



What Employers Should Know About Hiring International Students

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Great news for employers! International students who have F-1 status with training or work authorization are sponsored by their college/university. We hope you will find the information in this document helpful. Read on for more information about hiring international students with authorization for training and employment.

Getting permission for international students to work in the U.S. is not as difficult as you might think. Most international students are in the U.S. on non-immigrant student visas (F-1), and federal regulations permit the employment of international students on F-1 visas within certain limits.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) is defined as employment which is an integral part of an established curriculum, including: “alternate work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum.” CPT may be authorized by the institution for F-1 students participating in curricular-related employment before finishing their studies.

Students must have a written job offer in order to apply for CPT. WCU students must also be enrolled in a Practicum or Internship course. Authorization is indicated on the Form I-20 issued to the student and includes the name of the company, beginning and ending date, and signature of the Designated School Official (DSO).

Optional Practical Training (OPT) must be authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) based on a recommendation from the Designated School Official (DSO) at the school where the student is enrolled. Students are eligible for 12 months of OPT for each degree level. Students who obtain a degree in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) may be eligible for additional 24 months of OPT.

Pre-Completion OPT can be done prior to completion of study.

Post-Completion OPT can be authorized for up to 12 months, for full-time work after completion of the course of study.

STEM OPT Extension can be authorized for additional 24 months if student:

- 1) Is currently on post-completion OPT after completing a bachelor’s, master’s or doctoral degree in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), and
- 2) Has a job or job offer from an employer registered in [USCIS E-Verify](#) program.

Employment Authorization Document (EAD): Students who have received OPT authorization will be issued an EAD (a small photo identity card that indicates the dates for which they are permitted to work) by USCIS. Their name, photo and valid dates of employment are printed on the EAD.

International students with F-1 visa status must have work authorization before they begin working, but do not need it to be interviewed or offered employment. Many F-1 students will be in the process of obtaining work authorization while they are interviewing for employment. Students can give employers a reasonable estimate of when they expect to receive work authorization, but their actual start date will be dependent upon the date indicated on the EAD.

Please contact the CDC with any concerns you have about hiring international students from West Chester University. You may visit [USCIS](#) and the [STUDY in the STATES](#) web pages for additional information.

