

**Admissions Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.Sc. Bioinformatics within the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin, the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at Freie Universität Berlin, and the Faculty of Charité – Universitätsmedizin 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 from October 27, 1998 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 24/1998) and Section 9.1.1 of the Berlin University Medicine Act (*Berliner Universitätsmedizinergesetz*, BerlUniMedG) from December 5, 2005 (GVBl. p. 739), most recently amended on October 12, 2020 (GVBl. p. 794), 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 from October 9, 2019 (GVBl., p. 695), most recently amended on September 28, 2020 (GVBl., p. 758), in conjunction with Section 10.5.2, Section 74.1, Section 74.4, and Section 71.1.1.1 of the Berlin Higher Education Act (*Berliner Hochschulgesetz*, BerlHG) in the version of the announcement of the amended version from July 26, 2011 (GVBl., p. 378), most recently amended on October 12, 2020 (GVBl., p. 803), the Joint Commission (*Gemeinsame Kommission*) for Bioinformatics, appointed by the Department Council (*Fachbereichsrat*) of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin, the Department Council of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at Freie Universität Berlin, and the Faculty Council (*Fakultätsrat*) of the Faculty of Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin (Charité), issued the following regulations on December 2, 2020:<sup>1</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. Bioinformatics within the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy at Freie Universität Berlin, the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at Freie Universität Berlin, and the Faculty of Charité – Universitätsmedizin 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.
- (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

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<sup>1</sup> These regulations were approved by the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin on December 16, 2020, by the Executive Board of Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin on February 16, 2021, and by the Berlin Senate Administration's department with responsibility for higher education on June 24, 2022.

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 Section 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 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 or an equivalent degree from an institution of higher education within or outside of Germany that requires at least six semesters to complete and includes modules in computer science/bioinformatics, mathematics/statistics, and biology/chemistry/biochemistry to the following extent:

- Computer science/bioinformatics: at least 25 credits
  - of which at least 10 credits were obtained in modules that covered an imperative programming language (e.g., C/C++, Java, or Python).
  - of which at least 10 credits were obtained in modules that covered algorithms.
- Mathematics/statistics: at least 25 credits
  - of which at least 10 credits were obtained in the areas of analysis/linear algebra.
  - of which at least 10 credits were obtained in the area of statistics.
- Biology/chemistry/biochemistry: at least 25 credits
  - of which at least 10 credits were obtained in the field of biochemistry/molecular biology/genetics.

(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) The examination board responsible for the master's degree program determines the equivalence of any documentation provided. Evidence of qualifications obtained through another course of university study or through external programs (e.g., online certificates) may also be submitted for consideration if these are relevant for compliance with the module requirements specified in Section 3.1. 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 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 15.2.1.1 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. 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 to 4.2.3. The maximum number of points that can be awarded is 100.

(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 the appendix to these regulations.

(5) A maximum of 20 selection points can be awarded under Section 4.2.2 of these regulations based on the following:

1. 10 points for evidence of examinations and coursework in the area of algorithmic bioinformatics in which at least 20 credits were obtained.
2. 10 points for evidence of examinations and coursework in the area of computer science/bioinformatics in which at least 15 credits were obtained, provided these have not already been included for consideration under Section 4.5.1.

(6) 10 selection points may be awarded under Section 4.2.3 of these regulations for relevant employment or equivalent in the area of bioinformatics amounting to at least 450 hours.

(7) At least two admissions officers will be appointed to supervise the selection process. They are appointed by the chairperson of the joint commission to carry out the selection interviews on behalf of the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin. 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.

## **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, which makes the decision on behalf of the head of the Faculty of Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin, 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**

These regulations enter into force on the day following their publication in *FU-Mitteilungen* (the official bulletin of Freie Universität Berlin) and the *Amtliches Mitteilungsblatt* (official bulletin) of the Faculty of Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin.

(2) The Admissions Regulations for the Master's Degree Program M.Sc. Bioinformatics from July 12, 2012 (*FU-Mitteilungen* 61/2012, p. 1036), therefore lapse when the new regulations come into force.

**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.

<b>Grade point average</b>	<b>Selection points</b>
1	70
1.1	67.5
1.2	65
1.3	62.5
1.4	60
1.5	57.5
1.6	55
1.7	52.5
1.8	50
1.9	47.5
2	45
2.1	42.5
2.2	40
2.3	37.5
2.4	35
2.5	32.5
2.6	30
2.7	27.5
2.8	25
2.9	22.5
3	20
3.1	17.5
3.2	15
3.3	12.5
3.4	10
3.5	7.5
3.6	5
3.7	2.5
3.8	0
3.9	0
4	0