

Exceeding the maximum Support Period

Meaning: BAföG (i.e. Federal Student's Assistance) is only provided at higher education institutions for the standard period of study. If this cannot be observed, the support will be discontinued often during the last examination phase.

Principle: BAföG is provided for the duration of the education. When attending a higher education institution, however, this is limited to the maximum support period which corresponds to the standard period of study. Regardless of the economic circumstances there can only be an entitlement if particular conditions are fulfilled.

Exceptions: Entitlement to BAföG exists for a reasonable period of time even after the maximum support period has ended if it was exceeded because

- a) of serious reasons.
- b) as a result of participation in statutory committees and statutory bodies of the universities and the states, as well as in statutory self-governing bodies of the students at their educational institutions, as well as the student unions,
- c) as a result of not passing a final exam for the first time (does not generally apply for today's normally modular courses of study with a flexible examination procedure)
- d) as a result of a disability, a pregnancy or the care and raising of children up to ten years of age.

The duration of the continued financial support depends on the additionally needed time as a result of the delay of the studies. This as a rule will be equal to the time loss but, depending on the duration of the reasons for the delay and the possibility of academic progress, it may be longer or shorter. However all students are obligated to limit the disadvantage sustained to an unavoidable extent, as far as reasonable.

The following applies to all reasons of delay: they must be the cause for exceeding the maximum support period. This will not be the case if, for example, the interference with the studies occurred during the basic studies semesters and the required credit for the fifth subject-related semester was nevertheless achieved in time. Delays which occur after the end of the maximum support period are irrelevant.

Reasons are serious if they are of considerable importance and cannot be dealt with by the student. This means the delay that occurred must not have been caused by the student's own behavior— unless it is understandable according to the BAföG standards.

Serious reasons are therefore in particular

- an illness (doctor's certificate required)
- an extension of the exam period not caused by the student (e.g. the examiner's sudden sickness),
- delayed admission to courses relevant for the exam (e.g. "internal numerus clausus"),

Any questions?

PERSONAL ADVICE

 Tue 9.00–12.00
Thurs 1.00–3.00
During the personal advice sessions we would ask you to refrain from calling us by telephone. We thank you for your understanding.

TELEPHONE ADVICE

 Mon and Wed 10.00–12.00

ZENTRALER INFO-POINT

Phone 0251 837-95 09
 Mon to Thurs 9.00–12.00
and 1.30–4.00
Fri 9.00–12.00
and 1.30–2.00

- failing to pass a mid-term exam or module exam for the first time, or having to repeat a semester because of the first-time failure to achieve the required credits. This is only the case if the mid-term/module exam or the required credits are the conditions for continuing the studies.

Continued financial support for one semester for a pregnancy is considered appropriate. The care and the raising of a child up to ten years of age can be supported as follows:

until the child's 5th birthday:	1 semester per year of life,
for the child's 6th and 7th years of life:	altogether 1 semester,
for the child's 8th to 10th years of life:	altogether 1 semester

The compensation for disadvantages listed above may not exceed more than one semester in total for the respective period of time. This is also the case when several children are cared for at the same time. If both parents are studying, the continued financial support can be divided up. In this case a mutual statement must be submitted that explains the share of the care of the children that the respective parent is responsible for.

Type of financial aid: Half of the BAföG financial aid for students is a grant. The other half is paid as an interest-free loan. If the continued support is provided because of pregnancy, child care or a disability, the financial aid is a full grant. If there is no special reason, where appropriate an interest-bearing loan is possible as an aid to finishing the studies.

Procedure: If the application is aimed at the time following the expiration of the maximum support period, an additional informal statement is required which explains the reasons for and states the length of the delay. Before submitting the statement it is recommended to take advantage of personal consultation.

Legal reference

§ 15 section 3 BAföG