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SCHOOL OF BIOLOGY/CHEMISTRY

REGULATIONS ON ACCESS AND ADMISSION FOR THE CONSECUTIVE MASTER'S PROGRAM "BIOLOGY – FROM MOLECULES TO ORGANISMS"

Updated version

Resolved in a circulation procedure

by the school executive board of the School of Biology/Chemistry on 05.01.2023,
endorsed at the 172nd meeting of the Central Commission for Teaching and Study and Commission for
Program Quality Assurance (ZSK) on 18.01.2023

resolved at the 208th meeting of the Senate on 25.01.2023

Approved by email by the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture (MWK) on 26.01.2023, file
no.: 27.5-74509-11

Osnabrück University official gazette No. 01/2023 dated 09.02.2023, p. 73.

Amendments agreed

at the 150th meeting of the school executive board of the School of Biology/Chemistry on 20.09.2023,
endorsed at the 181st meeting of the Central Commission for Teaching and Study
and Program Quality Assurance (ZSK) on 13.03.2024

Resolved at the 216th meeting of the Senate on 03.04.2024

Approved by email by the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture (MWK) on 09.04.2024, file
no.: 27.5-74509-026,765

Osnabrück University official gazette no. 03/2024 dated 30.04.2024, p. 119

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The Senate of Osnabrück University, in its 216th meeting on 03.04.2024, passed the following regulations in accordance with Section 18 subsection 8 of the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (NHG) in the version dated 26.02.2007 (Official Government Gazette of Laws and Ordinances (GVBl.) p. 69 of 01 March 2007), as amended on 23.03.2022 (GVBl. 11/2022 p.218), and Section 7 of the Lower Saxony University Admissions Law (NHZG) of 29 January 1998 (Lower Saxony Official Government Gazette of Laws and Ordinances (GVBl. No. 3/1998) in the version dated 19 November 2019 (Lower Saxony Official Government Gazette of Laws and Ordinances GVBl. No. 19/2019).

Section 1 Applicability

- (1) These regulations specify the terms of access and admission to the Master's program in "Biology – From Molecules to Organisms" with its three specialist fields 1. General Biology, 2. Evolution, Behavior and Ecology, and 3. Cell and Molecular Biology.
- (2) The admission requirements are set out in Section 4 of these regulations.
- (3) ¹If the degree program is subject to admission restrictions and a greater number of applicants fulfill the admission requirements than there are places on the program, then these places shall be awarded on the basis of the university's internal selection procedures (Section 6). ²If there are not more applicants than there are available places on the program, then a selection procedure shall not take place.

Section 2 Explanatory Notes

- (1) Osnabrück University's **application portal** (hisinone.uos.de for applicants) is an online portal which handles applications and admission procedures for Osnabrück University.
- (2) The core function of the organization **uni-assist e.V.** is the assessment of international school and higher education certification in order to establish its formal equivalence to the German education system.
- (3) **Access** means the general entitlement to study at Osnabrück University.
- (4) **Admission** means that a place at the university may be offered to an applicant within the framework of an allocation process.

Section 3 Digitalization, Data Protection, E-Files, Communications, Duty of Cooperation

- (1) ¹Admission procedures and other procedures set out in these regulations relating to studying and learning are automated and digitalized. ²If the allocation of places at the university is coordinated through the Dialogue-Oriented Service Provider (DoSV) and the application portal "Hochschulstart", then the regulations of the Lower Saxony university admissions directive (NHZVO) take precedence. ³If applicants can credibly demonstrate that their participation in automated and digital procedures is unreasonable or impossible, then they shall be permitted to submit applications and documentation in paper form to the admissions office. ⁴Provisions governing deadlines remain unaffected.
- (2) ¹In the course of the procedures set out in subsection 1, personal data will be collected and processed for the purposes of completing the required tasks. ²Particulars are set out in the up-to-date version of Osnabrück University's Data Processing Directive which was passed by the Senate in accordance with Section 17 Lower Saxony Higher Education Law (NHG). ³In accordance with these regulations, the university handles the collection, storage, processing and archiving of digitally submitted documentation and data in an electronic file (e-file) as set out in Section 10 subsection 1 of the Lower Saxony law on digital administration and information security (NDIG). ⁴This is also the case for digital forms and, depending on the degree of technological implementation, digital identification.

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- (3) ¹The contact email address to be used by applicants shall be the email address provided to applicants by this application portal. ²Applicants are obliged to regularly check their email accounts linked to their respective email address for incoming mail. ³Should applicants wish to set up an automatic forwarding mechanism for their incoming email to an additional email address which is provided by a third party, then they do so at their own risk.
- (4) ¹With the consent of the applicants, electronic administrative files may be disclosed in accordance with Section 9 Online Access Act (OZG) if they are accessed by the applicant or their authorized representatives using publicly accessible networks from their mailboxes in accordance with Section 2 subsection 7 OZG which are part of a user account in accordance with Section 2 subsection 5 OZG. ²The university shall ensure that access may only be granted following authentication by the authorized person and that the electronic administrative file may be saved by them. ³The administrative file shall be deemed to have been issued on the third day after it is made available for retrieval. ⁴In case of doubt, Osnabrück University is obliged to prove the issuance and the time of issuance should a legal fiction arise. ⁵Applicants or their authorized representatives shall be informed of the possibility for retrieval no later than the day upon which administrative files are made available for retrieval using the address they have provided for this purpose. ⁶If retrieval takes place before the new disclosure of the administrative file, the day of the first retrieval remains decisive for its receipt. ⁷If no user account is set up in accordance with Section 2 subsection 2 OZG or no declaration of consent is extant in accordance with subsection 1, then Section 1 subsection 1 Lower Saxony Administrative Procedure Act (NVwVfG) in conjunction with Section 41 Federal Administrative Procedure Act (VwVfG) applies.
- (5) ¹Notifications about individual personal information relating to the application process shall be made available to applicants via the Osnabrück University application portal. ²As a rule, applicants shall be notified of the existence of new messages by email via the contact email address in accordance with subsection 3. ³Applicants are obliged to check regularly for the arrival of new messages in the application portal and in doing so to contribute to the functioning of the automated and digitalized operative processes used by Osnabrück University. ⁴The use of the application portal is exclusively for the purpose of processing applications to Osnabrück University. ⁵In the event of improper use, user access to content may be either temporarily or permanently limited or completely suspended.

Section 4 Admission Requirements

- (1) ¹In order to be admitted to the Master's program in "Biology – From Molecules to Organisms", the applicant must
 - a) have successfully completed a minimum six-semester Bachelor's degree program in "Biology" or a comparable Bachelor's degree in a relevant subject or a comparable program of study at a German university or a university abroad which is in one of the Bologna-signatory countries to a total of at least 180 ECTS credit points, or
 - b) hold a comparable qualification in a three-year-long program of study in a comparable or closely-related field from another university abroad that is not in one of the Bologna-signatory countries; the equivalence of non-German qualifications is determined in accordance with the assessment proposals of the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) at the Administrative Office of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK);
 - c) not have irrevocably failed a Master's examination or a comparable examination in a comparable specialist subject nor lost their right of examination entry at a German university or at a university abroad that is in one of the Bologna-signatory countries or at any other university abroad; and
 - d) not have already successfully completed a Master's examination or a comparable examination in a comparable specialist subject at a German university or at a university abroad that is in one of the Bologna-signatory countries or at any other university abroad, and
 - e) demonstrate language proficiency in accordance with subsection 2 (b) and subsection 3.
- (2) ¹The degree program in accordance with subsection 1 letters a) and b) is considered relevant and comparable when students
 - a) have completed 75 credit points in Biology, and

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b) can demonstrate that they have attained level B1 in the English language according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR); proof is considered to have been provided when

- the relevant level of English proficiency was already an admission requirement for the earlier Bachelor's degree, or
- the applicant has already successfully completed an English-language undergraduate or graduate degree program, or
- English was the language of the education system of the applicant at the time they earned their higher education entrance qualification, or
- the applicant has passed a language test at level B1 (CEFR) (for possible language tests, see: www.uni-osnabrueck.de/sprachnachweise).

²In cases of doubt, the selection committee (Section 7) shall decide about an applicant's language proficiency.

(3) ¹The decision about whether an earlier degree program was relevant and comparable is taken by the selection committee. ²A positive decision may be issued with the proviso that the applicant must take catch-up courses to a total of 15 credit points within two semesters of commencing their Master's studies. ³The catch-up courses an applicant is required to take in accordance with sentence 2 are decided by the selection committee. ⁴The catch-up modules an applicant is required to take by the selection committee in accordance with sentence 2 shall not be accredited towards the Master's program. ⁵Any requirements of this kind do not appear on the Master's certificate, do not appear on the transcript of records, and are not included in overall grading. ⁶Upon application, the courses may be certified separately. ⁷If the requirements laid down by the admission committee are not completed within the period of time stipulated in sentence 2 and if the applicant is responsible, then their registration at the university shall be terminated upon expiry of the deadline (Section 9 subsection 1 no. 4 in conjunction with Section 4 subsection 4 sentence 2 no. 1 and sentence 3 of the Admission Regulations of Osnabrück University).

(4) ¹Notwithstanding subsection 1 applicants whose degree certification has not yet been issued at the time of their application may be awarded provisional admission if they have earned at least 150 credit points and if their progress in their degree program thus far and especially with respect to their examination results indicates that they will have completed their degree at the latest by the end of the first semester of their Master's program. ²An average grade shall be calculated from the grades of the courses which are relevant to the applicant's eligibility for entry; this grade is used in the selection procedure irrespective of whether it deviates from the final result of the Bachelor's examination. ³This means that applicants must have completed all credits for the Bachelor's degree or the comparable qualification by the end of their first semester in the Master's program, namely by March 31st for students commencing their studies in the winter semester and by September 30th for students commencing their studies in the summer semester. ⁴The certificate for the applicant's Bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification must be uploaded to Osnabrück University's application portal by April 15th for applications for commencement in the winter semester or by October 15th for applications for commencement in the summer semester. ⁵If the certificate is not uploaded by the deadline and if the provisionally admitted person is responsible, then their registration at the university shall be terminated upon expiry of the deadline (Section 19 subsection 6 sentence 3 no. 2 NHG).

Section 5 Program Commencement, Deadlines and Format of Applications for Admission

(1) The Master's program in "Biology – From Molecules to Organisms" commences in the winter semester and in the summer semester.

(2) ¹Applications for admission shall be submitted online using the application portal of Osnabrück University notwithstanding Section 3 subsection 1 sentence 2 for intended commencement in the winter semester by July 15th and for intended commencement in the summer semester by January 15th of any given year. ²Overseas applicants in possession of non-German certification shall apply online by June 15th or December 15th respectively of any given year using the application portal of

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the service agency “uni-assist e.V.”. ³Documents in accordance with subsections 3 and 4 shall be uploaded to the application portal of “uni-assist e.V.”. ⁴An application is only relevant for the places on a program for the single admission date in question.

(3) ¹An application shall include

1. the applicant’s surname, all given names listed on the applicant’s identity document, the applicant’s current correspondence address, date of birth, place of birth and nationality/nationalities, details of the applicant’s desired program of study and desired semester of study, as well as details
2. of the applicant’s first degrees which are recognized professional qualifications,
3. and information on the degree programs, joint degree programs or courses and the periods of study the applicant has already engaged in at Osnabrück University and/or at other institutes of higher education,
4. and information pertaining to whether the applicant has irrevocably failed an examination in their chosen program of study or a comparable program of study which is mandatory according to the applicable examination regulations for that program or the final examination, and
5. a prioritized list of the applicant’s chosen specialist fields in accordance with Section 1 subsection 1.

(4) ¹To complete the application for admission, applicants shall upload the required documentation in accordance with subsection 3 letters a) to e) in PDF format to the application portal of Osnabrück University. ²Osnabrück University reserves the right to check documentation at random and to require applicants to submit originals or verified documents.

³Applicants shall submit:

- a) their degree certificate for their completed degree course in accordance with Section 4 subsection 1 letter a) or letter b), or
- b) insofar as their degree certificate is not yet in their possession, certification of the examination credits they have already acquired over the course of their Bachelor’s degree or a comparable program of study (transcript of records) and their average grade; if the certification does not indicate an average grade, then additional certification is required; if non-German certification only lists individual grades, then an average grade is calculated in accordance with the resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (Kultusministerkonferenz) entitled “Agreement on the Setting of the Overall Grade for Overseas Higher Education Entry Certificates” [Vereinbarung über die Festsetzung der Gesamtnote bei ausländischen Hochschulzugangszugnissen] in its up-to-date version.
- c) a transcript of records for their Bachelor’s degree program or for the comparable program of study – insofar as the applicant has not completed their studies at Osnabrück University – in order to demonstrate their suitability to study their chosen course of study in accordance with Section 4 subsection 2 letter a); if possible, this should include the permanent Internet address containing the module descriptions for all of the course credits (module catalogue) listed in the applicant’s certificates and other certification;
- d) supporting documents in accordance with Section 4 subsection 1 letter b),
- e) upon application for admission to a higher semester of study, a course file [“Studienbuch”] and/or transcript of records, enrollment certificates, documents of withdrawal (where applicable) from all previously attended institutes of higher education, and documentation certifying any preliminary, intermediate, module, module component or final examinations taken.
- f) a prioritized list of the specialist fields in accordance with Section 1 subsection 1.

⁴Applicants shall upload to the portal

- a) a declaration stating that they have not irrevocably failed a Master’s examination or a comparable examination in a comparable subject area and that they have not lost their right of examination entry,

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- b) a declaration stating that they have not already passed a Master's examination or a comparable examination in a comparable subject area,
 - c) a declaration stating that they have taken note of and accepted the data protection guidelines,
 - d) a declaration regarding Section 3 subsection 4 sentence 1,
 - e) a declaration on their participation in any succession procedures, and
 - f) a statement of assurance confirming the correctness and completeness of all information uploaded to the application portal including a statement to the effect that any false declarations or information may lead to the rescission of their admission to the university.
- (5) If certificates and records are not available in either the German or English languages, then these shall be translated by a sworn translator and uploaded in either German or English.
- (6) ¹Any applications which are incomplete, in an incorrect format or uploaded to the application portal of Osnabrück University's service agency "uni-assist e.V." after the deadline has passed, and if the required documentation is not uploaded completely, in the correct format and by the set deadline or if the above are not submitted by the deadline in the cases outlined in Section 3 subsection 1 sentence 2, then these applications are given no further consideration in the selection procedure.

Section 6 Selection Procedure

¹If the degree program is subject to admission restrictions and the number of applicants who meet the admission requirements is larger than the number of places available, then the selection committee convened in accordance with Section 7 decides about the admission of the applicants taking into consideration the final grade of their previous degree program and/or their average grade in accordance with Section 4 subsection 4 sentence 2. ²With respect to the average grade, the first two places after the decimal point are taken into account and additional decimal places are disregarded without rounding. ³With respect to the average grade, the first two places after the decimal point are taken into account and additional decimal places are disregarded without rounding. ⁴If there is no average grade on the final certificate or the other certification in accordance with Section 5 subsection 4 sentence 3 letter b), then the average grade of 4.0 shall be used for the selection procedure. ⁵The overall grades determined in this procedure serve as the basis for ranking the applicants. ⁶If grades are the same, positions on the list are decided by the drawing of lots.

Section 7 Selection Committee

- (1) In preparation for the selection procedure, the School of Biology/Chemistry shall convene a selection committee.
- (2) ¹The selection committee shall consist of the head of the Biology examination committee occupying the position of chairperson and two further members with the entitlement to teach courses, all of whom are entitled to vote. There shall also be a student member who participates in an advisory capacity. ²The members are appointed by the executive board of the School of Biology/Chemistry. ³Members are appointed for two years, the student representative for one year. Reappointment is admissible. ⁴The selection committee is quorate when at least two voting members are in attendance.
- (3) ¹Minutes shall be kept to record the meetings of the selection committee. ²These minutes shall document the key points of discussion and the resolutions of the selection committee. ³The minutes shall be signed by the chair and the keeper of the minutes. ⁴In addition, the provisions of the General Rules of Procedure of Osnabrück University shall be complied with where applicable.
- (4) The duties of the selection committee are:
- a) checking the formal correctness and completeness of incoming admission applications,
 - b) checking admission requirements,
 - c) deciding whether an applicant's previous course of study is relevant and comparable in accordance with Section 4 subsections 1 and 2,

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- d) determining the catch-up tasks to be required in accordance with Section 4 subsection 3 sentence 2
 - e) in cases of doubt, deciding whether an applicant is in possession of the required level of language proficiency in accordance with Section 4 subsection 2 letter b),
 - f) deciding about the admission or the refusal of the applicant to their preferred specialist field.
- and
- g) deciding about the admission or the refusal of the applicant based on their rank in the list of applicants.
- and
- h) deciding about the admission of applicants to a higher semester (Section 9).

Section 8 Notification of Acceptance, Succession Procedures, Completion of Procedures

- (1) ¹Applicants who may be admitted as a result of the selection process receive a notification of acceptance in accordance with Section 3 subsection 4 through the application portal of Osnabrück University. ²Insofar as the applicant's acceptance is subject to the fulfillment of additional requirements in accordance with Section 4 subsection 3 sentence 2, these shall be included on the notification of acceptance. ³The applicant is required, by the deadline set in the notification of acceptance, to declare through the application portal of Osnabrück University whether they wish to accept the place offered to them. ⁴If the applicant does not make this declaration by the deadline or in the correct format, then the notification of acceptance becomes null and void. ⁵Reference shall be made to this legal consequence and to the legal consequences arising from Section 5 subsection 7, where relevant, in the notification of acceptance. ⁶The same applies accordingly in cases in Section 3 subsection 1 sentence 2.
- (2) ¹Applicants who do not fulfill the admission requirements in accordance with Section 4 receive a rejection notification in accordance with Section 3 subsection 4 listing the reasons for their rejection. ²The rejection notification shall include details of the applicant's legal right of appeal.
- (3) ¹Applicants who cannot be offered a place in consequence of the selection procedure in accordance with Section 6 shall receive a rejection notification in accordance with Section 3 subsection 4 which states the position they were ranked at on the list and the position of the last applicant to be admitted to the program. ²The rejection notification shall include details of the applicant's legal right of appeal.
- (4) Any subsequent succession procedures shall be carried out, should not all places be allocated in the selection procedure in accordance with subsection 1, on the basis of the ranking list in accordance with Section 6 sentence 5 for those applicants who have declared their participation in the succession procedure in accordance with Section 5 subsection 4 sentence 4 letter e).
- (5) The allocation process is complete when
 - a) all available places have been allocated

or

 - b) all succession lists have been cleared.
- (6) ¹If there are still places available after the conclusion of the allocation process, then these are filled by the drawing of lots. ²The application deadline shall be publicized in an appropriate manner. ³Applications for participation in the random selection process are to be submitted via Osnabrück University's online application portal; upon receiving a place through the random selection process, applicants shall upload the required documentation in accordance with Section 5 subsection 4 sentence 3 and shall submit the declarations in accordance with Section 5 subsection 4 sentence 4. ⁴Sections 3, 4, 5 and 7 apply accordingly.

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- (7) In all other respects, the general provisions for admission in the admission regulations of Osnabrück University in their up-to-date version remain unaffected.

Section 9 Admission to Higher Semesters

- (1) ¹Available places in a higher semester of study with restricted admission are awarded to applicants in the following order:
- a) applicants for whom a refusal of admission for reasons associated with their person would mean particular hardship;
 - b) applicants who in the same or a comparable program of study
 - aa) have been awarded a full place through the central allocation process and who are or were already enrolled at this university on a joint degree program;
 - bb) are or were already enrolled at this university on a joint degree program;
 - cc) are or were already enrolled at a German university, a university in another member state of the European Union or in a signatory state to the Agreement on the European Economic Area;
 - dd) are or were enrolled at an overseas university not included in cc) and are in possession of German citizenship or its equivalent for the purposes of enrollment.
 - ee) have been enrolled to the first semester of study and who may be placed in a higher semester
- or
- c) can assert other reasons.

²Applicants must demonstrate that they have achieved the required level of proficiency to be placed in a higher semester.

- (2) ¹Within each of the categories listed under subsection 1 sentence 1, decisions shall be made based on the social, family and economic situation underlying the choice of location, thereafter the grade of the applicant's university entrance qualification, thereafter by the drawing of lots. ²If two applicants are ranked the same, then the average grade is decisive.
- (3) Section 8 subsection 7 applies accordingly.

Section 10 Entry into Force

¹These regulations enter into force on the day after their publication by the university. ²They apply for the first time for the first semester that is open for applications following their publication. ³The previous version shall cease to be in force as of that time.