



Study and Examination Regulations for the Master of Science in Life Sciences Degree Programme at the School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences HAFL (SPR MSCLS)¹

The University Board of Bern University of Applied Sciences,

pursuant to Article 33 Paragraph 1 Letter n of the Act of 19 June 2003 concerning Bern University of Applied Sciences (FaG)², Articles 52 and 59 of the Ordinance of 16 November 2022 concerning Bern University of Applied Sciences (FaV)³ and Art. 1, Paragraph 2 of the Framework Study Regulations (FSR) of Bern University of Applied Sciences of 5 May 2021,

rules:

1. Object

Art. 1 ¹ These regulations govern admission to and studies in the Master of Science in Life Sciences (cooperation master) programme for students who are enrolled at Bern University of Applied Sciences (BFH).

² The provisions of the FSR are applicable unless otherwise stated in these regulations. These regulations also contain provisions substantiating the FSR.

³ The powers of disposal under the FSR shall be exercised by the Head of Teaching.

2. Admission

Prerequisites

Art. 2 ¹ Admission to the degree programme is granted to anyone who:
a holds a bachelor's degree from a Swiss university of applied sciences with a grade average of at least 5.0 or an ECTS grade of A or B, in one of the following subject areas

for the specialisation in Food, Nutrition and Health

- Food Science
- Food Technology
- Nutrition and Dietetics
- Oenology

for the specialisation in Agricultural Science

- Agriculture
- Oenology
- Viticulture

¹ This document is a translation and is not legally binding; the original German version prevails.

² BSG 435.411.

³ BSG 436.811.

for the specialisation in Forest Science

- Forest Science
- Forestry
- Wood Engineering
- Environmental Engineering
- Landscape Architecture
- Nature Management
- Agriculture
- Geography
- Environmental and Resource Management

b and can demonstrate at least six months of work experience approved by HAFL.

² Applicants who do not hold a degree in accordance with paragraph 1, letter a are admitted to the degree programme after passing an aptitude assessment and fulfilling the requirements of paragraph 1, letter b if they

- a* hold a bachelor's degree from a Swiss institution of higher education with an average grade of less than 5.0 or an ECTS grade of C or lower in a subject area as set out in paragraph 1, letter a, or
- b* hold a bachelor's degree from a Swiss institution of higher education in a subject area other than those set out in paragraph 1, letter a and with sufficient subject relevance to the degree programme, or
- c* hold an equivalent foreign bachelor's degree, the equivalence of which is assessed by the Head of Teaching.

Application

Art. 3 ¹ Applications must be entered within the specified deadline.

² A complete application dossier must be submitted; it must include the following documents, in addition to the duly completed application form:

- d* their identity card or passport (front and back),
- e* a passport photo compliant with international passport standards,
- f* tabular CV,
- g* a letter of motivation,
- h* copies of the required diplomas, certificates and work references in accordance with Article 2,
- i* a copy of their academic transcripts of records,
- j* a confirmation of termination of matriculation from the university at which the applicant was previously enrolled,
- k* a certified translation of all documents issued in a language other than German, French, Italian or English.

³ Dossiers deemed to be incomplete are rejected and must be completed or improved. A short extension period is granted, with the notice that the application will be deemed withdrawn if it is not completed within the stated period.

Aptitude assessment

Art. 4 ¹ The aptitude assessment consists of a structured interview lasting 45 to 60 minutes assessed with a numerical grade.

² Aptitude is assessed according to the following criteria:

- a* conceptual skills,
- b* analytical and networked thinking,
- c* subject-related skills,
- d* motivation.

	<p>³ The aptitude assessment is deemed passed if two experts in the relevant specialisation both rated it with a grade of at least 4.0. A passed aptitude assessment is valid for five years.</p> <p>⁴ A failed aptitude assessment may be taken a second time as part of a new application process.</p>
Conditional admission	<p>Art. 5 ¹ If the aptitude test has been assessed with a grade between 4.0 and 4.9, admission is conditional. This condition must be fulfilled by the end of the degree programme at the latest. The Head of Degree Programme may set a shorter deadline.</p> <p>² If the required work experience has only been partially acquired by the start of the programme, applicants may be admitted on condition that they acquire it by the end of the first year of study.</p> <p>³ Failure to comply with these requirements will result in exclusion from the programme.</p>
Decision	<p>Art. 6 Admission to the programme is granted by the BFH President.</p>
	<p>3. Structure of the degree programme</p>
Structure of the programme	<p>Art. 7 ¹ The degree programme has a modular structure and comprises 90 ECTS credits.</p> <p>² The programme consists of the following categories, which can be subdivided into module groups for the study plan of each specialisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a</i> core-competence modules, <i>b</i> cluster-specific modules, <i>c</i> specialisation modules, <i>d</i> master's thesis (1 module).
Modes of study and ECTS credit workload	<p>Art. 8 ¹ The degree programme can be taken as full-time or part-time studies.</p> <p>² Each semester, modules amounting to at least twelve ECTS credits must be taken. The Head of Teaching decides on exceptions.</p>
Standard duration of studies	<p>Art. 9 ¹ The full-time degree programme usually lasts three and a maximum of five semesters and the part-time degree programme a minimum of four and a maximum of eight semesters.</p> <p>² The maximal duration may be extended upon request and for serious reasons by the Head of Degree Programme.</p> <p>³ Exceeding the maximum duration of studies without serious reasons leads to exclusion from the degree programme.</p>
National and international mobility	<p>Art. 10 During their studies, students can acquire a maximum of 30 ECTS credits at another department of Bern University of Applied Sciences or another institution of higher education. On prior request, the Head of Degree Programme may grant recognition for these learning achievements. Only learning achievements at master's level are recognised.</p>
Teaching languages	<p>Art. 11 ¹ The teaching languages are German, French and English.</p>

² The module descriptions specify the teaching language for each module.

4. Competency assessments

Subsequent improvement

Art. 12 ¹ Subsequent improvements to competency assessments and partial competency assessments depend on the respective module description. Subsequent improvement is not possible for core-competence modules.

² Master's theses with a grade of 3.5 and the possibility of subsequent improvement can be revised and resubmitted. Further details can be found in the "Guidelines for Master's Theses".

³ Subsequent improvements must be made within 30 days of the release of grades.

Repetition of a module
1. Principle

Art. 13 ¹ Failed modules may be repeated once.

² Repetition involves taking the module again with all its competency assessments.

³ When a failed module is repeated, the initial module grade is nullified and replaced in the transcript of records by the grade obtained for the module resit. This applies even if the grade for the module resit is worse than the initial grade.

2. Master's thesis

Art. 14 The master's thesis is repeated with a new assignment and a new supervisor.

Passing grades for module groups

Art. 15 A module group is deemed passed if the minimum number of ECTS credits required to pass the module group has been achieved.

5. Degree

Master's thesis
1. General provisions

Art. 16 ¹ A master's thesis is required to complete the master's degree programme.

² The master's thesis, worth 30 ECTS credits, consists of a written paper, a poster and an oral examination.

³ The master's thesis is deemed passed if the written paper, the poster and the accompanying oral examination are awarded an overall grade of at least 4.

⁴ The school management regulates the details in the "Guidelines for Master's Theses".

2. Supervision and assessment

Art. 17 ¹ During the writing of their master's thesis, students are supervised by a lecturer or a research associate with a master's degree and at least three years of research experience.

² If the written work is assessed as unsatisfactory by the supervisor, an expert will provide a second opinion. In this case, the grade is the rounded average of the supervisor's grade and the expert's grade.

³ Experts may be persons as defined in paragraph 1 or external persons with scientific qualifications in the relevant subject area. They are appointed by the Head of Degree Programme.

3. Oral examination

Art. 18 ¹ The starting and focal point of the oral examination is the topic of the written assignment.

² The oral examination is conducted by the supervisor with the participation of an external expert (examination expert); both persons assess the poster and the performance in the oral examination. The external expert is appointed by the Head of Teaching.

³ Should there be any duty of confidentiality towards third parties, the thesis is not presented in a public setting.

Degree diploma

Art. 19 The master's degree diploma is awarded to students who have cumulatively

- a* acquired at least 90 ECTS, at least 45 of which have been acquired at HAFL,
- b* passed all compulsory modules in the specialisation,
- c* earned the minimum number of ECTS credits in each module group of the specialisation in accordance with the study plan,
- d* successfully completed their master's thesis.

Transcript of records

² **Art. 20** ¹ All modules taken are listed on the Transcript of Records.

³ To calculate the overall grade, all the compulsory, compulsory-elective and optional modules completed and the master's thesis are taken into account, each weighted according to the ECTS credits allocated it. The overall grade is rounded to the nearest tenth.

6. Transitional and final provisions

Transitional provisions

Art. 21 Students who began their studies before the autumn semester of 2018/2019 may complete them in accordance with the conditions for graduation set out in the Study and Examination Regulations for the Master of Science in Life Sciences degree programme at the Swiss College of Agriculture dated 5 September 2011 (Articles 6 and 8).

Repeal of a decree

Art. 22 The Study and Examination Regulations for the Master of Science in Life Sciences Degree Programme at School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences HAFL (SPR MSCLS) of 14 June 2018 are repealed.

Effective date

Art. 23 These regulations come into force on 1 August 2024. They apply to all students who start their studies on this date and to all existing students who started their studies in the autumn semester of 2018/2019 or later.



Bern, 5th June 2024
Bern University of Applied Sciences
University Board

Markus Ruprecht, President

Bern, 19th June 2024
Approved by the Department of Education and Culture of
the Canton of Bern

Christine Häsler, member of the Government of the
Canton of Bern