required for most applicants (except students from Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States).

How to prepare effectively

1. Submit complete documentation at your first appointment

Make sure your application is complete and accurate from the start.

Missing documents are one of the main causes of delays — and can now lead to immediate visa refusal.

2. Monitor the Prenot@mi portal of the consulate regularly

Appointment slots may fill up quickly, but:

new slots are added periodically

Mondays often see new availability

Check the system frequently to secure an appointment.

3. Avoid unnecessary emails to Visa Offices

Visa Offices handle a high volume of requests. To keep the process efficient:

avoid sending repeated emails

do not request updates if you already have an appointment

Excessive emails can slow down processing for everyone.

4. Plan passport return carefully

If you are required to submit your passport:

include a pre-paid return envelope

choose an express/overnight delivery service

This can significantly reduce waiting time for passport return.

5. Manage expectations about timing

Keep in mind that:

passports are often returned close to the start of courses

expediting the process is rarely possible, even when consulates are supportive

Plan your travel with flexibility.

6. Prepare a strong motivation letter

Although not legally required, a motivation letter is highly recommended:

it should be clear, consistent, and well-structured

especially important for applicants from countries with medium/high migration risk

A strong letter can improve your application.

7. Be aware of possible delays

Delays may occur:

in scheduling appointments

in visa issuance

Common causes include:

high application volumes

limited staffing at certain consulates

Start your application process as early as possible.

Final advice

Careful preparation, attention to detail, and adherence to procedures are essential for a successful visa application. By following these guidelines, you can minimize the risk of delays or refusal and prepare for your study experience in Italy with confidence.