



# Guidance for international graduate students

In response to recent incidents of international students having their immigration records terminated, we have developed new guidance to support our international student community. This resource is designed to help graduate students and their advisors navigate federal education policy, manage uncertainty around visa status, and access timely assistance when challenges arise.

International graduate students holding F1 or J1 visas should stay in close contact with **International Student Services (ISS)**. Information and resources, including links to services on all three campuses, can be found [here](#). International graduate students also should stay in close contact with their local academic units, especially their advisors, Graduate Program Advisors (GPAs) and Graduate Program Coordinators (GPCs), since they are best positioned to assess a student's possible path toward degree completion.

## DEGREE COMPLETION

**Student status:** Graduate students who have their visas or SEVIS records terminated remain graduate students as long as they are registered and tuition-paying.

**Residency:** The Graduate School does not require that graduate students be in residence to complete their studies. However, graduate students **must** have completed and fulfilled all UW and department/school/college/campus place-based requirements for graduation (e.g. coursework, lab work, internships, etc.) to do so. Decisions about whether the graduate student has fulfilled place-based programmatic requirements are made by the local academic unit. Units should consult [Graduate School requirements](#) in making their determinations.

Also, international students with active immigration records (F1 or J1 visas) do have expectations of attending programs in-person. Please consult with an International Student Services Advisor to ensure compliance with visa requirements.

**Virtual dissertation defenses:** For doctoral students who have completed all coursework and place-based requirements, you may find information on virtual dissertation defenses [here](#).

## REGISTRATION AND TUITION WAIVERS

**Registration waiver:** A graduate student must maintain registration as a full-time or part-time graduate student for the quarter the degree or certificate is conferred. However, certain eligible students may be allowed to graduate the following quarter without being required to register by paying the [graduate registration waiver fee](#).

**International graduate student tuition waivers/Fulbright Students:** The Graduate School has a finite number of international graduate student tuition waivers. In the 2025-2026 academic year, our priority is fulfilling our commitment to current Fulbright students. Directions to request tuition support can be found [here](#). Please note, this is only a tuition waiver and does not include a stipend or benefits. It also does not replace tuition coverage provided by RA/TA/fellow/trainee funding from units.

**Additional international graduate student tuition waivers:** The Graduate School may be able to support additional international graduate students beyond Fulbright scholars with tuition waivers. However, the academic unit in which the graduate student is enrolled must demonstrate that they have exhausted all local resources to support international students before doing so. Again, this is only a tuition waiver and does not include a stipend or benefits.

## EMPLOYMENT

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If F1 or J1 international graduate students have their SEVIS record terminated, they lose employment eligibility. If employed on campus, employing units will be contacted about terminating employment. If employment includes a tuition coverage benefit (e.g., from RA/TA employment), and the student has not yet met the eligibility criteria for that coverage, it will be removed from the student's account and a tuition balance will appear.

Academic units should assist students in working with Student Fiscal Services to request a waiver of late payment fees if students are working on reinstating their visa status.

If SEVIS records/visa status are reinstated, employing units should first verify directly with ISS the date on which that occurs. Once verified, employing units should then ask their HCM contacts at UWHR to rescind the initial termination *unless* ISS indicates that there is some type of break in time necessary. If such a break is necessary, then units should process a rehire effective as of the date ISS provides.

Once an eligible TA/RA job is active again in Workday, tuition coverage should reappear on the student's account. If this doesn't happen within 48 hours of all processes completed in Workday, units should reach out to the Graduate School at [\*\*gradappt@uw.edu\*\*](mailto:gradappt@uw.edu).