

Information on hardship applications

This information sheet provides helpful guidance on submitting an application for the consideration of exceptional hardship in an application for a study place on an undergraduate degree programme. This includes all degree programs that lead to a first university degree (e.g. Bachelor).

Please note, this translation is provided for information purposes only. In case of any ambiguity or discrepancy, the original German version shall prevail.

Overview

- [1. Who can submit a hardship application? on page 1 ↗](#)
- [2. Which reasons justify a hardship application? on page 2 ↗](#)
- [3. Required documents on page 2 ↗](#)
- [4. Unjustified applications on page 3 ↗](#)
- [5. Relevant legislation on page 3 ↗](#)
- [6. Contact details on page 4 ↗](#)



1. Who can submit a hardship application?

Article 10(2) of the Higher Education Admissions Act for the state of Berlin (BerlHZG):

“Upon application, the study places pursuant to paragraph 1 sentence 1 number 1 [applicants for whom rejection of the application for admission would give rise to exceptional hardship] shall be allocated according to the degree of exceptional hardship. Exceptional hardship exists if special reasons, above all relating to health, social aspects, a disability or family reasons in the person of the applicant make it absolutely necessary for the applicant to begin their studies immediately.”

Applicants from Germany, the EU and the EEA states of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland and foreign nationals holding a German school-leaving qualification are able to submit a hardship application.

In addition, applicants for a second degree and pursuant to Article 11 of the Berlin Higher Education Act applicants without the Abitur school-leaving qualification (§ 11 BerlHG) cannot submit a hardship application. It is **not** possible to submit a hardship application within these quotas.



Hardship applications cannot be submitted for **higher semesters** either. In the event of an equal ranking, social (and particularly family), economic or academic reasons will be taken into account however (proof required!).



2. Which reasons justify a hardship application?

In the following examples, a hardship application can usually be accepted for health reasons. The existence of special circumstances relating to the applicant's health or a disability that make immediate admission necessary is essential.

These may be as follows:

- a. Progressive illness/disease that means it is likely that the applicant will be unable to cope with the stresses of completing the degree programme in the future
- b. Disability due to illness; professional rehabilitation can only be ensured with immediate admission to studies as the disability does not allow for reasonable bridging of the waiting period
- c. Restriction to a narrow occupational field due to a physical disability; the intended degree programme is expected to lead to successful professional rehabilitation
- d. Discontinuation of previous studies/profession for health reasons; reasonable bridging of the waiting period is therefore not possible
- e. Physical disability; a disability prevents any other reasonable activity until a study place can be allocated
- f. Restriction in the choice/exercise of a profession due to illness; reasonable bridging of the waiting period is therefore not possible



3. Required documents

The required medical report from a **specialist doctor** must provide sufficient information on the individual criteria mentioned in the respective point.

The medical opinion should detail the origin, severity, course and treatment options for the disease/illness as well as a prognosis for its further course. It must also be comprehensible for medical laypersons – without in-depth medical knowledge.

Please note: A confirmation, medical certificate or presentation of a severely disabled person's ID only is not sufficient.



Documents suitable as further/additional proof include the severely disabled person's ID (Schwerbehindertenausweis), a notice of disability (Feststellungsbescheid) from the pension office (Versorgungsamt) or a notice of discharge (Ausmusterungsbescheid) from the German Armed Forces. A personal cover letter is not required.

Marks and waiting periods do not play a role in admission within the hardship quota. Instead, points are awarded according to the **degree of hardship** based on the medical opinion (1 to 10 points). If you are not allocated a place within the main quota, your application will automatically transfer into the hardship quota if your hardship application has been accepted.



4. Unjustified applications

As a rule, hardship applications **cannot** be approved for the following reasons, unless further extenuating circumstances relating to the applicant's person exist.

- Restriction to a particular location due to the need for home-based care and support for an existing illness
- Discontinuation of previous studies/profession for health reasons; bridging of the waiting period is possible
- Restriction to a narrow occupational field due to a physical disability; bridging of the waiting period is possible and reasonable



5. Relevant legislation

● Articles 10, 11 and 14 BerlHZG

● Articles 6, 8 and 15 BerlHZVO



6. Contact details

1. Hardship applications for health reasons

Representative for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses

Disability Advisory Service

Unter den Linden 6, 10117 Berlin

E-Mail: barrierefrei.studieren@hu-berlin.de

Office hours: hu.berlin/barrierefrei ↗

2. Hardship applications for family reasons

Family Office

Unter den Linden 6, 10117 Berlin

E-Mail: familienservice@uv.hu-berlin.de

Office hours: familienbuero.hu-berlin.de/de/familienbuero/kontakt-und-beratung ↗

3. Hardship applications for all other reasons

Student Services

Admissions Office

Unter den Linden 6, 10117 Berlin

Office hours: hu.berlin/zulassung ↗ or hu.berlin/zulint ↗