



A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS HIRING UMD ENGINEERING STUDENTS ON F-1 VISAS

Most international students are eligible to receive work authorization during their programs of study. This process is much less complicated and time consuming than you might think.

Before working, international students must first obtain authorization for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) from the University. Engineering Career Services guides international engineering students through this process, specifically by offering a 0-credit co-op course, which serves as the academic component of CPT.

Prior to applying for CPT, they will need two things from you.

1. Provide the student with an offer letter on your company letterhead that states the following:

- The student's name and that they are being hired
- Job title, including the word co-op or intern, and a 2-3 sentence job description that makes it apparent how the position relates to the student's major and/or curriculum (specific bullets that include job duties work best)
- Name of student's supervisor
- Exact start and end dates of the work assignment*
- Number of hours per week the student will work (limited to 20 hours/week during fall and spring semesters)
- Salary/wage (unpaid work must comply with the US Department of Labor standards)

**Note that dates should fall within the term for which the student will be registered, but do not need to be the full length of the term indicated. We suggest putting the last date of the term, as it offers the employer and student the most flexibility. An experience may end earlier (even if a later end date was stated), but cannot be extended once an I-20 is issued for that term. For example, in Spring 2025, an experience can be submitted from Jan 27-May 21. The offer letter should state Jan 27 - May 21, but the student can stop working on April 30 without any issues. However, if the offer letter states Jan 27 - April 30 and the parties want to extend until May 21, this will not be possible and a student will have to pause work on April 30 until the next term begins for Summer, on May 22.*

2. Confirm the details of the student's Experience request on Handshake:

- Please check your spam for emails from Handshake
- Ideally, the student should have the offer letter at least one week before their start date, so they can complete the work authorization request with the university.

If you have questions about hiring students for co-ops, internships or full time positions, contact our office.

More information on work authorization types for students on F-1 or J-1 visas is available via the University of Maryland's [International Student and Scholar Services](#) under [Employment & Taxes](#) and [Curricular Practical Training \(CPT\)](#).