



## **SEVP Policy Guidance S13.2: The Form I-20 and the English Proficiency Field**

**Issue Date:** July 13, 2016

**Effective Date:** July 13, 2016

**Supersedes:** N/A

**Status:** Final

**Applicable to:** *8 CFR 214.3(k)*

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**Purpose/Background:** SEVP regulations and the Form I-20, “Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status,” require a DSO to provide information on a school’s English proficiency requirements and whether a prospective F-1 or M-1 student<sup>1</sup> has met those requirements.<sup>2</sup> Consistent use of the English proficiency field by DSOs is important because it directly relates to who is eligible for F-1 or M-1 student status.

**Attachments:** None.

**Definitions:** None.

### **Acronyms:**

1. **DSO.** Designated school official
2. **SEVIS.** Student and Exchange Visitor Information System
3. **SEVP.** Student and Exchange Visitor Program

### **Policy:**

1. **English proficiency requirements and standards for admission.** SEVP regulation requires a DSO to issue a Form I-20 to a prospective F-1 or M-1 student who has met all standards for admission for a program of study, including any English proficiency requirement. Regulation prohibits issuance of the Form I-20 based on conditional admission.<sup>3</sup>
2. **Proper Form I-20 English proficiency field scenarios.** The following scenarios explain how the DSO can properly complete the English proficiency field on the Form I-20:
  - 2.1. **Scenario 1 – Student meets required English proficiency standard.** The following sample answers denote that the school requires English proficiency as a standard for admission to the program of study for which the DSO is issuing the Form I-20 and that the student has met the standard. By using this response, the DSO confirms that the student meets the required standard.

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<sup>1</sup> All use of the term “student(s)” refers to F-1 or M-1 student(s).

<sup>2</sup> *8 CFR 214.3(k)*

<sup>3</sup> See *8 CFR 214.3(k)*, *8 CFR 214.4(a)(2)(x)* and *(xviii)* and [SEVP Policy Guidance S13.1: Conditional Admission](#).

English Proficiency:

Is English proficiency required by the school? \*

Yes  No

Does the student have the required English Proficiency? \*

Yes  No

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- 2.2. Scenario 2 – School does not require English proficiency.** The following sample answer denotes that the school does not require English proficiency as a standard for admission to the program of study for which the DSO is issuing the Form I-20. The DSO must explain why the school does not require English proficiency.

English Proficiency:

Is English proficiency required by the school? \*

Yes  No

If No, explain why the school does not require English proficiency. \*

English proficiency is not an admission requirement.

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- 3. Improper Form I-20 English proficiency field scenario.** The following sample answers denote that the school requires English proficiency as a standard for admission to the program of study for which the DSO is issuing the Form I-20 and that the student has not met the standard. By using this response, the DSO confirms that the student does not meet the required standard; therefore, the DSO must not issue the Form I-20.

English Proficiency:

Is English proficiency required by the school? \*

Yes  No

Does the student have the required English Proficiency? \*

Yes  No

Students are required to have English proficiency in order to enter this program. Please check your entry.

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- 4. Form I-20 review.** SEVP has discretion to verify that a DSO properly issues and certifies a Form I-20 to an F-1 or M-1 student.
- 5. Evidence.** SEVP can request evidence of a school’s standards for admission and school use of the English proficiency field, including but not limited to, school catalogues and student records.<sup>4</sup>
- 6. Adverse action.** SEVP can deny a school’s recertification or withdraw a school’s SEVP certification for failure to comply with applicable statutes, regulations, or admissions policies stated on the school’s Form I-17, “Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student.”<sup>5</sup>

## References:

<sup>4</sup> 8 CFR 214.3(g)

<sup>5</sup> 8 CFR 214.4(a)(2)(x) and (xviii)

1. *8 CFR 214.3(g)*
2. *8 CFR 214.3(k)*
3. *8 CFR 214.4(a)(2) (x) and (xviii)*

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Signed by Rachel Canty on July 13, 2016  
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Student and Exchange Visitor Program