

# **Admissions Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.A. Semitic Studies within the Department of History and Cultural Studies 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 Freie Universität's supplemental rules and regulations (*Teilgrundordnung [Erprobungsmodell]*) from 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 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), most recently amended on July 10, 2024 (GVBl., p. 461), the Department Council (*Fachbereichsrat*) of the Department of History and Cultural Studies at Freie Universität Berlin issued the following regulations on October 23, 2024:<sup>1</sup>

## **Section 1 Scope**

These regulations govern admission 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.A. Semitic Studies within the Department of History and Cultural Studies 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 admissions cycle is stipulated in Freie Universität Berlin's General Admissions 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.
- (3) The application deadline is 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) Under certain circumstances, applicants may be admitted to the master's degree program even if they have not yet obtained the university degree stipulated under Section 3.1. In order to qualify for this exception, the applicant must demonstrate that, based on their academic performance to date (in particular their performance on previous assessments), they will have obtained the above-mentioned university degree prior to commencing the master's degree program. In addition, the applicant must provide evidence that the other admission requirements listed under Sections 3.1 and 3.2 will also be met in due time. This exception will be granted if the applicant has completed at least two-thirds of the total coursework and this coursework has been evaluated. Under this rule, the applicant must also have officially registered to commence work on their final thesis and demonstrate that they will be able to complete this thesis before the start of the master's degree program. In this scenario, the applicant's grade point average will be used in lieu of a final grade during the selection procedure. The grade point average is based on the applicant's previous coursework as reflected in their current transcript, which they should submit

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<sup>1</sup> These regulations were approved by the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin on December 30, 2024 and by the Berlin Senate Administration's department with responsibility for higher education on March 24, 2025.

with the application. Under this exception, the result of the university degree is considered irrelevant for the selection procedure (as it has not yet been obtained).

(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) The admission requirement for the master's degree program is a first university degree from a German or comparable non-German institution of higher education in which at least 60 credit points were completed in modules relevant to Semitic studies. This includes modules on Semitic languages and cultures, and the Christian Orient and other non-Muslim minorities, past and present.

(2) With regard to the relevance of modules to Semitic studies specified in Section 3.1, the following shall be taken into consideration in particular:

1. The ability to demonstrate at least 40 credit points obtained in a modern Semitic language – in particular, Arabic (MSA), Hebrew, Amharic, Neo-Aramaic – to the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) or equivalent.

or

2. The ability to demonstrate at least 40 credit points obtained in classical Semitic languages – in particular, Syriac Aramaic, Biblical Hebrew, Classical Arabic, Ge'ez, or Phoenician.

(3) Applicants who did not complete a university degree at an institution where coursework was conducted in English must demonstrate English language skills at a level equivalent to C1 CEFR.

(4) Applicants are exempt from the requirement to provide proof of proficiency in German.

(5) The examination board responsible for the master's degree program in the Department of History and Cultural Studies, Freie Universität Berlin, determines the equivalence of any documentation provided. Upon request, the equivalence of the documents can be examined by parties external to the application procedure.

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

(1) 80 percent of the study placements that are still available after the preliminary quotas have been filled will be distributed according to the selection procedure 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 degree 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. Other qualifications acquired outside of a university degree program (Section 15.2.1.5 BerlHZG).

(3) In the selection process, selection points will be awarded under the criteria defined above in Sections 4.2.1 and 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 grade point average stated on the degree certificate for the candidate's previous degree program. The selection points for each grade point average are listed in Appendix 1 to these regulations.

(5) A maximum of 20 selection points can be awarded under Section 4.2.2 of these regulations. Qualifications from non-university contexts must be relevant to the proposed area of study and

indicate the candidate's suitability for the master's degree. This may include qualifications gained via practical experience in working or interning in the field of education, academia, languages, literature, culture, history, society, economics, or politics at an institution or organization related to Semitic languages or the Christian Orient, and may include cultural and regional studies-based qualifications gained by spending an extended period of time in an area where Semitic languages are spoken. The relevant qualifications are to be summarized in a tabular CV format and submitted together with relevant documentation, thus demonstrating that the requirements have been met. These qualifications must have involved at least six months of full-time employment, study, or equivalent. If these qualifications were obtained part-time, the minimum durations are doubled respectively.

(6) At least two admissions officers will be appointed to supervise this part of the selection process. The dean of the Department of History and Cultural Studies appoints these two people under the authority of Freie Universität Berlin's Executive Board. The appointed admissions officers must be authorized examiners for the master's degree program 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. Failure to meet these deadlines will result in the place being offered to another candidate.

(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).

(2) The Admissions Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.A. Semitic Studies from April 22, 2015 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 41/2015, p. 1519), therefore, lapse when the new regulations come into force.

**Appendix  
(to Section 4.4)**

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.

<b>Grade point average</b>	<b>Selection points</b>
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