

## Compensation for disadvantages regarding examinations

Any disadvantages faced by students with disabilities or with a chronic illness that may affect their academic performance or examination results should be compensated wherever possible. The Chemnitz University of Technology provides special compensatory examination arrangements for students with long-term impairments if they are not able to participate under normal examination conditions. A disadvantage compensation (in German: Nachteilsausgleich) aims to ensure that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate academic achievement in examinations without any unfair disadvantages as a result of a health impairment (disabilities, chronic illnesses, partial performance disorders and mental illnesses). However, please note that it is not possible to apply for a disadvantage compensation if the performance deficit relates to the skills that are being tested in the examinations. This is associated with equal opportunities for all students. Compensation for disadvantages are not advantages or facilitations, but represent the compensation of concrete disadvantages caused by impairments. Subject-specific requirements of the degree programme, namely the qualification and learning objectives defined in the study regulation (in German: Studienordnung), may not be reduced or changed through compensation for disadvantages.

### Legal basis

Compensations for disadvantages are legally based on Article 3 Paragraph 3, 2nd Sentence Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany (Grundgesetz) and § 35 Paragraph 4 Saxon Law on Universities (Sächsisches Hochschulgesetz). At Chemnitz University of Technology each examination regulation contains the following section:

*„Macht ein Prüfling durch ein ärztliches Zeugnis glaubhaft, dass er wegen chronischer Krankheit oder Behinderung nicht in der Lage ist, Prüfungsleistungen ganz oder teilweise in der in der jeweiligen Modulbeschreibung vorgesehenen Form abzulegen, so soll der Prüfungsausschuss dem Prüfling auf Antrag gestatten, gleichwertige Prüfungsleistungen in einer anderen Form zu erbringen.“*

*„If a candidate proves by a medical certificate that due to chronic illness or disability he/she is unable to take examinations fully or partially in the form provided in the module description, the Examination Board is to permit the candidate, on application, to provide equivalent examinations in another form.“*

Disadvantages or difficulties that arise due to a health impairment in an examination situation or as a result of examination deadlines are to be compensated by compensatory examination arrangements. Compensation for disadvantages must be applied for. Proof of the existence of the health impairment is necessary. The responsible Examination Board of the degree programme decides on the application and on specific arrangements to compensate disadvantages.

The fact that a student has made use of disadvantage compensation is not mentioned in his or her Bachelor or Master degree certificate and transcript of records.

### Who can apply for compensation for disadvantages?

- Students with a disability (in German: Behinderung; e.g. visual, hearing or mobility impairments), longer-term illnesses or health conditions (in German: chronische Krankheiten; e.g. epilepsy, diabetes, asthma) and/or mental illness (in German: psychische Krankheiten) are allowed to apply for disadvantage compensation.

- It does not matter whether the disability is officially recognized or not (disabled pass/disability card, in German: Schwerbehindertenausweis).
- Students with partial performance disorders such as dyslexia (difficulties with reading and writing), dyscalculia (difficulties with learning and comprehending maths) or attention disorders are also allowed to apply for a disadvantage compensation.

### What is the application deadline?

- The application for a compensatory examination arrangement is usually made **together with the registration for the examination**. Please note the corresponding registration periods for examinations. This is the only way to ensure that a compensatory examination arrangement can be implemented.

[Link to information about registering for examinations from the Central Examination Office](#)

- A later application can lead to examinations without a compensatory examination arrangement because the Examination Board was not able to deal with the application.

### Is there a form to apply for compensation for disadvantages?

Please only use the PDF form “Antrag auf Nachteilsausgleich für Studierende mit Beeinträchtigung“.

- You will find the PDF form on the website of the Central Examination Office (in German: Zentrales Prüfungsamt) under general forms and others:

[Link to the application form for the compensation of disadvantages](#)

- For each registered examination, one application for compensation of disadvantages is submitted per form. If you are registering for more than one examination in the current semester, please use a supplementary sheet and hand it in as a complete application.

[Link to the supplementary sheet of the application form for the compensation of disadvantages](#)

- Applications are only possible for examinations offered in the current semester.
- A follow-up application after the date of the examination is not possible!
- The Examination Board will not accept handwritten or incomplete applications.
- Edit the pages 1 to 3 of the form, print out all pages and sign on page 3 and every of your supplementary sheets.

### How to apply for compensation for disadvantages?

- It is your responsibility to provide all required documents and evidence in due time and form. Incomplete applications cannot be accepted. If you do not provide sufficient evidence of the effects of the health impairment on the examination, your application for compensatory examination arrangements cannot be considered or cannot be considered in full.
- The fully completed application with evidence and any supplementary sheets for further examinations must be submitted **to the Central Examination Office** (Chemnitz University of Technology, ZPA, 09107 Chemnitz) or handed into the mailbox of the Central Examination Office (Reichenhainer Str. 70/ZPA or Straße der Nationen 62).

- The (chairperson of the) **Examination Board** (in German: Prüfungsausschuss, Prüfungsausschussvorsitzender) will make a decision about the application and will determine compensatory examination arrangements (processing page 4 of the form).
- Students will receive information on the decision of the Examination Board by the Central Examination Office by e-mail: Was the application approved, rejected or modified?
- Examiners are informed by the Examination Board about compensation for disadvantages (copy/scan of page 4, without personal details and diagnostics on page 2) and have to implement the compensatory examination arrangement as intended by the Examination Board.
- For organizational reasons (e.g. separate room, individual appointment) a consultation with the examiner is recommended.
- **Regulations on withdrawal from an examination or in the case of non-attendance at an examination remain untouched.**

### Advisory service

Within Department 1.2 Student Service and Central Course Guidance Service, students with health impairments can ask for advice. Questions regarding the personal requirements for a compensatory examination arrangement, the application procedure and possible arrangements can be addressed, especially in the case of initial applications:

Dr. Daniela Menzel

Straße der Nationen 62 | room 047 (new: A10.047)

phone: 0371 531-34939

e-mail: [daniela.menzel@verwaltung.tu-chemnitz.de](mailto:daniela.menzel@verwaltung.tu-chemnitz.de)

[Link to contact information](#)

### Voraussetzungen für einen Nachteilsausgleich

1. There is a long-term or permanent health impairment (disability, chronic illness, partial performance disorders, mental illness as well as side effects of medication) and corresponding evidence is provided. A medical certificate must be enclosed (usually not older than one year). The evidence should explain why alternative examination arrangements are needed.
2. The impairment leads to a disadvantage or difficulty, as long as an examination has to be completed under the same conditions that exist for everyone and within a specific deadlines (effects on the concrete examination situation of a written exam, oral exam, paper etc. are evaluated on a case-by-case basis).
3. The disadvantage is not directly related to the knowledge, skills and abilities graded in the examination according to the qualification and learning objectives in the study regulations, but only makes it more difficult or impossible to demonstrate (writing, hearing, seeing, sitting, etc.) an existing knowledge, skills and abilities.

If these three requirements are met, the Examination Board has no authority to decide whether a requested compensatory examination arrangement should be permitted. This means that students with impairments are in the position to get a compensatory examination arrangement if these three criteria are fulfilled.

## Case-by-case decisions and inadmissible compensatory arrangements for disadvantages

A compensatory examination arrangement **is not permitted to change the academic requirements of the degree programme**, which is why the necessary arrangements must be individually determined. Such compensatory examination arrangements are not intended to make the study programme "easier", but to ensure that the studies are fair and that everyone has the same chances of success.

Compensatory examination arrangements are decided at the discretion of the Examination Board, whereby consultation with the responsible examiner on the aspect of equivalence takes place if necessary. This **discretionary authority** with regard to the compensatory arrangements is limited in two ways:

- no under-compensation: The kind and extent of compensatory examination arrangements should be designed in such a way that the impairment is compensated as completely as possible.
- no privileging over-compensation: Compensatory examination arrangements must ensure equal opportunities for other candidates, and therefore the modified examination must be an equivalent substitute, which tests the same qualification and learning objectives as described in the study regulation.

In general, only modifications with regard to the conditions and form of the examination are possible. A cancellation or reduction of academic achievements without appropriate compensation or a change in the grading of achievements is not permissible. The defined qualification and learning objectives according to the study regulation remain untouched by a compensatory examination arrangement.

## Examples of compensations for disadvantage

In order to determine suitable compensatory examination arrangements for disadvantages, the interactions between individual health impairments and the specific examination conditions as well as the qualification and learning objectives and characteristic aspects of the degree programme must always be taken into account. All compensatory arrangements for disadvantages are based on individual decisions to fit the student's needs. Therefore, the following overview provides some examples and is not intended to be exhaustive:

- modification of examinations such as added/extra time (typically by 20 %, so for example instead of 60 minutes a 75-minute working time)
- admission of technical aids, personal assistance or additional work tools (laptop, speech-to-text interpreter, writing assistance; assistance to "handle" documents, special keyboards, magnifiers, lamps or software as well as use of blood glucose meter or other testing devices, personal objects)
- modification of the tasks in written examinations (simple language, enlarged font size, font type, etc. or as an audio file) for those with a visual impairment
- modification of speech speed or pronunciation in oral exams as well as written instructions for those with a hearing impairment

- examinations can be held in a separate room or in a barrier-free accessible room
- ergonomic or other seating arrangements
- special breaks can be permitted during the examination time
- changing an examination form in extraordinary cases (here the risk is very high that the third requirement is not fulfilled and there is no equivalence examination):
  - substitution of a group examination by an individual performance or examination
  - substitution of a written exam by an oral exam (e.g. in the case of visual impairment)
  - substitution of an oral exam by a written exam (e.g. in the case of a hearing impairment)
  - giving a presentation in a smaller setting
  - producing a video instead of a presentation in presence
- allowing impairment-related activities during the examination (taking medicines; eating for medical reasons)