

# Compensation for disadvantages due to a health impairment



## INFORMATION FOR DOCTORS AND PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

### Request for specialist/psychotherapeutic statements (expert opinions/certificates)

Students with attested special needs are entitled to an alternative form of examination where their disability or impairment prevents them from sitting an examination in the prescribed form. These students need the opinion/certificate for submission to the European University Viadrina when applying for compensatory measures.

### Compensation for disadvantages during studies and examinations:

If evidence of a chronic mental illness or physical disability is provided in the form of a specialist or psychotherapeutic opinion/certificate, alternative study and examination achievements can be recognised by the examination board at the university. The expert opinion/certificate is required for the corresponding application. It is the basis for certifying the need for compensatory measures, to enable students to study based on their individual abilities and ensures their academic success.

### The expert opinion/certificate must contain the following information:

- name, date of birth, and address of the student
- start of treatment and expected duration of the illness/health impairment
- description of the impairment and its impact(s) on the student's ability to study and complete examinations
- (in your opinion) appropriate form(s) of compensation
  - What support/measures does the student need in order to complete the examination and/or the study programme successfully?
  - Which deadlines cannot be met during the degree programme and may have to be extended?
  - What alternatives are required to achieve academic success? (see examples below)
- date stamp and your signature

Please do not list any diagnoses in your opinion/certificate for privacy protection reasons. Instead, the expert opinion/certificate should describe the present limitations and what the person concerned needs to compensate for these restrictions during their studies. Your professional assessment is decisive for the examination board's judgement as to whether the student is entitled to compensation for disadvantages. Therefore, please describe the effects of the impairment on the student's performance in relation to her/his studies in such a way that the examination board can make an assessment without further enquiry. The mere statement that the patient "is/was only able to study to a limited extent" is insufficient without a more detailed description of the effects of the impairment on studies and/or examinations. Please also note that short-term fluctuations of symptoms, exam anxiety, exam stress, etc. are not considered significant impairments that justify compensation for disadvantages.

### Below are some examples of compensation for disadvantages:

- Customised adaptation of study materials
- Use of personal assistance and/or technical aids
- Change of examination form, e.g. oral instead of written examination
- Granting of an extended processing time for essays, term papers and/or thesis
- Extension of writing time for exams by e.g. 25 or 50 percent of the regular time allotted
- Additional breaks and/or separate room for exams
- Modification of internship and excursion regulations
- Modification of the "attendance requirement" for courses
- Disregarding spelling/grammar in written work
- Extension of the standard study period

**Contact:** Please contact Dr. Jenny Kuhlmann, counsellor for students with health impairments at the European University Viadrina, if you have any questions about the opinion/test.

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Counselling service for students with  
health impairments

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