



Retroactive withdrawal from examinations

If a candidate is unable to attend an examination for an important reason, the Chair of the Examinations Board must be notified in writing immediately and proof must be provided. Both the notification and the provision of proof in the stipulated form must be immediate. Notification of withdrawal is deemed to have been given immediately if it is submitted no later than the third working day after the date of the examination not taken.

— This written notification is only considered to have been given immediately if the candidate him or herself, or an authorised representative of the candidate, hands it in to the Examination Office, posts it in the Examination Office postbox, hands it in to the university's post room or sends it to the Examination Office by post without culpable delay. If the notification is sent by post, the date of the postmark will be considered proof. If there is a delay in the issuing of the required proof (e.g. a medical certificate for a claimed illness or other proof of valid reasons for retroactive withdrawal from an examination), written notification of withdrawal must be given immediately without any substantiating documents and the proof submitted as soon as it has been issued. This written notification can take the form of an informal statement. To make it easier for candidates who have fallen ill to submit their notification, the Examination Office has supplied a special form in the download section of its website.

A candidate is deemed to be unable to take an examination for health reasons if their ability to perform is so impaired by major health complaints of a physical or psychological nature that they are unable to demonstrate their specialist knowledge and abilities in a university examination. This is typically due to an acute, temporary impairment of health. If the impairment is not temporary, it does not justify withdrawal from the examination because withdrawal from and rescheduling of the examination would not result in a better situation for the candidate.

Impaired ability to perform due to examination-related anxiety or stress does not give rise to a legally significant inability to take an examination; this is not the case when the candidate has crossed the threshold to a mental health disorder. Examination candidates are expected to be able to control or compensate for examination-related anxiety.

To help you write your notification of withdrawal and obtain a medical certificate as proof of inability to take an examination, we supply a form with information for physicians, in addition to the form for requesting approval of your withdrawal. This form can be used for notification of withdrawal and for medical certificates. However, there is no obligation to use the form; the important thing is that the candidate provides the Examination Office with the necessary information in writing immediately and that the medical certificate contains the information required from the examining physician (confirmation that the impairment is relevant in terms of examination rules and information on the type of examination concerned (oral/written)).

Please point out to the physician that the certificate must include the above-mentioned details. Often, the easiest way to do this is to use the form.

Simply presenting, for example, an incapacity certificate is not a sufficient means of determining inability to take an examination.

You may choose any physician you wish. However, the following physicians, who are located close to the university, are particularly familiar with the rules applicable to such certificates:

Herr Dr. Georg Uhlenbruck
 Facharzt für Innere Medizin
 Robert-Koch-Str. 1
 Telefon: 28 27 060

Frau Dr. Susanne Effner
 Ärztin für Allgemeinmedizin
 Klettenberggürtel 60
 Telefon: 41 40 73

Herr Dr. Hans-J. Graf
Herr Dr. Martin Haßler
 Fachärzte für Innere Medizin
 Sülzgürtel 16
 Telefon: 41 45 38

Herr Dipl.-Psych. Dr. Frieder Nau
 Facharzt für Neurologie und Psychiatrie
 Neumarkt 8-10
 Telefon: 27 27 700

Herr Dr. Karl Lenhardt
 Facharzt für Orthopädie
 Sülzgürtel 38
 Telefon: 9 41 55 77

Herr Dr. Rudolf Ollig
 Facharzt für Innere Medizin
 Am Justizzentrum 1
 Telefon: 42 74 42

Dr. Stefan Mauß
 Facharzt für Innere Medizin
Falk Carsten Lintz
 Facharzt für Allgemeinmedizin
 Sülzgürtel 74a
 Telefon: 41 36 36

Herr Hans Joachim Wolf
 Arzt für Chirurgie – Unfallchirurgie
 Luxemburger Str. 258
 Telefon: 41 38 83

With regard to the time at which the medical examination should take place, candidates should bear in mind that it may not be possible to diagnose an illness with adequate certainty in the afternoon or later if it became acute before the examination on the day of the examination. If you have to visit a doctor's practice out of opening hours, please contact the general medical emergency service („Kassenärztlicher Notdienst“). You will find an overview of the general medical emergency service practices here.

Retroactive withdrawal from an examination that has started or ended is not possible even if the candidate was unable for reasons of ill health to produce examination work that could be assessed. If a candidate takes or begins an examination knowing that they have an impaired state of health, withdrawal is no longer possible. In such cases, it is considered part of the candidate's duties to consult a physician, if necessary, prior to the examination to ascertain whether they are fully able to sit the examination.

Candidates may be entitled to withdraw retroactively from an examination they have started or completed, as an exception, if a health impairment existed before or during the examination but was not subjectively discernible to the candidate. This also applies if the health impairment did not occur until during the examination and could not be foreseen by the candidate. However, health complaints that are symptoms of the psychological stress typically associated with examinations (fatigue, high blood pressure, furred tongue, nausea, stomach problems, sweating attacks, etc.) do not usually count. Please note that, in cases of withdrawal from an examination that had already begun, the medical certificate must include a note (on the back of the form, if necessary) as to whether, in the physician's judgment, the health impairment already existed before the examination or had initially gone unnoticed and suddenly appeared during the examination. Your request for retroactive withdrawal must also include (on the back of the form, if necessary) a detailed description of how the symptoms came to your attention.

The rules above also apply if, due to prolonged illness, you wish to return a **bachelor or master thesis topic** or to request an extension. In this case, the medical certificate must include a note concerning the extent of your incapacity to continue work on your thesis during the period of impaired performance diagnosed by the physician, in addition to a more detailed description in your request.

Cologne, April 2019