

Regulations on requests for a leave of absence from studies at Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

1. General

(1) Students may request a leave of absence from their studies due to an important reason in accordance with Section 93 (2) of the Bavarian Higher Education Innovation Act (BayHIG). The leave of absence therefore applies to the future and must be requested before the start of the lecture period. If the reason for a leave of absence arises after the start of the lecture period, it may still be granted in certain circumstances (see 5). A leave of absence may not be taken in the first semester of a degree program other than for the purpose of maternity or parental leave, or to provide care for a close family member. A leave of absence cannot be granted retrospectively for semesters which have already ended. The reasons for taking a leave of absence must be presented in writing and suitable documents must be provided as proof.

(2) More detailed regulations on a leave of absence are given in Sections 10 to 11 of the FAU regulations on enrollment, re-registration, leave of absence and de-registration dated January 31, 2023, which is available at <http://www.fau.de/universitaet/rechtsgrundlagen/regelungen-zum-studium/> (in German only). A leave of absence is generally granted for one semester; you must therefore re-register at the beginning of the following semester.

The leave of absence should generally not exceed two semesters; this does not apply to maternity leave, parental leave or periods spent providing care for a close family member in accordance with Section 48 (1) of BayHSchG.

2. Consequences of a leave of absence

(1) Course or examination achievements may not be obtained during the semester of a leave of absence, which does not count as a subject semester.

Some degree programs also prohibit students from registering for examinations held in the following semester. However, it is possible, and usually mandatory according to the examination regulations, to resit failed examinations. The deadline by which the resit examination must be taken is not postponed by a leave of absence or by de-registration. Postponed examinations which are taken at a later date – for example, due to approved withdrawal from the examination – are not included in the exception

regarding resit examinations; it is therefore not possible to take a postponed examination during a leave of absence. If a student is on maternity, parental or caregiver leave, the above regulations on coursework and examination achievements do not apply and coursework and examination achievements may be obtained during this time.

(2) Student's rights and obligations remain otherwise unaffected; they are still members of the University and therefore have the right to use its facilities and remain eligible to vote. Social benefits usually remain unaffected, although it is possible that they may be withdrawn depending on the reason for the leave of absence. In particular, in the case of child allowance, the authority responsible assesses cases individually.

3. Reasons for a leave of absence

(1) The following are considered important reasons for a leave of absence:

- a) Severe illness
- b) Internship or placement in Germany
- c) Studying abroad, internship abroad,
foreign language teaching assistant

- d) Maternity/parental leave
- e) Cooperative degree program
- f) Providing care for a close family member
- g) Other important reasons

(2) Applications for a leave of absence due to an illness that prevents a student from studying must be submitted with a doctor's certificate. A leave of absence may be granted for more than two semesters in particularly serious cases. If the student is unable to study for a longer period of time, an interruption of studies in accordance with Section 10 (3) of the enrollment regulations should be considered if the reason for the leave of absence is appropriate. In such cases, the University approves an interruption of studies (de-registration) for a longer period and guarantees that the student may re-enroll later once they are able to study again.

(3) A leave of absence may be granted for compulsory internships/placements if at least seven weeks during the lecture period are required for this purpose. A leave of absence may only be granted once for an internship/placement.

(4) If a student wishes to complete an internship/placement which is **not** required according to the degree program and examination regulations (voluntary placement/internship) and which will take up at least seven weeks during the lecture period, a leave of absence may be granted on request.

(5) Students studying a teaching degree (Lehramt) with one or more modern foreign languages as their school subject may request a leave of absence for time spent abroad as a language assistant. Language assistant placements usually last one year.

(6) If requesting a leave of absence in order to study abroad, which is usually granted for a maximum of two semesters, the certificate of enrollment at the host university must be submitted with the request. For questions about accreditation of coursework and examination achievements obtained while studying abroad, please contact the relevant Examinations Office. The accreditation of achievements may be associated with the accreditation of subject semesters (higher subject semester) in accordance with examination law. This does not cancel the leave of absence under enrollment law. Students who have enrolled in a higher semester for the degree programs Medicine, Medicine Erlangen/Bayreuth, Pharmacy or Dentistry at FAU in the current semester may not be granted a leave of absence to study abroad.

(7) During pregnancy and parental leave, students may apply for a leave of absence which does not count toward the total amount of leave permitted for other reasons in accordance with the Maternity Protection Act (Mutterschutzgesetz, MuSchG) and BEEG Parental Allowance and Parental Leave Act (Bundeselterngeld- und Elternzeitgesetz – BEEG). A leave of absence during pregnancy is generally limited to one semester. Mothers and fathers are entitled to take a leave of absence for parental leave up until the child's third birthday. It is also possible for both parents to take a leave of absence at the same time. 24 months (4 semesters) of parental leave may be postponed until a later date and taken up until the child's eighth birthday. In the case of maternity or parental leave, a leave of absence may be granted during the first semester upon request as an exception to the regulations which otherwise apply, Further exception is also made to Section 93 (3) of the Bavarian Higher Education Innovation Act (BayHIG) and students may obtain course and examination achievements during periods of parental leave in deviation to the regulations that would otherwise apply. The leave of absence does not count toward the examination deadlines.

(8) There are three possible formats for cooperative degree programs: The first format begins with a one-year training block at the company; during this time the student is also enrolled at FAU and is granted a leave of absence for this period. In the second format, the one-year training block is in the second year of the program; the student is granted a leave of absence for this period. In the third format, students do not require leave as they complete their training at the company outside the lecture period.

(9) Leave of absence for the purpose of caring for a close family member

Students who provide care for a close family member in accordance with Section 7 (3) of the Caregiver Leave Act (Pflegezeitgesetz - PflegeZG) are granted leave of absence. Proof of the level of care in accordance with Section 15 (1) German Social Security Code (SGB 11) is required.

Students must provide evidence that they are involved in providing care and, if applicable, to what extent. Further exception is also made to Section 93 (3) of the Bavarian Higher Education Innovation Act (BayHIG) and students may obtain course and examination achievements during periods of providing care in deviation to the regulations that would otherwise apply. The leave of absence does not count toward the examination deadlines.

(10) Leave of absence for other reasons

Other than for the reasons given above, a leave of absence shall only be granted after a strict assessment of the individual case. **Such considerations may be made if reasons beyond the student's control temporarily prevent them from continuing their studies.**

Requests for a leave of absence due to financial or economic reasons, in particular to seek employment, or to complete Bachelor's and Master's thesis or other written assignments will **not** be considered. Similarly, preparation for State Examinations is also not a valid reason for a leave of absence.

4. Duration of a leave of absence

In general, the period of a leave of absence should not exceed two semesters. Periods of maternity and parental leave and periods spent providing care for a close family member are not counted. In the case of severe illness or other serious reasons, a leave of absence may be granted for more than two semesters. For study abroad or periods spent abroad as a language assistant, the duration of two semesters may not be exceeded. A leave of absence for a work placement/internship is limited to one

semester. Furthermore, a leave of absence must be requested in good time within the standard duration of studies. A leave of absence shall only be granted outside of the standard duration of studies in exceptional cases.

5. Procedure for requesting a leave of absence

If the reason for a leave of absence is foreseeable, the request must be made before re-registration. If you request a leave of absence for two semesters at the same time, such as for study abroad, this will be recorded. In this case, you must still re-register by the set re-registration deadline by transferring your semester fees. Students who apply for a leave of absence due to studying abroad, an internship abroad or placement as a language assistant can be exempted from the obligation to pay the solidarity fee for the semester ticket upon request. The exemption must be requested with the leave of absence.

If the reason for the leave of absence does not arise until after re-registration, the leave of absence can usually still be requested before the start of the lecture period. In this case, it is also possible to request a leave of absence for the following semester at the same time if the reason is still applicable and there is no reason for rejecting the request.

You may also request a leave of absence for an unforeseen reason that arises during the lecture period, although the request must be made no later than two months after the start of the lecture period. It is not possible for a leave of absence to be granted after this time.

A leave of absence for the following semester should be handled as described in the paragraph above.

To request a leave of absence, please use the form available at <http://www.fau.de/studium/im-studium/die-studierendenverwaltung-der-fau/>. Please send the completed form and all required documents by post or e-mail to the Student Records Office.

February 2023

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