



## **FAQs on Studying with a Child during the Corona Pandemic**

Students with children have to combine their studies, childcare, the organisation of everyday family life, and often a part-time job. They also face the challenge of securing not only their own livelihood, but also that of their child/children. With the current situation plagued by the corona pandemic, it has become much more difficult for students with children. Not only the lack of funding in some cases, but also the organisation of their studies without municipal childcare are major hurdles. We have compiled some of the current issues here alongside information from relevant actors. We are continually adding new questions and answers to the FAQs. If you have any further questions, the counselling services of TU Dresden and the Students' Union (Studentenwerk) Dresden will be happy to help you. We wish you all the best in these extraordinary times! Above all, it's important that you and your family stay healthy!

### **Five categories:**

Study organisation

Childcare

Funding

Children

Counselling and service institutions

## **1. Category: Study organisation**

**(1) Should I apply for a semester of leave of absence or for non-accreditation of the semester if I can only partially pursue my studies due to a lack of childcare?**

Pregnant women and students with children can apply to the Admissions Office for leave of absence from their studies for maternity leave or the statutory parental leave. In accordance with the Federal Law on Parental Benefits and Parental Leave (BEEG), the Act on the Autonomy of Institutions of Higher Education in the Free State of Saxony (*SächsHSFG*) provides students with a total of six additional semesters of leave for childcare during the first three years of the child's life. Students can find out what other options are currently available in the FAQ's under the menu item "Enrolment and Re-registration".

LINK: <https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/coronavirus#section-1-2>

**(2) What can I do if I can only partially pursue my studies due to a lack of childcare?**

At TU Dresden, it is currently possible to pursue part-time courses in all distance learning degree programmes, as well as in many direct programmes.

LINK: <https://tu-dresden.de/studium/vor-dem-studium/studienangebot/teilzeit-und-fernstudium>

**(3) What can I do if I can't submit all graded work for my degree programme according to the course schedule due to a lack of childcare?**

TU Dresden's regulations for study and examination procedures for the summer semester 2020 can be found in the FAQ's under the menu item "Examinations / Certificates".

LINK: <https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/coronavirus#section-2-3>

Independent of the corona pandemic, the extended compensation for disadvantages - if this is anchored in the relevant examination regulations - can be applied for by contacting the Chairperson of the Examination Committee.

§5 para. 4 of the Model Examination Regulations of TUD - Types of Graded Academic Work stipulates the following:

*If the student can credibly demonstrate that they are not able to complete graded academic work according to schedule due to **caring for their own children (up to the age of 14)**, the Chairperson of the Examination Committee shall allow the student to complete the work in an equivalent manner upon request. The Chairperson of the Examination Committee decides how the graded academic work is to be produced in consultation with the responsible examiner at their own discretion. The Chairperson of the Examination Committee decided on **an appropriate measure to compensate** for the disadvantages. Suitable measures to compensate for the disadvantages are, for example, extended time allowance, extended breaks, use of other media, use of other examination rooms within the university or another examination date. The same applies to preliminary graded work.*

Further contact persons are the Examination Offices, the Equal Opportunities Officers of the faculties and the Faculty Students' Councils. The Campus Office *Uni mit Kind* will also be happy to support you in making use of the extended compensation for disadvantages.

LINK: <https://tu-dresden.de/intern/studium-und-lehre/ressourcen/dateien/studiengangsangelegenheiten/doks/arbeitshilfen/MBPO63.pdf?lang=de>

#### (4) Does the period of grace begin during maternity leave?

The Model Examination Regulations of TU Dresden (cf. §3 para. 4 Model Examination Regulations - Deadlines and Dates) stipulate the following for deadlines in connection with the completion of the graduation examination:

*During the maternity leave period, the period of grace does not begin and it is not taken into account. Regarding the claim for parental leave, please refer to §12 para. 2 of the Enrolment Regulations of Technische Universität Dresden.*

It does not correspond to the option of extended time allowance in connection with the compensation of disadvantages as described above.

LINK: <https://tu-dresden.de/intern/studium-und-lehre/ressourcen/dateien/studiengangsangelegenheiten/doks/arbeitshilfen/MBPO63.pdf?lang=de>

#### (5) What can I do if, due to the unavailability of childcare, I cannot complete all the assignments in my studies in the planned time?

You can find TU Dresden's regulations regarding study and examination procedures in the 2020 summer semester in the FAQs under the menu item "Examinations / Certificates".

LINK: <https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/coronavirus#section-2-3>

In these exceptional times, if you are a student with responsibilities to your family, you can be sure of the understanding of your lecturers / module supervisors if you have not been able to complete some of the assignments in the given time. Therefore, do not hesitate to be candid about the challenges you are currently facing and jointly work out individual solutions that are suitable for both sides.

## 2. Category: Childcare

### (6) When will day-care centres and schools reopen?

Limited regular operation of schools and childcare facilities will be available again from 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020. The Saxon Cabinet passed a corresponding general decree on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020. LINK: [https://www.coronavirus.sachsen.de/?\\_cp=%7B%22accordion-content-4444%22%3A%7B%220%22%3Atrue%7D%2C%22previousOpen%22%3A%7B%22group%22%3A%22accordion-content-4444%22%2C%22idx%22%3A0%7D%7D](https://www.coronavirus.sachsen.de/?_cp=%7B%22accordion-content-4444%22%3A%7B%220%22%3Atrue%7D%2C%22previousOpen%22%3A%7B%22group%22%3A%22accordion-content-4444%22%2C%22idx%22%3A0%7D%7D)

### (7) How am I supposed to study this semester (online) if simultaneously I have to look after my children at home?

Due to the current unavailability of municipal childcare, studying with children is a particular challenge. In the new Decree by the Free State of Saxony of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020, the scope for emergency care was further specified.

LINK: <https://www.coronavirus.sachsen.de/amtliche-bekanntmachungen.html#a-6458>

The conditions for TU Dresden students to be eligible for emergency childcare are outlined in the Rector's circular mail of 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020. LINK: [https://tu-dresden.de/tu-dresden/gesundheitsmanagement/ressourcen/dateien/corona/rundmails/200505-Kindernotbetreuung\\_DE\\_final\\_Rektormail.pdf?lang=en](https://tu-dresden.de/tu-dresden/gesundheitsmanagement/ressourcen/dateien/corona/rundmails/200505-Kindernotbetreuung_DE_final_Rektormail.pdf?lang=en)

If your child is in a day-care centre run by the Students' Union (*Studentenwerk*), emergency care is available upon presentation of your certificate of enrolment.

### (8) Where do I claim the entitlement to emergency childcare?

As a general rule, the entitlement to emergency care must always be claimed at the day-care centre, in which the children are normally taken care of. Therefore, please contact your children's day-care centres or schools directly. During the period of the facilities' closure and of emergency care, the parental contributions are waived.

### (9) Is the Campus-Nest of the Students' Union (*Studentenwerk*) Dresden currently open?

Since the Campus-Nest is subject to the regulations for childcare, it is closed at the moment. LINK: <https://www.studentenwerk-dresden.de/soziales/campusnest.html>

### (10) Can I use a private babysitter?

If you are not entitled to emergency care, you can contact private babysitting agencies to find out whether they can assist you with childcare and under what conditions this is possible.

## 3. Category: Financing

Students with familial responsibilities are affected by the Covid-19 pandemic even beyond the digital start of the semester and the limited on-site teaching activities. For example, part-time jobs at major events or in the catering industry are no longer available. Instead, many questions arise: Are students entitled to unemployment or housing benefits? Does the postponed start of the semester have an

effect on BAföG funding? Do the economic implications of the corona virus crisis have an impact on child alimony payments? Questions like these will be answered by the *Campusbüro Uni mit Kind* family service centre, a cooperation between TU Dresden and the Students' Union (*Studentenwerk*) Dresden, and by the Social Counselling Services of *Studentenwerk* Dresden.

#### **(11) Lectures and courses are cancelled. I'm exceeding the standard period of study. Will I continue to receive BAföG?**

BAföG is granted beyond the maximum funding period, i.e. the standard period of study, e.g. if care for a close relative in need of care is provided within the domestic environment, and for "serious reasons". Interruptions in education due to a pandemic are considered to be such serious reason. The same applies if examinations are postponed beyond the standard period of study due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, BAföG will continue to be granted beyond the standard period of study if assignments and examinations cannot be completed in due time due to closed day-care centres and schools and the resulting parental childcare responsibilities (cf. § 15, paragraph 3, p. 5). In this case, for the period of the extension, BAföG is not provided as a loan but as a grant.

LINK: <https://www.bmbf.de/de/faq-ausbildungsfoerderung-und-corona-krise-11215.html> More information

#### **(12) How do the corona pandemic and the associated loss of income affect my parental allowance?**

The extraordinary situation caused by the novel corona virus represents a particular hardship. Temporary adaptations are planned so that parents do not suffer any disadvantages in terms of parental benefits as a result of the corona pandemic.

#### **Guide for Corona Help of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS)**

The BMAS provides a schematic overview of different aid offers that can be used during the corona crisis. The guide also provides links to the institutions where you can apply for these services.

LINK: [https://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Infografiken/lotse-corona-hilfen.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](https://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Infografiken/lotse-corona-hilfen.pdf?__blob=publicationFile)

## **4. Category children**

#### **(15) How do I manage studying at home and caring for my child(ren) at the same time?**

Reconciling study and/or work and childcare is sometimes a difficult balancing act to achieve. The following are just a few ideas on how this can be done a little better.

##### **Tip #1: Planning, planning, planning**

Provide each day with a programme, plan it through and record the individual stages in a timetable. Involve older children in the planning and place the timetable where everyone can see it. A notice board in the kitchen, for example, would be a good idea.

##### **Tip #2: Define both shared and separate periods**

Split the time available into periods that you spend together and periods that your children spend independently. In addition to breakfast, lunch, and dinner together, plan activities that involve physical activity, such as a walk.

##### **Tip #3: Use the morning and the evening**

Use the time early in the morning and later in the evening, when your children are sleeping, for concentrated work.

**Tip #4: Starting the working day together**

Create a fixed ritual with which you start your first learning or work phase together in the morning. It will help you to switch to another mode without changing location.

**Tip #5: Create a defined workspace**

If possible, set up a separate area where you can work undisturbed. A spatial separation from the areas where your children work alone is usually very helpful.

**Tip #6: Split childcare**

When both parents are home, you take turns being a contact person for your children. A room arrangement often helps: Both parents work in different rooms, for example in the living room and the study. The person who works in the living room can be contacted by the children. The one or the one in the study remains undisturbed. Over the day, you simply change rooms to take turns.

LINK: <https://www.stw-edu.de/kinderbetreuung/coronavirus-tipps-fuer-eltern/>

**(16) How can children be learn at home and how can media be sensibly implemented in this context?**

The Saxon State Ministry for Higher Education, Research and the Arts compiled the most important questions and answers for learning at home. LINK:

<https://www.bildung.sachsen.de/blog/index.php/2020/03/30/lernen-zu-hause-die-wichtigsten-fragen-und-antworten-im-ueberblick/>

**(17) How do I explain the corona virus to my child?**

Even if your child is too young to understand the situation, you cannot shield them from the omnipresent topic. Help your child to get used to the current situation by providing clear and age-appropriate information.

LINK: <https://jugendinfoservice.dresden.de/de/elternweb/faq-familien-corona.php>

**(18) Where can I get ideas to keep my children occupied?**

The schools and day-care centres are mostly still closed, the playgrounds are not accessible and meet-ups with other children outside their homes are restricted. In order to make everyday life with children playful and varied, a lot of creativity is needed. You will find a selection of activity suggestions here:

LINK: <https://jugendinfoservice.dresden.de/de/elternweb/faq-familien-corona.php>

At the moment, school children and children in day-care are spending the whole day at home. In order to bring movement into your own four walls, ALBA BERLIN's new online programme "ALBA's daily sports lesson" offers two digital school lessons (day-care and school) every day for all children and young people - to watch and participate.

LINK: <https://www.albaberlin.de/news/details/reaktion-auf-coronavirus-albas-taegliche-digitale-sportstunde-fuer-kinder-und-jugendliche/>

## 5. Category: Counselling and service institutions

(19) How do I reach the counselling and service institutions of TU Dresden?

Answer: see the FAQ regarding the accessibility of the counselling and service institutions  
LINK: <https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/coronavirus#section-2-9>

(20) What counselling and service offers does the Students' Union (*Studentenwerk*) provide?

Answer: see the FAQ regarding the accessibility of the counselling and service institutions  
LINK: <https://tu-dresden.de/studium/im-studium/coronavirus#section-2-9>

(21) What counselling offers does the Dresden Youth Welfare Office provide?

The corona situation is a challenge for all walks of life, especially for families, children and young people. If contact with peers and friends is lacking, if the family structure is under great pressure due to the problems providing care, and because of movement restrictions to protect against infection, tension and conflict can arise. In order to be able to provide advice and support, the Youth Welfare Office has set up a counselling hotline.

LINK: <https://jugendinfoservice.dresden.de/de/elternweb/faq-familien-corona.php>

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