FAQs on Employment Classification

1. **If my employer says it is RF/IF, that trumps everything, right?**

   No - Just because a graduate or employer states a position is IF or RF, it does not mean that the position is truly IF or RF or should be considered an initial success. It is the DOCS and College Director's responsibility to maintain the integrity and validity of each and every employment.

   Some questions that should be asked are:
   a. Does the position truly represent a success?
   b. Is the graduate really using skills taught in their core courses?
   c. Is this a position a student would have come to our school to obtain?
   d. For self-employments, is this self-employment a potential pathway to success or a means to obtain an employment for ETG purposes?
   e. Are the responsibilities commensurate with the position title?
   f. Could the graduate have gotten the position without a degree?
   g. Does the position represent a good (or even valid) ROI for the graduate?

2. **If the "Employers by Program" listing on the Portal shows that a graduate working for a particular employer in one area of the country is IF/RF, then doesn't that mean that my graduate who goes to work for that employer locally in a similar job title is IF/RF, too?**

   No - Every employment is unique and must be evaluated, documented and confirmed based on the specifics of the individual situation (e.g., Graduate degree, Job title, Job duties and responsibilities, Hours working using skills taught in the core courses, etc.)

3. **If my IT-CNS graduate is required to use a PC in their current job for at least 20% of the time, aren't they RF?**

   It depends on the specifics of the position and what skills obtained from core courses the graduate is using in their position. If the graduate is only entering data into a spreadsheet or other programs or is using a computer that is networked with other computers, that would not by counted toward the justification for an IF/RF classification. On the other hand, if the graduate is programming or monitoring network activities, or collecting and analyzing data, those might be activities that count toward an IF or RF classification.

   Again, every employment is unique and must be evaluated, documented and confirmed based on the specifics of the individual situation (e.g., Graduate degree, Job title, Job duties and responsibilities, Hours working using skills taught in the core courses, etc.)

4. **If my IT-CNS graduate does data entry that involves opening up a spreadsheet and typing in values, is that an RF?**

   No – simply typing data into a spreadsheet or document is not justification for an IF or RF classification.

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5. **If my graduate had to set up and/or train individuals on specific equipment related to their field of study (e.g., computers or electronics) as part of a project at work, but that is not part of their official job description or typical daily duties, can I count that as RF/IF?**

   This would depend on the specifics of the project. Generally, this would not count unless you could document that the project was "long-term" (at least 30 days or longer and the graduate would be working on the project at least 30 hours per week for those 30+ days) and that the graduate was using skills taught in the core course of the program of study.

6. **I am having no luck contacting the graduate or the employer to verify the employment, but one of my Chairs spoke to the grad and said that he stated he's using his skills. Does this count as a valid verbal verification?**

   A verbal verification needs to be collected, verified and documented in writing by a member of the Career Services Department or the College Director. However, the Career Services Department should use this "opening" to work with the Chair to get the graduate to contact Career Services to discuss their employment situation.

7. **I was unable to talk with the grad's supervisor, but I called another Wendy's location and spoke to their Management Supervisor, who said that all people in this position use the core skills at least 20% of the time. Is that a valid verification?**

   The information used to obtain the information necessary to document an employment needs to come directly from the graduate and/or their Supervisor (or someone else in their management chain), the Company's Human Resources Department or a job description specific to that position and location. This assures that the specific position the graduate is working in is the one being evaluated and documented.

8. **I spoke to someone at the grad's place of employment who said he is working there, but I did not get a last name or job title for the person I was speaking with. Can I use this conversation to document the employment?**

   The information used to validate or confirm (post-graduation and/or post-start date) an employment needs to come directly from the Supervisor (or someone else in their management chain), the Company's Human Resources Department or a job description specific to that position and location. It must include the date, name and title of the person providing the information.

9. **If I get information that a grad is working somewhere via the Work Number, do I have to speak with the grad or the employer? Is it enough to just research on my own what someone in that position typically does?**

   For Work Number employments, you should:

   1.   Obtain a job description from the graduate or the employer to determine whether the employment is OF, IF or RF. This is mandatory, and you cannot evaluate the employment without it. Do this for every graduate, even those who appear to be out of field.

Note: Sometimes job titles are misleading because you do not know exactly what the graduate is doing on a daily basis. Per procedure, you should evaluate the information you learn from the graduate or employer about the details of the job responsibilities to determine if the position is a valid employment or not:

i.   Is the graduate using tasks, skills and knowledge learned in the core courses of his or her program of study? If no, then the position is OF. If yes, then go to ii below.

ii.   Is the graduate using that skill/knowledge a minimum of 20% of the time in this position? If no, then the position is OF. If yes, then the position is RF (20-49%) or IF (50%+).

2.   If you determine the employment is valid (IF or RF), document it per procedure as you normally would:

a.   Complete the GEI with the information you have obtained, including a thorough job description. It should be clear to any person who reads the file that the job responsibilities constitute a valid RF or IF employment

        Per procedure, do not answer the "Is the graduate utilizing skills and knowledge taught in the core courses of the program of study? and the "If yes, how much time on the job is spent utilizing these skills" questions on the GEI

b.   Obtain the graduate's signature or a valid good faith attempt (per procedure).

c.   The Work Number data represents the employer verification.
        *   On the Employer Signature line of the GEI write "See attached Work Number data."

d.   DOCS signs the GEI

e.   College Director signs the GEI

f.   Enter the employment in the system. Because The Work Number is a legal proxy for the employer to validate employment, you should use the "ES" code when entering this employment (per procedure).

3.   If you determine the position is OF, complete the Out of Field Employment Information Form and if you are out of contact with the graduate, use the information as a method to contact the graduate and begin working with him or her to obtain valid employment.

10. **If my graduate works at a Blockbuster or an electronics department that sells video games, doesn't that make them a DEGD related field placement? What if their employer says they are more effective at taking care of customers' questions because of their degree?**

Blockbuster, GameStop and other video/game store employments are not black and white and require a significant amount of analysis, thought and documentation.

At a basic level, a Game or Video Advisor is a sales clerk, taking orders, ringing up sales, describing games, etc. They also may be doing some other tasks but their main responsibilities likely are general sales and store operations.

As a result, to try and validate such an employment as IF or RF, consideration needs to be given to:

    a. Is the graduate really using skills taught in their core courses?
    b. Is the graduate using any of these skills at least 20% of the time? Can this "accurately" be quantified? Quantifiably, 20% of a 40 hour week is 8 hours or 480 minutes. For example purposes, if an employee is "using" some of their game design skills in "5 minute" blocks to talk game engines, design criteria, etc. with customers, they would need to have 96 of these "technical" interactions per week. In a 5 day week, that would mean almost 20 "technical" interactions per day. Is this something they are/would be doing? Similar analysis/consideration would need to be given if they were using other skills learned in core courses.
    c. Is this position a reasonable ROI for the graduate? Is there a career path that aligns with the graduate's degree program beyond this position?
    d. Documentation notwithstanding, do these positions truly represent an initial success for a DEGD/MM/VC graduate? Or should these be considered more "training" or "experiential" type positions that we/our students should be pursuing to obtain pre-graduate employment experience?

11. **If part of my grad's job responsibilities involves creatively setting up sales displays, can I count that as an RF placement for a CDD or MM grad?**

It depends on the specifics of the position and what skills obtained from core courses the graduate is using in their position. If the graduate is only stacking products or hanging signs then it would not be considered a valid employment. However, if the graduate was designing the layouts using skills taught in the core courses or creating the sales and marketing materials used on the displays, and was spending at least 20% of the time using these skills taught in the core courses, then the position might be an RF employment.

Again, every employment is unique and must be evaluated, documented and confirmed based on the specifics of the individual situation (e.g., Graduate degree, Job title, Job duties and responsibilities, Hours working using skills taught in the core courses, etc.)

12. **If HQ CS has mentioned an employer by name as a potential target for a particular program, does that mean all placements with that employer are automatically approved as RF/IF?**

No -Every employment is unique and must be evaluated, documented and confirmed based on the specifics of the individual situation (e.g., Graduate degree, Job title, Job duties and responsibilities, Hours working using skills taught in the core courses, etc.)

13. **My CJ grad is in charge of a cash register. She needs to be accountable for keeping that money secure. Is that an RF/IF placement?**

No – keeping track of money or being "honest" is not a skill taught in core courses.

Again, every employment is unique and must be evaluated, documented and confirmed based on the specifics of the individual situation (e.g., Graduate degree, Job title, Job duties and responsibilities, Hours working using skills taught in the core courses, etc.)

14. **My CJ graduate has taken classes in Emergency Procedures. If he is a bus driver or a nursing home attendant, part of his duties would include making sure that everyone knows how to safely evacuate in time of fire or a crash. Could this help to qualify him as RF?**

Though this might be a skill taught in a core course, it is not likely that the graduate would routinely be using this skill/knowledge at least 20% or more of the time each week during their performance of their duties (e.g., performing actual evacuations for 8 or more hours per week).