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## **Regulations governing access and admission to the consecutive Master's degree programme „Social Sciences“ (M.A.) of Faculty I – Educational and Social Sciences of the Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg**

**dated 27.04.2023**

On February 15, 2023, the Faculty Council of Faculty I - Education and Social Sciences adopted the following regulations on access and admission to the consecutive Master's degree programme "Social Sciences" at the Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg. It was approved by the Presidential Board on 04.04.2023 and by the Ministry for Science and Culture of Lower Saxony (MWK) on 27.04.2023.

### **§ 1**

#### **Scope of application**

- (1) These regulations govern the access and admission to the consecutive Master's degree programme "Social Sciences" (M.A.).
- (2) The admission requirements are determined in accordance with § 2.
- (3) If more applicants meet the admission requirements than there are places available, admissions to the programme will be allocated based on the results of a university-specific selection process (§ 4). If there are not more applicants who meet the admission requirements than there are places available, a selection process will not take place.

### **§ 2**

#### **Admission requirements**

- (1) The prerequisites for admission to the consecutive Master's degree programme "Social Sciences" are that applicants:
  - have obtained a Bachelor's degree or an equivalent degree in a subject-relevant previous course of study with a minimum of 180 credit points, either from a German university or from a university belonging to one of the Bologna signatory states,
  - or
  - have obtained an equivalent degree in a subject-relevant previous course of study with a minimum of 180 credit points from a foreign university; the equivalence is determined according to the evaluation suggestions of the Central Office for Foreign Education at the Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen beim Sekretariat der Kultusministerkonferenz: <http://anabin.kmk.org>).

A previous course of study is considered subject-relevant if the degree programme leading to a Bachelor's degree or an equivalent degree has provided competencies in one of the areas of social sciences, sociology, and/or political sciences with a minimum of 60 credit points and has also provided descriptive and inductive statistical competencies with a minimum of 9 credit points.

- (2) Applicants may be provisionally admitted to the programme if
  - a) the Bachelor's degree or an equivalent degree has not yet been obtained at the time of application, but at least 150 credit points have been demonstrated for a degree programme with a total credit point value of 180 or at least 180 credit points for a degree programme with a total credit point value of 210, and it is expected that the Bachelor's degree or an equivalent degree

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will be demonstrated no later than the end of the first semester of this Master's degree programme.

and/or

- b) the subject-relevant previous course of study is missing certain contents for a maximum of 30 credit points of coursework.

The temporary access authorization in case of lit. a) must be accompanied by the condition that the Bachelor's degree or an equivalent degree must be submitted no later than April 1 of the following year of enrolment (for enrolment in the winter semester). In case of lit. b), it must be accompanied by a condition that ensures that any missing competencies will be made up for and demonstrated within a maximum of 2 semesters after enrolment in the Master's programme.

(3) Sufficient knowledge of the English language at level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) must be demonstrated for the programme. The proof can be provided by a first university degree in an English-speaking programme in a country where English or German is the official language or by successfully completed tests for the B2 level or higher. Accepted language tests include TOEFL, IELTS, Cambridge English Language Assessment, UNlcert, Pearson PTE Academic, TOEIC, TELC, university language test of the Language Centre of the University of Oldenburg or another German university. The qualification demonstrated must not be older than 2 years at the time of application. The language skills can also be demonstrated by high school diplomas showing that English has been completed as a continued foreign language for at least five years with sufficient performance, or by evidence of a study abroad programme taught in English; such evidence must not be older than 5 years.

Applicants can be granted provisional admission if it is expected that they will provide the missing proof of language proficiency within one semester. In this case, the determination of the provisional access authorization is to be granted under the condition that language skills at the B2 level of the GeR will be demonstrated by the end of the first semester after enrolling in the master's programme.

(4) If more than one of the cases specified in paragraph 2 sentence 1 lit. a) and lit. b) apply, the determination of the provisional access authorization should only be made if the workload required to meet all conditions is not expected to exceed a total workload equivalent to 30 credit points.

### **§ 3**

#### **Programme start and application deadline**

(1) The Master's programme "Social Sciences" starts each year in the winter semester.

(2) The application is submitted in electronic form of the admission application (§§ 2 Nr. 6, 35 S 1 i. V. m. § 20 Abs. 2 Verordnung über die Hochschulzulassung und das Anmeldeverfahren an den Hochschulen in staatlicher Verantwortung in Niedersachsen (Niedersächsische Hochschulzulassungsverordnung - NHZVO)) via the online portal of the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg or, in the case of a foreign university degree, via uni-assist and additionally by submitting the printed and signed application form with the necessary documents according to para. 3 in paper form to the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg. The application must be received by 15 July (deadline)<sup>1 2</sup>

(3) The following documents must be attached to the printed and signed application form according to sentence 1 of para. 2:

- a) Documents according to § 2 para. 1 to para. 3, in particular the bachelor's degree certificate or the certificate of an equivalent degree program or - in the case of § 2 para. 2 lit. a) - a certificate of the completed coursework, the credit points and the resulting grade point average,

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<sup>1</sup> Please observe § 20 Abs. 2 S. 4 NHZVO

<sup>2</sup> Applicants with a foreign university degree should send their application documents to the Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg through the central service point uni-assist. Applicants with a (Bachelor's) degree from abroad are strongly advised to submit their application with all required documents to uni-assist by May 31 for the winter semester, as the equivalence assessment of foreign degrees requires additional processing time and may require further action by the applicants. Therefore, if the application documents are submitted later, starting the studies in the desired winter semester cannot be guaranteed.

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b) Evidence of English language proficiency according to § 2 para. 3.

The documents referred to in sentence 1 lit. a) and b) must be submitted in certified copy<sup>3</sup>. If the originals are not in English or German, the documents must be presented in certified German or English translation.

(4) The application is only valid for the allocation of study places for the respective application deadline. The university is not obliged to verify the information provided by the applicants ex officio. Incomplete, formal or late applications are excluded from further processing. The submitted documents remain with the university.

#### **§ 4 Admission procedure**

(1) The university's own selection process is based on a ranking list according to the principles of best selection, which is determined by the final grade or - in the case of § 2 (2) lit. a) - regardless of the later results of the bachelor's examination - the average grade in accordance with § 3 (3) lit. a) of the relevant applicants. In case of a tie in the rankings, the decision will be made by drawing lots.

(2) The ranking list is compiled by the responsible admissions committee (§ 5).

#### **§ 5 Admissions committee for the Master's programme "Social Sciences"**

(1) The Faculty Council of Faculty I - Education and Social Sciences appoints an admissions committee consisting of at least three voting members and one student representative from either the Master's programme "Social Sciences" or the Master's programme "Sozialwissenschaften" with advisory voting rights, as well as a substitute for each status group/member.

(2) The voting members are composed of at least

- two members of the group of university teachers (Hochschullehrende) and
- one member of the group of university teachers (Hochschullehrende) or the group of employees (Mitarbeitende).

(3) The term of office of the voting members and their substitutes is two years, while that of the student member and their substitute is one year; reappointment is possible.

(4) The admissions committee elects the chair and their substitute from among its voting members. It is quorate when at least two voting members are present. In the event of a tie, the chair's vote decides.

#### **§ 6 Notification, clearing procedure, completion of the admissions procedure**

(1) The Admissions Committee is responsible for deciding whether the applicant meets the admission requirements, in particular whether a degree is professionally suitable, as well as for determining provisional access authorization with conditions and making decisions within the university's own selection process (§ 4)<sup>4</sup>.

(2) Applicants who are to be admitted based on their ranking will receive an admission notification from the university. This notification will set a deadline by which the applicant must declare in writing or electronically whether they accept the study place. If this declaration is not received in a timely and proper manner, the admission notification will become invalid. The admission notification must state this legal consequence.

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<sup>3</sup> The requirement for a certified copy is waived for evidence (e.g. language tests) that can be verified through a secure online process. Otherwise, simple copies/prints are sufficient.

<sup>4</sup> The decision-making authority of the admissions committee also covers decisions in cases of doubt, such as regarding language requirements.

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(3) If not all applicants admitted in the initial allocation according to paragraph 1 enroll within the specified deadline, an equal number of applicants who did not initially receive an admission notification will be admitted (admissions procedure for remaining places) in accordance with paragraph 2. The admissions procedure for remaining places will be carried out based on the ranking list according to § 4 paragraph 1.

(4) Applicants who are not admitted will receive a rejection notice with instructions on legal remedies.

(5) The conclusion of the procedure is governed by § 37 paragraph 1 and 3 of the NHZVO.<sup>5</sup>

(6) Furthermore, the general provisions of the university's matriculation regulations apply. Individuals with provisional access authorization according to § 2 paragraph 2 lit. a) will be deregistered if they fail to provide evidence of a Bachelor's degree or an equivalent degree by April 1st of the following year after enrollment (for winter semester students) and if the person concerned is responsible for this failure. Individuals with provisional access authorization who need to make up for missing competencies according to § 2 paragraph 2 lit. b) will be deregistered if the necessary proof of making up for the missing competencies is not provided within the set deadline and if the person concerned is responsible for this failure.

## **§ 7**

### **Admission to higher semesters**

(1) The vacant study places in a higher restricted admission semester are allocated to applicants in the following order:

- a) Those for whom a rejection of admission for reasons related to their person would represent a particular hardship,
- b) Those who are enrolled or have been enrolled in the same or a comparable degree programme
  - aa) at another German university or a university of another member state of the European Union or another contracting state of the Agreement on the European Economic Area,
  - bb) who have German citizenship or are treated as having German citizenship for admission purposes and are enrolled or have been enrolled in a foreign university,
- c) Those who cite other reasons.

(2) Within each of the three categories of paragraph 1, the admission decision is based on the result of the Bachelor's examination or an examination that is equivalent to the Bachelor's examination. In case of equal results, the social, in particular family and economic reasons that are relevant for the choice of location are decisive. In cases where there are still equal situations, the decision is ultimately made by lot.

(3) Section 3 (2) to (4) applies accordingly to applications for higher semesters.

## **§ 8 Entry into force**

This regulation shall enter into force upon approval by the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture and its publication in the official announcements of the Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg for the application process for the winter semester 2023/24.

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<sup>5</sup> Usually, the allocation procedures are completed no later than April 15th for admission to the summer semester and October 15th for admission to the winter semester. Any remaining study places are then usually allocated by lottery.