

REGULATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO MASTER'S PROGRAMMES**Board of Admissions of the Graduate School of Life Sciences at Utrecht University****2025-2026**

The Board of Admissions (or admissions committee) of the Graduate School of Life Sciences, Utrecht University, with reference to Section 7.30b of the Higher Education and Research Act in conjunction with Section 9.2, second paragraph of this Act, has decided to adopt the following regulations for admission to Master's programmes.

These regulations are an addition to the Educational and Examination Regulations of the Graduate School of Life Sciences 2025-2026, paragraph 2.

Chapter 1. General conditions

Article 1.1 Definitions

In these regulations, the following definitions apply:

- A. The Act: The Higher Education and Research Act (WHW);
- B. Admissions officer: staff member with expertise in the area of selection and admission; takes part in the university-wide Master-ATI meetings (ATI = *Aanmeldingen, Toelatingen, Inschrijvingen*);
- C. Applicant: a person submitting a request for admission to a Master's programme;
- D. Board of Admissions (BoA) : board charged with responsibility for all admissions to Master's degrees; on the application website referred to as the Admissions committee;
- E. Board of Studies (BoS): management of the School, consisting of the three deans of the involved faculties;
- F. Confirmation of admission: a confirmation of admission as issued by the Board of Admissions on condition that the applicant meets the admission requirements;
- G. Education and Examination Regulations (EER): formal document describing duties and rights of students and staff;
- H. Graduate School of Life Sciences (GSLs): organization responsible for content and quality of education of Life Sciences Master's and PhD degrees of the Faculties of Science, Medicine, and Veterinary Medicine;
- I. Programme selection committee: each programme has a selection committee comprised of the programme leader, programme coordinator, and programme lecturer(s) (Table 1);
- J. Quota programmes: programmes that have a URO registered maximum capacity;
- K. NL-Scholarship: provided nationally, divided by Utrecht University (UU) for non-EU applicants;
- L. Advisory board to the BoA: programme leaders of the Master's programmes responsible for the selection process of applicants for their programme selection committee.

Article 1.2 Board of Admissions

- 1. The BoS ensures a proper procedure for admissions to all GSLs Master's programmes (see Annex 1) to be executed by the BoA.
- 2. The deans are responsible for appointing the BoA of the GSLs. The BoA consists of at least six members, and an advisory board consisting of the programme leaders of each Master's programme.
- 3. The members of the BoA include the degree directors of the GSLs, the admissions officers, the chair of the Educational Committee (EC), and the chair of the Board of Examiners (BoE).

The BoA may appoint other members from staff charged with executive responsibilities on teaching in the GSLS. The BoS will appoint a chair from the members of the BoA.

4. The BoA will take decisions by an ordinary majority of votes.
5. In accordance with university policy, the BoA strives to take a decision within 20 working days after receiving a complete application (for rolling admissions) or within 30 working days after the application deadline (for programmes with a fixed quatum on capacity).
6. Decisions taken by the BoA will be recorded in formal letters of (un)conditional acceptance or rejection.
7. The BoA will be supported in its work by an official secretary. The secretary will ensure:
 - a. preparation, convocation, and keeping of minutes at the meetings;
 - b. monitoring the implementation of decisions taken;
 - c. communication of decisions taken to applicants and other interested parties;
 - d. drawing up the annual report;
 - e. archiving requests, objections, and decisions taken.

Article 1.3 Task of the Board of Admissions

1. The BoA is charged with the task of applying the admissions criteria listed in the Education and Examination Regulations (EER) of the Master's programme in order to assess which applicants can be granted admission to the Master's programme.
2. The BoA is charged with the task of awarding the NL-Scholarship. Within the budget made available to the UU each year, the BoA will determine the number and amount of the scholarships awarded. The BoA will award the scholarships based on the following criteria:
 - a. Institute degree / grades and GPA/GTA/average grade;
 - b. motivation;
 - c. resume: i.e. relevant extracurricular activities;
 - d. if applicable, ranking of the students by the programme selection committee.
3. The BoA is charged with the task to present an annual report to the BoS each academic year.

Article 1.4 Decision to grant admission

1. The authority to grant admission is mandated, in accordance with Section 7.30b of the Act, to the deans of the faculties, to the chair of the BoA. The authority around admission policy is mandated from the Deans of the Faculties to the director of the GSLS.

2. Admission decisions will be based on the advice from the programme selection committees, the University Framework for Admission and the BoA guidelines.
3. The advice of the programme selection committees is based on the assessment whether or not the applicant possesses the knowledge, insight, skills, and motivation in order to successfully finish the Master's degree in two years (for EPMM in 1.5 years).
4. The BoA will only take into account complete applications submitted within the deadlines.
5. The BoA may grant an applicant the exemption to still apply after the deadline has passed, in case of circumstances that caused the applicant to be hindered and that would lead to unreasonable rejection of the application, and as long as UU regulations permit.
6. The programme selection committees may request applicants to submit additional documentation or take part in a conversation to clarify outstanding questions. Applicants who do not cooperate may no longer be considered for admission.
7. The BoA reserves the right to check all submitted information and documentation for authenticity.
8. The BoA may grant an applicant exemption in certain cases, for example if the applicants' profile deviates substantially from eligibility criteria but deserves specific assessment (see category D, Richtlijn Onderwijs Universiteit Utrecht). The BoA may exercise a "wildcard" once per academic year per programme, admitting one additional student beyond the fixed programme capacity, provided that the decision is duly justified and documented.
9. In cases of fraud the applicant will not be eligible for admission.

Article 1.5 Conditions for admission to a Master's programme

1. An application for admission can only be processed after a fee for administrative costs as set by the UU has been paid by or on behalf of the applicant. Applicant with a UU degree or of other Dutch higher-education institutions who have been awarded a Bachelor's degree in accordance with the Act are exempt from paying the aforementioned fee.
2. Without prejudice to the stipulations of or under the Act relating to registration for Master's programmes, application for a Master's programme is open to all persons who meet the admission requirements as specified on the Master's website.
3. The Executive Board of the UU may establish a quota (maximum number of persons) that can be registered for a given programme (Education guideline Article C5 (4)). In such cases, this should be stated in the EER and on the Master's website in a timely manner, and in any event no later than at the start of the academic year preceding that to which this maximum applies. An overview of quota is given in Annex 2.

Chapter 2. Procedure for admission to a Master's programme

Article 2.1. Application for admission

1. Any person who wishes to be admitted to a Master's programme at the GSLS¹ should submit a digital application for admission via Studielink and subsequently OSIRIS Online Application;
 - a. in case of an international degree: through the International Student Admissions office (ISA) of the UU, or
 - b. in case of a Dutch degree: through the administration office of the GSLS (Faculty of Medicine or Faculty of Science, depending on the Master's programme).
2. The application should be accompanied by digitized documents that are required to assess whether the applicant can be admitted to their chosen Master's programme. Mandatory documents for all applicants include:
 - diploma of the Bachelor's degree or a statement of graduation (not applicable for UU Bachelor's students)¹;
 - (certified) transcript / list of courses and grades;
 - resume;
 - letter of motivation.

Additional mandatory documents may include:

- a. two standardised letters of recommendation;
 - b. passport copy;
 - c. proof of English language proficiency (i.e., test result IELTS/TOEFL/Cambridge Certificate);
 - d. writing sample (i.e., Bachelor's thesis);
 - e. course description of relevant course work.
- 3a. Programme selection committees may request extra documents, after approval of the BoA. These documents will be listed in the Regulations of the BoA and may be adjusted annually (see Table 3 for an overview). The required documents will be stated on the Master's website for each Master's programme.
- 3b. The International Student Admission office (ISA) of the UU may demand certified hard copies of documents before international candidates can be definitively admitted.

¹ The Master's programmes of the degree Health sciences (EPMM) deviate from the standard admission process. The postgraduate programme requires a Master's degree or certificate to meet the requirements. Moreover, the deadlines (Table 2) and duration (1.5y) differ from the other programmes.

4. ISA offers advice on the level of previous education to the BoA based on Nuffic criteria. The BoA will take the advice into account when reaching a decision.

Article 2.2 Deadlines

1. The complete application must be submitted no later than the set deadline for the Master's programme for which admission is sought. Deadlines may differ for applicants who need to apply for a visa or residence permit. See Annex 2 for actual deadlines.
2. Deadlines will be communicated on the UU Master's application website.
3. In deviation from section 2.2.1 the BoA may decide to accept an application after the deadline see article 1.4 clause 5.

Article 2.3 Admission decisions

Admission decisions can entail:

- a. approval (unconditional admission) of the application for admission, or
- b. rejection or non-acceptance of the application for admission, or
- c. conditional admission based on documents or based on competences.

2.3.a. Approval or unconditional admission²

1. If the applicant meets all criteria and is selected for a fixed quatum or rolling admission programme, the applicant is admitted unconditionally and receives a letter of acceptance.
2. In all such cases successful completion of the final examination of a Bachelor's degree programme is required. This is the case if:
 - a. the applicant is in possession of a Bachelor's diploma², or
 - b. the applicant does not yet possess a Bachelor's degree certificate, but has successfully completed all the examinations of the relevant Bachelor's programme, and is in possession of a graduation statement. In case the Board of Examiners of the relevant Bachelor's programme has explicitly specified that the final examination should also include an additional investigation conducted by the Board, the applicant is considered not to have completed the relevant Bachelor's programme yet. The date of graduation from the Bachelor's programme, as stated on the diploma, should be no later than the last day of the month prior to the start of the Master's programme.

² The Master's programmes of the degree Health sciences (EPMM) deviate from the standard admission process. The postgraduate programme requires a Master's degree or certificate to meet the requirements. Moreover, the deadlines (Table 2) and duration (1.5y) differ from the other programmes.

3. In all cases applicants should demonstrate to have achieved the minimum required English test levels as described in the EER.

2.3.b. Rejection or non-acceptance

1. If an applicant does not meet the required competences, the applicant will be rejected and receive an e-mail of non-acceptance.
2. In case of programmes with fixed quota on capacity, applicants may also be rejected based on the fact that they ranked lower than the maximum number of applicants who can be admitted to the programme. This means that applicants who are eligible for a programme can be rejected when the number of applications exceeds the number of places.

2.3.c Conditional admissions

1. Admission to a Master's programme may be subject to restrictions regarding the choice of tracks of the programme.
2. Applicants who have been conditionally granted admission based on missing documentation should demonstrate that the admission criteria as referred to in EER are met by sending in the required documents no later than the day before the Master's programme starts. If this is not possible due to circumstances beyond their control, the relevant evidence can be submitted until two weeks into the month in which the Master's programme started. In deviation of this regulation, international applicants requiring a visa or residence permit should hand in certain documentation no later than 3 months prior to the start of the programme. Specific information for applicants is mentioned on the UU Master's website.
3. If an applicant fails to meet the admission requirements listed in the EER of the Master's programme in question, and the deficiency is not more than 30 credits, this applicant can be granted a conditional premaster admission with a validity of one year. Eligibility for a premaster depends on the nature of the deficiency, availability of courses, and language restrictions. The BoA will subsequently grant unconditional admission at the moment the premaster has been completed successfully and on time.

2.3.d Waiting list

1. Programmes with fixed quota on capacity may use a waiting list for applicants that did not make the main ranking, but are still eligible in case a place becomes available. In this case, the applicant does not yet receive a formal letter, but is notified by email. Applicants on the

waiting list should receive a formal decision (a letter or email of non-acceptance) no later than two weeks after the start of their studies (15 September or 15 February).

2. Early bird non-EU applicants will in all cases receive a formal decision within 6 weeks after the application deadline (1 February) and cannot be put in waiting until the main deadline ranking.
3. Non-EU applicants that need a visa or residence permit, should note that the placement on the waiting list cannot be maintained or offered, when there is a conflict with the deadline for entry visa or residence permit application.

Article 2.4 Period of validity

In general, the offer of application is valid only for the starting date of the original application. In some cases, the BoA decides to a validity of 7 months, or the maximum validity of 13 months after the original starting date of the programme. This gives the applicant access to the programme for February (if applicable) and/or September the upcoming year without having to pass the selection again.

Validity of a (conditional) letter of acceptance is noted on the letter, and can vary between 1, 7 or 13 months after the original starting date of the programme.

Article 2.5 Communication with the applicant

1. Each applicant is notified by email when the application file is complete and being processed. This message includes the time frame for the decision. Deviation from this time frame during the selection process is subsequently communicated with the applicant in a timely manner.
2. Any applicant who is granted admission to a Master's programme will receive a confirmation of admission from the BoA. This confirmation should always specify the Master's programme to which the applicant has been granted admission, as well as any conditions and deadlines for completing registration for the Master's programme in question.
3. An applicant whose request for admission has been rejected will be notified accordingly by the BoA.
4. If the application for admission has been rejected or the confirmation of admission has been issued with certain conditions, the applicant will be briefly informed of the reasons behind the decision made by the BoA.
5. Upon request of the applicant the BoA may provide information on the selection considerations in further detail.



Article 2.6 Appeal to CBE

Within six weeks of receiving a decision, the applicant concerned can lodge an appeal with the Board of Appeal for Examinations (CBE) against a decision made by the BoA. In case of rejection or non-acceptance and conditional acceptance, applicants will be notified of this right in the written decision.

Chapter 3. Conclusion and transitional provisions

Article 3.1 Date of commencement

These regulations have been approved by the BoA for the academic year 2025-2026 (for applicants who wish to start their studies in the academic year 2026-2027).

Annexes academic year 2025-2026
Annex 1
Members Board of Admissions

Prof. dr. H.V.M. van Rijen (chair):	Director of the GSLS and degree director of the Master's degrees Biomedical Sciences, Health Sciences, and Neuroscience and Cognition
Prof. dr. B. Snel:	Degree director of the Master's degrees Biosciences and Science and Business
S. Goubitz, PhD:	Secretary Graduate School of Life Sciences
J.A. Post, PhD:	Chair Board of Examiners
A.S.J. Melquiond, PhD:	Chair Educational Committee
P. Krijgsheld, PhD:	Process coordinator and admission officer of the Master's degrees Biomedical Sciences, Health Sciences, and Neuroscience and Cognition
V.E. Dijkstra, MA:	Process coordinator and admission officer of the Master's degrees Biosciences and Science and Business
M.A.C. de Kort, MSc (secretary):	Policy advisor of the Master's degrees Biomedical Sciences, Health Sciences, and Neuroscience and Cognition

Table 1: List of Master's programmes with members of the advisory board to the BoA.

Master's programme	Programme leader
Biofabrication (BIFM)	Prof. dr. Jos Malda
Bioinformatics and Biocomplexity (BINF)	Dr. Michael Seidl
Bio Inspired Innovation (BINN)	Prof. dr. Han Wösten
Cardiovascular Health and Disease (CARD)	Dr. Saskia de jager
Cancer, Stem Cells and Developmental Biology (CSDB)	Prof. dr. Boudewijn Burgering
Drug Innovation (DINN)	Prof. dr. Tina Vermonden
Environmental Biology (PLBI/ENVB)	Dr. Kaisa Kajala
Epidemiology (EPIM)	Prof. dr. Lotty Hoofst
Epidemiology Postgraduate (EPMM)	Prof. dr. Lotty Hoofst
Health and Environment (HENV)	Prof. dr. ir. Lidwien Smit
Infection and Immunity (IMIF)	Dr. Esther Nolte-'t Hoen
Medical Imaging (MIMG)	Dr. ir. Wilbert Bartels
Molecular and Cellular Life Sciences (BMOL/MCLS)	Prof. dr. Lukas Kapitein



Neuroscience and Cognition (NSCN)	Prof. dr. Roger Adan
Regenerative Medicine and Technology (RMTM)	Prof. dr. Marianne Verhaar
Science and Business Management (SPMM/SBM)	Dr. Sabrina Santos Oliveira

Annex 2
Table 2: List of Master's programmes with starting dates, quota information and deadlines per nationality.

Programme	Quota on capacity	Starting dates	Deadlines*	
			NL/EU nationality	non-EU nationality
BIFM	Yes (15)	Sept	1 April	1 April
BINF	Yes (40)	Sept	1 April	1 April
BINN	Yes (30)	Sept	1 April	1 April
CSDB	Yes (40)	Sept	1 April	1 April
CARD	Yes (40)	Sept	1 April	1 April
DINN	Yes (48)	Sept	1 April	1 April
ENVB	Yes (60)	Sept	1 April	1 April
EPIM	No	Sept	1 June	1 April
EPMM	No	Sept/ Feb (online)	1 July/ 1 Dec	1 April/ 1 Dec
HENV	No	Sept	1 June	1 April
IMIF	Yes (30)	Sept	1 April	1 April
MCLS	Yes (70)	Sept	1 April	1 April
MIMG	No	Sept	1 June	1 April
NSCN	Yes (60)	Sept	1 April	1 April
RMTM	Yes (30)	Sept	1 April	1 April
SBM	Yes (60)	Sept / Feb	1 April / 15 Oct	1 April / 1 Sept

*Each programme has in addition an Early Bird deadline of February 1st for scholarship purposes for non-EU applicants starting in September. Applications for the NL scholarship can be taken into account as long as the **full and complete programme application**, including letters of recommendation, has been submitted before February 1st.

Annex 3

Table 3: List of extra documents requested as mandatory input by programmes for applicants with a previous education from certain institutes: UU (Bachelor's degree of Utrecht University), HBO (Bachelor's degree of Dutch universities of applied sciences), WONL (Dutch universities) and INT (Bachelor's degree of international institutes), 'all' means all institutes mentioned above; 'x' means not applicable.

Programme	Letter of recommendation	Referent contact info on CV	Writing sample	Course information	Standardized letter of Motivation	Optional other docs
BIFM	HBO / INT	x	x	all	x	x
BINF	HBO / INT	x	x	x	All*	x
BINN	INT	HBO	x	x	All	x
CARD	HBO / INT	x	HBO / INT	WONL / HBO / INT	All	x
CSDB	HBO / INT	WONL	x	WONL / HBO / INT	x	all
DINN	INT	HBO	x	x	All*	x
ENVB	HBO / INT	x	x	x	All*	x
EPIM/ EPMM	HBO / INT	x	x	x	x	x
HENV	HBO / INT	x	HBO / INT	x	x	x
IMIF	HBO / INT*	WONL	x	WONL / HBO / INT	x	x
MCLS	HBO / INT	x	x	x	All	x
MIMG	INT	HBO	HBO/INT	HBO / INT	x	x
NSCN	HBO / INT	WONL	UU/WONL/HBO/INT	UU / WONL / HBO / INT	x	all
RMTM	HBO / INT	x	x	x	All	all
SBM	HBO / INT	x	x	HBO / INT	All	x

*Standardized motivation contains programme-specific questions