

Visitors

There are many different types of visitors that come to Caltech to work and study for durations between a few days and several years. The Graduate Office and [International Student Programs \(ISP\)](#) are responsible for appointments for visitors that are graduate students at other Institutions or will be visiting in a graduate student role at Caltech. ISP is only involved with the non-US students and handles the immigration documentation aspects as well as other international student specific concerns once the paperwork is received from the Graduate Office.

Students

Student visitors include both students that are taking classes and those that are not but just working as researchers or within a faculty member's research group.

There are two main classes of students:

Degree-seeking: Students that are enrolled at Caltech for the purpose of obtaining a degree. These students must be admitted for graduate study through the regular admission process and all the usual regulations apply.

Non-degree seeking: All other students are non-degree seeking. This includes all visitors.

Visiting Student Appointments

Faculty or their administrative staff must request appointments and supply documentation for all long-term visitors. There are two main types of appointments for visiting students:

- **Visiting Student 'Special'** -They are usually just referred to as **Special Students**. These are visiting students who require proof of enrollment (i.e., must register) or who will be paid a stipend through the payroll system. Special students are eligible for Caltech benefits as defined by their enrollment status (i.e, housing, health and dental insurance, etc.). Special students who receive a salary will be billed for tuition and tuition remission will be deducted from the grant/PTA. Special students who do not receive a Caltech salary will be billed the minimum tuition (rates vary each year, but are the equivalent to three units of tuition).
- **Visiting Student Researcher** - a Visiting Student Researcher (VSR) is not eligible to receive academic credit, cannot be paid a salary, and does not have an official "academic" standing at Caltech. They are also required to provide proof of insurance for the duration of the visit since they are not eligible for Caltech benefits. VSR's can be reimbursed for research-related expenses (i.e., travel, housing, per diem, etc.), but will not receive a check through payroll. If paid on a reimbursement basis, it is the PI's responsibility to ensure that the grant can be used for such purposes and there are no restrictions on spending. VSR's are required to check in with the Registrar's office to obtain a Caltech ID.

Special Programs

- **Exchange Programs** - Some Options and Divisions have exchange programs that they have arranged with other institutions. The exchange students must have a visiting student appointment and the type of appointment will depend on the agreement negotiated for that exchange program. These programs are administered by the Option or Division.
- **Education Programs** - Some Options have special arrangements to provide educational opportunities for students at local institutions to study at Caltech. The visiting student arrangements have to be approved by the Option Representative or Program Officer in addition to the Graduate Office.

Other Visitor Appointments

- Appointments of visitors with advanced degrees that are not in the student category are handled through the Division and Human Resources as well as the [International Scholar Services](#).
- Postdoctoral visitor appointments are handled through the Division Offices and the [International Scholar Services](#).
- Undergraduate students visiting for a summer research program (SURF, MURF, LIGO, Amgen...) are handled through the [Student Faculty Program Office](#)
- Volunteers, these are guests in a laboratory or research group, no privileges or formal association with Caltech. This is done through the Option or Division and is only appropriate for US nationals and casual presence at Caltech. The Graduate Office is not involved in these appointments.