



## Washington International Education Conference

### Pre- and Post-conference Questions and Answers

*Feb. 14, 2018*

*Note: This document provides answers that interpret U.S. government regulation, but does not serve as a replacement for federal regulation or official Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) policy guidance. Questions have been edited for grammar and style.*

**1. Can SEVP explain the reason for lengthy processing times for Form I-17, “Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student,” updates? What is SEVP doing to decrease these processing times?**

A. The SEVP School Certification Unit (SCU) receives, on average, 350 Form I-17 update requests per week. The term “Form I-17 update” can refer to anything from a simple change to one field, to changes to all 26 fields. Additionally, processing times vary depending on the complexity and type of update submitted. For example, an update to add a program of study will take longer than an update to a school’s contact information. The majority of pending updates have four to six different fields that require adjudication.

SEVP leadership monitors the SCU workload and reviews this workload on a regular basis to see if it is growing within a specific area. SCU works to re-prioritize resources if one or more adjudication queues become problematic.

One particularly labor-intensive priority is maintaining a 10-day processing time for Form I-17 updates that *only* involve principal designated school official (PDSO) and designated school official (DSO) changes. SEVP prioritizes this processing time since DSOs are the conduit between SEVP,



SEVP-certified schools and nonimmigrant students, and are also responsible for updating and maintaining student and school data in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System.

**2. How can a school make changes to its Form I-17 during the recertification process?**

A. Schools that need to update their Form I-17 during the recertification process should email [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov) and include, “Attn: Recertification,” the school name, and school code in the subject line. In the email, include a description of the update and attach all necessary supporting evidence prior to submission to SEVP. Refer to the Evidence Guides, located at [ICE.gov/SEVIS/Schools](https://ice.gov/SEVIS/Schools), under the “Petition Updates” tab, for evidence requirements.

**3. In what situations will SEVP expedite a Form I-17 update request? Does SEVP still prioritize updates for schools with pending certification expiration dates (CEDs)?**

A. SEVP does not expedite Form I-17 updates, and processes updates on a first-in, first-out basis. SEVP prioritizes DSO and PDSO updates, as well as updates for schools approaching their CED.

**4. SEVP notes schools cannot file a change in instructional site when filing for recertification, and must submit this as a separate Form I-17 update. What does a change in instructional site mean? Is it the same as a change in location?**

A. A change in instructional site includes any change to a location listed on a school’s Form I-17. This includes changes to the school’s physical location, as well as adding instructional sites to the Form I-17.



**5. How should a school handle a situation where it has an upcoming CED, but needs to make a change in instructional site? Should the school file a Form I-17 update before its CED to add the instructional site? In this situation, would SEVP extend the school’s CED until it adjudicates the instructional site?**

A. Schools with an upcoming CED should file a Form I-17 update for a change of location and include all necessary evidence at the time of filing. SEVP prioritizes Form I-17 updates for schools approaching their CED to ensure these schools are able to file for recertification on time. SEVP adjudicators have the discretion to provide CED extensions on a case-by-case basis.

**6. How should a school handle a situation where it needs to change its instructional site during the recertification process?**

A. Schools that need to update their Form I-17 to add a new instructional site during the recertification process should email [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov) and include, “Attn: Recertification,” the school name, and school code in the subject line. In the email, include a description of the update to add an instructional site, and attach all necessary supporting evidence prior to submission to SEVP. Refer to the Evidence Guides, located at [ICE.gov/SEVIS/Schools](https://ice.dhs.gov/SEVIS/Schools), under the “Petition Updates” tab, for evidence requirements to add an instructional site.