

## Definitions of Commonly Required Evidence

Below is a list of commonly required evidence for adjudication of an initial certification, petition update or recertification. THIS IS NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST. Schools may be required to submit additional evidence or information, which will be outlined in any Request for Evidence sent to the school. Please provide an explanation for any submission of evidence outside to the listed guidelines below.

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#### **1. Attendance Policy**

- A detailed statement outlining the school's attendance policy. For many schools, the attendance policy may be found in the school catalog. If the attendance policy is located within the institution's catalog, please note where in the catalog it can be found. If the attendance policy is not included within the catalog, provide documentation outlining the policy.

#### **2. Complete Signed Form I-17**

- A COMPLETE Form I-17, "Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student," with I-17A. The Form I-17 must include signatures as follows:
  - i. Form I-17 signed by the President/Owner/Head of School

- ii. Form I-17 A Designated Official block signed by all P/DSO(s)  
**Note** - Instructions to print: For updates petitions, the Form I-17 and all attachments can be printed by logging onto SEVIS and selecting the “Print I-17 Form” radio button  
**Note:** For Initial Certification Draft versions of the Form I-17 are not accepted.

### 3. **Designated School Officials**

- For Initial petitions:  
**Submit ONE of the following for each P/DSO as proof of citizenship or Lawful Permanent Residence (LPR):**
  - a. U.S. passport (current or expired);
  - b. U.S. birth certificate or birth certificate card;
  - c. Alien registration card;
  - d. Naturalization/citizenship certificate.
    - i. If the proof of U.S. citizenship or LPR contains names other than those listed on the Form I-17 A, “Record of Designated School Officials,” a copy of the court-order(s) granting the P/DSO name change(s), (e.g., marriage or divorce certificate) must be submitted.
    - ii. **SEVP WILL NOT ACCEPT** driver’s licenses, hospital birth records, or social security cards.
- For Certified schools - Refer to the posted guidance on Updating School Officials: <https://www.ice.gov/doclib/sevis/pdf/factSheetDsoSubmissions.pdf>

### 4. **Evidence in Lieu of Accreditation**

For more information regarding the Evidence in Lieu requirements please reference: [SEVP Policy Guidance S1.2: Evidentiary Requirements for Schools Not Meeting Eligibility Criteria in 8 CFR 214.3 \(b\) and \(c\)](#)

#### **A. Non-Accredited Post-Secondary Programs (F Classification):**

A minimum of three (verifiable) pieces of evidence that fulfill the criteria listed in “a” or “b” below are required. Each program listed on the Form I-17 must be referenced in separate documents. Therefore, it is possible that more than three pieces of evidence is required to ensure that each program is referenced. If submitting letters/articulation agreements, each must be from different institutions that are either owned or operated as public educational institutions or accredited by a US Department of Education recognized accrediting agency. SEVP seeks evidence pertaining to students who have graduated or transferred from the petitioning school within the past two years. Additionally, only ONE document from an entity affiliated with the petitioning school will be accepted.

- a. Acceptance letters – All letters must be on the accepting institution’s letterhead and include the following information.
- b. Signature(s) of the appropriate school official(s);
- c. Name of the accepting school’s US Department of Education recognized accrediting body;

- d. Name of the petitioning institution;
- e. Student's name;
- f. Program of study pursued (transferable credits earned) at the petitioning school and program of study entered at the accepting school;
- g. Student's graduation/transfer date;
- h. Accepting school's attestation of acceptance and continued unconditional acceptance of credits earned from the petitioning school.
- i. Articulation agreement(s) – Agreements between the petitioning school and a school owned or operated as a public educational institution or accredited by a US Department of Education recognized accrediting agency must indicate the following:
- j. Program name from the petitioning school and the program name from the accepting school into which the credits will transfer;
- k. Accepting school's attestation that credits earned at the petitioning school are unconditionally recognized by and transferrable to the accepting school;
- l. Effective date and expiration date of agreement (if applicable)
- m. Signatures of the appropriate school officials at petitioning school and accepting school.
- n. Provide evidence proving each student referenced in the documentation attended the petitioning (your) institution and completed the program of study referenced in the evidence. The evidence must include program enrollment and completion dates (e.g. transcripts).

**B. Non-Accredited Vocational Programs (M Classification):** A minimum of three (verifiable) pieces of evidence that fulfill the criteria listed in “a” or “b” below are required. Each program listed on the Form I-17 must be referenced in separate documents. Therefore, it is possible that more than three pieces of evidence is required to ensure that each program is referenced. If submitting employment letters, each letter must be from a different employer. SEVP seeks evidence pertaining to students who have graduated or transferred from the petitioning school within the past two years. Additionally, only ONE document from an entity affiliated with the petitioning school will be accepted.

- a. Employment letters - SEVP does not accept letters from persons who are self-employed. Employment letters must be on the employer's letterhead and include the following:
- b. Signature(s) of the appropriate individual(s);
- c. Name of the petitioning institution;
- d. Student's name;
- e. Program of study pursued at the petitioning school;
- f. Student's graduation date;
- g. Position for which the student was hired;

- h. Dates of employment;
- i. Employer's attestation that the student was hired as a result of the training earned at the petitioning school and is fully qualified in the applicable field of study.
- j. Professional license requirements - A copy of professional license issued by the local, state, or federal government.
- k. Provide evidence proving each student referenced in the documentation attended the petitioning (your) institution and completed the program of study referenced in the evidence. The evidence must include program enrollment and completion dates (e.g. transcripts).

**C. Grades K-12:** A minimum of three (verifiable) pieces of evidence that fulfill the criteria listed in "a" or "b" below are required. Each program listed on the Form I-17 must be referenced in separate documents. At least one letter must reference the highest grade level listed on the petition. Each letter must be from different institutions that are either owned or operated as public educational institutions or accredited by a SEVP-identified accrediting agency. SEVP seeks evidence pertaining to students who have graduated or transferred from the petitioning school within the past two years. Additionally, only ONE document from an entity affiliated with the petitioning school will be accepted.

- a. Acceptance letters – All letters must be on the accepting institution's letterhead and include the following information.
- b. Signature(s) of the appropriate school official(s);
- c. Name of the accepting school's SEVP-identified accrediting body if the school is private;
- d. Name of the petitioning institution;
- e. Student's name;
- f. Grade level completed at the petitioning school and grade level entered at the accepting school;
- g. Student's graduation/transfer date;
- h. College Acceptance Letters - If the petitioning school is a high school, college acceptance letters referencing the school's graduates are permitted. Each accepting college must be owned or operated as public educational institutions or accredited by a US Department of Education recognized accrediting agency.
- i. Provide evidence proving each student referenced in the documentation attended the petitioning (your) institution and completed the program of study referenced in the evidence. The evidence must include program enrollment and completion dates (e.g. transcripts).

## **5. Explanation of Edit Statement**

- Submit a statement explaining the edit made to the Form -17.

## **6. FAA Certification**

- A current copy of the school's FAA Air Agency Certificate under part 141 or Training Center Certification under part 142;
- FAA letter/list of approved programs which identifies the instructional sites and certificates/ratings.
- **NOTE:** SEVP **will not** accept provisional licenses; see [SEVP Policy Guidance for Adjudicators 1207-04: Flight Training Providers](#)

## 7. Facilities

- Physical location – Description of the facilities, including the number of classrooms used for instruction, the maximum capacity of each classroom, and the purpose of each classroom (e.g., instruction, lab, computer) and a labeled floor plan of each building and floor.
- Capacity – Official document(s) issued by either the fire marshal or other state or county government body indicating the maximum capacity for each building of the school, for each location listed on the Form I-17.
- If renting or leasing space, provide a copy of the rental or lease agreement.

## 8. Financials

- A copy of your institution's Certified Financial Statement signed by your accountant. The statement must be the most recent statement within one calendar year. Tax documents are NOT accepted.

## 9. Grading Policy

- A detailed statement outlining the school's grading policy. If the grading policy can be found in the institution's catalog, please note where in the catalog it can be found.

## 10. Ownership

- Legal documentation demonstrating ownership of the school (e.g., articles of incorporation showing share ownership, share purchase agreements, limited partnership or partnership agreement, sole proprietorship documents, and/or most recent Bill of Sale). If the institution is a d/b/a, also provide evidence of the fictitious name.

## 11. Payment

- Payment Fees:
  - Initial Petitions
    - Filing fee (non-refundable) - \$1,700.00

- Site Visit - \$655.00 (per location listed on the Form I-17, non-refundable once site visit is completed)
  - SEVP Certified Schools
    - Ownership change - \$1,700.00
    - Site Visit for a change of the main location - \$655.00
- To make a payment, go to [www.pay.gov](http://www.pay.gov). In the Search Public Forms box type SEVIS and click enter. Click on the link to the form and follow the instructions. Once payment has been made, send an e-mail to SEVP containing the following:
  - a. NAME OF SCHOOL;
  - b. SCHOOL CODE;
  - c. PAY.GOV TRACKING ID (transaction confirmation sheet);
  - d. REFERENCE: Reason for payment (see payment fees above)

## **12. Pre-Kindergarten Statement**

- A statement, signed by the PDSO and head of school, attesting that your institution will not issue Forms I-20 for Pre-K nonimmigrant students.

## **13. Programs of Study Statement**

- A. Programs of Study (Post-secondary programs based on credit hours): A statement for **EACH** program of study you are seeking approval to issue Forms I-20 for. This statement should be submitted in the format below and include the following:

- a. Program name;
- b. Degree type (if non-degree, specify non-degree program type);
- c. Visa Classification (F academic and language OR M vocational or technical);
- d. Date on which instruction of the program **ORIGINALLY** began at your school;
- e. Mode of delivery (for example: is the program in-person, online, distance, hybrid, etc.);

***Note:** For F programs only: If any of the programs have hybrid and/or online component(s), indicate the total percentage of hybrid or online instruction for each academic session.*

- f. Total credit hours per academic session and the time necessary to complete the program for a full time student;
- g. Instructional sites at which the program will be taught, include addresses;
- h. Admission standards and enrollment criteria.

***Note:** Any employment, internship/externship, and Curricular Practical Training (CPT) must be listed separately as well and an explanation provided detailing the nature, location and requirements of this portion of the program.*

B. Programs of Study (Post-secondary programs based on clock hours): A statement for **EACH** program of study you are seeking approval to issue Forms I-20 for. This statement should be submitted in the format below and include the following:

- a. Program name;
- b. Degree type (if non-degree, specify non-degree program type);
- c. Visa Classification (F academic and language OR M vocational or technical);
- d. Date on which instruction of the program **ORIGINALLY** began at your school;
- e. Mode of delivery (for example: is the program in-person, online, distance, hybrid, etc.);

***Note:** For F programs only: If any of the programs have hybrid and/or online instruction, indicate the total percentage of hybrid or online courses for each academic session.*

- f. Total clock hours per week and how many weeks to complete the program (each week listed separately – see example below);
  - i. Lecture, laboratory or shop hours, **must** be listed separately.
- g. Instructional sites at which the program will be taught, include addresses;
- h. Admission standards and enrollment criteria.

***Note:** Any employment, internship/externship, and Curricular Practical Training (CPT) must be listed separately as well and an explanation provided detailing the nature, location and requirements of this portion of the program*

Example for “f” above

Program Name			
	Classroom Hours	Laboratory Hours	Total Hours per Week
Week 1			
Week 2			

C. K-12 and Public High Schools: A statement for **EACH** grade level you are seeking approval to issue Forms I-20 for. This statement should be submitted in the format below and include the following:

- a. Specific grade levels;
- b. Mode of delivery (for example: is the program in-person, online, distance, hybrid, etc.);
  - a. **NOTE:** *If any of the programs have hybrid and/or online instruction, indicate the total percentage of hybrid or online courses for each academic session*
- c. Time necessary to complete each grade level (e.g. “Grade level 8 – 1 year”);
- d. Date to include month and year in which instruction in each program initially began after its establishment;
- e. Instructional sites at which the program will be taught include addresses;
- f. Admission standards and enrollment criteria.

- D. Flight Schools: Click on the PDF worksheet, [Programs of Study - Flight School Worksheet and fill it out electronically](#). Read, and complete the worksheet in its entirety. A worksheet must be completed for EACH program of study which includes your certificates/ratings you are seeking approval to issue Forms I-20 for. Please make sure to include ALL the ACTUAL hours that students are involved in instruction/lab work at your institution each week and not just the FAA minimum hours. Include actual supervised hours involved in all facets of instruction/lab work, including ground school, flight time, pre/post debriefing, stage checks, and examinations.

#### **14. Removal Statement**

- Provide a statement explaining the request to remove the information from the Form I-17.

#### **15. School Type**

- Submit a business license or IRS tax documentation indicating the operation of your institution.
- If this is not a change of ownership, submit an explanation as to the nature of the change (ie required edit).

#### **16. SEVP Identified Accrediting Agencies**

- Elementary and Secondary Institutions only:
  - A copy of the institution's certificate of accreditation and/or letter from an SEVP-identified accrediting agency. The evidence must indicate the effective/expiration date(s) of accreditation.

#### **17. State Recognition and Exemption**

- Submit evidence from your state educational oversight body that shows the school has authorization to operate in the state or is exempt from authorization to operate in the state. If applicable, the evidence submitted must indicate the effective/expiration date of state licensure or exemption.

***Note:** In lieu of state licensing, a postsecondary school which offers courses recognized by a state-approving agency as appropriate for study for veterans under the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 3675 and 3676 may submit a statement of recognition signed by the appropriate official of the state approving agency.*

#### **18. Statements Acknowledging IIRIRA**

- Pursuant to the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) of 1996, F-1 nonimmigrant students may only attend a public high school for a maximum of one year and must demonstrate that he or she has reimbursed the



local educational agency the unsubsidized per capita cost of education for the period of attendance. Provide a statement signed by the PDSO and the Head of School acknowledging the following:

- F-1 students must make payment of the unsubsidized per capita cost of education for the period of attendance.
- F-1 students may only attend one year and only enroll in grades 9-12.
- The current unsubsidized per capita cost of education for your school or school district.

### **19. Teacher Qualifications**

- For each member of the teaching staff provide the following information:
  - a. Educational, vocational, or professional qualifications of the teaching staff (by name);
  - b. Salary of each instructor (by name);
  - c. Current responsibilities at the school of each member of the teaching staff (by name);
  - d. Amount and character of supervisory and consultative services available to students and trainees.

### **20. U.S. Department of Education Recognized Accrediting Agencies**

- Evidence of accreditation that fulfills the criteria listed in “a” and/or “b” below are required: If more than one applies to the institution, please submit evidence accordingly. The evidence must indicate the effective/expiration date(s) of accreditation.
  - a. Postsecondary Institutions
    - i. A copy of the institution’s certificate of accreditation and/or letter from a U.S. Department of Education recognized accrediting agency. The documentation must include evidence of accreditation for all instructional sites and programs for which the school is seeking SEVP certification for.
  - b. Stand-alone ESL schools and/or ESL programs of study
    - i. A copy of the institution’s certificate of accreditation and/or letter from a U.S. Department of Education recognized accrediting body which specifically includes the English language program and all instructional sites where the programs are offered.