

Admissions Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.Sc. Physics within the Department of Physics at Freie Universität Berlin

Disclaimer: Please note that only the German versions of these documents are legally binding. This translation is intended for the convenience of the non-German-reading public and is for information 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 September 28, 2020 (GVBl., p. 758) 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 May 4, 2021 (GVBl., p. 435), the Department Council (*Fachbereichsrat*) of the Department of Physics at Freie Universität Berlin issued the following regulations on January 12, 2022):¹

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. Physics within the Department of Physics 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 study placements 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.
- (3) The application deadline each year is January 15 for the following summer semester and May 31 for the following winter semester.
- (4) In accordance with Section 3.1, applications for admission must be accompanied by an official certified copy of the applicant's first university degree (or equivalent professional certification) 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 as long as the requirements stipulated in Section 3.2 are also fulfilled in due time.

¹These regulations were approved by the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin on February 9, 2022 and by the Berlin Senate Administration's department with responsibility for higher education on May 2, 2022. This approval is limited to the admissions cycle for the 2022/2023 winter semester.

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) To be admitted to the master's degree program, applicants must hold a first university degree in physics from a German or comparable non-German institution and which is equivalent to the bachelor's degree program B.Sc. Physics as taught at the Department of Physics at Freie Universität Berlin.

(2) 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 B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

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

(4) The examination board responsible for the master's degree program in the Department of Physics, Freie Universität Berlin, determines the equivalence of any documentation 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 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 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 the credits they have received for studying the following subjects: Solid-state physics, atomic and molecular physics, biophysics, complex analysis and differential equations, numerical methods. The points are listed in Appendix 2 to these regulations.

(6) At least two admissions officers will be appointed to supervise the selection process. They are appointed by the dean of the department 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. Physics 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 the next candidate on the ranking list.

(3) Candidates selected based on their transcripts are granted tentative admission and can enroll in the first semester of the program, but the duration of their enrollment is limited. 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) With their publication, the Admissions Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.Sc. Physics from December 14, 2011 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 7/2012, p. 92), amended on April 17, 2013 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 23/2013, p. 156), shall lapse.

Appendix 1
(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:

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
(to Section 4.5):

Distribution of points based on the credits received for coursework in particularly relevant subjects
solid-state physics, atomic and molecular physics, biophysics, complex analysis and differential
equations, numerical methods, laboratory courses as referred to in Section 4.5:

Credits received for particularly relevant subjects	Selection points
60	20
55	18
50	16
45	14
40	12
35	10
30	8
25	6
20	4
15	2