

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the Student Educational
Employment Program (SEEP) at the Transatlantic Programs Center, U.S.
Army Corps of Engineers (TAC)

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1. What is SEEP?

The Student Education Employment Program is a flexible program that serves as a critical tool to assist agencies in attracting and recruiting students to meet employment needs. The program consists of two components, the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) and the Student Temporary Experience Program (STEP). [Back to Questions](#)

2. What is the SCEP Program?

The SCEP Program offers students valuable work experience directly related to their academic field of study. It provides formal periods of work and study while they are attending school. It requires a commitment by the student, their school, and TAC. [Back to Questions](#)

3. What is the STEP Program?

The STEP Program offers students temporary employment. Employment can range from summer jobs to positions that can last for as long as the employee is a student. These employment opportunities do not have to be related to the student's academic field of study. Students may not be employed beyond graduation. Students may be converted to the Student Career Experience Program when requirements of that program are met and if an appropriate position is available. [Back to Questions](#)

4. Can a student appointed to one of the SEEP programs remain on the appointment once they have completed their educational requirements?

Students employed under the SCEP program may continue on the appointment for 120 days beyond the date of completing their work and academic requirements. At the end of the 120 days, if the graduate has not been converted to a position in the competitive service, he/she would either have to resign or a personnel action terminating the student's employment would be processed. Students in SCEP may be noncompetitively converted in any Federal agency to permanent employment under this component after successfully completing their education and meeting 640 hours of work experience.

Once a student appointed to the STEP has completed the requirements for his/her degree/diploma/certificate (as appropriate), he/she is no longer a student, and his/her employment would end, either through the student's voluntary resignation or a personnel action terminating his/her employment. The reason for terminating student's employment is that they are no longer "students" and therefore no longer meet the basic eligibility for the program. If enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an additional educational program, they may be rehired. Necessary steps must be taken to make a new appointment, if the student is to be retained. [Back to Questions](#)

5. Must applicants for the Student Educational Employment Program (SEEP) be rated and ranked?

These positions are exempt from the usual competitive examining procedures. However, TAC supervisors will panel the applications and choose the best suited for the available positions. [Back to Questions](#)

6. Does veterans' preference apply in the selection process for students?

Yes. Qualified veterans receive consideration before qualified non-veterans. [Back to Questions](#)

7. Is there a public notice requirement for filling student positions?

No, there is no requirement for public notice. TAC will announce vacancies within its workforce and through local schools. [Back to Questions](#)

8. Do students need to take any written tests to apply for the Student Employment Programs?

No, written tests are waived for students in the SEEP Program. [Back to Questions](#)

9. Can a son or daughter of an agency employee participate in the SEEP program?

Yes. There is no longer a restriction that would bar a student from working at the same agency as his/her parent. The only requirement is that the parent and student have no direct reporting relationship. [Back to Questions](#)

10. What qualification standards does an agency use to appoint students?

TAC uses the Department of the Army (DA)-developed qualification standard for SCEP positions. For STEP positions, TAC uses the appropriate Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Qualification Standard; for example, the OPM qualification standard for General Clerical and Administrative Support positions is used for clerical positions. [Back to Questions](#)

11. Do time-in-grade restrictions apply to students in the Student Educational Employment Program (SEEP)?

No. Time-in-grade restrictions do not apply. [Back to Questions](#)

12. What qualification standard does an agency use when it wants to promote a student?

TAC uses the DA qualification standard for SCEP students, and the appropriate OPM Qualification Standard for STEP positions. [Back to Questions](#)

13. What qualification standard does an agency use at the time a student (Student Career Experience Program) is being converted to a career-conditional appointment?

TAC uses the competitive service qualification standard for the grade level and occupation to which the student is being converted. [Back to Questions](#)

14. Can students in the career experience program be classified using the student trainee, GS-099, series?

Yes. Students appointed to SCEP positions subject to the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) are classified as student trainees, Pay Band YP, for the appropriate occupational group. SCEP employees perform work related to the type of academic program being pursued, so the position would be classified by using the XX99 occupational codes for the corresponding field. For example, a SCEP appointee studying civil engineering would be a Student Trainee (Civil Engineering), YP-0899-01. [Back to Questions](#)

15. Are students eligible for annual and sick leave?

Yes. Students in both programs earn annual and sick leave. Generally, students earn 4 hours of sick leave and 4 hours of annual leave per pay period. [Back to Questions](#)

16. Are students eligible for health and life insurance benefits?

Health and life insurance coverage for Federal employees depends on the type of appointment an employee has and the expectation of substantial employment during the year. Students in the STEP are considered temporary employees and are generally not entitled to these benefits. They will be eligible to enroll in the Federal Employee' Health Benefit Program after one year of current continuous employment, excluding any break in service of 5 days or less, has been completed. They would have to pay 100 percent of the premium (i.e., both the employee and government share). There is no provision for temporary employees to be eligible for life insurance coverage.

Students in the SCEP are eligible for both health and life insurance coverage as long as they are expected to be employed under this appointment authority for at least one year. They are expected to be in a pay status for at least one-third of the total period of time from the date of their initial appointment to the date of the completion of the program. Cost of premiums is split between the employee and the agency, as for all permanent employees. [Back to Questions](#)

17. Are students eligible for retirement benefits?

Students in the STEP are generally ineligible for retirement. Students in the SCEP with less than 5 years of prior civilian service are generally covered by the Federal Employees Retirement Systems (FERS). [Back to Questions](#)

18. Must students work or attend school during the summer?

The intent of the SEEP is that students are always either attending classes, working at the agency, or both. However, agencies may use their discretion to permit a break in program during which time a student is neither attending classes nor working. The student would be placed on leave without pay (LWOP) during this time. [Back to Questions](#)

19. Are there any “outer limits” on the length of a “break in program” which TAC can approve?

No. It is at the discretion of TAC. TAC should ensure that the student is making reasonable progress towards the attainment of the degree/diploma, etc., and that the needs of the manager are also considered. [Back to Questions](#)

20. Can students work less than 16 hours a week?

Yes. There are no limitations on the number of hours a student can work per week, but the student’s work schedule should not interfere with the student’s academic schedule. [Back to Questions](#)

21. May a student still alternate school and work (e.g., work full-time this semester, and next semester go to school full-time, and not work at all)?

Yes. The student, school and agency need to work together to accommodate the academic needs of the student and the work related needs of the agency. For students participating in the SCEP, there must be a written agreement and a formally arranged schedule of school and work. [Back to Questions](#)

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DATE ORIGINATED: 20 May 2008

CONTENT: Based on information on the Office of Personnel Management website at <https://www.opm.gov/employ/students/QSAS.asp> and the Defense Finance and Accounting Center at http://www.dfas.mil/careers/student/ca_sd_seep.htm