INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISA REGULATIONS
A Cheat Sheet for Career and Internship Advisors

The Department of Cultural and Global Engagement has developed this resource to assist career advisors in understanding the immigration regulations governing international students' visa status. This guidance specifically applies to international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa sponsored by Quinnipiac University, and not to students in other non-immigrant or immigrant visa categories. If you have any questions about these regulations or specific student circumstances, please contact DCGE International Student Services for assistance.

Visa Types

F-1 Students: Students enrolled in a degree program in the U.S. Their visas are sponsored by Quinnipiac and the immigration document is the I-20.

J-1 Exchange Visitors: Semester exchange students and visiting scholars. Their visas are sponsored by Quinnipiac and the immigration document is the DS-2019.

Government Agencies & Terms

SEVIS: The Student Exchange Visitor Information System is a database used by the **Department of Homeland Security (DHS)** to collect, track, and monitor information regarding exchange visitors, international students, and scholars who enter the United States on F or J visas. All Quinnipiac international students have a SEVIS "record" which is managed by the **Designated School Officials (DSOs)** in the DCGE.

USCIS: **United States Citizenship and Immigration Services** is the agency that grants some employment authorization benefits to F-1 students such as OPT and STEM-OPT

Summary of Employment Options during Studies

Pre-Completion Options for F-1 Students

On-Campus Employment	- No special authorization needed for on-campus employers or vendors (Chartwells, Follett). - Must be part-time (less than 20 hours/week) during fall and spring semesters. - Can be full-time in winter or summer break. - Must be non-federal work-study positions.
Curricular Practical Training (CPT)	- Must be earning academic credit during term or hours must be required for degree completion. - Work/internship must be related to a student's program of study. - CPT is required for paid and unpaid off-campus positions, including clinicals or practicums. - Approved in SEVIS by DSO in the DCGE.
Employment Based on Severe Economic Hardship	- In extreme circumstances of unforeseen financial hardship (war, natural disasters, etc.), F-1 students may be eligible for this work authorization. - Requires application to USCIS ($410 fee and 1-3 month processing time) - Flexible employment types; Work outside of major permitted
Optional Practical Training (Pre-completion OPT)	- Requires application to USCIS ($410 fee and 1-3 month processing time) - Work must be "directly related" to major. Self-employment permitted. - Deducts from total 12 months of authorization - Must be part-time (less than 20 hours/week) during fall and spring semesters - Pre-completion OPT is rare; used in specific cases when CPT is not an option

Pre-Completion Options for J-1 Students

Academic Training	- Required employer or mentored training experience, paid or unpaid - Work "directly related" to major or program objective - Training approved in SEVIS by DSO in DCGE

All international student forms and resources are linked on the **International Student MyQ Page**

International Student Services
international.student@qu.edu
203-582-5215
CCE-190

Quinnipiac
Cultural & Global Engagement

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Summary of Employment Options after Studies

Post-Completion Options for F-1 Students

Optional Practical Training (Post-completion OPT)	• 12 months of work authorization in the U.S. per degree level. • Work must be "directly related" to major. • Must be full-time (more than 20 hours/week) • Students can have multiple jobs and can change jobs during OPT period • Can include volunteer positions, remote work, or self-employment (if company is licensed) • Start date of work authorization must be within 60 day of completion date • 90 days of unemployment allowed on OPT **Application Process:** • Students eligible to apply within 90 days of completion date (mid-February for May graduates) • Students first complete "OPT Online Training" Blackboard course and submit OPT Request Form signed by academic advisor to DCGE • DCGE issues OPT I-20 needed for application • Students must apply to USCIS online ($410 fee and 1-3 month processing time) • Students receive an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card
STEM OPT	• 24-month extension of OPT (Optional Practical Training) that is available to students in F-1 status who completed a degree program in a government-approved list of STEM fields. • The STEM OPT extension begins the day after the Post-Completion OPT EAD expires. • Work must be "directly related" to the STEM-eligible field of study • Must be full-time (more than 20 hours/week) and paid • The employer must be enrolled in E-Verify and complete the I-983 Form: Training Plan for STEM OPT Students **Application Process:** • Students eligible to apply within 90 days of post-completion OPT end date. • Students submit STEM OPT Request Form and supporting documents to DCGE • DCGE issues STEM OPT I-20 needed for application • Students must apply to USCIS online ($410 fee and 1-3 month processing time) • Students receive an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card

Post-Completion Options for J-1 Students

Academic Training	• Required employer or mentored training experience, paid or unpaid • Work "directly related" to major or program objective • Training approved in SEVIS by DSO in DCGE • Must start within 30 days of program completion date

Additional Resources:

• **Study in the States: Training Opportunities in the United States**
• **USCIS Optional Practical Training (OPT) for F-1 Students**
• **Eligible CIP Codes for the STEM OPT Extension**