



**CARSON-NEWMAN**  
A CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

INTERNATIONAL ADMISSIONS  
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



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## ENGLISH PROFICIENCY SCORES

### **What are the English Proficiency requirements for international applicants seeking admission, including details on exemptions and the process for waiving the English Proficiency Score?**

International applicants aiming for undergraduate or graduate programs are required to demonstrate English proficiency.

For *undergraduate* programs, the necessary scores are:

- TOEFL iBT score of 74,
- IELTS score of 6.0, or
- Duolingo score of 90.

For *graduate* programs, the necessary scores are:

- TOEFL iBT score of 79,
- IELTS score of 6.5, or
- Duolingo score of 101.

However, there are specific exemptions to this requirement. International students who have earned a high school diploma, an undergraduate, or a graduate degree from an institution in the United States are exempted. Similarly, those who have completed their high school or undergraduate studies at a school where English was the primary language of instruction, as evidenced by an official transcript or a letter from the institution, are also exempt from the English proficiency test.

It is important for applicants to understand that due to the high volume of applications received, the English proficiency score will be waived during the application process only after it has been verified that they qualify for an exemption. This waiver process is a crucial step to ensure that all applicants meet the necessary language proficiency standards, which are vital for academic success in the programs, as they require effective communication skills, a good understanding of lectures, and the ability to write academic papers.

**What can I do if I do not meet the English proficiency requirements to attend Carson-Newman?***1. Attend an External English Language Program:*

Look for intensive English language programs offered by other institutions or language schools. These programs are specifically designed to improve English language skills to the level required for university study.

*2. Online English Language Courses:*

Enroll in online English language courses. There are many reputable platforms offering courses that can help improve your English proficiency. Some of these courses may also offer certification upon completion.

*3. Private Tutoring:*

Consider hiring a private tutor specializing in English language training, particularly in areas you find challenging, such as speaking, listening, reading, or writing.

Remember, improving language proficiency is a gradual process, and consistent practice and exposure to the language are key.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

**How do I apply to an UNDERGRADUATE program at Carson-Newman University as an international student or international *transfer* student?**

1. *Begin the Application Process:*

Visit the university's application page at [Carson-Newman University Application](#).

2. *Access the Application Form:*

Click on the blue “Apply Now” link located beneath the “First-time freshmen and transfer students” section. This will redirect you to the “Application Management” page.

3. *Create an Account:*

As a first-time user, create an account by clicking the blue link under 'First Time Users'. Provide your email address, name, and date of birth. Remember to write down the password you create, as you will need it for future logins.

4. *Start a New Application:*

Once your account is set up, click on “Start New Application.” In the drop-down menu, select “undergraduate application” since you are applying to start a bachelor’s degree program.

5. *Fill Out the Citizenship Section:*

In the citizenship section of the application, **do not** click on the “permanent resident” box. Instead, select your country from the dropdown menu. For residency status, choose “visa” and then select F-1 for the visa type. If you are a *transfer* student currently attending school in the U.S., please make sure you list your home country address when requested for your mailing address to ensure that your application will be appropriately assigned to international admissions.

6. *Complete the Application:*

Proceed to fill out the rest of the application. The questions are generally straightforward, but if you encounter any difficulties or have questions, you can email [admitme@cn.edu](mailto:admitme@cn.edu) for assistance.

7. *Submit Your Application:*

After completing the application, submit it through the system.

#### 8. *Check and Manage Your Application Status:*

Each time you log in post-submission, you can visit the “[application status](#)” page, where you can track the progress of your application. Here, you will find a list of additional items and documents required to complete your application.

*Note regarding your Application Checklist on your [application status page](#):*

Please note that your list will be updated once your submitted documents have been reviewed and confirmed to meet the necessary criteria. We encourage you to check this status page regularly for any updates to your application materials list.

*Special Note Regarding "Photo Copy of Visa":* While you may notice "Photo Copy of Visa" included in your checklist, it is important to understand that it is **not** a requirement for the initial application process. You will be required to upload a copy of your visa only after you have received it from the U.S. embassy. Keep in mind that you are eligible to apply for the visa only after your application is complete and you have received an I-20 form.

### **How do I apply to a GRADUATE program at Carson-Newman University as an international student?**

#### 1. *Begin the Application Process:*

Visit the university's application page at [Carson-Newman University Application](#).

#### 2. *Access the Application Form:*

Click on the blue “Apply Now” link located beneath the “Graduate and adult students” section. This will redirect you to the “Application Management” page.

#### 3. *Create an Account:*

As a first-time user, create an account by clicking the blue link under 'First Time Users'. Provide your email address, name, and date of birth. Remember to write down the password you create, as you will need it for future logins.

#### 4. *Start a New Application:*

Once your account is set up, click on “Start New Application.” In the drop-down menu, select “graduate application” since you are applying to start a master’s degree program.

5. *Fill Out the Citizenship Section:*

In the citizenship section of the application, **do not** click on the “permanent resident” box. Instead, select your country from the dropdown menu. For residency status, choose “visa” and then select F-1 for the visa type. In addition, if you are currently completing your bachelor’s degree at a school in the U.S., please make sure you list your home country address when requested for your mailing address to ensure that your application will be appropriately assigned to international admissions.

6. *Complete the Application:*

Proceed to fill out the rest of the application. The questions are generally straightforward, but if you encounter any difficulties or have questions, you can reach out via email for assistance at [adult@cn.edu](mailto:adult@cn.edu).

7. *Submit Your Application:*

After completing the application, submit it through the system.

8. *Check and Manage Your Application Status:*

Each time you log in post-submission, you can visit the “[application status](#)” page, where you can track the progress of your application. Here, you will find a list of additional items and documents required to complete your application.

*Note regarding your Application Checklist on your [application status page](#):*

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## APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

### How do I submit the required documents for my application?

1. *Accessing Your Account:*

Navigate to the “[Application Management](#)” page and click on the blue “Log in” link under the “Returning Users” section.

2. *Selecting Your Application:*

On your Application Management page, under the section “Your Applications,” click on the application for which you want to submit documents and open the application.

This will take you to your “[Application Status Page](#).”

3. *Reviewing Required Documents:*

Under the section “Application Checklist,” you can view a list of all the documents that you are required to submit for your application. You can also access the fillable forms via the links in your checklist.

4. *Preparing to Upload Documents:*

Under the “Upload Materials” section, you will see a dropdown menu. Click on the small arrow pointing down and select what type of document you want to submit. If you do not find a title that is the same as the document you want to upload, please choose the "Miscellaneous" option.

5. *Uploading Documents:*

Click on the grey “Choose File” button and select the document from your device that you want to submit.

6. *Finalizing the Upload:*

After selecting the document, click the “Upload” button to complete the submission process.

Please note that your transcript and any other test scores must be official documents. To be considered official, the transcript or test score must be sent to Carson-Newman directly from the school/institution where you obtained it. (*For more information on this, please see the questions related to the official transcript.*)

Once you have submitted your application, you will receive emails with detailed instructions for all the documents you are required to submit.



**As an international student, what specific documents are required for my application submission to Carson-Newman University?**

*1. Official transcript (in English):*

Official transcripts are a crucial component of your university application, providing a comprehensive and verified record of your academic history for evaluation purposes. A scan of a transcript emailed to C-N, even if it is stamped with “official,” is not truly an official transcript if it is sent by the student. In order to be considered official, a transcript must be sent directly from the school or university. *(For more information on this, please see the questions related to the official transcript.)*

*2. Confirmation of Financial Support (CFS):*

This document is to be filled out by you and your sponsor (if applicable) stating that financial support in the total amount listed for your program is available to cover the estimated cost of attendance at C-N.

*3. An official copy of a bank letter:*

The U.S. government requires proof of financial support from all international students applying for an F-1 visa to study in the U.S. Therefore, all students must show in advance that they can pay at least one year of all estimated expenses associated with their travel and education here in the U.S. To verify the support noted on the Confirmation of Financial Support, we must require each individual providing support (parent, sponsor, or student, if self-funding) to request a letter from their bank to verify account status and the amount available. Please be sure to comply with the bank letter instructions provided in the application portal. We cannot accept online banking printouts.

If you are to receive a scholarship, please provide a letter that confirms the dollar amount and your eligibility for said scholarship.

*4. A copy of your passport photo page:*

Simply scan (in color if possible) the picture page of your passport and upload it to your application portal. Please note that your passport must not be within 6 months of expiration. Also, please provide passports for any dependents traveling with you.

5. *Application for a Certificate of Eligibility Non-immigrant Student Visa Form I-20:*

You will simply complete a form (*I-20 Application Form*) on which you provide us with all the personal information we need to prepare the I-20 form that you will need to apply for your F-1 student visa. If you have dependents who will travel here with you (spouse and/or children), please provide the information requested on the F-2 dependent addendum to the I-20 application.

6. *English Proficiency Scores (if applicable):*

International applicants to undergraduate or graduate programs are required to demonstrate English proficiency. (*For more information on this, please see the questions related to English Proficiency Scores.*)

Please visit the C-N [webpage on the academic program](#) you are applying for to see what additional documents might be required for your application. Once you have submitted your application, you will have access to your “[Application Status Page](#),” where you will be able to see a list of the documents required for your application. This list will include links to fillable forms and additional instructions.

You can also access our [catalogs](#) for more information.

## **What is an Official Transcript, and how do I submit it?**

1. *Importance of Official Transcripts:*

Please be aware that official transcripts are absolutely essential to the acceptance process!! ***We cannot fully accept a student into our programs until we receive an official transcript directly from their school or university!***

2. *Submission Options for Official Transcripts:*

Your school or university can send us your official transcript through one of the following methods:

a) Email Delivery:

The transcript should be emailed directly to [admitme@cn.edu](mailto:admitme@cn.edu) (for undergraduate applicants) and [adult@cn.edu](mailto:adult@cn.edu) (for graduate applicants) from your school or university's official email account. Please note that transcripts sent from commercial email accounts like Gmail.com, Mail.com, Hotmail.com, etc., are not considered official.

b) Online Transcript Service such as Parchment:

Use the Parchment service for electronic delivery. The service can be accessed here: [Parchment Transcript Order](#).

c) Postal Mail:

Send the transcript in a sealed envelope, accompanied by a cover letter on the school's letterhead. The mailing address is:

Office of Admissions  
1645 Russell Avenue  
Jefferson City, TN 37760  
United States of America  
Attention: Nilma Stewart

If your school or university's official email is a commercial account, please use either an online transcript service or postal mail options.

3. *Verification and Credential Evaluation:*

Carson-Newman is responsible for verifying the authenticity of transcripts. If, for any reason, we are unable to verify the transcript, it may be necessary to have it evaluated by a professional credential evaluation agency, which should be a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). Agencies like WES or ECE can conduct this evaluation. You can find a list of member organizations at [NACES Members](#). The agency will then send the evaluation directly to Carson-Newman, and we will consider it official. Please note that these agencies may also require an official transcript sent to them.

4. *Additional Information:*

In some cases, particularly for undergraduate transcripts from non-U.S. institutions, a professional credential evaluation might be required.

## As an international transfer student, what additional documents do I have to submit?

### 1. *Credential Evaluation:*

In order for our Registrar's Office to award you university credit for the courses you have taken at a University outside of the U.S., a professional course by course credential evaluation will be required from one of the companies that is a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services or [NACES](#). The World Education Services (or WES) evaluation is probably the most well-known, but you can choose any company on the list. If the company sends its completed report electronically, it may be sent to [admitme@cn.edu](mailto:admitme@cn.edu) (for undergraduate applicants) and [adult@cn.edu](mailto:adult@cn.edu) (for graduate applicants). If they use regular mail, here is the mailing address to provide:

Office of Admissions  
1645 Russell Avenue  
Jefferson City, TN 37760  
United States of America  
Attention: Ms. Nilma Stewart

Here are the steps to get started:

- a) Choose a NACES member agency for your credential evaluation. You can find a full list of members on the [NACES website](#).
- b) Contact the agency directly to learn about the required documents, fees, and processing times.
- c) Request a course-by-course evaluation with grade equivalency.
- d) Ensure that the final evaluation report is sent directly to Carson-Newman University from the evaluation service. Please have them email it to [admitme@cn.edu](mailto:admitme@cn.edu) (for undergraduate applicants) and [adult@cn.edu](mailto:adult@cn.edu) (for graduate applicants).

Please start this process as soon as possible, as the evaluation can take several weeks to complete. This step is important for continuing with your application and for us to make an informed decision regarding your transfer credits.

2. *Disciplinary Record Check:*

Your [Application Checklist](#) contains a link to this form and instructions. Transfer applicants must disclose their disciplinary history from all schools they are currently attending or have previously attended.

3. *Transfer-IN Release Form (only if you are transferring from a university in the U.S.):*

Your [Application Checklist](#) contains a link to this form and instructions. International students transferring to Carson-Newman University from another university, college, high school, or English language program *in the United States* must complete this form. Please provide this form with your acceptance letter from Carson-Newman University to your current school's international student advisor (DSO) to complete Section II. Please email it to [admitme@cn.edu](mailto:admitme@cn.edu) (for undergraduate applicants) and [adult@cn.edu](mailto:adult@cn.edu) (for graduate applicants).

## TUITION, FEES, AND SCHOLARSHIPS

### How much does it cost to attend Carson-Newman as an International Student?

For a breakdown of the estimated costs, please go to your “[Application Status Page](#)” and have a look at the *Cost of Attendance Reference Sheet* available under the section “Application Checklist” with the *Confirmation of Financial Support Form*.

You can also visit Carson-Newman’s “Tuition & Costs” pages for more information:

Undergraduate: <https://www.cn.edu/admissions-and-aid/financial-aid/tuition-costs/>

Graduate: <https://www.cn.edu/graduate-and-professional-studies/financial-aid/>

### What are the application and enrollment fees for Carson-Newman University?

It is FREE to apply to Carson-Newman! Apply [here](#).

Once you have been accepted:

*Undergraduate students:*

There is a \$200 non-refundable enrollment deposit.

*Graduate students:*

There is a \$500 enrollment deposit, which will be applied to the student's account. This deposit is refundable in the event of a visa denial.

### What are the scholarship opportunities for an UNDERGRADUATE student at Carson-Newman?

Carson-Newman offers a merit-based academic scholarship each year to undergraduate students seeking their first degree. For more information on merit-based scholarships, please visit the Carson-Newman “[International Scholarships](#)” webpage. We also offer some smaller scholarships, depending on major and other factors. Please visit [University Scholarships | Carson-Newman University \(cn.edu\)](#) for more information.

*If you are an athlete, please look at the question regarding our athletic scholarships for more information.*

### **Does Carson-Newman offer fully funded scholarships?**

As a small, private university, Carson-Newman is unable to offer fully funded scholarships. Therefore, we suggest that you explore other independent scholarships you may be eligible for which are not sponsored by Carson-Newman. The following information can be found on the governmental webpage, "[Study in the States:](#)" International students can use Education USA's [Find Financial Aid tool](#) and visit their local [Education USA advising center](#) for more information about the options available to them.

### **What are the scholarship opportunities for a GRADUATE student at Carson-Newman?**

Because tuition at the graduate level is offered at a tremendous discount, we are unable to offer scholarships to any student, domestic or international. However, after arriving on campus, several international students have been able to obtain graduate assistant positions which offer half-off tuition plus minimum wage for up to 20 hours of work per week. These positions, which are limited and therefore quite competitive, can only be offered to accepted students. Furthermore, they cannot be used as a means of financial support for the F-1 visa application process.

Therefore, we suggest that you explore other independent scholarships you may be eligible for which are not sponsored by Carson-Newman. The following information can be found on the governmental webpage, "[Study in the States:](#)" International students can use Education USA's [Find Financial Aid tool](#) and visit their local [Education USA advising center](#) for more information about the options available to them.

*If you are an athlete, please look at the question regarding our athletic scholarships for more information.*

### **How do I get an athletic scholarship?**

To obtain an athletic scholarship, it's important to understand that the admissions office does not play a role in this process. Instead, athletic scholarships are managed and awarded by the coaches of each sport. Here are the steps you can follow to pursue an athletic scholarship:

1. *Contact the Coaches:*

The first step is to get in touch with the coaches of the sport you are interested in. You can find the contact information for each coach on Carson-Newman University's website. Visit their [Athletic Staff Directory](#) to find the relevant coach for your sport.

2. *Complete a Recruiting Questionnaire:*

Carson-Newman University provides a recruiting questionnaire for prospective athletes. You can find and complete the questionnaire at [Carson-Newman Athletics Recruiting](#).

3. *Showcase Your Abilities:*

In your communication with the coaches, be prepared to showcase your athletic abilities. This could include providing statistics, video footage of your performances, or any accolades you have received.

4. *Follow-Up:*

After initial contact and submitting the questionnaire, follow up with the coaches. Maintaining communication shows your interest and commitment to the program.

5. *Understand the Requirements:*

Each sport and coach may have different criteria for awarding scholarships. Make sure to understand these requirements and how you can meet them.

Remember, obtaining an athletic scholarship is competitive, and it's important to proactively engage with the coaches, demonstrate your athletic prowess, and express your enthusiasm for joining their program.



## F-1 STUDENT VISA

### What is an F-1 Student Visa?

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) defines an [F-1 Student Visa](#) as follows:

*The F-1 Visa ([Nonimmigrant Academic Student](#)) allows you to enter the United States as a full-time student at an accredited college, university, seminary, conservatory, academic high school, elementary school, or other academic institution or in a language training program. You must be enrolled in a program or course of study that culminates in a degree, diploma, or certificate and your school must be authorized by the U.S. government to accept international students.*

### How do I get an F-1 Student Visa?

Once you have completed your [application to Carson-Newman](#) and have been accepted, you will be given an I-20 form issued by Carson-Newman University which you can use to apply for your F-1 Student Visa at the [U.S. Embassy or Consulate](#) in your country. For more information on this application process please visit [Travel.State.Gov](#) on the “Student Visa” page scroll down to the “How to Apply” section and follow those steps carefully.

### What happens if I get denied an F-1 Student Visa?

If your F-1 visa is denied, the consular officer usually provides the reason. If not, contact them for clarification. There is no appeal process for a visa denial; you must reapply. Understanding the reason for the initial denial is crucial to address any issues in your new application. Note that the terms visa refusal, rejection, and denial are used interchangeably and mean the same thing.

If your visa is not approved, there are three possible courses of action:

1. Additional documentation is requested for the current application.
2. Additional time is needed to process the current application.
3. The current visa application is denied, and a new application is needed.

Common types of visa denials

<p><b>INA section 221(g)</b> <i>(Incomplete Application or Supporting Documentation)</i></p>	<p>Application incomplete and/or additional documentation required – no new application is needed; you just need to submit the required documentation and your visa processing will continue. You have one year from the date of visa refusal to complete the application.</p>
<p><b>INA section 214(b)</b> <i>(Visa Qualifications and Immigrant Intent)</i></p>	<p>Failure to demonstrate nonimmigrant intent and/or failure to demonstrate that you qualify for the F-1 student visa.</p>
<p><b>INA section 212(a)(4)</b> <i>(Public Charge)</i></p>	<p>Failure to show you have sufficient finances to fund your education and living in the U.S. while attending school.</p>
<p><b>INA section 212(a)(9)(B)(i)</b> <i>(Unlawful Presence in the U.S.)</i></p>	<p>Previously entered the U.S. unlawfully or overstayed a visa.</p>
<p><b>INA section 212(a)(6)(C)(i)</b> <i>(Fraud and Misrepresentation)</i></p>	<p>There is evidence that you committed fraud or lied in an attempt to get a U.S. visa – this is a permanent denial, so you cannot reapply.</p>

*Tips for reapplying after student visa denial:*

Please note that a previous visa denial may lead to increased scrutiny on future U.S. immigration applications. Only reapply after you have adequately addressed the denial's cause. While consular officers typically state the denial reason, some decisions are discretionary and less clear. In such cases, consider reapplying at a different consulate or embassy, but ensure thorough preparation before doing so.

Before reapplying, consider these questions:

- What questions did the consular officer ask during the interview and how did you answer them?
- How did you explain your overall plan for your education?
- Is there additional information you can provide to clearly establish your intent to leave the U.S. after the completion of your studies?

- How did you present yourself at the interview and what will you do differently?
- What new documents will you include in your reapplication?
- Does the consulate have any special rules for reapplying?

Start the reapplication process as soon as possible because the next available visa interview appointment may be a long time away. It's essential to secure your visa before the school year begins. Check for other U.S. consulates in your country, as they may have earlier appointment times available.

You can read more regarding this information on [Travel.State.Gov](https://travel.state.gov) under "[Visa Denials](#)."

### *Important Note!*

When you have reapplied and rescheduled your visa appointment, please ensure that your financial documentation is recently dated (within 6 months) and provide Ms. [Nilma Stewart](#), Director of International Admissions, with your appointment confirmation, so that she is able to reissue an I-20 Form to you for the next available start date.

Carson-Newman admissions can defer your enrollment date for *one semester only*. If you do not get your visa within that timeframe, you will have to start a new application.

## **What are some common reasons for F-1 Student Visa Denials?**

If your student visa is denied, it indicates issues with your application, but you can reapply. There's no limit on the number of times you can apply, but avoid submitting identical applications. Misrepresentation or dishonesty on your application can lead to permanent visa ineligibility. It is important to understand the reasoning behind student visa denials to correct any mistakes.

### *1. Failure to prove your non-immigrant intent:*

A common reason for visa denial is "immigrant intent," where applicants don't convincingly show plans to leave the U.S. after their degree. Despite many international students wishing to stay post-graduation, remember that the F-1 visa is temporary and non-immigrant. Your application and interview should clearly demonstrate your intention to return home after your studies, even if you plan to apply later for a work visa in the U.S. The primary purpose of an F-1 visa is to complete a specific higher education program.

To demonstrate nonimmigrant intent for a visa, you can show:

- Close family ties in your home country.
- Ownership of property in your home country.
- Financial connections to your home country.
- A job offer in your home country post-graduation.
- Involvement in organizations or communities in your home country.
- A clean visa and immigration history.

*2. Incomplete application form:*

Your visa application, like your college application, must be fully and accurately completed to ensure acceptance/approval. Before submission, carefully review it for typos or minor errors.

*3. Insufficient financial funds:*

Most colleges and universities ask international applicants to demonstrate their ability to pay for their education before making final admissions decisions. However, you will have to show this again during the visa application process to demonstrate that you will not become a financial burden on U.S. citizens during your time here.

*4. Poor academic performance:*

When the school's admissions office accepted you, they showed confidence in your potential to succeed as an international student at their institution. A consular officer's role includes verifying this decision. They might ask for your transcripts, standardized test scores, or other academic records. To be prepared, bring copies of these documents to your visa interview.

*5. Inadequate English proficiency:*

Besides the English proficiency test scores you provided to the university, you'll also need to demonstrate your English skills during the interview with the consular officer. Practicing with a native English speaker can help.

You might be asked questions like:

- Have you been to the U.S. before?
- Do you have family, relatives, or friends in the U.S.?
- What will you be studying?
- Why did you choose this particular university?

### 6. *Poor visa interview*

The consular officer's impression of you influences their interpretation of your interview responses. They assess your honesty and intentions, noting not just what you say but also how you say it, including your tone and body language. To improve your chances of success, dress in a professional yet simple manner and behave confidently yet respectfully. Practicing before the interview can make it easier to convey these qualities effectively.

### 7. *Criminal history*

Individuals with a [criminal record](#), including most types of convictions and even traffic violations, are generally ineligible for U.S. student visas. It's crucial for international students to always abide by the law, as the consequences of legal issues can be more severe for them compared to domestic students.

### 8. *Past violations of visa terms*

This is typically not relevant for most international undergraduate students. However, it could affect graduate students who have previously held any type of U.S. visa, including a student visa. If you have violated the terms of a past U.S. visa, for instance, by overstaying, you might be disqualified from obtaining a new visa.

You can read more regarding this information on Travel.State.Gov under "[Visa Denials](#)."

## **Can I change from a B/J-1/F-2 Visa to an F-1 Student Visa?**

Yes, it is possible to change from a B (visitor), J-1 (exchange visitor), or F-2 (dependent of an F-1 student) visa to an F-1 student visa through a process that the U.S. government calls a "change of status".

However, there are specific procedures and requirements you must follow:

#### 1. *Admission to a SEVP-Certified School:*

First, you must be accepted into a program at a school certified by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). [Carson-Newman](#) is certified.

#### 2. *Form I-20:*

Once accepted, the university will issue you a Form I-20, which is necessary for the F-1 visa application.

Please note that Carson-Newman cannot assist you directly with this change of status process. We recommend that you consult with an immigration attorney on this matter.

For more information and guidance, please visit the USCIS website “[Change My Nonimmigrant Status.](#)”

### **What is a Designated School Official (DSO)?**

A Designated School Official is an individual authorized by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to verify and certify documents for F-1 international students and ensure that international students remain in compliance with Federal and State laws.

### **Can I work in the U.S. on an F-1 student visa?**

Please keep in mind that the F-1 visa is a *student* visa and not a work visa! However, there are limited circumstances when you *may* be able to work in the U.S. on an F-1 visa, but there are strict rules and guidelines: It is vital that you consult with your DSO before you plan to start working!

#### *1. On-Campus Employment:*

F-1 students are generally allowed to work on-campus for up to 20 hours per week during the academic term and full-time during breaks and holidays. This does not require approval from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

#### *2. Off-Campus Employment:*

Off-campus employment is only permitted under very limited conditions and requires authorization. This includes:

- Curricular Practical Training (CPT): For work experience that is an integral part of your curriculum, like internships or cooperative education programs.
- Optional Practical Training (OPT): Allows you to work in your field of study for up to 12 months after completing your academic program. You must apply for OPT authorization through USCIS.
- STEM OPT Extension: If you have a degree in certain science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields, you may be eligible for a 24-month extension of your OPT.

Remember, unauthorized employment can have serious consequences for your F-1 status. Always consult with your school's international student office before accepting any employment to ensure compliance with F-1 visa regulations.

For more information regarding employment on an F-1 Student visa, please visit the USCIS webpage "[Students and Employment](#)."

### **What should I do if my Visa interview date is scheduled after my program start date?**

We are aware that U.S. visa appointments in many locations are difficult to obtain or that the appointments are booked up many months into the future. Unfortunately, we here at Carson-Newman are unable to assist directly with this type of situation.

Some U.S. Embassies and Consulates have an option for F-1 Students and J-1 Exchange Visitors to request an expedited visa appointment, though there is no guarantee that the visa office will be able to honor these requests.

#### *Option 1:*

To see if a U.S. Embassy or Consulate offers this option, go to [usembassy.gov](http://usembassy.gov) and find the specific location where you plan to apply for the visa. Then, search that location's website for information on emergency or expedited appointments.

#### *Option 2:*

Some U.S. embassies use a different website platform which simplifies finding information. Go to [ustraveldocs.com](http://ustraveldocs.com). Choose the region and country and find the link *Apply for an Expedited Appointment*, which lists the qualifications and how to apply.

#### *Documentation needed to qualify for and Expedited Appointment:*

- Original I-20 Form indicating the start date of your program within 60 days.
- Evidence that you have paid the [SEVIS fee](#).

Please understand that Carson-Newman University does not have the ability to influence the U.S. Department of State's visa process. Although we empathize with your situation regarding visa appointments, our capacity to help is limited. We can only provide additional support if the U.S. visa authorities request specific information about your program of study at Carson-Newman University.

## ACT/SAT/CLT

### **What are ACT/SAT/CLT tests, and do I, as an international student, have to take them?**

The ACT, SAT, and CLT are standardized tests commonly used in the United States for college admissions. These tests are optional for international students. A very high test score can sometimes make an undergraduate applicant eligible for a modest increase in merit scholarship amount. Please visit the Carson-Newman "[University Scholarships](#)" webpage for more information on the merit scholarships.

Let us know if you plan on taking one of these tests; if not, please inform us so that we can waive the requirement on your application. You can communicate this information via email to Ms. Nilma Stewart, Director of International Admissions, at [nstewart@cn.edu](mailto:nstewart@cn.edu).



## RESOURCES

**What are some good resources for international students who want to study in the U.S.?**

### [Education USA](#)

Education USA is a U.S. Department of State network of over 430 international student advising centers in more than 175 countries and territories. The network promotes U.S. higher education to students around the world by offering accurate, comprehensive, and current information about opportunities to study at accredited postsecondary institutions in the United States. [Education USA](#) is your official source on U.S. higher education.

### [Study in the States](#)

[Study in the States](#) offers free government resources that explain the rules and regulations governing the nonimmigrant student process in the United States.