



OPTIONAL PRACTICAL TRAINING

Initial Post-completion OPT

Students on F-1 Visa - SEVIS Process

The term “optional” refers to your option as far as when to use part of or all of your maximum 12 months of practical training. Optional practical training is defined as a work experience directly related to your field of study.

The 12-month limit is for each degree level. In other words, you get an additional 12 months if you move from a Bachelor's degree to a Master's degree or from a Master's to a Ph.D. Under certain circumstances you can also apply for a one-time 17 month extension of your OPT. Your degree must be a Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) degree and the employer must be what is known as an E-Verifier.

Who Can Apply

Post completion optional practical training must be full-time. F-1 students who have maintained their F-1 status and who have been in F-1 status for one academic year and who have completed all the coursework required for their degree are eligible. (Students completing thesis or dissertation can apply during their last year of study) In order to maintain F-1 status you must:

1. keep your passport valid at all times,
2. attend the school you are authorized to attend,
3. continue to pursue a full course of study unless authorized by the Director of International Students and Scholars for less than full-time,
4. follow procedures for moving from one educational program to another and school transfer and
5. refrain from unauthorized employment.

When to Apply

The application for post-completion OPT can be submitted up to 90 days prior to the completion of your program and no later than 60 days after the completion date. The start date of the OPT can be no later than 60 days after the completion of your program.

How to Apply

Application for the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) should be submitted by certified mail to the USCIS Service Center in Vermont.

Make sure to follow these step-by-step instructions.

1. Complete the WPI request for OPT recommendation (attached).
2. Complete form I-765 (attached).
3. Address in the US.

The local US Postal Service will not deliver US government mail if they are not completely certain that the individual lives at the address. The address you supply must be a valid address that you will have for at least four months and your name must be on the mailbox. Also note that the local US Postal Service will not forward US government mail. If you move subsequent to your filing the application and do not notify the Service Center, the card will be returned to the Center by the post office. It is your responsibility to notify the Vermont Service Center in the event of an address change.

4. Note: #16 must be completed (c) (3) (B).

Bring your OPT request and the completed I-765, to the Director of International Students and Scholars with the following additional documents:

1. All previously issued I-20's
2. Passport
3. I-94 Card
4. \$340.00 fee, check or money order payable to the Department of Homeland Security (DO NOT abbreviate the name). They will NOT accept cash.
5. Two (2) full-frontal passport photos. Photos for the card should be purchased from a professional photographer. A list of local photographers is available at the International House.

The Director of the Office of International Students and Scholars will review your application, make all necessary copies, issue a SEVIS I-20 Form with the OPT recommendation, and mail it to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services. Your Receipt Notice and EAD card will be returned to you at the address you put on the I-765 form.

For students applying for Optional Practical Training, the Office of International Students and Scholars will charge a \$5.00 processing fee to cover certified mail postage, copying, etc.



Post-Completion Optional Practical Training Request Form

The term "optional" refers to your option as far as when to use part of or all of your maximum 12 months of practical training. Optional practical training is defined as a work experience directly related to your field of study.

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

LAST Name: _____ FIRST Name: _____

WPI ID Number: _____ Major/Department: _____

Degree: BS _____ MS _____ Ph.D. _____ Expected completion date: _____

Proposed employment for Optional Practical Training (describe functions you anticipate to carry out):

Employment must be directly related to your major area of study.

Beginning date: _____ Ending date: _____
mm/dd/yyyy mm/dd/yyyy

OPT Employer if known: _____

Address: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Please be aware that it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to inform the International House of ANY CHANGES in your employment situation.

Student Signature

Date

For WPI use ONLY

OPT Recommended and I-20 Form issued:

Date: _____/_____/_____

Mailed to VSC by International House:

Date: _____/_____/_____

OPT Application given to student for mailing:

Date: _____/_____/_____

Student has received handout about OPT obligations:

Date: _____/_____/_____



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Information for WPI Students on Optional Practical Training

While on Optional Practical Training (OPT) you remain in F-1 non-immigrant status and you must have a valid I-20 form and a valid I-94 card with the D/S notation. If traveling while on OPT, you must have your Employment Authorization Document (EAD Card), your I-20 form and proof of employment in order for you to re-enter the US in your F-1 OPT status. You will also need to make sure your F-1 visa is still valid. If your visa has expired, you can apply for a new F-1 visa from a US Consulate abroad with the same documentation as mentioned above.

Initial 12 month OPT

While on your initial 12 months of post-completion OPT you are required to report the following information to the International House. (ih@wpi.edu)

- any change of address
- name and address of your OPT employer (if no employer was identified when you applied for your OPT)
- any change in employment such as change of employer, interruption of employment.

17 month OPT extension

If you are on your 17-month OPT extension, you are required to report to the International House (ih@wpi.edu) within 10 days of any change of:

- legal name
- residential or mailing address
- employer name
- employer address, and/or
- loss of employment.

In addition, you must make a validation report to the International House (ih@wpi.edu) every six months starting from the date the extension begins. The validation is a confirmation that your name and address, employer name and address, and/or loss of employment are current and accurate. The report is due to the International House within 10 business days of each reporting date.

Limited Periods of Unemployment to Maintain Status

- During post-completion of OPT, F-1 status is dependent upon employment.
- Students may not accrue an aggregate of more than 90 days of unemployment during any post-completion OPT carried out under the initial post-completion OPT authorization.
- Students granted a 17-month OPT extension may not accrue an aggregate of more than 120 days of unemployment during the total 29-month OPT period.