

What Are Alternative Study Arrangements (“Nachteilsausgleich”)?

RWTH Aachen University ensures that students with a disability and/or chronic illness are not disadvantaged in their studies, but are appropriately supported according to their potential. For this reason, students have the right to apply for alternative study arrangements (“Nachteilsausgleich”) in their studies if they have a disability or chronic illness (see Article 3 and Article 20 of Basic Law). Assessments can therefore be adjusted for the needs of individual students and their general study conditions can be improved.

A brief disclaimer: Despite this basis, students do not automatically have the right to a certain form of alternative arrangements. The student’s health condition, personal needs, resulting medical certificate, and the University’s possibilities of implementing the desired arrangements all form the basis for the alternative measure(s).

Examples for Alternative Study Arrangements for Assessments:

- Extension of the write-up time for time-restricted assessments such as written exams, term papers, or final theses
- Splitting an exam up into several parts
- A change in the form of assessment, such as a written exam instead of an oral exam and vice versa, for example for students with a hearing or speech impediment
- Time-restricted assessments suspended with individual breaks, which may not be credited to the write-up time, even if this has already been extended. This particularly applies to any work under supervision
- Exemption from a mandatory attendance rule by making up for the lack of attendance by completing a compensatory assignment
- Admission of sign language interpreters
- Nonconsideration of spelling and punctuation mistakes in written exams
- Permission to use technical aids and have personal assistance



VORSCHUB – Representation for Students With Disabilities and Chronic Illnesses

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How Do You Apply for Alternative Study Arrangements?

Students must initiate the application themselves by writing and submitting their request to the examination board of the respective Faculty. They must include a medical certificate with their request. A specialist must have issued the certificate and, if possible, also stated the degree of disability/restriction, since this information regulates the extension of the examination time. In addition, the certificate can stipulate precise recommendations for the general conditions of an examination, such as a separate room where the candidate can calmly sit the exam. (Please also read *HOW TO Apply for Alternative Study Arrangements*)

How Long Are the Arrangements Valid?

They are currently valid for two semesters. You must apply for them once again after this. If a change/improvement to the condition in the foreseeable future can be ruled out, students can apply for measures valid for more than two semesters.

Important appeal for considering the processing times of the examination boards – the principle behind it: The earlier students apply for alternative study arrangements, the more feasible they are to implement!

Applying for alternative arrangements at short notice, i.e. only a few weeks or even days before the examination, usually leads to complications for several parties (stress and worry for the students and pressure on the responsible examination boards that have to adhere to fixed meeting dates to approve student applications). **The later the request is submitted, the lower the chances it will be approved and sent in time. Even if the examination board meeting dates coincide so the application can still be approved shortly before the date of the examination, the examiners, etc. also require a certain amount of preparation time in order to implement the alternative arrangements (e.g. organizing extended supervision, booking a separate room, etc.)**

For this reason, we strongly recommend applying for alternative study arrangements as early as possible in the semester. This means: ideally, students would apply for alternative arrangements **three months beforehand** i.e. at the beginning of December for the winter semester examination period and at the beginning of May for the summer semester examination period.

IMPORTANT!

1. If alternative study arrangements have been approved, you have a **right** to them.
2. Alternative study arrangements will **not** be noted on transcripts or the like.
3. The examination is not made easier with alternative study arrangements, rather the **conditions** are made fairer for all students because of them.

We would like to thank you for understanding this situation and emphasize that we would be happy to support you with your application!



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