

# International Student Employment – Checklist & Process for Supervisors

*What to know to legally hire and onboard an F-1 international student for an on-campus role.*

## Step 1: Verify Institutional Position Eligibility

- **State/Institutional Funds Only:** International students are **not eligible for Federal Work-Study (FWS) positions**, which are strictly reserved for U.S. citizens and permanent residents. They must be paid via your department's regular, non-federally subsidized institutional student employment budget.
- **Hours Limitation:** Under federal law, students are limited to working a maximum of **20 hours per week** while school is in session. They may scale up to full-time (usually up to 40 hours per week) during official school breaks and winter/summer vacation periods.

## Step 2: Issue a Formal Job Offer Letter

Before the student can complete their onboarding, your department must issue an official **on-campus employment job offer letter**. This letter is vital because the student needs it to apply for a Social Security Number (SSN).

## Step 3: Approval

- **F-1 Students:** F-1 students may generally work **on-campus** without special authorization while attending school.
  - **Eligibility**
    - Valid F-1 status
    - Valid, unexpired Form I-20 from the college's Director of Global Engagement
    - Full-time enrollment in fall and spring semesters
  - **Authorization**
    - No authorization required on Form I-20.
  - **Limitations**
    - New and transfer students may begin on-campus employment up to 30 days prior to the program start date on the Form I-20
    - Cannot work on campus after the completion of program requirements
    - Must physically work on Centenary College of Louisiana campus

- Limited to part-time (20 hours or less each week) during the fall and spring semesters
- May work full-time (more than 20 hours each week) when school is not in session, during the summer term (if summer enrollment is not required), and during other official school breaks.
- New students may start working up to 30 days prior to the program start date listed on the Form I-20. The program start date is usually the first day of classes. Continuing students may start any time.

#### **Step 4: The Social Security Number (SSN) Application**

If the student does not already have an SSN, **they cannot be paid until they apply for one.**

1. The student must be provided an offer letter – see exhibit A for example of job offer letter.
2. The Director of Global Engagement provides a secondary letter (DSO Support letter) verifying the student's legal status – see exhibit B for an example of the on-campus letter
3. The student takes both documents to the local Social Security Administration (SSA) office to submit their application.
4. The SSA provides a receipt immediately, and the physical SSN card arrives within 2 to 3 weeks. *Note: Most universities allow the student to complete onboarding using the application receipt, but require the number as soon as it arrives.*

#### **Step 5: Form I-9 and HR Onboarding**

Like any employee, the student must complete **Form I-9 (Employment Eligibility Verification)** no later than their **third day of work**. To verify identity and work authorization, they must present their original, physical documents to Human Resources (usually their Passport, Form I-94 arrival record, and active Form I-20 or DS-2019).

#### **Step 6: Specialized Tax Onboarding**

Unlike typical student workers, international students are generally classified as **nonresident aliens for tax purposes**. They must complete tax forms (Form W-4) under specific federal guidelines. They are, however, generally **exempt from Social Security (FICA) and Medicare taxes** while maintaining active F-1 status. Please contact payroll at 318-869-5127 with any questions regarding tax forms.

## **Next Steps for Your Department**

1. **Print on Letterhead:** The Social Security Administration requires this letter to be printed on **official university letterhead** with an original ink signature (or a verified secure digital signature, depending on local SSA office preferences).
  - Exhibit A is a standard, customizable job offer letter template for an on-campus international student worker.
2. **Send to the Student:** Provide this completed letter to the student so they can take it to the college's Director of Global Engagement office to receive their required secondary Designated School Official (DSO) letter.
  - Exhibit B is a standard, customizable DSO letter template for an on-campus international student worker.
3. **Complete and Submit the [Student Employment Action Form \(SEAF\)](#)** to get the student hired and in payroll

## Exhibit A – Offer Letter

### [COLLEGE LETTERHEAD]

**Date:** [Month, Day, Year]

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter serves to confirm that **[Student's Full Legal Name]** has been offered on-campus employment at Centenary College of Louisiana.

The specific details of the employment offer are as follows:

- **Hiring Department:** [Name of Department]
- **Job Title:** [Job Title, e.g., Student Assistant, Lab Attendant]
- **Detailed Job Description:** [Insert 1-2 sentences of duties, e.g., The student will assist with front desk operations, answer phone inquiries, and provide data entry support.]
- **Anticipated Start Date:** [Month, Day, Year]
- **Number of Hours Per Week:** [Number of hours, e.g., 15] hours per week (*Note: Max 20 hours while school is in session*)
- **Rate of Pay:** \$[Amount] per hour
- **Employer Identification Number (EIN):** 72-0408915
- **Employer Telephone Number:** [Department Phone Number]

### Confidentiality & FERPA Agreement

As an employee of Centenary College of Louisiana, you may have access to confidential student records, financial information, or proprietary institutional data. In accordance with the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** and university policy, you are strictly prohibited from disclosing, discussing, or releasing any student or institutional information to unauthorized individuals. Unauthorized access, modification, or disclosure of protected data is a direct violation of federal law and university regulations and will result in immediate termination of employment and potential disciplinary action through the Dean of Students.

### Performance and Disciplinary Guidelines

Your employment is an at-will, temporary arrangement tied to your active student status. Continued employment is contingent upon satisfactory job performance, adherence to department schedules, and compliance with the Student Code of Conduct. The

department follows a progressive disciplinary workflow for performance or attendance issues:

1. **First Infraction:** Documented verbal warning and performance coaching.
2. **Second Infraction:** Official written warning detailing corrective action steps.
3. **Third Infraction:** Suspension or immediate termination of employment.

**Note:** *Severe misconduct, including but not limited to academic dishonesty, theft, safety violations, or breaches of FERPA confidentiality, will bypass progressive steps and result in immediate termination.*

**Supervisor/Hiring Authority Information:**

- **Supervisor Name:** [Name of Supervisor]
- **Supervisor Title:** [Title, e.g., Department Coordinator]
- **Supervisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Acknowledgment**

By signing below, I accept this offer of on-campus employment and agree to comply with the FERPA confidentiality requirements and disciplinary guidelines outlined above.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Exhibit B - Designated School Official (DSO)

### [COLLEGE LETTERHEAD]

(Date)

To Whom it May Concern:

This letter is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_(student's name)  
has been offered, or is already working in, general on-campus employment.

Position Title:

\_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of the position:

\_\_\_\_\_

Start Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of Hours/Week:

\_\_\_\_\_

### Employers Information:

EIN:

72-0408915

Department:

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone:

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Immediate Supervisor:

\_\_\_\_\_

Employer's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Title

\_\_\_\_\_