

# **Admissions Statute for the Master's Degree Program in Planetary Sciences and Space Exploration in the Department of Earth Sciences at Freie Universität Berlin**

*[unofficial, preliminary version]*

*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 14, 2021 (GVBl., p. 1039), 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 September 14, 2021 (GVBl., p. 1039), the Department Council of the Department of Earth Sciences at Freie Universität Berlin issued the following statute on December 15, 2021:<sup>1</sup>

## **Section 1**

### **Scope**

These statutes 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 Planetary Sciences and Space Exploration in the Department of Earth Sciences at Freie Universität Berlin (master's program). This is a consecutive master's degree 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 stipulated in Section 1 is determined for each admissions cycle in accordance with Freie Universität Berlin's admissions regulations.
- (2) The application for admission is to be submitted electronically via the online application system to the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin - Admissions Office.
- (3) The application deadline for the winter semester is May 31 of each year.
- (4) In accordance with Section 3.1, the application for admission must be accompanied by an officially certified copy of the applicant's first university degree (or equivalent professional certification).

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<sup>1</sup>This statute was approved by the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin on DD.MM.20YY and by the Berlin Senate Administration's department with responsibility for higher education on DD.MM.20YY.

(5) Applicants can still submit their application to 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 there is reason to believe, based on the applicant's record and especially their previous performance in examinations, that the university degree referred to in Section 3.1 will be completed before the master's degree program begins and that the requirements stipulated in Section 3.2 are also fulfilled by the relevant deadline. This expectation is fulfilled in particular if at least two-thirds of the total coursework has been evaluated, the registration 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 before the start of the master's program. 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 performance in academic examinations as reflected in their current transcript, which they should submit with the application. In this case, the result of the university degree is 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 or professional qualification from a German or comparable non-German institution in the natural sciences or engineering sciences for which at least 36 credit points (CP) were awarded in the area of geosciences, biology, physics, chemistry, mathematics, or computer sciences, including at least 8 CP in the area of physics and at least 10 CP in the area of mathematics and/or statistics.

(2) Applicants who have completed their university degree at an institution where English was not the teaching language must demonstrate proficiency in English to at least the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) or equivalent.

(3) Applicants are exempted from providing proof of German language skills.

(4) The examinations committee is responsible for determining the equivalence of any documents submitted. Upon request, documents can also be evaluated for equivalence outside of an ongoing application process.

### **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 allocated under 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 in line with 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. A weighting of the subject or subjects studied as part of the previous degree program that can indicate the candidate's motivation and suitability for the degree for which they are applying (Section 15.2.1.4 BerlHZG),

3. Other qualifications acquired outside of a university degree program (Section 15.2.1.5 BerlHZG).
4. The result of an interview with the applicants, which should provide information about their motivation and qualification for the Master's program (Section 15.2.1.6 BerlHZG).

(3) In the selection process, selection points will be awarded under the criteria defined at Sections 4.2.1 to 4.2.4 above. The maximum number of points that can be awarded is 120.

(4) A maximum of 60 selection points can be awarded under Section 4.2.1 of this statute 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 the appendix to this statute.

(5) A maximum of 20 selection points can be awarded under Section 4.2.2 of this statute. Of these, 10 selection points can be awarded once only for examinations and coursework in English for which at least 20 CP were obtained and 10 selection points once only for examinations and coursework in the area of planetology and/or remote sensing for which at least 10 CP were obtained.

(6) 10 selection points can be awarded under Section 4.2.3 of this statute for practical work (e.g., as part of a voluntary internship) in the area of planetology and/or remote sensing where the practical work amounted to at least 150 hours.

(7) The interview according to section 4.2.4 is held by the admission officers according to section 4.8. It is not public and lasts approx. 10 minutes per applicant. Applicants will be invited to the interview by one of the admission officers in writing, stating the time and place. The invitation is sent in time if it is sent at least 5 working days before the interview. A protocol is made of the interview, which contains the essential reasons for the assessment of the applicant. Depending on the established motivation and qualification, up to 30 selection points are awarded as follows:

1. excellent suitability = 30 selection points,
2. very well suited = 24 selection points,
3. well suited = 18 selection points,
4. suitable = 12 selection points,
5. conditionally suitable = 6 selection points or
6. not suitable = 0 selection points

(8) At least two admissions officers will be appointed to supervise the selection process. The officers are to be appointed by the dean of the Department of Earth Sciences at Freie Universität Berlin on behalf of the Executive Board of Freie Universität Berlin. Both officers must be authorized examiners for the master's degree program and must be employees of Freie Universität Berlin with Freie Universität as their main employer. The positions may not be filled by substitutes or replacements.

## **Section 5**

### **Admission Decision**

(1) The final admission decision is made by the Executive Board - Admissions Office on the basis of the outcome of the selection process.

(2) The selected candidates receive a formal notification of admission stating the deadlines for their written acceptance and enrollment. Should a candidate fail to meet this deadline, their place will be awarded to the applicant who is next on the ranking list.

(3) Candidates selected on the basis of a transcript receive a conditional admission and can enroll initially for the first semester only. Generally, they may enroll permanently thereafter provided that they submit proof that they have completed their first degree as set out in Section 3.1 by the end of the first subject semester together with proof of meeting any further requirements in relation to said degree as set out in Section 3.2. If such proofs are not furnished by the stated deadline, their admission to the program will lapse.

(4) Candidates who are not admitted to the program will receive notification that they have not been selected together with the grounds for the decision.

(5) All documents submitted as part of the application process must be retained until the admission decision is finalized. Should any legal proceedings ensue in relation to the application and decision process, the documents must be retained until a legally binding decision has been made.

## **Section 6**

### **Entry into Force**

This statute shall enter into force on the day after its publication in the official bulletin of Freie Universität Berlin (*FU-Mitteilungen, Amtsblatt der Freien Universität Berlin*).

### Appendix to Section 4.4

Maximum allocation of selection points for the average grade indicated in the certificate of the first university degree in accordance with Section 4.4.

Average grade	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