

Can Maximum Timeframe Be Rounded Up (Or Down)?

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This guidance is not award-year-specific and applies across award years.

Scenario: If an undergraduate academic program is 63 credits and the school's satisfactory academic progress (SAP) policy states that maximum timeframe is measured in credit hours, i.e., not measured in calendar time, the maximum timeframe measured in credit hours for that program would be $63 \times 150\% = 94.5$ credits.

Answer: No. According to a clarification NASFAA received from U.S. Department of Education (ED) policy staff, the school cannot round maximum timeframe up (or down). If the maximum timeframe is 94.5 credits, then the student cannot exceed 94.5 credits without a successful appeal and an extension to his or her maximum timeframe.

If the school knows **at any time** that the student cannot complete the program within the maximum timeframe, then the student must successfully appeal for an extension to the maximum time frame in order to continue to receive Title IV aid. If a student is meeting satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements before the beginning of a payment period but will exceed the maximum timeframe before the end of that payment period, then the student must submit a successful appeal to extend the maximum timeframe to at least the end of that payment period.

Let's say the student in your scenario is still meeting SAP requirements with 94 credits before the beginning of the next term. This student must submit an appeal, and that appeal must be approved, before the student can begin that next term on Title IV aid. Whether the school approves the appeal is up to the school's SAP appeal policy.

Similarly, if a school's SAP policy is to measure maximum timeframe in calendar time, unless a school awards fractions of credits, required credits must be in whole numbers. See the April 2021 ED webinar, [Satisfactory Academic Progress & Return of Title IV Aid: New Regulation Overview](#), for more information on using calendar time to establish maximum timeframe.

Remember, even if a SAP appeal is approved, a student still cannot be paid Title IV aid for credits which do not count towards degree completion requirements. There is one notable exception--see AskRegs Knowledgebase Q&A, [Can a Student Receive Aid to Cover a 3-Credit Course If He Only Needs 1 Credit to Graduate?](#)

Student Aid Reference Desk: For additional information, try the [Student Aid Reference Desk](#). It is a central hub of all the important financial aid resources you need with direct links to legislation, regulation, Dear Colleague Letters, and other ED and NASFAA references. It is updated on a rolling basis with the latest news and changes. Search Satisfactory Academic Progress.

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