

Subject-Specific Regulations Governing the Master's Degree Programme in Biophysics at Saarland University Supplementing the Joint Examination Regulations for Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology and the Center for Human and Molecular Biology (ZHMB)

17 February 2022

Note: This translation is provided for information purposes only. In the event of any discrepancy between the translation and the original German version published in the Official Bulletin (*Dienstblatt der Hochschulen des Saarlandes*), the provisions of the latter shall take precedence.

Pursuant to Section 64 of the Saarland Higher Education Institutions Act (SHSG) (Official Gazette of Saarland I, p. 1080) as amended by the Act of 8 December 2021 (Official Gazette I, p. 2629) and based on the Joint Examination Regulations for Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology and the Center for Human and Molecular Biology at Saarland University of 4 November 2021 (Official Bulletin p. 272), and with the consent of the University Senate, the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology and the Center for Human and Molecular Biology at Saarland University hereby issue the following Subject-Specific Regulations Governing the Master's Degree Programme in Biophysics.

Section 25

Scope

(cf. Sec. 1 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

These subject-specific regulations apply to the Master's degree programme in Biophysics at Saarland University.

Section 26

Examination Board and Examination Office

(cf. Sec. 5 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

The department involved in the degree programme is the Department of Physics.

Section 27

Progress checks

(cf. Sec. 8 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

A student studying full-time for the Master's degree programme with a standard period of study of four semesters shall fulfil the following minimum academic progress requirements:

- after 1 semester, a total of at least 9 credits
- after 2 semesters, a total of at least 30 credits
- after 4 semesters, a total of at least 60 credits
- after 6 semesters, a total of at least 90 credits.

Section 28
Admission to the Master's programme
(cf. Sec. 10 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

(1) Applicants to the Master's programme must have successfully completed a first (undergraduate) degree from a university. Students seeking admission to the Master's programme shall:

1. have a Bachelor's degree or equivalent university qualification whose main curricular focus was on biophysics, biology or physics or a subject closely related to biophysics from a German university, a recognized foreign university or a recognized distance-learning institution
2. demonstrate adequate language proficiency (as a rule, at least level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or equivalent) for academic study in English and
3. demonstrate particular academic aptitude (see Section 77(6) SHSG).

(2) The criteria used to assess particular academic aptitude are:

1. sufficient merit in the applicant's previous academic track record, as demonstrated by an overall grade in the Bachelor's degree (see Paragraph (1) above) of at least 'Satisfactory' (German grading scale: 3.0 or better), and
2. the scientific content of the applicant's first degree. Applicants should demonstrate a level of knowledge and competence that corresponds to that acquired in the Bachelor's degree programme in Biophysics taught at Saarland University. Specifically, this requires applicants to show that they have the necessary level of expertise in the following areas:
 - I. In the areas of nonlinear dynamics, thermodynamics and statistical physics, cell and molecular biology, genetics and basic knowledge of biochemistry, the number of ECTS credit points acquired in lectures and problem-solving classes in physics and biology should be no less than 20 ECTS each
 - II. At least 20 credits should have been earned in physics and biology laboratory courses.
3. The Examination Board may decide to introduce an additional obligatory criterion requiring applicants to submit satisfactory academic references that demonstrate the applicant's particular interest in the subject.

The criteria listed above will be used to assess the aptitude of the applicant in terms of the academic profile and requirements of the Master's degree programme in Biophysics.

(3) If only one of the academic aptitude criteria set out in Paragraph (2), sentence 1 or 2 above has been met, the Examination Board may substitute the criterion that has not been met by an aptitude test and/or by additional requirements as specified in Section 10(3) of the Joint Examination Regulations. The Examination Board shall designate a Biophysics professor to conduct the aptitude test. If the aptitude test reveals that the applicant does not have the required level of competence, the applicant may be admitted to the programme subject to conditions as specified in Section 10(3). If more than one of the academic aptitude criteria set out in Paragraph (2) have not been met, the applicant shall not be admitted to the programme.

(4) The applicant will be informed in the letter of admission which of the modules must be taken from the area of Theoretical Biophysics.

Section 29
Student assessments, academic assessments and examinations
(cf. Sec. 11 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

(1) Oral examinations shall last at least 15 minutes and not more than 30 minutes per examination candidate.

(2) If failing to pass an examination or assessment at the final attempt ('final retake') would lead to the student irrevocably failing the module, the candidate may submit a request to the Examination Board for an examiner to be replaced by another examiner in the same subject area.

Section 30
Participation in student assessments
(cf. Sec. 12 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

(1) Students wishing to take the modules 'Research Seminar' and 'Lab Project' must have earned at least 52 credits and must have successfully completed the modules 'Experimental Biophysics' and 'Theoretical Biophysics'.

(2) For the 'Tutoring' module, the prerequisite is prior successful completion of the module element to be tutored.

Section 31
Repeating assessments and examinations and/or the Master's thesis
(cf. Sec. 15 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

If a student fails an assessment or examination at the first scheduled attempt (i.e. within the period specified in the study regulations), the assessment or examination will be treated as if it had not been taken (*Freiversuch*).

Section 32
Recognition of previous periods of study and of credits
from earlier assessments and examinations
(cf. Sec. 17 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

If the grading systems are not comparable or if earlier academic assessments or examinations are ungraded, these will be transferred as ungraded credits. If the maximum number of ungraded modules has already been reached, the academic assessment or examination will be transferred with the grade 4.0.

Section 33
Registering for the Master's thesis phase
(cf. Sec. 18 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

(1) To demonstrate that they have completed all the stipulated programme requirements, in addition to the requirements set out in the Joint Examination Regulations, students shall present proof of the following:

1. the academic assessments and examinations defined in the study regulations
2. proof that they have acquired at least 70 credits and that they have fulfilled the prerequisites specified in Section 7 of the study regulations.

(2) Applications to register for admission to the Master's thesis phase shall be submitted to the Examination Board.

Section 34
Procedural elements, presentation and layout of the thesis
(cf. Sec. 21 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

The Master's thesis phase concludes with a research colloquium lasting 30 minutes. One of the colloquium examiners shall be the primary thesis examiner. The colloquium shall be held no later than six weeks after the candidate submits the printed version of the Master's thesis. The date of examination shall be recorded as the date on which the printed version of the Master's thesis was submitted.

Section 35
Successfully completing the Master's programme and overall grade
(cf. Sec. 22 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

(1) Credits from academic assessments and examinations that were used to obtain the preceding Bachelor's degree cannot also be used to meet the requirements of the Master's programme.

(2) If a candidate is awarded a final overall grade of 1.1 or better and has not exceeded the standard period of study by more than 1 semester, the addendum 'with distinction' will appear on the Master's degree certificate and on the certificate of graduation.

Section 36
Degree qualification and documentation
(cf. Sec. 23 of the Joint Examination Regulations)

(1) The final documents are issued in accordance with Section 23(2) of the Joint Examination Regulations for Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology and the Center for Human and Molecular Biology at Saarland University.

(2) The degree certificate contains the overall grade classification, with the calculated overall numerical grade in parentheses, and contains the subject of the Master's thesis and the grade awarded for the thesis.

(3) The Master's certificate of graduation is issued in German and may be issued in English on request and contains the information from Section 23(3) of the Joint Examination Regulations for Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programmes of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology and the Center for Human and Molecular Biology at Saarland University.

Section 37
Commencement

These regulations shall come into force on the day after they are announced in the Official Bulletin of the Institutions of Higher Education in Saarland (*Dienstblatt der Hochschulen des Saarlandes*).

Saarbrücken, 14 March 2022

President of Saarland University
(Univ.-Prof. Dr. Manfred Schmitt)