

# **Admissions Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.Sc. Biochemistry within the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin**

**Disclaimer:** Please note that only the German version of this document is legally binding. This translation is intended for the convenience of the non-German-reading public and is for informational purposes only.

## **Preamble**

On the basis of Section 14.1.1.2 of the supplemental rules and regulations (*Teilgrundordnung [Erprobungsmodell]*) of Freie Universität Berlin of October 27, 1998 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 24/1998) in conjunction with Section 15 of the Law on Admissions to Higher Education in the Federal State of Berlin for Programs with Admission Requirements (*Berliner Hochschulzulassungsgesetz*, BerlHZG), in the version of the announcement of the amended version of October 9, 2019 (GVBl. p. 695), last amended on July 5, 2022 (GVBl. p. 450) in conjunction with Section 10.5.2 of the Berlin Higher Education Act (*Berliner Hochschulgesetz*, BerlHG) in the version of the announcement of the amended version of July 26, 2011 (GVBl., p. 378), last amended on July 5, 2022 (GVBl. p. 450), the Department Council of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin issued the following regulations on February 22, 2023.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the Department Council of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin issued the following First Ordinance on the Amendment of the Admissions Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.Sc. Biochemistry within the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin on February 14, 2024 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 14/2023, p. 339), which has been integrated into this text.<sup>2</sup>

## **Announcement: Extension of the Admissions Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.Sc. Biochemistry**

Berlin's Senate Department for Higher Education and Research, Health, and Long-Term Care issued a document on February 16, 2024, confirming their decision to convert the temporary status of the Admissions Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.Sc. Biochemistry at the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin to permanent status.<sup>3</sup>

## **Section 1 Scope**

These regulations govern admissions to the study program in accordance with Section 10.5.2 BerlHG and the selection procedure for the allocation of places in accordance with Section 15.1.1.1 BerlHZG for the master's degree program M.Sc. Biochemistry within the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin. This is a consecutive master's program as defined under Section 23.3.1.1a BerlHG.

## **Section 2 Number of Available Places and the Application Process**

(1) The number of places available for the master's degree program for each given admissions cycle is stipulated in Freie Universität Berlin's General Admission Regulations.

(2) The application for admission must be submitted electronically to the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin – Admissions Office using the online application system.

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<sup>1</sup> These regulations were initially approved by the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin on March 7, 2023, and by the Berlin Senate Administration's department with responsibility for higher education on April 14, 2023, for the period lasting until the end of the 2023 summer semester.

<sup>2</sup> These regulations were approved by the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin on February 29, 2024, and by the Berlin Senate Administration's department with responsibility for higher education on February 16, 2024 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 7/2024 of March 18, 2024).

<sup>3</sup> *FU-Mitteilungen* 7/2024 of March 18, 2024.

(3) The application deadline for the following summer semester is January 15 and for the following winter semester May 31 of each year.

(4) Applications for admission must be accompanied by an official certified copy of the applicant's first university degree (or equivalent professional certification) referred to below in Section 3.1 in the format specified by the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin – Admissions Office.

(5) Applicants can still submit their application for the master's degree program even if they do not have the university degree referred to below in Section 3.1 because certain assessment results are not yet available, as long as they otherwise have a good academic record based on previous assessment results, and if the university degree referred to in Section 3.1 will be obtained before the master's degree program begins, and the requirements stipulated in Section 3.2 are also fulfilled in due time. This expectation is fulfilled in particular if at least two-thirds of the total coursework has been evaluated, the application for the final thesis project has been submitted, and the work schedule for the thesis has been set so that it can be completed in due time during the ongoing semester. The applicant's grade point average will be considered as part of the application and factors into the selection process. The grade point average is based on the applicant's previous coursework as reflected in their current transcript, which they should submit with the application. In this case, the result of the university degree is considered irrelevant.

(6) Freie Universität Berlin has no obligation to investigate the facts of a case on its own initiative (*ex officio*).

### **Section 3 Admission Requirements**

(1) Admission to the master's degree program requires a higher education degree (bachelor's degree) in biochemistry or a related subject in the natural sciences or life sciences, equivalent to the bachelor's degree in this subject from the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin, from a German or comparable non-German institution.

(2) Proof of proficiency in German and/or English must be provided by candidates whose qualifying degree was obtained at a non-German university or equivalent institution, as proficiency in these languages is required to participate in courses and read the applicable specialist literature. An official examination or test serves as appropriate proof of language proficiency; for German this would be proof of DSH 2 proficiency based on the German language examination for university entrance, while for English this would be proof of B2 proficiency based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

(3) The examination board for the master's degree in the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin is responsible for determining the equivalence of any documents submitted under Sections 3.1 and 3.2 above. Upon request, the equivalence of the university degree specified in Section 3.1 can be examined by parties external to the application procedure, who may also provide recommendations concerning inadequate documentation.

### **Section 4 Quotas, Selection Criteria, Organizational Aspects**

(1) 80 percent of the study placements that are still available after the preliminary quotas have been fulfilled will be allocated according to the selection process as outlined in this document (higher education quota). 20 percent of the study placements will be distributed according to Section 15.1.1.2 BerlHZG. 5 percent of the study placements are reserved for the quota stipulated in Section 15.1.3 BerlHZG.

(2) Candidates are selected for the master's program according to the following criteria:

1. The level of qualification as demonstrated by the applicant's academic performance in their previous degree program (Section 15.2.1.1 BerlHZG).

2. Considerations of the applicant's academic background in their choice of previous degree program and academic interests that provide an indication of their specific motivation and suitability for the subject (Section 15.2.1.4 BerlHZG).

(3) In the selection process, selection points will be awarded under the criteria defined above in Sections 4.2.1 to 4.2.2. The maximum number of points that can be awarded is 80.

(4) For the selection criteria listed under Section 4.2.1 of these regulations, a maximum of 60 selection points can be awarded in relation to the average grade stated on the degree certificate for the candidate's previous degree program. The points for each average grade are listed in Appendix 1 to these regulations.

(5) Applicants can receive up to 20 points for the selection criterion set out in Section 4.2.2 based on credits received in the subject of biochemistry. Credits for their bachelor's thesis will not be counted in this regard.

(6) At least two admissions officers will be appointed to supervise this part of the selection process. They are appointed by the dean on behalf of the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin. The appointed admissions officers must be authorized examiners for the master's degree program M.Sc. Biochemistry and must be university employees with Freie Universität Berlin as their main employer. These positions may not be filled by substitutes or alternates. The admissions officers hold their positions for one admission cycle.

## **Section 5**

### **Admission Decision**

(1) The decision on which applicants are to be selected is made by the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin – Admissions Office on the basis of how candidates have been ranked.

(2) The selected candidates receive a formal notification of admission stating the deadlines for their written acceptance and enrollment. If a candidate fails to honor the deadline stipulated by the Admissions Office, their place will be given to someone else.

(3) Candidates selected based on their transcripts are granted tentative admission and can enroll in the first semester of the program on a conditional basis. Generally, the university degree required for admission as described in Section 3.1 must be submitted by the end of the first semester of study, together with relevant documentation proving that any other requirements associated with the degree have also been met. If the necessary documents are not submitted on time, the student's admission will be retracted.

(4) Applicants who are not admitted will receive a rejection letter that states the reasons for the decision.

(5) The documents submitted for the selection procedure are to be kept until the decision is final; in the case of legal proceedings, they are to be kept until a legally binding decision has been made.

## **Section 6**

### **Entry into Force**

(1) These regulations enter into force on the day following their publication in *FU-Mitteilungen* (the official bulletin of Freie Universität Berlin) and shall apply from the application period for the 2023/2024 winter semester onward.

(2) With their publication, the Admissions Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.Sc. Biochemistry of February 15, 2012 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 29/2012, p. 440), amended on April 17, 2013 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 16/2013, p. 114), shall lapse.

## Appendix 1

Allocation of selection points based on the grade point average as recorded in the documentation for the first university degree in accordance with Section 4.4.

Grade point average	Selection points
1.0	60
1.1	58
1.2	56
1.3	54
1.4	52
1.5	50
1.6	48
1.7	46
1.8	44
1.9	42
2.0	40
2.1	38
2.2	36
2.3	34
2.4	32
2.5	30
2.6	28
2.7	26
2.8	24
2.9	22
3.0	20
3.1	18
3.2	16
3.3	14
3.4	12
3.5	10
3.6	8
3.7	6
3.8	4
3.9	2
4.0	0

## Appendix 2

Distribution of points based on the credits received for coursework in biochemistry as referred to in Section 4.5.

Credits earned in biochemistry	Selection points
60	20
55	18
50	16
45	14
40	12
35	10
30	8
25	6
20	4
15	2