

1. Facts & Figures

- A motor disability is a restriction in **neuro-musculoskeletal functions and/or movement related functions**.
 - A restriction of joints and bones can lead to **reduced mobility** of joints and/or **stability problems**.
 - A restriction of muscular functions can lead to symptoms of **reduced muscular tonus, strength or endurance**.
- Some motor disabilities are **visible** (someone in a wheelchair) but they can be less visible or **not visible at all** (e.g. restrictions in joints). The restrictions are **not always continuously** present. In specific cases the restrictions are associated with **pain**. There is almost always a **reduced load limit**.
- The **symptoms and the impact** of the motor disabilities are very **divers**. The restrictions can be temporary or permanent. The patterns of complaints can be degenerative or variable. Students with a motor disability, experience problems with:
 - **Accessibility** of the campus, the lecture rooms, the internship locations, and facilities.
 - **Independent transportation** to and from campus/dorms/internship location.
 - **Sitting still, standing or moving** for a long period of time due to pain or reduced mobility.
 - **Fine motor skills** and the manipulation of instruments.

- Besides the condition specific symptoms, other **associated problems** are reported such as:
 - Problems with frequent **absences** during classes, practical lessons, internships due to fatigue, illness and (para)medical follow-up and treatment. **Deadlines** are not always met.
 - Problems with taking **readable and complete notes** due to fatigue and concentration difficulties, motor disabilities or absence from classes.
 - **Lower study rate** due to fatigue and problems with concentration.
 - **Problems with time management and planning** due to (para)medical care, fatigue and concentration problems.
 - Problems with **self-reliance** and the need for an **adjusted environment**.
 - Symptoms of **stress, fatigue and overload** can be present. These symptoms are related to the disability itself or the extra burden the disability causes.
 - There can be **reduced social contact** due to frequent absences and fatigue.

2. Focus points, Tips and Tricks

□ Attending classes

Focus points

- Taking readable, complete and well-structured **notes** is difficult
- Due to frequent **absences** it can be hard to follow classes.
- **Medical procedures** are sometimes required during classes.
- **Independent transportation** to and from campus and lecture rooms can be difficult.

Tips and tricks

- **PowerPoint** presentations with adequate structure, delivered before classes, enhances the process of taking structured and complete notes.
- Using a **laptop** can contribute to taking readable and complete notes, which facilitates information processing.

- ❑ Using a [writing assistant](#) or [taking copies of notes](#) of fellow students can have substantial added value.
- ❑ [Lecture recordings](#) that are made available online after classes, offer the opportunity to review difficult passages and complete notes.
- ❑ Choosing a [location](#) within the classroom can help make the class as comfortable as possible.
- ❑ [Fellow students](#) that help manipulate specific materials (e.g. taking the laptop out of the bag), are a valuable contribution.
- ❑ At times the use of [technological tools](#) is necessary. Delivering course material [digitally](#) is helpful.
- ❑ The possibility to [ask lecturers additional questions](#), can help eliminate confusion or ambiguities due to absence of classes.
- ❑ It is advisable to put a [space](#) or room at the disposal of the student were [medical procedures](#) can be performed and were it is possible to rest. Leaving class early should be allowed.
- ❑ During [classes](#) the follow-up of [medical prescriptions](#) should be allowed e.g. drinking, taking medication, standing up,
- ❑ [Support in mobility issues](#) is sometimes needed e.g. transport to and from campus/ lecture rooms. The use of an elevator or having a parking place at campus can be supportive.

❑ [Planning and organizing study-related activities](#)

Focus points

- ❑ Due to absence certain [information is missed](#) leading to a lack of overview on all study activities.
- ❑ Due to unforeseen inactivity, exhaustion, and difficulties with concentration [deviations from the study](#) plan are necessary leading to problems with time management.

Tips and tricks

- ❑ Providing [an overview](#) of all assignments and tasks helps to create an overview and make up an efficient study plan.

- **Study coaching** can be useful to help make up a realistic plan and help determine which tasks are proprietary, how much time can be spent on specific tasks , ...

□ Processing and rehearsing study materials

Focus points

- Due to difficulties with concentration, applying structure, and problem solving, the **processing** and **studying** of course materials is hampered.

Tips and tricks

- Offering **study coaching** to help make up a realistic planning enhances the processing of course materials.
- An **individual trajectory** with a reduced study load is sometimes appropriate.
- It can be helpful to **postpone deadlines**.

□ Assignments

Focus points

- It is difficult to finish tasks with the required **precision** or at a sufficiently high **speed**.
- The **manipulation** of materials during practice lessons, lab's or giving a **presentation** can be difficult.
- Frequent absences can hinder the **termination of assignments within the provided time**.
- **Active participation** in group assignments can be difficult due to frequent absences.

Tips and tricks

- Changing **deadlines** can be advisable in specific situations.
- Large assignments such as bachelor- or master theses can be split up in **partial assignments** where progress is monitored.
- For **group assignments** additional agreements on the division of work load by the lecturer are necessary.

- Using **assistive tools** can be supportive.
- If this is not in contradiction with the learning goals, small **deviations with regard to the required precision** should be allowed. An **alternative assignment** can be considered if necessary.
- Certain **materials** can be useful such as graph paper, a calculator, a drafting compass, a ruler, scrap paper,
- Besides elaborating on the assignment **in class**, the instructions are also best given **in writing**.
- **Working in group** can help compensate for the slow or less precise motor execution.

□ Exams

Focus points

- **Writing readable and fast** can be challenging. It can be difficult to deliver an answer with the necessary structure.
- **Fatigue and concentration difficulties** can hamper the successful termination of an exam.
- During exams the **follow-up of medical prescriptions** is sometimes necessary e.g. drinking, taking medication, standing up, ...
- Due to **absence** exams cannot be taken at the provided time.

Tips and tricks

- Taking exams in a **separate room** where medical prescription can be followed are advisable. A more quiet room is also advisable in case of concentration difficulties.
- The use of **technological tools or a laptop** during an exam, can be supportive. The provision of an **accessible exam format** with sufficient room to formulate an answer can make a great difference.
- In some cases a **writing assistant** can be used to take down the answers.
- **Extra time** for the preparation of an oral exam or written exam can help compensate for the concentration difficulties.
- Providing the opportunity for an **alternative exam** form can be supportive.

- An exam that is divided in **two parts**, makes it possible to rest in between.
- An **optimal spread of exams** within an exam period can compensate for the overload and slower processing speed.

Internships

Focus points

- Transportation** to and from the internship location can be challenging.
- Due to medical follow-ups, exhaustion, or illness, frequent **absences** can hinder the internship.
- During the internship **medical procedures** are sometimes necessary e.g. drinking or eating, taking medication, standing up or moving, ...
- It is difficult to finish tasks with the necessary **precision** or with sufficient **speed**.
 - There can be difficulties in **manipulating** the materials in a **safe** way.

Tips and tricks

- A **prospection** at the internship location with regard to accessibility can be useful.
- An **accessible internship location** can remedy mobility issues and reduce exhaustion.
- Providing a **quiet room** at the facility where the student can retreat and perform the necessary medical procedures is advisable.
- Specific assistive tools can be supportive
- Deviations in precision** can be allowed provided this is not in contradiction with the learning goals. **Alternative assignments** can be considered.
- Large assignments are best split up in **partial assignments** where progress is monitored and intermediate feedback is given.
- It is useful to **monitor** the progress **at a regular base** and provide clear feedback. Working points that are formulated very concretely create learning opportunities.

- Spreading an internship over a longer period of time can be useful.

□ Student life

Focus points

- Participation in student activities and the associated social contacts with peers can be challenging.
- Living independently and being self-reliant can be challenging.
- Finding a new balance between attending classes, medical procedures, living in dorms (grocery shopping, cooking, studying, ...) and creating a new network can take time.
- These challenges can have an impact on the general well-being. Stress, anxiety and loneliness can occur.

Tips and tricks

- Support in finding an accessible dorm with adequate space for the supportive equipment can make a great difference. Adjusted housing can be necessary. When a guide dog is used, this needs to be taken into account when choosing a dorm.
- Support can be provided in ADL-activities through projects such as framed living. Additionally, support in the development of structure, new routines and the organization of the paramedical support system (physiotherapy, nursing, ...) is important.
- Mentoring or buddy programs (where students are assigned a mentor) can play an effective supporting role.
- A fixed contact person in the study program can help monitor the load limit and help look for solutions in case of difficulties.
- Staff members of student facilities provide for coaching in case of psycho-social problems.