

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) Sections 1101, 1102, and 1103; Fiscal Year 2010 grants the Secretary of Defense authority to make appointments of certain scholarship graduates to the excepted service, with non-competitive conversion to a career or career conditional appointment available upon their completion of two years of successful service. The authority to appoint individuals under these authorities is delegated to the DoD Component Head and Defense Agencies with independent appointing authority. The authority may be further re-delegated in writing. These scholarship programs include: the National Security Education Program (NSEP), the Information Assurance Scholarship Program (IASP), and the Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation Scholarship Program (SMART). This authority is implemented by the Under Secretary of Defense's memo titled Implementation of Authority to employ Individuals Completing Department of Defense Scholarship or Fellowship Programs; dated April 5, 2010.

Generally, to be eligible, the individual must:

- Meet the scholarship program completion requirements within required time frame
- Have an active service obligation and service agreement
- Meet the minimum qualification standards for the position as published in the OPM operating manual
- Must meet any selective placement factors and competencies necessary for appointment

To be appointed to a position, the individual must provide documentation from the NSEP/SMART/IASP Scholarship Program Office showing that they have completed the scholarship program and have a service obligation to fulfill. After completing two years of continuous service, the candidate may be non-competitively converted to a permanent career or career-conditional appointment in the competitive service.

General Scholarship Program Appointment Instructions:

Before Graduation:

- 1) Agency reviews and determines scholar's eligibility for an excepted service appointment 2 years prior to graduation
- 2) Agency makes a tentative job offer up to 1 year and no later than 4 months prior to graduation
- 3) Agency completes employment requirements before graduation occurs. These may include but are not limited to: background investigation, fingerprinting, financial disclosure, service and/or mobility agreements, etc.

After Graduation:

- 1) Upon graduation, the individual provides the Agency with documentation from the scholarship program office showing that they have completed the scholarship program and they have a service obligation to fulfill
- 2) Completion letter from university is accepted in lieu of degree conferral on transcript per OPM General Schedule Qualification Policies (<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/general-schedule-qualification-policies/#url=e4>)

- 3) Scholarship recipients who meet program completion requirements are given an excepted service appointment in order to fulfil their service obligations
- 4) Agency makes a final job offer 30 days after graduation
- 5) Employee Enters on Duty (EOD) within 30 days of receiving final job offer and 60 days after graduation
- 6) After completing two years continuous service, the individual may be non-competitively converted to a permanent career or career-conditional appointment in the competitive service

Legal Authority Code (LAC):

LAC: ZLM - Excepted Service Appointment (Insert Applicable Scholarship Program Remark)

LAC: ZLM - Conversion to Competitive Service (Insert Applicable Scholarship Program Remark)

NATIONAL SECURITY EDUCATION PROGRAM (NSEP)

The National Security Education Program (NSEP) awards scholarships for study or program development in languages and regions critical to national security. NSEP focuses on the critical languages and cultures of Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America. Participants are involved in innovative, intensive, and long-term programs designed to provide meaningful opportunities to gain significant competencies in these languages and cultures. The Secretary of Defense may appoint to a position identified as having national security responsibilities, an individual who has successfully completed an academic program for which NSEP scholarship or fellowship was awarded. These appointments may be to the excepted service and may be noncompetitively converted to a career or career conditional appointment in the competitive service upon satisfactory completion of two years of substantially continuous service.

Visit <http://www.nsep.gov/> for additional information.

SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS AND RESEARCH FOR TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM (SMART)

The Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation (SMART) Program is an opportunity for students pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines to receive a full scholarship and be gainfully employed upon degree completion. The Secretary of Defense may appoint to the excepted service an individual who has successfully completed an academic program for which a SMART scholarship or fellowship was awarded. The individual may be noncompetitively converted to a career or career-conditional appointment in the competitive service upon satisfactory completion of two years of substantially continuous service.

Visit <http://smart.asee.org/> for additional information.

INFORMATION ASSURANCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (IASP)

Information Assurance Scholarship Program (IASP) recruits and retains well-qualified personnel for work in the vital information assurance field. The scholarship program aims to cultivate continuing capacity for information assurance workforce development at select institutions of higher learning (CAEs) throughout the United States. The Secretary of Defense may appoint to the excepted service an individual who has successfully completed an academic program for which an IASP scholarship was awarded. The individual may be noncompetitively converted to a career or career-conditional appointment in the competitive service upon satisfactory completion of two years of substantially continuous service.

Visit <https://www.nsa.gov/ia/index.shtml> for additional information.

Note: *This document provides an overview of the program's basic policies and procedures. For detailed guidance see April 2010 Memo; "Implementation of Authority to Employ Individuals Completing Department of Defense Scholarship or Fellowship Programs".*