

Information about Compensation for Disadvantages and Alternative Examination Arrangements

For Departments, Lecturers and Students





Who's working at the Disability & Diversity Centre?

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Did you know ... ?

- About 17% of the Paris Lodron University's students state that they are living with a disability – that is about 3000 students.¹
- Of these students, 83% state that their disability affects their studies.
- 65% state that their disability is not immediately apparent, i.e. invisible.
- One-third of these students state that they experience negative effects on their studies due to their disability.

If you are not sure whether we are the right place to come to just contact us and make an appointment to speak with someone. There are no stupid questions. Just contact us and ask! We keep all information confidential.

¹ Figures from: Zaussinger, S.; Brenner, J.; Precup A. (2017): „Studierenden-Sozialerhebung 2015. Tabellenband Universität Salzburg“. Studie im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Wirtschaft (BMWFW). Institut für höhere Studien. Wien.

What the Disability & Diversity Centre can do for you:

- We offer support and advice for students / prospective students with disabilities / chronic illness
- We provide support and advice for job applicants with disabilities / chronic illness who would like to work at the PLUS
- We identify and remove barriers in the university's infrastructure, teaching, and buildings
- We cooperate with university staff in order to create a barrier-free access to education for every student
- We organise and finance steps to support your studies, such as tutorials, study assistants and non-medical help (e.g., manual note-taking)
- We organise and carry out alternative examination arrangements

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) of the United Nation recognises the right of persons with disabilities to education in article 24: "States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning" to persons with disabilities.

States Parties shall also ensure that "reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided".

Support for blind students or students with a visual impairment

Mag.a Helga Gritzner offers support and advice for persons who are blind or have a visual impairment and runs the Information and Advisory Centre for Blind and Visually Impaired Persons.

The Information and Advisory Centre for Blind and Visually Impaired Persons offers the following services:

- Information and advice on assistive technology
- Access to barrier-free website design and CMS
- Barrier-free access to PDF files
- Assistance with using ALMA (the university's digital library), PLUS online, Blackboard
- Assistance with academic papers dealing with the subjects of blindness and visual impairment
- Assistance with textual research, digitalisation and quotable editing in alternative formats

The Information and Advisory Centre for Blind and Visually Impaired Persons offers the following services for departments and university staff:

- Individual advice for staff who are teaching or supporting students with disabilities
- Negotiation in case of conflicts (both students and staff)
- Support with compensation for disadvantages
- Organisation of talks about the subject in departments

What is compensation for disadvantages?

An individual compensation for disadvantages is NOT A PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT, but a way to achieve equality of opportunities. Students with a disability or chronic illness/psychosocial disability have a right to a compensation for disadvantages. Nevertheless, these students have to be able to acquire the knowledge and skills specified in the respective examination regulations and to demonstrate them by taking examinations. The students have to acquire the learning outcomes, but the form and conditions of acquiring and demonstrating these learning outcomes can be modified. Disabilities and chronic illness come along with different restrictions, which also depend on the degree course and the learning outcomes of individual lecture courses. Therefore, it is necessary to examine every request for a compensation for disadvantages individually, and to specify requests in close coordination with the respective departments and lecturers. There is no legal claim to a specified compensation for disadvantages as such.

A few examples of compensation for disadvantage

- Extension of deadlines for study and examination achievements
- Adapted time and/or relocation of classes and examinations to accessible rooms
- Extension of deadlines, e.g. for examinations, homework and final assignments
- Permission of special breaks, e.g. during examinations
- Test performances can be divided into partial performances
- The periods between individual academic achievements and examinations can be extended
- Students may participate in setting exam dates (e.g., not immediately before or after specified therapeutic measures)
- Deadlines of examinations can be extended, e.g. if there were necessary study breaks prior to an examination because of a student's bad health

Examinations can be arranged differently:

- Oral examinations instead of written examinations or vice versa
- Theoretical performances instead of practical performances and vice versa
- Individual examinations instead of group examinations
- Written examinations as part of oral examinations for students with a hearing impairment or a speech impediment
- Partial release from compulsory attendance in courses (students have to perform compensatory services instead)
- Additional work tools or aids can be permitted (e.g., refreshable braille display); assistants can be arranged (e.g., sign language interpreters); special exam papers can be prepared (e.g., in large print)
- Examinations can be held in the rooms of the Disability&Diversity Centre.

A compensation for disadvantages must never affect the evaluation of a student's course achievement and test performances and must not appear on performance records, diploma supplements and certificates.

Legal basis: Alternative examination arrangements UG 2002 §59 (1) 12: "According to legal provisions, academic freedom is granted to students. If a student has a chronic disability, this especially includes the right to alternative examination arrangements when the prescribed method of testing skills and knowledge is not possible for them, and if the contents and the requirements of the examination are not affected by the alternative examination arrangements."

You can find more information about the process of alternative examination arrangements here: www.plus.ac.at/disability-diversity

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

E-Mail: disability@plus.ac.at

Important information for students: Organisation of alternative examination arrangements and compensation for disadvantages

The Disability & Diversity Centre needs to be noticed at least 14 days ahead of an examination date so that we can contact the responsible department (the Vice Rectorate for Academic Affairs) and organise the examination arrangements. Please contact us in due time – at the beginning of the semester or when you register for an examination date – by sending an e-mail to disability@plus.ac.at. Only thus can we guarantee our full support (e.g., by organising an appropriate room for you, a supervision during the exam, etc.).

We may also draw your attention to the fact that bilateral agreements between students and teaching staff are not covered by the laws governing university studies if the **Disability & Diversity** Centre has not been informed and involved prior to the arrangement.

How to proceed

You can apply informally and via e-mail for alternative examination arrangements. However, it is important that you attach a medical certificate to prove your kind of disability. This certificate has to be issued by a medical specialist and should state the kind of compensation for disadvantages you require. Medical certificates by family doctors cannot be accepted.

Note: The medical certificate does not need to include a diagnosis. It needs to specify the connection between the requested exam mode and your present illness / disability, though. You need to send your application to the **Disability & Diversity** Centre at least 14 days ahead of the examination date!

What has to be part of your application?

- An informal letter (e.g., via e-mail to disability@plus.ac.at)
- A medical evidence of your disability / chronic illness or a copy of your “Behindertenpass” (this does not have to include a diagnosis, but it has to specify the connection between the requested exam mode and indication – which exam mode is necessary?)
- The requested exam mode: which exam mode do you need instead of the standard exam mode? (e.g., extra time, a quiet room, breaks during the exam, an oral examination instead of a written examination, ...)
- Course number, course title and name of your lecturer
- Your mobile number and an e-mail address so that we can contact you.
- After your application has arrived in our department, we will examine and process it in accordance with the responsible Vice Rectorate for Academic Affairs (Vice Rector Martin Weichbold). Afterwards, we will contact your lecturer and the Examinations Office and start organising your exam according to the requested exam mode.

Please do not hesitate to call or e-mail us if you have any questions.

We look forward to supporting you!

Your Disability & Diversity team

Contact:

Rector's office

Family, Gender, Disability & Diversity

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