

(1) When can you apply for approval of inability to attend examinations due to illness?

You must decide **before the examination** whether you wish to withdraw due to illness. This means that you have to consider carefully whether you feel able to sit the examination despite being ill before attempting the examination. You will not be able to withdraw once you have completed the examination, as that would give you an unfair advantage over the other exam candidates.

If you become ill **during** an examination and have to abort the examination, you must provide a medical certificate issued by an **official medical officer ('Amtsarzt')**. A regular medical certificate from a general practitioner or medical specialist is insufficient in this case.

(2) When do you have to submit the request and the medical certificate?

You must inform the Chairperson of the Board of Examiners in writing at the earliest reasonable opportunity of your inability to attend examinations due to illness. This is done by submitting the *Request for approval of inability to attend examinations due to illness form* together with the supporting medical certificate to the relevant Examinations Officer at the Examinations Office. 'At the earliest reasonable opportunity' means you have to send the medical certificate by post on the same day at which the medical examination takes place (or the following day by the very latest). If you are bedridden, you should send it out as soon as your health has improved sufficiently for you to do so. You do not need to come to the Examinations Office in person to submit the form and medical certificate. Alternatively, you may ask someone else to post the form and certificate on your behalf.

(3) What does the doctor have to write into the medical certificate?

Your request should be accompanied by a medical certificate ('ärztliches Zeugnis' or 'Attest' in German) which must invariably have been issued on the basis of a medical examination carried out on the date on which the inability to attend examinations due to illness has been determined. The medical certificate must be sufficiently detailed and conclusive to allow the Board of Examiners to determine from it that you are/were in fact unable to attend the examination on the exam date. Therefore, the medical practitioner should state, from a medical perspective, precisely in what ways the candidate's physical, mental or emotional state prevented him or her from attending the examination.

If you received treatment in a hospital's outpatient department or visited a registered physician's practice, the medical certificate has to specify the exact reasons why you cannot attend the examination. Examples of such reasons would be 'required bed rest', or 'it is objectively impossible for the patient to travel to the examination venue and/or sit the examination without causing significant discomfort to the patient and/or worsening the symptoms or the underlying illness'. However, the medical certificate does not need to state the medical diagnosis as such. At the end of the certificate, the medical practitioner should indicate whether, in his or her professional opinion, you are medically unfit to attend examinations.

If you are treated in hospital on an inpatient basis, you should submit the certificate from the hospital without delay. If there is cause for doubt, the University may additionally require a medical certificate issued by the local health authority ('Gesundheitsamt').

IMPORTANT: A medical certificate for absence from work ('yellow slip') or school is not sufficient evidence of medical unfitness to attend examinations.

(4) In what cases is an illness not considered to cause inability to attend an examination?

The following reasons **do not** constitute sufficient grounds for withdrawal:

- your health issues are only very minor.
- non-acute health conditions: these are conditions that continually or constantly affect the candidate and did not recently emerge and are not at an acute stage. As they form part of the candidate's general aptitude and performance profile, they do not constitute grounds for withdrawal. Examples of these are psychosis, autonomic dysfunction, chronic illness, diabetes and other conditions.
- stress brought on by examinations and 'exam nerves', which do not constitute an illness in the stricter sense.
- a general sense of feeling unwell.