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"My professors say they're allowed to...!"

The ABC of study-related adversities

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Imprint

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The Referent*innenRat (RefRat; legally AStA) represents the student body of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (HU) and is divided into sixteen departments (see below). Each department has one or two representatives with equal rights who are elected by the student parliament (StuPa). Only the so-called autonomous departments are elected by plenary assemblies of certain student groups and subsequently confirmed by the StuPa.

It is directly bound by the resolutions of the StuPa and deals with the day-to-day business of the student body. In addition to providing advice on study matters, the RefRat also provides and coordinates the student social counseling system and anti-discrimination counseling.

Units of the RefCouncil

Anti-fascism, foreigners / anti-racism, student council coordination, finances, queer_feminism, university politics, international affairs, culture, teaching and studying, LGBT*I, public relations, ecology and environmental protection, political mandate and data protection, publication, social affairs and studying with child(ren).

In 2011, the Berlin Higher Education Act (BerlHG) was changed significantly to the disadvantage of students by the red-red Senate. As a result, new framework examination regulations and access and admission statutes had to be issued for all universities, which do not necessarily make studying any less bureaucratic. It is therefore important to know basic rights in order to be able to deal with a difficult situation appropriately in case of doubt.

The ABC of study-related adversities is intended to provide a brief introduction to the broad field of university policy and examination law issues. You will also find information about the various options for BAföG extensions. If you have any further questions, we recommend that you visit the student counseling services of the RefRat. You will find an overview of the counseling services with contact details and website at the end of this brochure. As student representatives, we are always there for you and ready to help!

Although the texts are often peppered with examples from the HU, the information can also be applied to other universities. In order to provide you with comprehensive advice, the AStA FU, the AStA TU, the AStA HTW and the Referent*innenRat also offer free legal advice on university and examination law. Only there can you receive legally binding information.

The problems described here are not contrived, but reflect everyday problems at German universities. All of the issues have arisen sooner or later in our counseling practice. Not all of these problems are always on the agenda during studies, but many of the situations occur with a regularity that highlights the flaws in the university system.

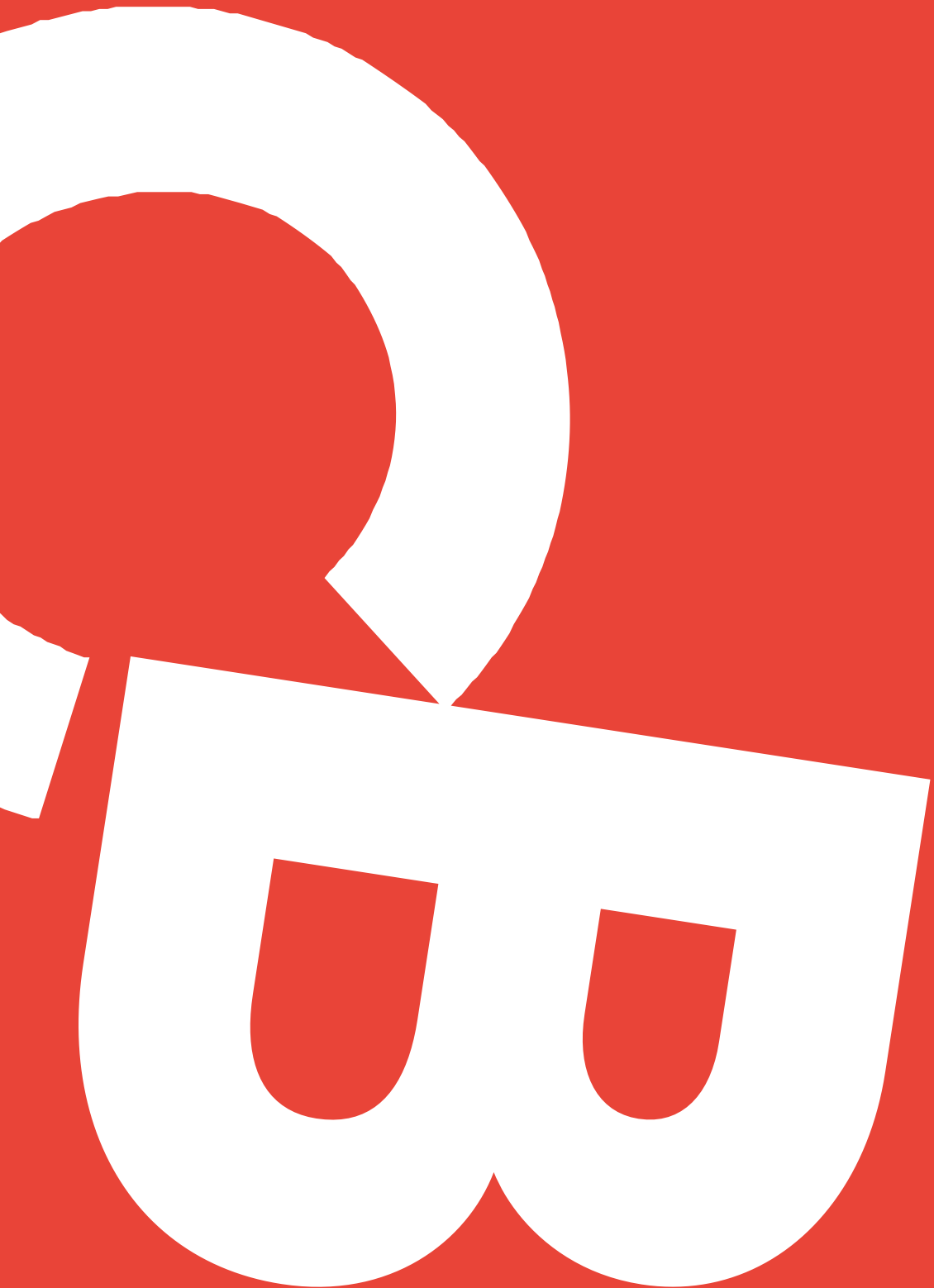
List of abbreviations

AS	Academic Senate
ASSP	Allgemeine Satzung für Studien- und Prüfungsangelegenheiten (HU)
AStA	Allgemeiner Studierendenausschuss
BA	Bachelor
	BerlHG Berlin Higher Education Act
	BerlHZG Berlin Higher Education
Admission Act	GG Basic Law
	GOÄ fee schedule for doctors
HIS	Hochschul-Informations-System GmbH
MA	Master
MAP	Final module examination
OVG	Higher Administrative Court
RefRat	Referent*innenRat
RSPO	Framework Study and Examination Regulations
(FU) StGB	Criminal Code
StuPa	Student Parliament VwVfG
	Administrative Procedure Act
	ZSP Central Statutes for Admission, Studies and Examinations (HU)

The incomplete ABC of study-related adversities

Status September 2023





A

Selection procedure

It is probably best to start such a compilation with the selection procedure. But not only because it starts with "A", but because it is at the beginning or actually before the start of the course. The "university's own selection procedure" refers to the part of the places to be allocated which the university distributes itself according to certain criteria specified by law as a catalog (§9 (3) BerlHZG).

In theory, the selection procedure is supposed to make it possible to get a place at university despite a poor Abitur, as not only the Abitur grade but also, for example, previous work experience can be taken into account, but in practice the situation is different:

Since 2005, university places are no longer allocated in equal parts according to Abitur grade and waiting time, but the universities have been given the instrument of the "university's own selection procedure" by the then red-red-red coalition (§9 (1) III BerlHZG). Since then, they have been allowed to select 60% of first-year students themselves, which usually means selection based on A-level grades, since, for example, the practical experience of applicants usually only counts for 10% in the selection process and is therefore de facto worthless.

Originally, enrolment via waiting semesters was only suitable for students with a double-digit number of waiting semesters. The "university's own selection procedure" was responsible for the rapid increase in waiting times. Until 2006, 50% of study places were still allocated on the basis of waiting time, but now the figure is significantly lower. This artificial shortage meant that almost every Bachelor's subject had a waiting time of nine to ten semesters. Hardly anyone can afford this long waiting time. In the meantime, the waiting time for most Bachelor's degree courses is more in the region of two to four semesters, except for those courses where the number of applications exceeds the number of places provided by the university many times over. After the Federal Constitutional Court (BVerfG) judged the waiting times to be partly not (or no longer) constitutional, the legislature has now introduced upper limits for waiting times. As a result, in some degree courses, students with average grades above 2.0 can no longer get a place at all (e.g. in psychology).

Attendance control/attendance lists

Attendance monitoring, not to be confused with → compulsory attendance, refers to instruments that can be used to monitor compulsory attendance. First things first: there is no legal regulation that obliges universities or higher education institutions to monitor attendance. Nor does the Bologna Agreement, which is often cited in this context, require such practices. Consequently, the allocation

ECTS or credit points cannot be legally linked to an attendance check, even if those who are keen on control like to claim this.

At the HU in 2006, it was rather the express wish of the committees, the majority of which were made up of professors, that a legal basis be created for the appointment of professors.

attendance controls were introduced at the HU. At the beginning of the 2010/2011 winter semester, attendance controls were abolished again at the HU, mainly thanks to the many students who protested during the Academic Senate meeting.

Since then, the principle anchored in the ZSP-HU (§ 93) at the HU has been: Attendance in courses is not checked and not confirmed. This also means that lecturers are not allowed to carry out substitute attendance checks in the form of strategically placed work if they are not anchored in this form in the study regulations. This is another reason why it is very worthwhile to actually read your own study regulations. This helps you to know what kind of work your lecturers can actually ask you to do (and how much time it may take you to complete → high workload).

Although the abolition of attendance checks is now mostly implemented consistently, there are always exceptions. In most cases that are reported to us, the problem is that lecturers are not informed about this HU-specific regulation and are still familiar with attendance checks from their former universities. So if attendance checks are carried out in your courses, talk to your lecturers and inform them that such checks are illegal at the HU. If this does not result in a change of behavior, please contact the Department for Teaching and Studies.

It is nobody's business whether you were there and at which session, as long as you meet the minimum attendance requirements. We believe that passing the final module examination (MAP) is the best indicator of successful participation in the course. After all, if you pass the MAP, you must have attended the course sufficiently to have internalized the material. You can find out whether your university has a regulation on attendance monitoring from your AStA or by looking at the respective framework study and examination regulations.

Last but not least, attendance controls are socially selective. If, for example, you do not manage to attend the full 75% (HU) or 85% (FU) of the sessions for work-related reasons, the module is dead and your studies are usually automatically extended, which can result in further repression. → (e.g. → compulsory counseling for → BAföG).

Although attendance checks are generally prohibited under the Interdisciplinary Statutes for the Regulation of Admission, Studies and Examinations (ZSP-HU), there are exceptions in some degree programs. This may mean that attendance checks are permitted in individual modules. This typically affects medicine and nursing as well as internship modules in other degree programs. If you are unsure whether attendance checks are permitted in one of your modules, check your study and examination regulations and, if in doubt, contact the Teaching and Study Advisory Service. But above all: Resist the stipulation of attendance checks in the revisions of your study regulations!

So-called attendance lists are a frequent source of annoyance. They can now be found far too often in the academic world. If attendance monitoring is not permitted in the course in question by the study regulations, the attendance list does not have to be completed by students. Anyone who discovers such unlawful interference in academic operations can hand in any lists they find to the respective attendance list lost and found office of the AStA/Referent_innenRat. If an attendance list disappears from the course you are attending, no replacement measures can be imposed. Above all, you are not allowed to write any additional cheat sheets etc. unless they are provided for in the module descriptions.

Compulsory attendance

Compulsory attendance, not to be confused with → attendance control, refers to the obligation of students to attend a course if it is to be graded as "attended"/"passed". At the HU be- it is 75%, at the FU 85%. Assuming 15 sessions per semester, you can be absent three times (HU) or twice (FU) without any consequences. If there are 16 sessions in the winter semester, you can even be absent four times at the HU, while at the FU there are only two absences without consequences. In these

In such cases, no (!) additional work may be required to compensate for the absence. At all higher education institutions, compensation for disadvantages can be used to further reduce the attendance time required to obtain the performance certificate for certain reasons (children, chronic illness, etc.) if other work is completed in return.

Anonymous blogs

Actually, the student movement of 1968 at the latest had clearly decided the debate on whether lecturers should be allowed to be criticized by students. The summer of 2023 once again showed that anonymous publications are sometimes the only way for students to report on abuses of power and denounce existing conditions at the university. In July 2023, for example, an anonymous text became public in which students accused a long-standing history lecturer of repeated sexualized assaults. This article broke a culture of silence that had existed for over 20 years and initiated a broader debate about abuse of power & discrimination at the university.

Anonymity is often a basic prerequisite for honest criticism. It is not for nothing that course evaluation forms are not marked with student numbers, as there is a clear power imbalance between lecturers and students. Professors decide on grades, study conditions and other matters relevant to studies through their majority in the decisive committees (e.g. Academic Senate, Examination Board), as employers for student employees or as examiners. There are many statements on the topic of anonymity, criticism and power imbalances from student parliaments, student councils, student representatives, etc.

It should be mentioned that, thanks to the hierarchical organization of teaching, there are many opportunities for students who express their criticism publicly and not anonymously to cause damage to their studies and thus their future life. Even in less politically charged matters, such as the → counter-examination procedure, people often do not dare to take action against the poor grading of an examination because they fear disadvantages for their studies afterwards. It is all too understandable that people speak out anonymously. It doesn't matter who expresses the criticism, but what the criticism is about. Anything else would be unscientific.

B

Harassment

Unfortunately, universities are not free of sexism, racism and queer hostility. For many students, experiencing harassment on campus, in lectures or at university parties is a painful everyday experience. This is not and cannot be an acceptable situation. If you feel uncomfortable or disrespected or experience an assault, please report it to the relevant authorities. No experience is too unimportant to report, whether it is an inappropriate comment in a lecture or a lecturer making you feel uncomfortable during a consultation. You can contact our anti-discrimination advice service and the Queer Feminism Department, as well as your student council and the decentralized → Women's Representative at your institute/faculty. It is our common task to make the university a space in which no one remains silent when assaults happen, because this protects the existing patriarchal conditions.

BAföG/Form 5/Maximum funding period

The BAföG amendment passed at the beginning of the 1990s introduced the link between study progress and monetary support. This progress is checked using form 5, where a report on progress must be submitted to the BAföG office upon reaching the fifth semester.

If the achievements do not correspond to the study plan specified by the university, the BAföG entitlement is lost. However, there are some exceptions where the form can be submitted one, two or more semesters later. A few examples are failure to pass a final module examination, participation in the student council or illness. It is also possible to exceed the maximum funding period.

As this subject is quite complex, we have included a detailed article on → BAföG extension at the back of the brochure. You can also find more information at refrat.de/beratung.bafog, astafu.de/be-beratung/bafog, asta.tu-berlin.de/bafog-und-sozialberatung

D

Discrimination

Various forms of discrimination continue to have an impact at the university. We have already mentioned various points of contact under → Harassment, who can provide advice and support in the event of assaults. However, self-organization by affected students also plays a central role in changing the existing conditions. For example, there are the autonomous departments in the RefRat, which organize and represent marginalized groups at the university: BiPoC students through the Department for Antiracism, FLINTAs through the Department for Queer Feminism, queer students through the LGBTI Department and students with children through the department of the same name. These are always contact points for anyone who wants to organize for participation and against discriminatory conditions. Other examples include the Black Student Union (BSU), the Black Indigenous Law Students of Color (BIJoC), the Queer Action Group (QAG) and the monthly get-together for trans*, inter and non-binary people (unitin*). Network, support each other in your struggles and assert your demands together!

Failure

Many students fail one exam or another during their studies. However, the reasons for many failed exams are not first and foremost the students' fault, but primarily the university's, as they are caused by the university itself. Students are regularly overwhelmed by too → high a workload or a much too tight examination sequence.

During your studies, you will find that you are only allowed to retake each exam a limited number of times. However, universities are not legally required to limit the number of times an exam can be retaken. Theoretically, it can even be retaken an infinite number of times. Thanks to the work of many student representatives, the minimum number of exam attempts was increased to at least 3 in 2021, and to at least two at art colleges, and you can even get an additional attempt by participating in the student advisory service.

However, the word "at least" is important here. Nobody is preventing your university from simply giving you 5 attempts instead of three. Or 10. Before the introduction of BA/MA through the Bologna reform, multiple repetitions were the order of the day. Today's MAPs were still simple academic achievements and could be repeated as often as you liked. If a piece of work was not completed on time, it could either be handed in later or simply transferred to another course.

course in order to start a new attempt to complete the course. Despite the serious differences in repeatability, the old study system still produced good academics. Only recently, during the height of the corona pandemic, exams could be repeated an infinite number of times, and yet students continued to graduate, just without the enormous additional mental stress and the fear of failing the exam. This means that the number of times you can retake an exam says nothing about the quality of your studies. A restriction is merely an attempt to make your studies more academic.

If you find yourself in such a situation, it is worth contacting the university legal advisors of the ASten/the Referent Council as **early as possible**, as deadlines begin to run from the announcement of the examination results.

E

Inspection of audit documents

When students write exams, it is in the nature of things that they are also interested in how and why they were assessed. Term papers, essays and similar written assignments are usually returned with (hopefully) a detailed evaluation. It is different for written and oral examinations. In this case, you must first request to see the examination documents. This is particularly important if you want to learn from mistakes or if you cannot explain your poor performance based on your own memory. As a rule, the examination office or the chair where the files are located can be contacted and students can easily obtain access to them. So-called general inspection dates are also rarely announced. They are an effective way for the university to channel the flow of students who want to inspect their files.

It only becomes problematic if access is refused. In principle, it can be stated that students have a right to inspect the examination documents (§ 29 VwVfG). How else are they supposed to determine whether they have been restricted in their rights to free choice of profession (Art. 12 I GG) or equal opportunities (Art. 3 I GG)? Inspection cannot be refused simply because there has already been one or more dates for inspection of the examination documents, which are often during the lecture-free period, for example. It is even possible and necessary for the authority holding the file (e.g. examination office) to make copies. Only in this way is it possible to familiarize oneself with the assessments.

and to examine their scientific content.

Of course, a photo taken with a cell phone is also sufficient for this. The same applies to the examination record for oral examinations. However, this does not mean that

must be granted immediate access to the required documents at all times. In some cases, these must first be collected and made available. Consequently, a waiting time must be expected.

If a request is refused verbally, a written request (not an email) must be submitted to the responsible examination office with a sufficient deadline (two weeks should be more than enough). It is always worth referring to the relevant regulations in the ZSP-HU, §117 Inspection of files. In addition to a personal appointment, this can be also include a copy of the examination documents. Your university advisory services of the ASten/the Referent*innenRat will support you in this.

ATTENTION: A late inspection of examination documents does NOT postpone the deadline for taking action against incorrect or false assessments. Therefore, you should not be put off until the next semester or similar.

Incidentally, such refusals are fatal in terms of university policy for several reasons. A university is also there for students to learn something. This means that they need to know on what basis and with what weighting what they have written has been assessed. If the university deprives students of the uncomplicated possibility of viewing their work or restricts it to such an extent that the subjective effort for students becomes too high, e.g. by having a single viewing appointment on Monday from 7 - 7:30 a.m. during the semester break, the opportunity is lost for them to learn from their mistakes and thus improve. This can lead to lower grades, longer study times and/or more students dropping out.

F

Photographing panel pictures

Yes, in principle, the blackboard image can be photographed for your own preparation and follow-up of the teaching material. But why not? Lecturers would have no objection to a complete copy of the blackboard image. However, when taking photos, care should be taken, for example, to ensure that no faces of bystanders and the like are depicted.

If you encounter problems here, it always depends on the specific case as to who is in the right here. In doubt, please contact your Student Advisory Service.

Women's and Equal Opportunities Officer

The Women's and Equal Opportunities Officers are institutions at Berlin's universities that are legally anchored in the Berlin Higher Education Act. These exist at the various structural levels of the university, i.e. at institute and faculty level as well as centrally. Their area of responsibility includes the representation of interests on women's and equality issues, as well as the allocation of funding, the further training of HU employees and advice in cases of sexist discrimination. It is interesting to know that students can also stand for these positions. So if you are motivated to shake up your institute/faculty in a feminist way, then find out about the next election of women's and equal opportunities representatives. If you don't fancy an elective office, at least the women's promotion funds could be helpful for you: For example, if you want to go to the Feminist Lawyers' Day as a law student, you can get your travel costs to the congress reimbursed by your decentralized women's representative. As important as the institution is, the underlying understanding of gender is unfortunately still binary; only women are allowed to vote and be elected here and, due to lengthy bureaucratic processes, usually only cis women. A good pinch of queer feminism is still missing here.

H

High workload

For several decades, many degree programs have suffered from an unrealistically high workload. This was already established by the studyability study carried out by students at the HU in 2006 (www.studierbarkeit.de). As a result, study times are sometimes considerably longer, which in turn means that the university receives less money thanks to the performance-related allocation of funds. Nevertheless, there are still no or only slight Reducing the workload is and remains one of the main points of contention at Humboldt-Universität.

There are rules for the workload, but they are not adhered to: It is measured according to so-called study or credit points, also known as ECTS points, whereby one ECTS stands for workload of between 25 and 30 hours. Consequently, the workload must not - or rather "should not" - exceed the study points estimated for a course. In addition, your study and examination regulations specify exactly how this workload must be distributed. In reality, however, these guidelines are regularly disregarded and ignored by your lecturers. Here is an example from computer science:

The study and examination regulations regularly stipulate that around 10 worksheets must be completed in a course during the semester. A total of 1 ECTS (= 30 hours) is estimated for this and for the preparation and follow-up of the course. If the preparation and follow-up takes about 10 hours in total, this leaves 2 hours per worksheet. In the mathematics modules, where these worksheets are several pages long, students usually need more than 8 hours instead. The university vehemently denies that this workload is too high and leads to students being overloaded. However, the actual study times and drop-out rates at HU and other universities prove the opposite. In principle, student representatives on the committees are repeatedly told that the points awarded are sufficient to actually fulfill the requirements. This also ignores the fact that an assignment, regardless of whether it is a coursework or examination assignment, must not only be completed, but also successfully (!) completed. Of course, it is possible to write a 15-page term paper, including all the necessary work such as literature research, reading texts, books, etc. and reflection time, in 7.5 days (2 ECTS points at 8 hours/day) or, to take it to the extreme, in just a few hours with the help of ChatGPT. Nobody wants to read the result! The learning success for students is also limited to a minimum. If more time than estimated has to be spent on a particular course, this time per semester is not available for other courses and these have to be postponed to the next semester. There, the same game starts all over again and the actual study time is sometimes considerably longer. This leads to the catastrophically long study times typical of the HU. Surprisingly, there are only 24 hours in a day. However, you can defend yourself against this overload: If what is described here also applies to your degree program, contact the Department of Teaching and Studies, complain to your institute and make sure that the workload is reduced when your study and examination regulations are revised!

K

Illness during examination

It's actually quite simple to withdraw from exams in the event of illness: You register with your examination board no later than three working days after the exam, present a doctor's certificate stating that you were ill on the day of the exam and that's that. This is exactly how it works in the vast majority of degree courses.

However, a few degree programs handle this somewhat differently: In terms of examination law, unlike in the case of incapacity for work, it is not the doctor who decides on incapacity for examination, but rather the examination board or the chairperson of the examination board. And because the members are usually medical laypersons, they require a so-called "medical certificate".

Functional disorder certificate. The doctor should record in detail the symptoms that give the illness its name. This is intended to provide the examination board with a means of making an appropriate decision despite a lack of medical knowledge. In the medical certificate, the doctors should not disclose the type of illness, but the associated symptoms. This is intended to satisfy data protection requirements. However, the symptoms can be entered into any search engine, which then spits out a number of possible diagnoses. This may seem harmless or tolerable in the case of a cold, but what about the symptoms of gonorrhoea, genital herpes or other stigmatized diseases, etc.? Should the university and some of its staff really know what symptoms the student is suffering from? Since the examination board is made up of the teaching staff of the degree program, your lecturer may know about your health problems. This is a more than questionable situation in terms of data protection.

But it gets even worse: in order to give the examination board every opportunity to carry out (unlawful) checks, the release of medical staff from their duty of confidentiality is also noted on many subject forms. Consequently, the examination board/office can carry out further investigations without the knowledge of the person concerned. Students should not and do not have to give this permission.

Have you ever had to hand in such a certificate before an exam? Then your AStA/Referent*innenRat will certainly be interested in this information. It is now also undisputed, with the exception of a few specialist areas, that this demand for functional disorder certificates instead of an ordinary certificate of incapacity for work is nonsense and that the assessment of the impact of illnesses should rather be left to medical professionals. The fact is that anyone who is already unable to go to work due to ill health is unlikely to be fully able to perform in an examination situation.

M

Multiple Choice (MC)

Answer-choice procedures, as they are called in officialese, better known as multiple-choice tests, are a scientific declaration of bankruptcy, and their popularity can only be explained by the fact that it is the form of examination with the least effort for your lecturers. However, this form of examination, which also deprives you of the last opportunity to contribute your own thoughts, is also highly problematic in terms of examination law.

This results in a statistical correction problem. If someone really has no idea at all about a topic, they will still tick something for every question at random. To prevent this, teachers repeatedly try to introduce minus points if incorrect answers or too many answers are ticked. This leads to the curious situation that a person who gets 10 out of 20 answers right, for example, only receives points for five correct answers in the end.

Mathematically, this solves the problem of MC exams, but not in terms of examination law. For example, the OVG NRW ruled in a series of decisions (14 A 2154/08, 14 B 1109/11, 14 A 2189/09) that such penalty point regulations are not permitted in MC exams. The answer to one question must not affect other questions in terms of points. Are you aware of such

MC examination procedure, at least the MC parts of the exam are likely to be illegal. Perhaps this is exactly the part that was missing to pass or to get a better grade. So it's always worth doing the math.

In general, however, MC tests are so messed up that it was necessary to introduce very strict rules for them: Tasks that were answered incorrectly by the vast majority of test candidates must be checked and, under certain circumstances, removed from the assessment. There are also two pass thresholds in the MC test. Either students must achieve 50% of the points or, if the result of the test is generally very poor, 90% of the points achieved on average by the candidates. The grade evaluation is also strictly defined, but the formula for this is a bit too complicated for this post. You can read all the rules at the HU on this in the admission, study and examination regulations.

If these rules are violated, or if anything else seems strange to you, please contact your Student Advisory Service as soon as possible!

N

Disadvantages in examinations (and compensation for disadvantages)

Basically, disadvantages that students face in examinations can be roughly divided into two categories: on the one hand, there are the individual reasons that students face. On the other hand, there are the general disadvantages in the specific examination situation that affect everyone equally.

Individual reasons are reasons that originate with the students themselves and have a negative impact on their ability to take examinations. These can be chronic illnesses, disabilities, (own) children, caring for close relatives or other reasons for which students are not responsible. For example, people with children and/or disabilities are not always able to perform in the same way and within the same timeframe as everyone else. This means that they are at an individual disadvantage in the specific examination situation.

And this disadvantage can be compensated according to § 109 ZSP-HU. To do this, an application for compensation must be submitted to the examination board before the start of the examination. Possible forms of compensation can be an extended deadline, a different examination period, withdrawal from the examination at short notice or even a different form of examination. As the justification depends too much on the individual case, please refer to the specialized counselling services of the Referent_in- nenRat of the HU (Referat für Lehre und Studium www.refrat.de/lust; Beratung für Studieren mit Kind www.refrat.de/beratung.kind; Beratung für Studierende mit chronischer Erkrankung und Behinderung www.refrat.de/beratung.enthinderung).

General reasons can be found above all in the specific examination situation and usually affect all those taking part in the examination. Among other things, this can be related to the nature of the room in which the exam takes place. For example, there is an impairment if it is too dark, too stuffy, too warm or too cold. However, there are no exact limit values. Only the lower reasonable room temperature has been defined by the courts to date. It must not fall below 18°C (BVerwGE 99, 172). A

In the past, the VG Berlin did not consider a room temperature of 28°C to be a significant disturbance, but in the meantime, analogous to labor law, there is a right of appeal from 26° and measures must be taken from 30° at the latest. From 35°, the inspection must be terminated. Even if there is a relative difference, i.e. you are sitting in an uncooled room and your fellow students are sitting in an air-conditioned room for the same exam, you are entitled to compensation.

But other factors also play a role. If, for example, construction noise enters the examination room, the ability to concentrate is also limited here. However, one-off disturbances such as the wailing of sirens, the slamming of a door etc. must be accepted.

Students do not have to tolerate these disadvantages. If the supervisory staff or the examiners themselves do not come up with the idea of e.g. to grant an appropriate writing time extension, this must be done yourself. The following steps are necessary for this:

1. Shortly before or during the test, the person being tested immediately reports the fault and requests that it be rectified. This could be, for example, switching on the air conditioning or opening a window.

2. If this is not possible for any reason (construction noise would come through the open window, the air conditioning is broken), the person being examined should request a reasonable extension of the examination time. For written exams, this can be 15-20 minutes if there is construction noise. (However, construction noise could also be a reason for the exam to be aborted)

3. The trouble starts when the requested extension is not granted. You should then insist that your application is entered in the examination record and the case should be brought before the examination board of the subject afterwards. The board then decides whether the impairment was significant and the consequences. This is usually an annulment of the examination for the person who complained and not for everyone involved in the examination.

P

Pee break

As in all other areas of your life, you also have the right to go to the toilet in exams. For a few years now, this has no longer been a problem in practice. If you are not allowed to go to the toilet by the examiners, insist that this is noted in the examination record and contact the AStA/RefRat.

Plagiarism/attempted deception

Other difficult topics - not only for various former federal ministers and Berlin senators - are plagiarism and attempts at deception. Difficulties Rigid because no one seems to understand the regulations that determine whether plagiarism is involved. Especially not those who are supposed to determine it, namely the teachers, examination offices and examination boards. Accordingly

The information given to students on the subject is correspondingly vague. We would like to take a brief look at the most striking features of alleged attempts to cheat. Knowledge of this is all the more important because in particularly serious cases, even a single attempt to cheat is sufficient to permanently fail an examination. The final failure of an examination can lead to de-registration. In the course of our work and especially during the corona pandemic, we have become aware of many absurd accusations and we fear that the number of unreported cases is much higher.

The central feature of plagiarism and attempted cheating is the burden of proof, which lies with the university. It must prove that you have used unauthorized aids and which ones. Consequently, it is not possible for a vague suspicion on the part of the examiner to be sufficient for the exam to be graded as "failed". In the case of term papers etc., the places where you are alleged to have deceived about the origin must be named. It may sound absurd because it seems so obvious. This means that a produced text can be assessed as an attempt to deceive - and therefore failed - just because the teacher believes that what is written there must have been copied from somewhere, because students cannot think of such a thought or the wording and style of a passage is different from the rest of the text. If the teacher has such a suspicion, they must prove it. If the burden of proof were already reversed at this point, the accused would be in the precarious position of having to prove that what they had written was written by them. This is absolutely impossible for logical reasons alone, because it is impossible to prove the non-existence, in this case, of plagiarism.

The search for plagiarism sometimes leads to special situations. We received A report according to which "plagiarism" is now also being prosecuted in exams in one subject at a university in the south of Germany. However, this does not mean copying from the neighbors, but - in all seriousness - the adoption of ideas from scientific texts (which were used for learning) without marking. In other words, students were criticized for not attributing what they had written down to the authors in their exams. It remains unclear what the point of the written exam is if it is simply an academic assignment in miniature. Such practices are already known in Berlin too. If you hear anything, please let us know.

Since academic assignments have become final module examinations (MAP), stricter standards for plagiarism are also applied here. However, a single or double citation error cannot lead to failing the exam, although it can lead to points being deducted. After all, we are at a university where students are supposed to learn and practise,

to work in a scientifically correct manner. Also, the sometimes demanded citation obligation for general word groups such as "increase in unemployment" instead of "Increase in unemployment" is - to put it mildly - nonsense! This would result in a quote every three or four words, because someone, somewhere, at some time, has certainly already published something like this in this context.

Anyone caught using an unauthorized aid during an examination, has - quite clearly - failed. Permitted aids must be announced before the examination. If the examiner believes to have recognized the use of an unauthorized aid, this must be reported immediately. Such a report is usually ineffective hours, days or even weeks later.

If you are accused or even just threatened with cheating during your studies, there are 2 rules: 1. do not talk to your professors under any circumstances. 2. report immediately to your university legal advisor at the AStA/ RefRat.

Hang up posters

Despite increasing digitalization, students still disseminate their opinions with countless pieces of paper, flyers, banners and posters. This mainly happens during the election campaign for the student parliament. There have been far fewer opportunities to put up posters in recent years. However, there are still boards here and there that are available for putting up posters.

These posters are part of the opinion-forming process at the university and should be protected by fundamental rights, as they are put up as part of an official election. As long as the posters have no justiciable content and are hung in a designated place, no one is allowed to take them down.

Should an employee or even a professor feel called upon to keep order, you as the poster owner can and should file this probable criminal offense (damage to property according to § 303 StGB) for evidence purposes. As a rule, the alleged offender must tolerate this. The damage can be claimed in court afterwards. A right of self-defense under Section 32 StGB against the person causing the damage should also be examined.

Examination dates

Since 2021, new rules for examination dates apply, which are set out in §30 of the Berlin Higher Education Act: You are entitled to two examination dates of your **choice** for your final face-to-face module examinations in the semester in which the module takes place. Your department cannot force you to do so,

register for the first of the two dates. In addition, the university must offer you a retake date for the exam at the beginning of the next semester at the latest. If you are restricted in your examination dates, please contact your Department for Teaching and Studies of the RefRat/AStA.

R

Teachers' rights and domiciliary rights

Right-wing extremists are on the rise across Europe. Refugee shelters continue to burn across Germany and the arsonists are rarely caught.

The intellectual arsonists who have to respond to this wave of violence are mainly found on the political right. They organize themselves in the Alternative for Germany (AfD), in the so-called "Reichsbürger scene", at lateral thinking demos or they simply rant on Facebook. Of course, all these circles also offer space for lecturers and so it can happen that you sit opposite lecturers who are themselves in the AfD. The AfD in particular was known as the "professors' party" in its early days, but this can no longer be said, but it shows that the AfD does not stop at the university.

For example, the following case involving an AfD professor has come to our attention: A student is said to have worn a T-shirt in a lecture with the inscription "Fuck AfD" and was probably sitting in the professor's field of vision. The lecturer - a leading member of the AfD - was so disturbed by this that he verbally attacked the student and is said to have expelled her from the room at the end of his tirade. So far, so unsurprisingly narrow-minded.

This raises a fundamental question: Are German citizens allowed to expel students with a bruised ego and the title of professor just because, for example, their clothes don't suit them or even run counter to their own political opinion?

In principle, it can be said that lecturers generally have the right of domicile. At the HU, this is regulated by the framework house rules in § 3 II No. 3. However, it cannot be deduced from this that the lecturer can indiscriminately expel students from the room. This is because, as students, they not only have the right to be present at courses (Section 9 BerlHG), but also the obligation (→ see compulsory attendance, Section 93 I ZSP-HU). They only lose this right (temporarily) if they seriously disrupt the course and significantly impair its progress.

However, it is not enough to wear a T-shirt with the words "Fuck AfD" in front of a teacher (e.g. professor) who is an AfD member.

Critical questions and discussions about lecturers' comments during the course are also unproblematic. However, questions and contributions to the discussion must not be aimed at making the course impossible. As long as the students' behavior remains socially acceptable and the course is not massively disrupted, the teacher must accept criticism. Nor can the teacher claim that the course is disrupted because the T-shirt print is so distracting that the course cannot be conducted correctly.

Theory is all well and good, but how should students behave in a situation in which they are acutely affected by such measures?

1. The teacher should be made aware of the illegality of their actions.
2. If security or the police are called in because the room order is to be enforced immediately, it is advisable to give in for the time being. You should then leave the room, even though the measure is presumably unlawful (§ 44 VwVfG). At this point at the latest, it is worth going to your AStA/RefRat, as the measure should be reviewed as part of an action for a declaratory judgment.

However, it is unlikely that point 2 will occur. It is more likely that the teacher will threaten to cancel the course if the person with the "Fuck AfD" shirt does not leave the room. At this point at the latest, it should be checked whether the teacher is not violating their official duties, as these clearly include holding classes.

At this point, it is impossible not to comment on the fact that those who always and everywhere crow that nothing may be said in Germany because an (imaginary) dictatorship of opinion prevails are abusing the right of domicile and their own hierarchically superior position to silence other opinions.

In this respect, it should be noted in principle and independently of teaching assignments: Nazis remain shit! Exmatriculate right-wing ideologies!

Standard period of study

The concept of the standard period of study originally dates back to the 1970s, when access to higher education in Germany was opened up to broader sections of the population. It originally had a protective function for students, so that the university did not simply stop offering compulsory courses at all or only at long intervals due to a lack of money and/or staff, thus prolonging studies through no fault of the student. Incidentally, the standard period of study should not be confused with the "average period of study".

average study time". The latter indicates how long the average student of a subject needs to complete the course and is usually significantly longer than the standard period of study.

In the meantime, we have noticed again and again from the consultations of the Berlin ASten that students are very afraid of exceeding the standard period of study because they fear immediate exmatriculation. From a legal point of view, however (apart from BAföG and other financial worries) it is still It is only an obligation for the university to enable students to complete their studies in the given time. As a rule, it rarely succeeds in doing so, as compulsory courses are offered in parallel or a combination of subjects between Mitte and Adlershof or Dahlem and Charlottenburg does not work as smoothly as imagined in planning games. There is **no way to exmatriculate someone just for exceeding the standard period of study**. The standard period of study is not an obligation for your studies! However, it is powerful, as it can be used to calculate things such as → compulsory counseling or the expiry of → protection of confidence.

Corona pandemic:

Berlin has extended the standard period of study for students due to Corona. So if you were already studying during the corona pandemic, the semesters SoSe 2020 - WiSe 21/22 will be added to your regular standard period of study. This also applies if you started your studies during the pandemic, in this case from the semester in which you started.

T

Collective agreement for student employees

The first collective agreement for student employees (TVStud I), which came into force in (West) Berlin in 1981 as a German novelty, formed the foundation for the open debate about student working conditions, which was sought again and again in the following decades - sometimes by the universities (or by politicians: in 1985, the conservative science senator Kewenig had terminated the collective agreement) mostly by the employees themselves.

The collective agreement in force today is the third of its kind (TVStud III). The 2018 collective agreement was preceded by several years of organizing and intensive industrial action by student employees, who had suffered a continuous loss of real wages since the renewal of TVStud II (2001). Although the hourly wage of € 10.98 stipulated in TVStud II represented a

This was a good degree for the time, but was increasingly devalued due to the rising cost of living.

In addition, the additional <<Christmas bonus>> for student employees was abolished in the course of cost-cutting measures at Berlin's universities in 2004. While the salaries of the other status groups, in particular the professors, who were already well-paid, were increased over the years, student employees fell by the wayside.

This prompted the students to re-enter negotiations in 2017 with a series of demands. These included an immediate increase in wages to 14 euros per hour, which would merely compensate for inflation since 2001, a future demonization of wages to prevent progressive real wage losses, the reintroduction of the <<Christmas bonus>> and an increase in sick pay to more than six weeks.

At the beginning of the collective bargaining negotiations, the universities offered something around 20 cents, later 44 cents more. This offer included a future link to the wage development of employees under TV-L (dynamization) in order to avoid another 16 years of standstill. A laughable offer when you consider that with a 41h/position, the loss of the 2004 abolished

"Christmas bonus" is greater than the increase now being offered. The following, supposedly improved offer from the university amounted to €12.13. However, this was without the "Christmas bonus" and TV-L link. This means that in three years' time, the salary would be lower than if the 44 cent offer with a link to the salary development of TV-L employees were applied. As a result, the offer has deteriorated.

Now, the HU Executive Board at the time, which is made up of and supported by the group of professors, argued that there was a huge financial gap. This is also fundamentally correct.

However, apart from the fact that the 2018-2022 university contracts provided for an annual 3.5% increase in funding from the state of Berlin and a 15% wage increase for student employees, the

"forgot" to mention where this financial shortfall comes from. The status group of professors in particular has played no small part in blindly trusting every, but really every promise of success. They voted through every financially risky "reform" project at the HU with their legally guaranteed majority in the committees. For example

the faculty reform of 2012 into the budget (estimated at 1.4 million per year, but exact figures are not available). However, the participation and non-limitation of professorships of excellence also has an impact here. Unlike at other universities, these were not set up for a fixed term, but rather for an indefinite period like regular positions.

When the excellence funds dried up after 5 years, these positions had to be paid for from the regular university budget (there are not even estimates for the additional costs).

After numerous failed attempts at negotiation (the employers had not managed to make a serious offer), the unions decided to terminate the old collective agreement (TVStud II).

as an employee representative body and the student employees took open industrial action. After a month of mega-strikes in June 2018, the negotiations for the new TVStud III were successful. The

Negotiating groups from the trade unions and universities have agreed on a compromise: With the contractually stipulated hourly wage of €12.50, which was then to rise again to €12.96 by 2022, the result was, however, significantly below the original demands (€14 + <<weekend allowance>>).

The €12.96 is still valid in the fall of 2023: after the price increases and worrying rental price developments of recent years and an hourly wage that has now even been overtaken by the state minimum wage, it is more true than ever: what was not enough in 2017 is certainly not enough today.

Student employees may still benefit from the wage dynamization agreed in the collective agreement in 2023: the link to the collective agreement for the public service of the federal states (TV-L) means that average wage increases in the TV-L will be added pro rata to the student salary.

Incidentally, students who do not carry out academic or teaching-supporting activities but take on tasks in accordance with the collective agreement of the federal states, for example working in the library or carrying out technical and administrative tasks, are often wrongly assigned the lower TVStud pay scale instead of being grouped according to the TV-L pay scale. This brazen attempt by the universities to cut costs is unlawful and affected students are advised to seek advice from a trade union. Collective bargaining for the federal states will begin in fall 2023: as a few percent more will probably not be enough to make a living, it is not unlikely that a renegotiation of the TVStud will follow.

Even if the collective agreement is sometimes undermined by employers or supervisors, e.g. when it comes to overtime or vacation regulations,

It can be seen that student employees in Berlin, where the only student collective agreement still exists, are better off in many areas than in other federal states: for example, they are less likely to be at risk of poverty, less likely to have a second job and are better informed about their rights as employees.

The nationwide TV-Stud movement, which has been organized since 2021, has recognized this and is calling for a joint collective agreement for ALL student employees at German universities. The campaign could build up pressure in the TV-L round: For the first time in history, a nationwide collective agreement for student employees is conceivable. In any case, student employees and their fellow campaigners are in for an eventful semester (and probably year) of industrial action.

V

Delays

As we all know, life punishes those who are late. At the university, teaching staff occasionally do this too. For example, it occasionally happens that the rooms in which lectures take place are locked from the inside shortly after they begin in order to prevent alleged or actual disruptions caused by students arriving late. Quite apart from the fact that there are many plausible reasons for delays, it is of course first and foremost questionable whether the rattling of the locked door by late students is not a much more significant disturbance.

Regardless of the question of what the actual disturbance is, the teacher's behavior is unlawful and even endangers human life. The reason is the risk of fire. If there is a fire in the building (or even in the room itself)
z. For example, if a fire breaks out, the escape routes are blocked by the locked doors. The stressful situation can quickly lead to panic among those present. In a situation where a panicked crowd is crowded in front of the doors, it will probably be impossible for the teacher to unlock them, regardless of the fact that valuable time would be wasted. Quite apart from this, the question would be what happens if the teacher themselves panics or, for example, is forced to leave the room.

B. loses consciousness. Do students then search the teaching "body" while the building is on fire? An absurd idea!

The teacher is also treading on thin ice in terms of criminal law, as excluding students always means including students who are already present and can therefore constitute a deprivation of liberty (Section 239 StGB).

Practical tip:

In practice, there are several ways of dealing with this situation. The first option is to talk to the teacher responsible. If this is unsuccessful or there are fears of disadvantages for studies, a call to the responsible fire safety officer should be enough to open the escape routes promptly. Creative people can also go to the toilet every few minutes, after which the door would (theoretically) have to be unlocked. → Pee break

Protection of legitimate expectations

During our studies and at university, we are basically in the area of application of administrative law. This means, among other things, that students can rely on a few basic principles of public law. One of these is the protection of legitimate expectations. But what is it anyway? Fundamentally, the principle of the protection of legitimate expectations means that citizens can trust that the existing legal situation will continue to apply as long as they are not informed to the contrary. This also includes trusting that positive administrative acts are lawful. There are two key examples of this at the university: The first concerns the question of how long students may rely on completing their studies under the conditions under which they started them. This becomes particularly relevant if you have been studying long enough for your study regulations to expire and you have to switch to a new one. The university is obliged to give you the credits, that you have already completed will be credited fairly when you transfer. In some situations, the university may also have to extend the period of validity of study regulations. This happened, for example, during the corona semesters in order to protect the legitimate expectations of students who could not have expected this delay in their studies. The second example of the application of the protection of legitimate expectations is examination dates & conditions. You are entitled to be informed of your → examination dates and conditions at the beginning of the semester and that these will not change thereafter (there are of course exceptions here too). So if exam dates are canceled at short notice or your examiners change the exam format or formalities, they need a damn good reason. If you are unsure about what is possible and what is not, simply contact the Teaching and Study Advisory Service.

W

Compulsory military service

Honestly, we never thought that we would be able to delete the text on compulsory military service. But now it has happened and the reason was a hole in the German budget caused by the global banking crisis of 2008-2011. Sometimes crises also have a good side. But be careful, compulsory military service has only been suspended, not abolished. If you are still confronted with compulsory military service due to your (second) citizenship, we recommend that you continue to visit our advice center.

Z

Reading newspapers in courses

Admittedly: It is not particularly friendly to sit in the front rows of a lecture and to have your newspaper spread out in front of you even after the lecture has started, preferring to read the lines rather than follow the lips of the lecturer. But perhaps this behavior is provoked by an attendance list, which is likely to be illegal in many cases (

→ Attendance check)

The question now is whether the teacher can sanction reading the newspaper by expelling the student from the room or even from the course. Let's assume that lecturers generally have the derived domiciliary right from the presidency. Then they should also be able to expel students reading newspapers from "their" courses. But far from it. Basic

The house rules or the framework study and examination regulations of the respective university should always be consulted. At the HU, there is a passage in the ZSP that refers to the disruption of courses. However, it seems at least questionable that this refers to reading newspapers. What kind of disruption is caused by reading a newspaper? As long as the noise when turning the pages is minimized and no one's view is obstructed, e.g. by holding up a newspaper, there is no disturbance. The argument that the teacher would be too distracted because no respect would be shown during the lecture does not apply here either, as this behavior is likely to be socially and ethically acceptable. The same naturally applies to all notepads, laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc. that are used for taking notes. Consequently, the behavior of the person reading the newspaper cannot lead to their exclusion from the course. Just one last question remains: Who still reads print these days?

Compulsory counseling / conditions

Compulsory counseling was finally abolished in 2021. The university can no longer force you to seek "advice" on your course of study under the threat of exmatriculating you. However, it is not completely nonsensical to seek advice on your course of study. If you → fail an exam, you may be given an additional attempt at the exam to save you.

Last but not least

Incidentally, many of these adversities have been introduced by the universities without legal necessity. We are fighting against them because they clearly promote the social selection of many (still) students and potential students. Our political work in the AStA/RefRat and our committee work is not always crowned with success, as social realities such as pressure to perform and outdated power structures also have an impact in the university context. In addition, students only have a fraction of the votes in the AS (4 out of 25 seats at HU - even though we represent 90% of university members) thanks to the legally anchored professorial majority. Nevertheless, we hope that the information was useful to you and that you can use it profitably - following the prevailing logic.

If you have problems with any of the points, please get in touch with us. We have been working on these issues for years and still have some advice that we have not been able to list here. Unfortunately, this list of repressive measures is certainly not exhaustive and we have only been able to cover the most common and best-known ones. If you can think of anything else to add to this list, please let us know. We are always happy to learn new things.

BAföG extension

BAföG

30

BAföG extension

In the early 1990s, under Helmut Kohl and the black-yellow coalition, a benefit freeze was introduced for BAföG. Since then, after the fourth semester, a so-called proof of performance - form 5 - must be provided in order to continue to receive funding. This is approx. 120 credit points. This is used by the BAföG office to check whether your academic achievements correspond to the level of the semester. The departments in which you are enrolled have a little leeway and can confirm the study status of the fourth semester even if you have fewer credit points. If you do not receive this confirmation, you will usually lose your BAföG.

However, there are a number of statutory/recognized reasons for delay that make it possible to receive funding in the fifth, sixth or - if necessary - even in the seventh or eighth semester, even if the 120 credit points have not yet been earned by the end of the 4th semester. The same reasons for extension apply to the extension of BAföG beyond the maximum funding period, which corresponds to the standard period of study (for Bachelor or Master).

This is made possible above all by § 15 Para. 3 BAföG. However, the reasons for the delay must be the cause of the delay. So if you were ill for six weeks in the third semester, it is difficult to explain why you are two or more semesters behind after four semesters, because you only "missed" one semester due to the illness. Further reasons for delay would then have to be asserted. We would like to present the most important ones here.

1. Illness

If you're lying in bed with a fever and headache or otherwise ill, you can't study. It's as simple as that. Of course, a few days' cold does not justify a delay of a semester or more. But if you are ill for three weeks during the semester (the days of illness do not have to be too long), you cannot study.

The student who is already ill has a considerable learning backlog, which is difficult to catch up on due to the high level of performance. It is therefore important to always go to the doctor so that the illness can be documented and proven to the BAföG office later. The same applies to illness during exams. Here, too, we recommend seeking medical advice and officially reporting sick to the university for the exam instead of signing out of the exam online and risking that the illness cannot be proven.

2. Chronic illness or disability

Unlike acute illnesses, after which the body recovers completely, chronic illnesses are at least longer-lasting or permanent physical or mental illnesses. The relevance threshold for a BAföG extension is often lower than expected by those affected. The chronic illness only has to have a negative effect on the "performance" for the studies. This can (but does not have to) be the case with permanent tinnitus, migraines, neurodermatitis, a crooked spine or depression. This is precisely where it is important to come to us for advice.

3. Participation in committees

If you are involved in student committees (e.g. student council) or in academic self-administration (e.g. institute council), you will need time for this. In principle, BAföG is granted one semester longer for two semesters of commitment.

Proof of student council activity can be obtained, for example, from the Department for Student Council Coordination of the RefRat (www.refrat.de/fako).

4. Failed exam

Who would have thought that failing exams could be a good thing? BAföG generally accepts failing a final module examination for the first time as a reason for extension.

5. Children/Pregnancy

As both pregnancy and child-rearing take time, this has also been reflected in the reasons for extending BAföG. For a pregnancy, BAföG is granted for one semester longer, even if this has not(!) led to a child. Different periods apply for children up to the age of ten. Until the child is 5 years old, parents receive one semester more BAföG for each year of the child's life; up to the age of 10, child-rearing is accepted as a reason.

6. other reasons

BAföG also has a so-called catch-all provision that makes an extension possible in special individual cases. Many different reasons for extension can be given when applying for an extension. You only have to fulfill two conditions:

1. They must have led to a delay in your studies
2. They are not your fault.

These are, for example, delays due to university organizational reasons, i.e. if the university has messed something up in your smooth course of studies. This is the case, for example, if you were unable to attend compulsory seminars. Or you were unable to take an exam because someone close to you died shortly beforehand. Or, or, or ...

What to do?

As a rule, the reasons for delay do not have to be asserted until you reapply for BAföG for the fifth semester or after the end of the maximum funding period, even if they occur before then. This means that if you have a chronic illness and are fundamentally limited in your ability to perform, then do as much as you can from the first semester onwards. It makes little sense to overextend yourself and then achieve no or less than if you had studied at a manageable level from the outset.

Where can I find help?

The BAföG counseling of the RefRat is a student counseling service. We are familiar with all topics relating to BAföG. We recommend that you do not take the extension lightly. Feel free to drop by with your questions during our office hours before you make mistakes with your application out of ignorance. We are financed by your contributions to the student body, so we are not tied to the BAföG office or similar actors.

See you soon.

Your BAföG advice from the RefRat
www.refrat.de/beratung.bafog

Student counseling

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Student consultations

www.refrat.de/beratung

In line with the motto "Students advise students", the student body and the university offer you a counseling service to help you with many of your everyday study worries.

Since the social counseling system was set up, the concept of students helping each other to deal with questions and problems has proven its worth. At the Student Social Counseling Service, you can talk to people who know student life and any problems that arise well from their own experience, who have also acquired a lot of expertise in social law matters and who know the university structures inside out.

They have enough time to listen to your problems in a pleasant atmosphere and also to have a longer conversation with you; you can tell them about your worries without hesitation. The advisors will help you as best they can, advise you on completing formalities and, if necessary and if they have the capacity, they will also be happy to accompany you to visit the authorities.

If the problems are even too big, our lawyers can help you clarify legal matters and are available to answer your questions free of charge. So whenever you have problems, come to the counseling service and don't wait until your problems get out of hand! We are always open to your questions. Although not explicitly listed here, you are also welcome to contact the TU advisory services!

General legal advice

beratung.allgemein@refrat.hu-berlin.de
www.refrat.de/beratung.recht

As legal advice must provide binding legal information, this advice is provided by professional lawyers. You will be advised on almost all legal problems. The various lawyers naturally have knowledge of all subject areas, but if you have a very specific problem, ask online for appointments for special areas.

General social counseling

beratung.allgemein@refrat.hu-berlin.de
www.refrat.de/beratung.allgemein

The general social counseling service is there for all students whose problems lie outside of Bafög, children, disability and studying as a foreigner.

Anti-discrimination counseling - adb

adb@refrat.hu-berlin.de
www.refrat.de/adb

The university is an area of society and therefore always a reflection of social conditions. Social inequalities are therefore also a (significant) part of everyday life at university. Discrimination practices therefore also take place there.

The university is a place where dominance relations and normative practices are maintained. The university space is still characterized by continuities and the maintenance of colonialism, male, patriarchal hegemonies, bisexuality, heteronormativity, abolitionism, welfare (social origin).

This is also reflected in the dissemination of knowledge: who researches what and about what - who teaches what and about what - who writes what and about what.

adb has been offered on a voluntary basis by students since 2012. Since 2015, there have been three paid positions and a dedicated room in which the counseling work takes place.

adb has one counseling center each for racist discrimination and discrimination based on trans* positioning. As we work interdependently and discrimination is often intertwined, we also offer advice on sexism, migration|s|history and genderism. Intersectional work is important to us. Our advice is always partisan and emancipatory and, in addition to concrete support, we want to empower those affected.

In addition to counseling work, another important focus is raising awareness of discrimination, recommending experienced anti-discrimination counseling centers, and recording and documenting cases of discrimination and/or unequal treatment.

Employment law, jobs and social insurance

www.refrat.de/beratung.arbeit
beratung.arbeit@refrat.hu-berlin.de

Do you have questions about social insurance or your rights at work? What to look out for in job and study combinations? Are you unsure about which social security contributions you have to pay? What does working student status or the 20-hour rule actually mean?

Our experience shows that only a few students are aware of their rights as employees. Rights such as continued payment of wages in the event of illness, legal entitlement to paid leave, protection against dismissal, etc. are unknown to some or they do not know that they also apply to students. That's why students do themselves a lot of favors at work.

If you know your own employee rights, you have a clear advantage!

The aim of the initial employment law advice service is to provide impartial support to student employees with problems. The advice is provided by students for students in a cooperation between the HU student body, DGB Jugend and GEW Berlin.

If we don't know what to do, we can usually put you in touch with the relevant authorities.

Just send us an e-mail with your request! We look forward to hearing from you!

Staff council for student employees

Ziegelstraße 13c, 10117 Berlin, Rooms 511-514
<https://vertretungen.hu-berlin.de/de/prstudb>
prstudb@hu-berlin.de

Over 2,000 students work at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and ensure that studying and teaching work. Students work at almost every chair and in countless projects and teach as tutors, for example.

The Staff Council of Student Employees (PRstudB) represents the interests of students working at HU.

This is elected once a year by all student assistants (SHKs) at HU and acts as a committee to represent your interests. If you are employed at HU, you can stand for election to the Staff Council yourself and even get paid for it.

Specifically, the Student Staff Council examines all job offers (advertisements) and recruitments to ensure that they are non-discriminatory and that the university complies with the applicable laws. In principle, appointments should be public, transparent, equal, fair and comprehensible. The PRstudB also advises you on all types of conflicts with your employers and supports you in solidarity. If you experience (for example racist or classist) discrimination, sexualized violence or bullying at work, you can contact the PRstudB. At hu.berlin/prstudb you can also find out about applicable labor law, occupational health and safety, (special) leave, maternity leave, parental leave, etc. or simply get in touch with us. Our office hours are always Tuesdays from 3-5 p.m. on 0151 26367326. At the same time, the PRstudB is active in university politics, as the working conditions at HU have not changed for the better in recent times. Increasingly unreasonably high demands are being placed on employed students in terms of flexibility, responsibility and qualifications. The burden is being passed on to students and attempts are being made to save money at our expense. If you would like to find out more: hu.berlin/tvlfu-erstudis or www.verdi-studierende.de/tv-stud/.

The PRstudB is therefore committed to constantly improving the working conditions of students who are employed at the university.

Stand for election and become part of the PRstudB!

Get in touch with us. You can find information about the next election at hu.berlin/elections.

BAföG and student finance advice

beratung.bafoeg@refrat.hu-berlin.de
www.refrat.de/beratung.bafoeg

The student BAföG and student finance advice service offers you support with all questions relating to studying and money - BAföG, loans, grants, housing benefit and Hartz IV are common topics. All matters that cannot be clarified with the clerks at the authorities can be discussed without prior registration. The advisors will help you with applications, formulating objections and everything related to this.

Advice for international students

beratung.auslaenderinnen@refrat.hu-berlin.de
www.refrat.de/beratung.auslaenderinnen

From "A" like "foreigners authority" or "recognition" to "Z" like "admission to studies" or "second degree". The path of international students through their studies is littered with obstacles.

We offer information and practical support in all areas that specifically affect international students. Counselors can support you with all of these problems and possibly also accompany you through difficult administrative procedures. If we are unable to help you ourselves, we can recommend specialist advice centers.

You can find our office hours online.

Advice on teaching and studying

www.refrat.de/lust
lust@refrat.hu-berlin.de

Studying is characterized by repressive regulations, an excessive workload and schooling. Lecturers who abuse their position of power to discipline students are the order of the day.

we look for solutions with you. We offer weekly consultation hours for all problems in and around your studies. In addition, we offer free legal advice on university law every two weeks. During the application season, we always offer additional advice on filing a complaint. You can find all information about our counseling services and contact options on our website.

Counseling for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, trans* and intersex people

LGBTI unit in the RefRat: beratung@lgbti-referat.de

Disability counseling

beratung.enthinderung@refrat.hu-berlin.de
www.refrat.de/beratung.enthinderung

Here you will be advised by students who are themselves affected by disability or chronic illness or who are aware of the topic and have experience in dealing with authorities, the university administration and everyday university life. Here you can, for example, clarify questions about compensation for disadvantages or integration aids. The advisory service is not only aimed at students with visible or "recognized" disabilities, but also at people who are disabled due to mental crises or chronic illnesses during their studies.

Studentenwerk Berlin - BBS Counseling Barrier-free Studying

Franz-Mehring-Platz 2, 10243
Berlin, Tel: 030 93939 8441
www.stw.berlin/beratung/beratung-barrierefrei-studieren/zur-beratungsstelle.html

Psychological counseling

The university offers digital and face-to-face counseling sessions. Appointments for counseling sessions via Zoom can be booked online. Appointments for a personal counseling session (in Mitte & Adlershof) can be made by phone on Thursdays from 1 pm to 2 pm on 030/2093 70298. More information on this can be found at www.hu-berlin.de/de/studium/beratung/psyber/counseling-in-praesenz-or-with-zoom

Berlin Student Union

Franz-Mehring-Platz 2 (Friedrichshain)
(030) 93 93 9 - 8438
pbs@stw.berlin
www.stw.berlin/beratung.html

Semester ticket office

semtix@refrat.hu-berlin.de
www.semtix.de

The cost of the semester ticket is not always easy for all students to afford. For this reason, all HU and KHB students can apply for a subsidy for the semester ticket from the social fund. Depending on your financial and social situation, the semester ticket fee will be partially or fully reimbursed. If the application is approved, the costs for language courses at the HU Language Center can also be reimbursed.

How does it work and what do you need? You can find application forms and detailed information including deadlines and legal bases on our home page. Or drop by during our office hours, we will be happy to advise you.

Studying with child(ren)

www.refrat.de/beratung.kind
beratung.kind@refrat.hu-berlin.de

If you have children, studying requires an increased level of organization and social security. We will be happy to advise you on issues such as financing, childcare and study organization.

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"My professors say they are allowed to...!" is unfortunately one of the most frequently heard sentences in the consultations of the Department for Teaching and Student Affairs of the HU's Referent*innenRat or the AStA's own university counseling services at the FU and TU. Unfortunately, we have noticed time and again how little students are informed about their own rights. Consequently, we have compiled an overview of the most common stumbling blocks that you will encounter during your student life. These range from "A" as in "Aus-
election procedure" or "attendance con-
trolle" to "Z" for "forced counseling". The text has already been revised several times based on our successes and contains older "stories" as well as current problems. Our aim is for this list to become shorter and shorter in the future through our joint struggles.