



**NCAA Division III 2021-22 Academic Year Full-Time Enrollment
Blanket Waiver Question and Answer Guide
Updated June 1, 2021**

The NCAA Division III Presidents Council and Division III Management Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief approved a blanket waiver for the 2021-22 academic year allowing a student-athlete to participate while enrolled less than full time as follows:

1. If a student-athlete has graduated, prior to the 2021-22 academic year, then they may be enrolled in a minimum of six credit hours each semester or quarter in a second baccalaureate, graduate program or classes approved by an academic authority outside of athletics that progresses the student-athlete toward a professional or career goal.
2. If a student-athlete will graduate during the 2021-22 academic year, the student-athlete may:
 - a. Enroll in a minimum of six hours of academic credit during the fall 2021 term and then enroll in the classes necessary to complete their degree per the final term exception (Bylaw 14.1.8.1.7.1) for the spring semester of 2022; or
 - b. The student-athlete enrolls in the classes necessary to complete their degree per the final term exception (Bylaw 14.1.8.1.7.1) for the fall 2021 semester and then is enrolled in a minimum of six credit hours for each subsequent term for the remainder of the 2021-22 academic year (e.g., Spring 2022 semester) in a second baccalaureate, graduate program or classes that progress the student-athlete toward a professional or career goal and are approved by an academic authority outside of athletics.

[The above criteria would apply to quarter institutions on the same equivalent basis.]

Who qualifies for this waiver?

Any student-athlete with eligibility remaining:

- Who will complete their degree during the 2021-22 academic year, or
- Has completed their degree prior to fall 2021; and
- Is otherwise eligible to compete during the 2021-22 academic year.

Application questions.

Question No. 1: Does the blanket waiver apply to a student-athlete who transfers to a Division III institution for the 2021-22 academic year?

Answer: Yes, however, transfer status is irrelevant to the application of the waiver. The student-athlete needs to be eligible (e.g., satisfies an exception to the year in residence requirement; has seasons and terms remaining) but otherwise the only requirement to qualify for the waiver is that they graduated prior to the 2021-22 academic year or will graduate by completion of the 2021-22 academic year.

Question No. 2: Does the blanket waiver apply to a student-athlete that graduated from a non-Division III institution prior to fall 2021 and wants to participate in the 2021-22 academic year?

Answer: The blanket waiver would apply if the student-athlete was otherwise eligible to compete during the 2021-22 academic year. The student-athlete would still need a graduate waiver to participate. If the student receives that waiver, then the full-time enrollment blanket waiver would apply.

Question No. 3: Does the blanket waiver apply if the student-athlete was not enrolled in 2020-21 academic year?

Answer: Yes. However, the enrollment status for 2020-21 academic year is irrelevant to application of the waiver. The student-athlete needs to be eligible but otherwise the only requirement to qualify for the waiver is that they graduated prior to the 2021-22 academic year or will graduate by completion of the 2021-22 academic year.

Question No. 4: Does the blanket waiver only apply to student-athletes using the COVID-19 relief (extra season) provided for the 2020-21 academic?

Answer: No. The waiver applies to any student-athlete who will graduate during the 2021-22 academic year or as already graduated and is otherwise eligible to compete during the 2021-22 academic year.

What does the waiver permit?

For the student-athletes that qualify for the waiver it permits participation while enrolled in less than a full-time course load during each term of the 2021-22 academic year as follows:

1. For a student-athlete that graduated before the fall 2021 term, the student athlete has three options for less than full-time enrollment:
 - a. A minimum of six credit hours per term toward a graduate program;

- b. A minimum of six credit hours per term toward a second baccalaureate program;
or
 - c. A minimum of six credit hours per term toward classes that progress the student's professional or career goal and are approved by an academic authority outside of athletics.
2. For a student-athlete who will graduate during the 2021-22 academic year, the student-athlete may use the final term exception for one of the terms during the 2021-22 academic year. For all other terms, the student-athlete must be enrolled in a minimum of six credit hours (see option no. 1 for type of credit hours).

Application questions.

Question No. 1: What type of courses that are not part of a graduate or baccalaureate program may be used to satisfy the minimum six credit hours?

Answer: Any courses that advance the student-athlete towards an academic or professional goal and are approved by an academic authority outside of athletics.

Question No. 2: If the student-athlete is taking classes toward a second undergraduate or graduate degree, does the student-athlete need to complete the degree by the end of the 2021-22 academic year?

Answer: No, the student-athlete does not need to complete the requirements for the second undergraduate or graduate degree by the end of the 2021-22 academic year.

Question No. 3: Would the blanket waiver permit a spring sport student-athlete who graduated before the 2021-22 academic year to not enroll in the fall term and then enroll in six credit hours during the spring 2022 term to complete their eligibility?

Answer: Yes. Provided the student-athlete qualifies for the blanket waiver, the student-athlete may use the blanket waiver for any or all terms of the 2021-22 academic year.

Final Term Exception.

Question No. 4 If the student-athlete uses the final term exception (Bylaw 14.1.8.1.7.1) to enroll in less than a full-time course load during the fall 2021 term and does

not complete their degree requirements, may the student-athlete continue to participate in the spring term?

Answer: No. The legislation for the final term exception requires the student-athlete to complete all degree requirements during the term the exception is used and is eligible to receive their degree or the student-athlete forfeits eligibility in all sports.

Question No. 5: If the student-athlete uses the final term exception (Bylaw 14.1.8.1.7.1) do they still have to be enrolled in at least six credit hours?

Answer: No. If they are applying the final term exception, they only need to be enrolled in the credits necessary to complete their degree, even if that is less than six.

Miscellaneous questions.

Question No. 1: What is a blanket waiver?

Answer: A blanket waiver is a decision by an appropriate governance body to temporarily provide relief from NCAA legislation for specific extenuating circumstances that have a reasonably demonstrated widespread impact.

Question No. 2: Does an institution have to file anything to receive the benefits of a blanket waiver?

Answer: No. An institution does not have to submit a separate waiver request to receive the benefits/exceptions granted in the blanket waiver. The waiver applies to all institutions and/or student-athletes that are addressed/described in the blanket waiver.

Question No. 3: Does the blanket waiver permit a winter sport student-athlete who will graduate following the fall 2021 term to not enroll in a spring 2022 term and be eligible to participate?

Answer: No. The blanket waiver requires the student-athlete to be enrolled in a minimum of six semester or quarter hours in each term after graduating while completing their season of participation. However, exceptions for eligibility after completion of a degree per Bylaw 14.1.8.1.7.7 are still available for any student-athlete who meets the criteria list in Bylaw 14.1.8.1.7.7 (a) or (b).

Question No. 4: What if my institution determines enrollment hours on a basis other than traditional semester or quarter hours?

Answer: The student-athlete must be enrolled in the equivalent of six credit hours based on how the institution determines enrollment hours provided the institution received a waiver per Bylaw 14.1.8.1.8.1 (nontraditional academic calendars or nonrequired cooperative education program – 12-hour requirement only).

Question No. 5: What are the options for a student-athlete who does not qualify for the blanket waiver or has extenuating circumstances that prevent the student-athlete from satisfying the requirements of the blanket waiver (e.g., unable to take six credit hours)?

Answer: The institution has two options:

- The student enrolls full-time for any term in which the student-athlete wants to participate in intercollegiate athletics; or
- The institution may submit a legislative relief waiver. However, the blanket waiver does reflect certain principles in which all individual waivers will be reviewed. For example, college athletics is about students competing against students and therefore a minimum enrollment threshold is important.

Question No. 6: How does the blanket waiver impact the financial aid a student-athlete may receive?

Answer: The blanket waiver has not altered, amended, or waived any Division III financial aid legislation. Institutions must still adhere to all Division III financial aid legislation and institutional policies regarding the awarding of financial aid to any student-athlete who participates during the 2021-22 academic pursuant to the blanket waiver. For questions regarding the employment of student-athletes during the 2021-22 academic year, institutions are encouraged to review the April 2, 2021, educational column titled: [Eligibility of Student-Athletes Working In or Outside the Athletics Department](#).

Question No. 7: Why was six credit hours selected as the minimum credit hours for the blanket waiver?

Answer: The Subcommittee for Legislative Relief and Councils believed that six hours maintains a base level of enrollment that ensures Division III athletics constitutes students competing against students, while providing flexibility that supports graduation and participation.

Additional resources.

Please click [here](#) for examples of the blanket waiver applications at a semester institution.

Please click [here](#) for examples of the blanket waiver applications at a quarter institution.