



Hardship applications – well-founded applications

§ 7a Berlin Higher Education Admissions Act (BerlHZG)

“In accordance with § 7 paragraph 1 sentence 1 no. 1 university places are allocated to applicants according to the degree of exceptional hardship. Exceptional hardship exists if particular reasons, above all relating to health, social circumstances, disability or family issues make urgently necessary the applicant's immediate admission onto the course of study. It also exists if an applicant resident in the university catchment area cannot be expected to move to another place of study for reasons relating to health, family, disability or social circumstances and the waiting period for the desired course of study in the state of Berlin is expected to last longer than four semesters.”

The following cases are cited as examples in which a hardship application may as a rule be accepted.

1. Particular health-related or disability-related circumstances which necessitate immediate admission.
 - 1.1. Illness with a tendency to get worse, making it unlikely that the applicant would be able to endure the workload involved in this course in the future (medical report).
 - 1.2. Disability through illness; professional reintegration may be promoted only by immediate admission to the course since the disability makes worthwhile activity during the waiting period impossible (medical report).
 - 1.3. Restriction to a narrow vocational field due to physical disability; the desired course would promote successful professional reintegration (medical report).
 - 1.4. Necessity to give up previous course of study or previous employment for health-related reasons, where the illness makes it impossible to pursue a worthwhile activity during the waiting period (medical report).
 - 1.5. Physical disability, where the disability stands in the way of taking up any appropriate activity prior to admittance to the course (medical report).
 - 1.6. Restriction in choice of employment or exercise of profession due to illness; resulting negative impact on possible worthwhile activity during the waiting period (medical report).

Regarding numbers 1.1. - 1.6.:

The required medical report – an attestation, doctor's certificate or pass for a severely disabled person (Schwerbehindertenausweis) being insufficient documentation – must elaborate on all of the criteria which are mentioned in the particular provision on which the applicant relies. The report should contain statements on the origin, severity, progression and potential treatment of the illness as well as a prognosis for further progression of the illness. It must also be fully comprehensible to non-experts. Further and additional documentation may include for example the pass for a severely disabled person, the grant of a disability pension or the notice of release from German military service. A personal cover letter is not necessary.

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