Hiring international students from the University of Washington

Who is an international student?
An international student is a citizen of another country who has come to complete a program of study at an American college or University under an F-1 or J-1 visa. Both are temporary nonimmigrant visas. F-1 is for studying in US academic programs and J-1 is for exchange visitors. For information on the F-1 visa, please see, [http://iss.washington.edu/rules-regulations/f1#toc0](http://iss.washington.edu/rules-regulations/f1#toc0). For information on the J-1 visa, please see, [http://iss.washington.edu/rules-regulations/j1#toc0](http://iss.washington.edu/rules-regulations/j1#toc0).

Are international students legally authorized to work in the US?
International students may apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT), a temporary training authorization for work related to the student’s field of study. An International Student must work with an employer to establish a CPT opportunity. Once an offer has been made to the student the CPT is then authorized by the UW International Student Services (ISS) Office. For more detailed information about CPT, please see, [http://iss.washington.edu/employment/f1-employment/cpt](http://iss.washington.edu/employment/f1-employment/cpt).

J-1 visa holders may also obtain authorization by applying for Academic Training (AT). For more detailed information about AT, please see, [http://iss.washington.edu/employment/j1-employment](http://iss.washington.edu/employment/j1-employment).

Are international students legally authorized to work in the US after graduation?
F-1 students may apply for work authorization as part of Optional Practical Training (OPT) for up to 12 months post-completion of their studies. Students in the science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) fields may potentially qualify for an additional 17 months of OPT eligibility beyond the initial 12 months. Employment must be directly related to the student’s program of study. For more detailed information about OPT, please see, [http://iss.washington.edu/employment/f1-employment/opt/overview](http://iss.washington.edu/employment/f1-employment/opt/overview). For information on the 17-month OPT extension, go to, [http://iss.washington.edu/employment/f1-employment/opt/stem-extension](http://iss.washington.edu/employment/f1-employment/opt/stem-extension).

J-1 students qualify for work authorization for up to 18 months as part of Academic Training (AT) work authorization. Employment must be directly related to the student’s major area of study. For more detailed information about AT, please see, [http://iss.washington.edu/employment/j1-employment](http://iss.washington.edu/employment/j1-employment).

Do I have to complete any paperwork to hire a student on CPT, OPT or AT?
No, the employer does not need to complete any paperwork. The necessary work authorization formalities are undertaken by the student, the International Student Services Office, and the student’s academic department. However, the academic department may require an employment offer letter as supporting documentation.

Are international students eligible for long-term US employment?
After a student’s OPT or AT duration, work visa is required for continued employment eligibility in the US. The common temporary working visa, the H-1B, can be obtained initially for three years and extended once for a combined total of six years.

Am I required to sponsor an employee for the H1-B?
No. However, an employee with OPT authorization must cease employment at the end of that authorization period if further sponsorship is not obtained.
How can I get more information about what is involved in sponsoring an employee for the H1-B, or about any of the topics represented above?
Consult with your company’s HR department or legal counsel, or consider reaching out to an immigration attorney for guidance. There are many immigration attorneys nationally and locally. One potential resource is http://greencardlawyers.com/.