



**NCAA Division III 2023-24 and 2024-25 Academic Year Full-Time Enrollment  
Blanket Waiver Question and Answer Guide  
Updated April 2023**

The NCAA Division III Management Council approved a blanket waiver to extend the relief of the full-time enrollment legislation from the 2021-22 and 2022-23 academic years to all student-athletes who earned season-of-participation relief, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, to permit *a student-athlete who has not previously used any pandemic-related enrollment relief* to participate while enrolled less than full time as follows:

1. **If a student-athlete has graduated prior to the academic year beginning**, they may be enrolled in a minimum of six (6) credit hours each term 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 complete their undergraduate degree during the academic year**, the student-athlete may do one of the following:
  - a. Enroll in the classes necessary to complete their degree, per the final term exception in Bylaw 14.1.8.1.7.1 (Bylaw 14.1.7.1.7.1 beginning August 1), for the *fall* term and then enroll in a minimum of six (6) credit hours for the *spring* term 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; or
  - b. Enroll in a minimum of six (6) hours of academic credit during the *fall* term and then enroll in the classes necessary to complete their degree, per the final term exception in Bylaw 14.1.8.1.7.1 (Bylaw 14.1.7.1.7.1), for the spring term.

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

**Please note:**

Only student-athletes who earned a season-of-participation under pandemic relief during the 2020 spring term and/or 2020-21 academic year **and** who have not previously used any pandemic-related enrollment relief may use the extended relief during the 2023-24 or 2024-25 academic year.

The council noted that the extension creates equity among all student-athletes who were affected by the pandemic while still maintaining a base level of enrollment, thereby, ensuring that Division III athletics constitutes students competing against students.

**Student-Athletes.**

**Question No. 1:** Who qualifies for this blanket waiver?

**Answer:** Any student-athlete with eligibility remaining who (1) earned a season-of-participation under pandemic relief during the 2020 spring term and/or 2020-21 academic year; **and** (2) has not previously used any iteration of pandemic-related full-time enrollment blanket relief. Further, the student-athlete must:

- Have completed their undergraduate degree prior to the academic year they will be using the relief; or
- Be completing their undergraduate degree during the academic year they will be using the relief.

**Question No. 2:** Does the blanket waiver provide relief to any other eligibility requirements?

**Answer:** No. The blanket waiver provides relief only to the full-time enrollment requirement for participation and the minimum 12 credit-hour requirement for competition. In order to participate while using the blanket relief, a student-athlete must satisfy all other eligibility requirements, including being accepted as a regularly admitted and matriculated student at the institution.

**Question No. 3:** Does the blanket waiver apply to a student-athlete who transfers to a Division III institution for the 2023-24 or 2024-25 academic year?

**Answer:** Yes. A student-athlete's transfer status does not affect their ability to qualify for the blanket waiver. Please note that the student-athlete must still be eligible (e.g., satisfy an exception to the year-in-residence requirement; have seasons and terms remaining) and must have earned a season of participation, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in the 2020 spring term and/or the 2020-21 academic year.

**Question No. 4:** Does the blanket waiver apply to a student-athlete that graduated from a non-Division III institution prior to the start of the academic year?

**Answer:** Yes. The blanket waiver would apply if the student-athlete is otherwise eligible to compete during the academic year, including those with an approved for a legislative relief waiver of Bylaw 14.1.9 (Bylaw 14.1.8, as of August 1, 2023).

**Question No. 5:** Can a student-athlete who was not enrolled during the 2022-23 academic year qualify for the blanket waiver?

**Answer:** Yes. The student-athlete's enrollment status for 2022-23 academic year is not relevant to application of the blanket waiver.

**Enrollment.**

**Question No. 6:** Are student-athletes required to enroll consistent with the blanket waiver during the academic year?

**Answer:** No. The blanket waiver simply provides additional enrollment options for student-athletes who earned season-of-participation blanket relief during the 2020 spring term and/or 2020-21 academic year.

**Question No. 7:** Would the blanket waiver permit a spring sport student-athlete who graduated before the academic year begins to not enroll in the fall term and then enroll in six credit hours during the spring 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 academic year.

**Question No. 8:** Does the blanket waiver permit a winter sport student-athlete who graduates following the fall term to not enroll in the spring 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 if they would like to complete their season of participation. The exceptions for eligibility after completion of a degree per Bylaw 14.1.8.1.7.7 (Bylaw 14.1.7.1.7.7 beginning August 1, 2023) are, however, still available for any student-athlete who meets the criteria listed in parts (a) or (b).

**Question No. 9:** If the student-athlete uses the final term exception to enroll in less than a full-time course load during the fall 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. 10:** For the term during which the student-athlete uses the final term exception: 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.

**Question No. 11:** 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. 12:** 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 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 academic year.

**Question No. 13:** 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.

### **Miscellaneous.**

**Question No. 14:** Will this blanket waiver be extended past the 2024-25 academic year?

**Answer:** No. The NCAA Division III Management Council determine that following the 2024-25 academic year all student-athletes who earned a season of participation due to the COVID-19 pandemic will have had an equitable

opportunity to utilize their full athletics eligibility and further relief will not be extended.

**Question No. 15:** Does an institution have to file anything in NCAA Requests/Self-Report Online as a result of this blanket waiver?

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

**Question No. 16:** 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 (Bylaw 14.1.7.1.8.1, as of August 1, 2023).

**Question No. 17:** 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 academic year pursuant to the blanket waiver.

**Question No. 18:** Why was six credit hours selected as the minimum credit hours for the blanket waiver?

**Answer:** The Division III Management Council and Subcommittee for Legislative Relief believe that six credit 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.