

YOUR WORKING CHECKLIST

F-1 study: from a SEVP-certified school to visa and admission

How do the school, Form I-20, student visa and admission steps fit together?

For the usual F-1 route from abroad, a SEVP-certified school accepts the student and issues Form I-20 through SEVIS. The student then follows the applicable SEVIS fee and consular visa process. The visa, school acceptance and CBP admission remain distinct; the school's designated official supports the student-record side of the journey.

Check the boxes on screen or by hand. Use the notes area for records to find and questions to ask.

Your preparation checklist

- ☐ Confirm the actual program and SEVP-certified institution.
- ☐ Review the school-issued I-20 with the DSO.
- ☐ Use the official SEVIS I-901 instructions for the applicable payment.
- ☐ Follow the actual consulate's current student-visa instructions.
- ☐ Check new-student arrival timing before travel.
- ☐ Keep dependent I-20s and individual records separate.

Notes and questions to follow up

Source links and current instructions

Sources checked October 25, 2026. Follow current instructions at the linked institution.

U.S. Department of State: Student visa: school and category distinctions
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/student-visa.html>

DHS Study in the States: Maintaining student status
<https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/maintaining-status>

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Source links (continued)

Immigrant Insider: Editorial policy and verification status

<https://immigrantinsider.com/editorial-policy/>

Return to the complete guide

<https://immigrantinsider.com/immigration-paths/student/f1-academic/>

General information

This free organizer is not a government form and does not submit an application, establish eligibility, preserve a deadline or replace individual legal advice. Government filing fees and professional services are separate.