Getting Students Ready to Enter the United States

SEVP
STUDENT AND EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM

Understanding the initial steps is key to properly maintaining SEVIS records.

Foreign National
Nonimmigrant (before Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status")

1 Applies to an SEVP-certified school
- Must apply in writing.
- Must meet admission requirements.
- Must prove financial support.

SEVP-certified School

2 Sends acceptance letter

3 Sends Form I-20 directly to student
- Must issue Form I-20 directly.
- Program start date may NOT be more than 30 days prior to the start of classes.

4 Applies for student visa or change of status to F or M
- Must have valid Form I-20.
- Must pay I-901 SEVIS Fee.
- Must meet all visa requirements.
- Must use the same Form I-20 for I-901 SEVIS Fee payment, visa application and admission at the port of entry.

U.S. Department of State

5 Issues student visa

6 If entering the United States
- Presents Form I-20.
- Presents student visa.
- May NOT enter more than 30 days prior to program start date.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officer

7 May allow entry to the United States
- May issue Form I-515A, "Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor," if student is missing documentation.

8 Report to DSO
- Must report within 30 days of and no later than the program start date.

DSO

9 PDSO/DSO orients the student and registers in SEVIS

For SEVIS technical questions, call: 800-892-4829 or email SEVISHelpDesk@ice.dhs.gov

Contact the SEVP Response Center at SEVP@ice.dhs.gov or 703-603-3400 for policy questions

For more information, visit http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov

Last updated
JUNE 2017