

Tips to Complete Form I-983 for the F-1 STEM OPT Extension

Background

A STEM OPT student and their employer must complete and sign the Form I-983, training plan, as part of the documents required to apply for a STEM OPT extension.

Only E-verified enrolled employers can participate in this program. The STEM OPT employer must be enrolled in and using the E-Verify program at the STEM OPT worksite.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has begun performing employer site visits to confirm the information reported on the student's Form I-983.

This guide is intended to provide general tips to facilitate the completion of this important form.

Completing the Form

When completing the Form I-983, it is important to remember that this form is intended to be a *training plan and reflect the STEM OPT student's learning objectives over the 24 month STEM period as it relates to their STEM degree*. The form confirms the employer's commitment and resources to helping the student achieve and evaluate those objectives.

It is strongly recommended to type this form. Be sure that all sections are completed (if the field does not apply, fill in "N/A"; do not leave blank).

Below are suggestions for answering key questions on the Form I-983, using an engineering student as an example.

Student's Role

In this section, it is helpful to break the student's training into simple phases and outline specific roles for each phase that will enhance the student's knowledge of his/her STEM degree.

The roles can include verbs, such as assisting, observing, learning, participating, coordinating, or reviewing.

For example:

"Phase 1: The student will assist his supervisor to analyze and develop plans, design calculations and cost estimations, and make recommendations to create holistic designs. Throughout this phase, the student will apply and expand his knowledge of theoretical concepts such as ____ and practical skills learned from his Engineering degree coursework."

*This material is not intended to substitute as legal advice.

Goals and Objectives

For this section, you can briefly explain 2 main goals and objectives of the student's role and how the training will facilitate the student's learning about his/her STEM degree and the specific methods of achieving this, such as training seminars, on-the-job training, observation methods, research, and meetings with clients, governmental agencies, and staff.

For example:

Goal 1: "The student will understand and apply engineering rules to plan and design programs to create environmentally conscious plans, as related to his Engineering degree. This will be accomplished by attending training seminars, observation methods, guided research, and hands-on training."

Employer Oversight

In this section, you can explain how the student will receive on-site supervision, such as through discussion and feedback from the supervisor and scheduled meetings with experienced experts in the field. If a related policy / program is already in place, a description of this program or policy may suffice to answer the question.

Measures and Assessments

In this section, you can explain how you will measure and confirm whether the student is acquiring new knowledge and skills, such as specific tests for the knowledge gained, assessment meetings with their supervisor, and written evaluations of performance after assignments of the training program. If a related policy / program is already in place, a description of this program or policy may suffice to answer the question.

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