

Claim of Hardship

Up to 2% of places at our University are reserved for applicants who have successfully claimed hardship. A hardship is deemed to exist if special social or family-related reasons exist in an applicant that make it absolutely necessary that he/she be admitted to a degree programme immediately, i.e. if reasons exist in the applicant for which he/she cannot reasonably be expected to spend as little as one semester waiting for admission. Claims of hardship will be considered to be justified in **exceptional and severe circumstances** only. To justify a claim of hardship, the factors you put forward must already **exist in your person at the time you are filing your claim and must be beyond your control**.

This is why claims of hardship only have prospect of success in a small number of cases. Before filing your claim, please consider carefully whether it has reasonable prospect of success.

As a rule, a claim for special circumstances must be submitted at the same time as you submit your application for admission and must be accompanied by a justification and appropriate evidence to support it (see below for examples). Please make sure that the justification you provide and the evidence you include to support your claim illustrate the special circumstances you are claiming in such a clear way that people who are not familiar with your issue will be able to understand your arguments merely by consulting the relevant documents.

Justified claims

Listed below are **examples** of cases in which claims of hardship can normally be accepted:

1. **Special medical conditions** that require immediate admission (statement from a specialist medical practitioner* required to serve as proof).

* In that statement, a specialist medical practitioner must provide, in an adequate and satisfactory manner, his/her medical opinion on the individual criteria stated in the relevant section below. The practitioner should comment on the pathogenesis, severity and progression of the condition as well as treatment options and the expected progression of the condition. The statement should be comprehensible for persons without a medical background. Documents that can serve as additional proof include a severely handicapped pass, a letter issued by the *Versorgungsamt* confirming that the applicant is considered severely handicapped (*Feststellungsbescheid des Versorgungsamtes*) etc.

- 1.1 The applicant suffers from an illness that is expected to deteriorate so that it is very likely that studying the degree programme in question will be too demanding for him/her in the future.
- 1.2 The applicant suffers from a disability caused by illness; only if he/she is admitted to the degree programme immediately can it be guaranteed that he/she will be able to participate in working life since, due to that disability, there is no way for him/her to productively use the time spent waiting to be admitted to the programme.
- 1.3 The applicant suffers from a physical disability that limits his/her career options to a small number of professions; the university studies he/she intends to take up are expected to enable him/her to participate in working life.
- 1.4 The applicant suffers from a medical condition that renders him/her unable to continue with his/her previous university studies or work in his/her previous occupation; due to that condition, there is no way for him/her to productively use the time spent waiting to be admitted to the degree programme in question.
- 1.5 The applicant suffers from a physical disability that renders him/her unable to exercise any other occupational activity he/she could reasonably be expected to exercise while waiting to be admitted to the degree programme in question.
- 1.6 The applicant suffers from an illness that limits his/her career choice or restricts the professional opportunities available to him/her; for this reason, there is no way for him/her to productively use the time spent waiting to be admitted to the degree programme in question.
2. **Special family-related or social circumstances** that require immediate admission (documents that will be accepted as proof).
3. The applicant is an **ethnic German repatriate** and had taken up, in his/her home country, studies in a degree programme that is equivalent to the degree programme for which he/she is applying (official certificate attesting status of ethnic German repatriate and letter issued by higher education institution in the applicant's

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home country confirming that the applicant had taken up the respective studies).

4. The applicant received an **offer of admission to the degree programme in question in an earlier semester** but compelling reasons beyond his/her control (health-related reasons in particular) rendered him/her unable to accept that offer (documents to confirm the existence of compelling reasons preventing the applicant from enrolling and old letter of admission).
5. **Special social or family-related reasons exist in the applicant that make it absolutely necessary that he/she transfer to a university in another town immediately**; in this context, reasons the applicant could already have put forward in the admission procedure that led to his/her admission to university will not be considered (documents to confirm that the applicant is currently enrolled in the selected degree programme at a higher education institution in Germany and documents to serve as proof of the reasons for a transfer to a university in another town).

Unjustified claims

Listed below are examples of cases in which claims of hardship will normally NOT be accepted unless additional extraordinary circumstances exist in the applicant:

Re 1:

- The applicant suffers from an illness that renders him/her in need of home care and thus cannot be expected to move to another town.
- The applicant suffers from a medical condition that renders him/her unable to continue with his/her previous university studies or work in his/her previous occupation; there are, however, ways for him/her to productively use the time spent waiting to be admitted to the degree programme in question.
- The applicant suffers from an illness that limits his/her career choice; there are, however, ways for him/her to productively use the time spent waiting to be admitted to the degree programme in question.

Re 2:

- The applicant is unable to finance his/her university education from his/her own resources.
- The applicant will no longer be able to finance his/her university education from his/her own resources should he/she be required to postpone his/her university studies any further.
- A contract or other legal transaction (e.g. contract on the transfer of the ownership of a farm, contract of inheritance, last will and testament) puts a limit on the financing of the applicant's university education; should the applicant's admission be delayed any further, financing of his/her university studies in the degree programme of his/her choice will no longer be guaranteed.
- The applicant receives an orphan's pension and is only eligible for that pension up to a certain age while he/she is completing his/her professional training; should the applicant's admission to university be delayed any further, he/she will no longer be eligible for an orphan's pension.
- The applicant's entitlement to pension payments from the German armed forces will run out.
- The applicant has taken up university studies in an alternative programme, for which he/she receives financial support from public funds, an orphan's pension, a pension or a comparable type of income; the applicant's entitlement to the respective payments will run out after a set period of time, i.e. the more time he/she spends studying that alternative degree programme, the shorter the period of time for which he/she will receive financial support for the university studies he/she actually intends to take up.
- The applicant has taken up university studies in an alternative programme, which he/she is financing by engaging in paid work since he/she does not want to accept financial support from public funds until being admitted to the degree programme he/she actually wants to study. This is due to the fact that his/her entitlement to the respective payments will run out after a set period of time. Claiming the respective payments while still studying that alternative programme would mean that the period of time for which he/she will receive financial support for the university studies he/she actually intends to take up would be shorter.
- The applicant has taken out a loan to finance his/her university studies in an alternative programme; should his/her admission to the degree programme he/she actually wants to study be delayed any further, the burden of principal and interest payments will become too heavy.
- The applicant is being maintained by his/her working spouse.
- The applicant's spouse, who had been working and maintaining the applicant, has to quit his/her job.

- The applicant's spouse, too, has yet to complete his/her professional training; in the applicant's opinion, his/her financial situation therefore demands that he/she take up the university studies immediately.
- The applicant is widowed or divorced and wants to secure a future livelihood for his/her own dependent children by taking up the university studies.
- The applicant's parents are experiencing financial difficulty.
- The applicant wants to start financially supporting or providing for his/her parents, who are experiencing financial difficulty, or wants to start providing for his/her siblings as soon as possible.
- The applicant is an orphan or half-orphan.
- The applicant is married.
- The applicant has one or more children.
- The applicant's father or mother or both of the applicant's parents are ill or severely handicapped.
- The applicant's father or mother or both of the applicant's parents are ethnic German repatriates, German expellees, victims of political or racial persecution or refugees from the former GDR.
- The applicant has siblings who are physically handicapped, have care needs or are unable to earn an income.
- The applicant comes from a family with many children; all or almost all of his/her siblings have yet to complete their professional training.
- The applicant will soon be required to provide financial support to his/her parents, siblings or other dependants.
- The applicant expects disadvantages regarding his/her opportunities to take over a medical practice or pharmacy should he/she be required to postpone his/her university studies any further:
 - disadvantages regarding his/her own future livelihood,
 - disadvantages regarding the ability to work, the health or the livelihood of the owner of the medical practice or pharmacy or
 - disadvantages for the people living in the catchment area regarding their access to appropriate medical or pharmaceutical care.
- Due to unemployment or poor career prospects, the applicant does not want to continue with his/her previous university studies or continue working in his/her previous occupation.
- Due to a lack of motivation or suitability, the applicant does not want to continue with his/her previous university studies or continue working in his/her previous occupation.
- The applicant does not want to continue with his/her previous university studies or continue working in his/her previous occupation on grounds of conscience.
- The applicant claims to be particularly suitable for the degree programme selected as his/her number one choice and the respective profession.
- The applicant has successfully completed practical activities (e.g. practical nursing training, preliminary examination in pharmacy (*pharmazeutische Vorprüfung*)) that are mandatory or, under earlier legislation, increased the applicant's chances of admission to the degree programme in question.
- The applicant is eligible for credit transfer and/or accreditation of periods of study in another programme.
- The applicant has completed many years of theoretical work in the area in which he/she wants to study.
- The applicant is at an advanced age.
- The applicant's application for admission to the degree programme of his/her choice has been rejected more than once.
- The applicant will exceed an important age limit should he/she be required to postpone his/her university studies any further (e.g. the age limit for entering into the preparatory service for civil service careers (*Vorbereitungsdienst*) or for being appointed into civil service).
- The applicant will lose his/her statutory entitlement to alternative classroom or assessment procedures or other facilities to accommodate for disabilities, special family-related circumstances etc. if not admitted to the degree programme in question immediately.
- The applicant has completed a service.

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- The applicant faces being drafted into the army if his/her application for admission to university is rejected.
- The higher education entrance qualification the applicant is holding provides access to higher education institutions in a particular geographical region only.
- The applicant took up university studies in a country other than Germany; since he/she is unable to finish his/her studies in the respective country, he/she wants to continue with those studies in Germany.
- Great effort required to obtain a higher education entrance qualification via second chance education.

Re 4:

- The applicant was admitted to the degree programme in question in an earlier semester but failed to enrol within the prescribed deadline according to Section 8 *Vergabeverordnung ZVS* (Directive on the Central Allocation of Places at Universities).
- The applicant was admitted to the degree programme in question in an earlier semester but decided to give up his/her place at university - either prior to enrolling or after having enrolled - since he/she was unable to find accommodation or for another reason.
- The applicant was admitted to the degree programme in question in an earlier semester but did not get enrolled because his/her higher education entrance qualification was not accepted by the university.