

Hardship Application

A hardship application allows you to present circumstances that justify your immediate admission. **Two percent** of the respective number of study places available are reserved for exceptional hardship cases. Recognition of a hardship application under this quota leads directly to an offer of admission without consideration of the other selection criteria. This is only the case, however, if you satisfy the general and special enrollment conditions for the desired degree program.

HOWEVER: Not every impairment, even though it may be perceived as severe, justifies admission as a hardship case. **An exceptional hardship exists if special social or family reasons that you yourself are not responsible for make it absolutely necessary that you begin your studies immediately or change your place of study immediately** and it would be unreasonable to expect you to wait even one semester for admission, even if especially strict standards are applied. It must therefore be an **especially serious exceptional situation**. This exceptional situation can only concern current or future circumstances, such as:

- Special health circumstances that require immediate admission and are supported by a specialist medical report
- A health condition with a tendency to worsen that has a high probability of making it impossible to bear the stresses of studying in this degree program in the future
- Restriction to a narrow occupational field due to a physical disability; the desired degree program can be expected to lead to successful rehabilitation
- A physical disability that stands in the way of any other reasonable activity until a study place has been assigned

The ranking is based on the degree of exceptional hardship.

Severe disability

As a rule, a severe disability (according to the Severe Disability Act (*Schwerbehindertengesetz*)) does not on its own justify immediate admission under the hardship provisions, but should be indicated in the application anyway and supported by appropriate evidence (see below). The hardship provisions also cannot be used to provide general compensation for disadvantages suffered by applicants previously in their lives.

Strict standards

The justifications and evidence provided must be examined especially critically due to the far-reaching significance that positive hardship decisions have for applicants who can no longer be admitted under the general selection criteria because of the study places that are filled by hardship cases.

Therefore, before submitting a hardship application, you should first examine it critically yourself to determine whether it has a chance of success. Not every justification that is considered relevant can be recognized as a hardship case when allocating study places. You should therefore apply strict standards to your own justifications.

In addition, since the number of places that can be allocated under the hardship quota is limited, it is possible that not every prospective student recognized as a case of exceptional hardship will receive a study place. This is especially true for degree programs that have local admission limits, are in very high demand and have few places to allocate. Since the

specified percentage must not be exceeded, however, the final decision on which applicants with recognized hardship applications to select will have to be made by drawing lots.

Justified and unjustified applications

The University of Bonn bases its hardship application on the rules and practices of “**hochschulstart.de**” for degree programs with nationwide admission limits. Additional helpful information and examples of justified and unjustified applications are available in the “*Sonderanträge*” (“special applications”) section of the [Downloads](#) web page.

The justifications for hardship applications are based on the principles underlying previous court decisions. This means that no systematic list of all possible life circumstances has been recorded, so that other justifications are possible. In addition, the court decisions were made when there was a single-tier education system (*Diplom, Magister*). One cannot, therefore, rule out the possibility that a judicial review of previous legal practice might lead to a different ruling.

Submitting the application:

If you submit your application for admission online, you **also** have to submit the hardship application, including the associated supporting documents and your admission application/registration number, to the admission office **informally in writing** (by mail) at the same time, if possible, or no later than the end of the application period. To find out whether this can also be done by email for degree programs with local admission limits, please contact the [Student Registry](#) or associated [subject-specific study advisory services](#).

You can reach the **contact person for hardship applications at *hochschulstart*** as follows:

Email: gruppe22@hochschulstart.de

Phone: +49 1803 987111 022

Separate rules apply to application procedures for [master's degree programs](#).

Supporting documents

The reasons for hardship must be supported by a current **specialist medical report** that provides sufficient information concerning the individual criteria specified. The report should include statements about the origin, severity, course and treatment options of the health condition and a prognosis for its further course. It should also be understandable for a medical layperson—without in-depth medical knowledge.

A **severe disability ID card or administrative decision by the Disability Benefits Office (*Versorgungsamt*)** are examples of suitable additional supporting documents (please always provide officially certified documents). On its own, however, proof of a (severe) disability is not sufficient for recognition as a hardship case.