



Guidelines<sup>1</sup> for the specialized Master's Degree in  
**Sustainable Development<sup>2</sup> at the University of Basel**  
Implementation as of fall semester 2017

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<sup>1</sup> Translation of: Wegleitung für den spezialisierten Masterstudiengang in Sustainable Development der Universität Basel, Implementierung per HS 2017; published in July 2017. In cases of doubt the original text in German of the "Wegleitung" for the MSD 2017 will apply.

<sup>2</sup> Abbreviation: MSD 17

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## 1. General

These guidelines explain and clarify the revised study regulations that the three faculties introduced in December 2016 for the Master's Degree in Sustainable Development (MSD) at the University of Basel. The participating faculties are the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Business and Economics of the University of Basel. These guidelines describe the principles and rules laid down in the study regulations. In cases of doubt, the regulation for the specialized Master's Degree in Sustainable Development will apply.

### 1.1 Study direction of the degree program

The content of the degree program is based on scientific foundations and analyses of sustainable development. Studies in sustainable development are concerned with:

- different levels of our society and natural systems;
- their connections and development;
- the normative framework for assessment of conditions and development;
- the control options in terms of sustainable development of these systems.

In this sense, we believe that the idea behind sustainable development is to achieve inter and intra-generational equity while preserving the functionality of the various systems (social, economic and ecological). In order to ensure this, the inclusion of scientific knowledge from different disciplines is required. The MSD is thus an interdisciplinary degree program that places particular emphasis on the interaction between the disciplines.

The MSD is not based on a particular scientific definition (e.g. the Brundtland definition) or on a specific political understanding of sustainability (e.g. the UN Sustainable Development Goals). Rather, the students learn about the various scientific and social approaches to sustainability, and assess their strengths and weakness contextually.

On successful completion of the course, graduates are awarded the title *Master of Science in Sustainable Development*.

## 2. Study objectives

The MSD is research-based. It enables graduates to analyze the subject of sustainable development in a scientifically sound way and to work in an interdisciplinary way. On successful completion of the master's degree program, the students will have the following general competences:

### a) Knowledge

- They know the components and structures of the ecological, social and economic systems. They understand their causal and functional connections, their interactions and dependencies and their development over time.
- They are aware of the possibilities for control and transformation of the systems with special consideration of their interdependencies.
- They are familiar with relevant sustainability concepts and their normative bases.
- They have good knowledge of the remote disciplines. These skills are academically enhanced in the faculty area in which the students complete their master's thesis.

## **b) Analytical and scientific abilities**

- In the faculty area of the master's thesis, students are able to apply appropriate analytical theory-based tools and methods to determine and analyze the current state and assess problems, strategies, measures and objectives.
- They use their interdisciplinary interface competences for scientific research.

## **c) Skills**

- They are able to collaborate in interdisciplinary working groups.
- They are able to plan and conduct scientific studies independently.
- They are able to communicate their knowledge intelligibly.

## **d) Doctorate**

In the faculty area in which the students complete their master's thesis, they can acquire the necessary basis for a further scientific qualification (doctorate). Whether a student is admitted to a doctoral program after the MSD is decided in accordance with the doctoral degree regulations of the faculty, which may, inter alia, stipulate additional requirements or minimum required grades.

## **3. Admission**

### **3.1 Admission requirements**

#### **3.1.1 Required academic qualification**

To be admitted to the Master's Degree in Sustainable Development, students must provide evidence of a university bachelor's degree worth at least 180 credit points (according to ECTS), or another academic first degree recognized in accordance with the guidelines of the University of Basel. Evidence of at least 100 credit points from one, or at least 150 credit points from two, of the following branches of study must be provided:

- (i) Business administration
- (ii) Economics
- (iii) Geography
- (iv) Communication and media studies
- (v) Philosophy
- (vi) Political science
- (vii) Social and cultural anthropology/ethnology
- (viii) Social work and social policy
- (ix) Sociology
- (x) Applied biosciences
- (xi) Biology
- (xii) Earth sciences
- (xiii) Forestry
- (xiv) Environmental sciences
- (xv) Environmental and geomatics engineering

*swissuniversities*<sup>3</sup> considers branches of study to mean different bachelor's degrees that have a similar study direction. For example, the course of studies in environmental and geomatics engineering contains a qualification in both environmental engineering and biotechnology. Specific information on the branches of study can be found at <http://www.uni-programme.ch/crus-sprdb-client/search->

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.swissuniversities.ch/>

[Branches.jsf](#) All candidates are advised to consult this website first if they are unsure which of the required branches of study their degree falls under. If they are still unclear, they can contact the MSD coordination office.

### 3.1.2 Further admission requirements

Other requirements for admission are:

- A bachelor's degree with an average grade of at least 5.0/unrounded (Swiss scale) in the first degree relevant for admission;
- evidence of basic knowledge in mathematics and statistics or methods of empirical social research at university level in the form of at least 10 CP, composed as follows:
- Mathematics: The minimum requirements for mathematics will be deemed fulfilled if at least 3 CP have been earned in university lectures, such as "mathematics for natural sciences or economics".
- Statistics and methods of empirical social research: The minimum requirements for statistics or empirical social research will be deemed fulfilled if at least 3 CP have been earned in university lectures, such as "statistics for social sciences, natural sciences or economics" or "methods of empirical social research".
- The remaining 4 CP provide evidence of basic knowledge in mathematics, statistics and methods of empirical social research in addition to the above-mentioned 3 CP per area.

If competences have been acquired in mathematics, statistics and methods of empirical social research on courses other than the above-mentioned types, details of the content of the completed courses must be provided together with the application documents. In such cases, evidence of the following course content worth at least 10 CP (see breakdown above) must be provided in writing:

- Mathematics:  
Basics of linear algebra, integral and differential calculus with functions of several variables.
- Statistics:  
Descriptive and inductive statistics (one and multi-dimensional frequency distributions, hypothesis testing), probability calculations, linear regression.
- Methods of empirical social research:  
Content analysis, interview techniques, triangulation.

### 3.1.3 Alternative admission requirements

If the minimum admission requirements of the average grade of at least 5.0/unrounded (Swiss scale), evidence in mathematics, statistics or methods of empirical social research are not (or only partially) met, the results of a completed Graduate Record Examination® General Test (GRE® Test) from the following two test areas can be provided:

- *quantitative reasoning*: among the top 30%;
- *analytical writing*: among the top 20%.

Details for this test – such as test data, location, frequency and conditions – can be found at <http://www.ets.org/gre/>.

### 3.1.4 Additional requirements

Admission subject to an additional requirement of max. 30 credit points (pursuant to the study regulations of the University of Basel<sup>4</sup>) may follow if the criteria for the branch of studies is met but

- the participating faculties do not recognize the bachelor's degree program as equivalent (e.g. obtained from a university of applied sciences),

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<sup>4</sup> Study regulations of the University of Basel, of September 28, 2011, Art. 16 and 17.

- or the 100 CP in one (or the 150 CP in both) branches of study have not been achieved.

Interested candidates are advised to contact the MSD coordination office if they are uncertain.

If pursuant to section 3.1.1, different admission conditions with additional requirements exist, admission will be granted with the minimum number of requirements where possible.

### **3.2 Admission process**

The students must submit their application documents to the Student Administration Office of the University of Basel. Admission to the Master's Degree in Sustainable Development is granted by the President's Board based on the recommendation of the teaching committee (TC) and at the request of the examination committee (EC).

For students who meet the formal admission criteria described above, the University of Basel has two processes for application to the Master's Degree in Sustainable Development:

a) For new enrollments at the University of Basel, students must complete an "Application for a master's program" and submit it to the Student Administration Office. This is available on the university website: <https://www.unibas.ch/en/Studies/Application-Admission/Application.html>

b) Students who are already enrolled at the University of Basel must complete a semester registration via MOnA on time. They must also fill in a special application form for the MSD and submit it in accordance with the instructions: <https://www.unibas.ch/en/Studies/My-Studies/Semester-Registration/Master-s-Degree-Program-Immediately-Upon-Graduation.html>

The application deadlines for the fall and spring semesters are published by the university's Student Administration Office: <https://www.unibas.ch/en/Studies/Dates-Events/Deadlines/Application.html>

If the documentation to prove that the admission requirements have been met is not yet available by the end of the application period, the Student Administration Office may grant an extension to the submission deadline. Details are available on request.

## **4. Program structure and modules**

The Master's Degree in Sustainable Development has a modular structure and is based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). It comprises 120 credit points and 30 hours of work will normally be required to earn one credit point. If the standard 30 CP are earned per semester, this equates to a two-year full-time course. The degree program can also be taken on a part-time basis, in which case the study period is extended accordingly.

The Master's Degree in Sustainable Development can be started in the fall or spring semester, but a start in the spring semester is recommended only in exceptional cases. As the course is optimized for a start in the fall semester, graduation in four semesters is not guaranteed if it is started in the spring semester.

### **4.1 The curriculum**

The curriculum has three focus areas based on the disciplinary specialization of the master's thesis. At the start of the course, students are recommended to choose their focus area in which they will acquire more advanced knowledge and write their master's thesis.

#### **1. Focus area Natural Sciences**

- a) 12 CP Complementary Knowledge in Social Sciences module
- b) 12 CP Complementary Knowledge in Economics module

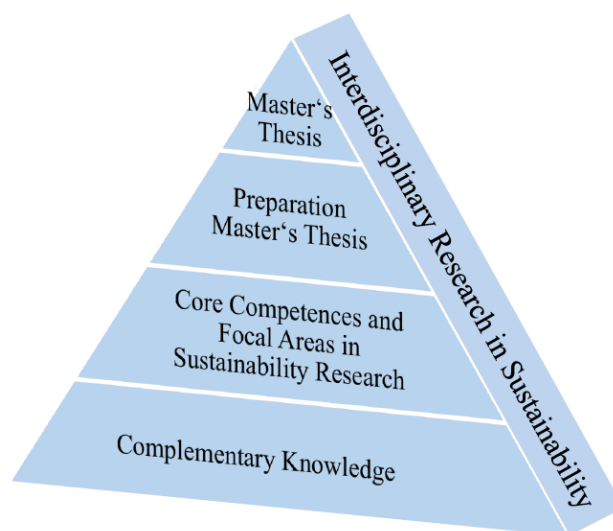
- c) 24 CP Interdisciplinary Research in Sustainability module
- d) 15 CP Core Competences in Natural Sciences module
- e) 15 CP Preparation Master's Thesis in Natural Sciences module
- f) 30 CP Master's Thesis Natural Sciences
- g) 12 CP Focal Areas in Sustainability Research module

## 2. Focus area Social Sciences

- a) 12 CP Complementary Knowledge in Natural Sciences module
- b) 12 CP Complementary Knowledge in Economics module
- c) 24 CP Interdisciplinary Research in Sustainability module
- d) 15 CP Core Competences in Social Sciences module
- e) 15 CP Preparation Master's Thesis in Social Sciences module
- f) 30 CP Master's Thesis Social Sciences
- g) 12 CP Focal Areas in Sustainability Research module

## 3. Focus area Economics

- a) 12 CP Complementary Knowledge in Natural Sciences module
- b) 12 CP Complementary Knowledge in Social Sciences module
- c) 24 CP Interdisciplinary Research in Sustainability module
- d) 15 CP Core Competences in Economics module
- e) 15 CP Preparation Master's Thesis in Economics module
- f) 30 CP Master's Thesis in Economics
- g) 12 CP Focal Areas in Sustainability Research module



The following considerations underlie the modular structure:

A) The students acquire solid basic knowledge in those scientific disciplines with which they are not usually familiar due to their bachelor's degree and in which they are not writing their master's thesis (= Complementary Knowledge modules).

B) The students complete an interdisciplinary module. The focus here is on the acquisition of interdisciplinary competences as well as all disciplinary methods important for the degree program (= Interdisciplinary Research in Sustainability module).

C) In specific areas of sustainable development, the students acquire more advanced knowledge of the relevant systems and the specific challenges associated with their transformation (= Focal Areas in Sustainability Research module).

D) In the disciplinary area of the master's thesis, students acquire more advanced scientific competences that enable them to familiarize themselves with the scientific working methods used in the context of the master's thesis (= Core Competences module and Preparation Master's Thesis module).

#### **4.2 Optimal course progression**

Optimal course progression is recommended in each focus area. The relevant details can be found on the MSD website. Details about the courses are provided in the medium-term syllabus and the detailed course directory published online.

The MSD includes so called core lectures that must be attended to avoid exclusion. Furthermore, the attendance of these lectures is compulsory for the allocation of certain classes, as they provide knowledge essential for the successful completion of the degree program. Students are advised to attend these core lectures in the first fall semester.

#### **4.3 Choice of focus area**

Students will usually choose the focus area from within the same discipline as their first degree. They may choose a different focus area, but this will influence the content of the modules. Students with an interdisciplinary first degree also have a special starting point.

##### **4.3.1 Choice of focus area in a different discipline from the first degree**

Students may choose a focus area that differs from the discipline of their bachelor's degree. In such cases, the student must meet two criteria:

- In the discipline of the first degree, the relevant Complementary Knowledge module courses must be replaced with suitable master's courses. To this end, a learning agreement that stipulates the choice of courses for this module must be agreed in consultation with the faculty representative.
- In the chosen focus area, a discussion must be held with the faculty representative in order to determine any knowledge gaps and how they can be filled.

These clarifications must take place at the start of the degree program, if possible, but no later than at the end of the first semester. The same applies if the student switches at a later date.

##### **4.3.2 Choice of focus area with interdisciplinary first degree**

Students with an interdisciplinary first degree may have already attended some courses that are the same as or equivalent to the Complementary Knowledge module that they wish to study. In such case, the students must replace the courses concerned with suitable master's courses. To this end, a learning agreement that stipulates the choice of courses for this module must be agreed in consultation with the faculty representative.



## 4.4 Study objectives and content of each module

### 4.4.1 Complementary Knowledge module

The curriculum in this module (total of 12 CP) serves to teach the students basic and further knowledge in the disciplinary areas in which they usually have no knowledge from their first degree. These courses must be selected from a restricted list that is published in the medium-term syllabus and the course directory. Variation in the course selection is possible only if switching focus area or in the case of an interdisciplinary first degree (see section 4.3.1 and 4.3.2).

### 4.4.2 Interdisciplinary Research in Sustainability module

The module comprises the following 24 CP:

- An **introductory course** in the first fall semester (3 CP): In the introductory course (core lecture), participants are familiarized with the topic of sustainability from scientific perspectives.
- A course on **interdisciplinary work**, in the first fall semester (3 CP): In this core lecture, students' understanding of the terms interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity is clarified, the approaches to appropriate scientific work are presented, and knowledge of different tools and methodologies suitable for interdisciplinary work is imparted.
- Three courses on **disciplinary methods** (3 x 3 CP): These courses provide insights into the methods of the three main and related MSD disciplines that are particularly relevant to the degree program.
- An **interdisciplinary project** (6 CP): Its aim is to enable students to enhance the acquired knowledge by means of selected topics, to identify interdisciplinary interfaces, and to gain experience of working in interdisciplinary groups.
- Three **master's colloquia** (3 x 1 CP): During the master's colloquium, students present their master's thesis to their fellow students for discussion. It is important that the thesis is relevant to sustainability. The applied methods and results must be communicated to an interdisciplinary audience. The master's colloquium is attended for a total of three semesters; on a full-time course, it is attended in the second, third and fourth semesters.

This module is of central importance for the interdisciplinary degree program, so it contains two core lectures with special examination modalities (see section 5.1 Course formats).

### 4.4.3 Focal Areas in Sustainability Research module

The aim of this module (12 CP) is to enhance the acquired competences in a specific field of application in the area of sustainable development. The students must have adequate basic knowledge to take part in the courses. They will have acquired this knowledge either through their first degree (in this case, the module courses can be taken in the first semester) or by completion of the corresponding discipline-oriented Complementary Knowledge module.

The following criteria apply in selection of the courses:

- The thematic reference to sustainable development must be clear;
- the course must be a master's course.

The choice of courses is stipulated in a learning agreement (pursuant to study regulations, Art. 9), for which the template is provided to the student.

### 4.4.4 Core Competences module

Each focus area has a Core Competences module (each 15 CP). The choice of courses is published in the medium-term syllabus and the course directory. With the Core Competences module, students acquire the advanced knowledge that they need for the Master's degree program, both in terms of the chosen focus area and the sustainability topics.

#### **4.4.5 Preparation Master's Thesis module**

For preparation of the master's thesis, a Preparation Master's Thesis module (15 CP) is offered for each focus area, whereby all students must attend a course on Research Design (3 CP) before starting their thesis.

In addition, the courses attended for this module must be master's courses that can be assigned to the same discipline as the focus area. In addition, different provisions apply depending on the study focus:

##### **Focus area Natural Sciences**

The MSD Life Science Colloquium (1 CP) must be attended during the preparation and execution of the master's thesis. In addition to the above-mentioned Research Design course (3 CP), the remaining 11 CP are earned through practical work for the master's thesis (in consultation). If a seminar paper (5 CP) is also written, the practical work comprises a total of 6 CP (if not, then 11 CP).

The courses to be completed for this module and the requirements for the CP are stipulated in a learning agreement (pursuant to study regulations, Art. 9 para. 3).

##### **Focus area Social Sciences**

The credit points are earned as follows:

- Research Design course, 3 CP;
- Seminar paper, 5 CP (details are stipulated in a learning contract);
- Methods course, 3 CP;
- Research colloquium, 1 CP;
- Current topics, 3 CP.

##### **Focus area Economics**

In addition to the above-mentioned Research Design course (3 CP), CP are earned through courses that teach important disciplinary basics and methods. The courses are published in the medium-term syllabus and the course directory.

#### **4.4.6 Master's Thesis module**

The aim of the master's thesis is to demonstrate that the student is capable of scientific work. The master's thesis is a work of independent research on a topic relating to sustainability using scientific methods. The questions and methods are based on the selected focus area, but an interdisciplinary embedding should be shown. Interdisciplinary master's theses that combine questions or methods from different disciplines are encouraged.

Details of the application formalities for the master's thesis are summarized in factsheets. The following points should be noted in particular:

##### **4.4.6.1 Application requirements for the master's thesis**

To be admitted for the master's thesis, the students must have earned at least 50 program-relevant credit points as part of the MSD. In addition, they must provide proof of compliance with any additional assessment requirements (only for those students who apply to them).

This means: The credit points acquired must be recorded in the student's academic progress summary or – in the case of external courses – must be confirmed in writing with an official certificate from the educational institution/lecturer. If an examination is pending or if no certificate can be provided for the credit points, application for the master's thesis cannot be made.

Fulfillment of these criteria will be confirmed during the credit point check. The students will agree a date for this with the manager of the MSD coordination office. In addition to the admission letter, students must also provide the following documents, which provide information on the acquisition of the program-relevant CP (and any additional assessment requirements):

- Current academic progress summary;
- any learning agreements;
- any learning contracts;
- any application approvals.

#### **4.4.6.2 Choice of master's thesis reviewer**

The master's thesis is supervised and assessed by a qualified reviewer, who is the holder of a professorship at the University of Basel.

On request, it is possible to assign a second reviewer, who must have completed a doctorate as a minimum. Interdisciplinary work supervised jointly by lecturers from different faculties is actively supported.

The reviewer performs support functions during the development of the master's thesis.

#### **4.4.6.3 Application for the master's thesis**

To apply for the master's thesis, a form must be completed that specifies the start/end dates, the topic and the choice of reviewer. The application is submitted to the teaching committee (TC), which will then check it. Applications are processed in the TC meetings. The TC deadlines must be observed in order to ensure timely processing.

On approval of the application by the TC, the students must provide the committee with the completed learning contract for the master's thesis within three weeks. The period for the master's thesis begins on submission of this learning contract. If the learning contract has not been received within three weeks at the latest, a new application with a new topic must be submitted.

If the application is rejected, a new or revised application may be submitted. In such cases, the TC will explain its reasons for refusal and the further course of action.

#### **4.4.6.4 Topic selection**

The topic for the master's thesis is agreed between reviewer and the student. In the master's thesis, an issue relating to sustainability is addressed using scientific methods.

On receipt of the application for the master's thesis, the teaching committee will assess whether the topic adequately meets the objectives of the master's degree program (relation to sustainability, scientific specialization, interdisciplinary embeddedness).

#### **4.4.6.5 Duration of the master's thesis**

The students have a choice of two periods in which to complete the master's thesis (six or nine months). They must choose one of these periods when applying for the master's thesis.

For the nine-month period, specific data collection relevant to answer of the research question is compulsory. Theses that do not meet these criteria have a period of six months.

If a master's thesis is not submitted on time, it will be deemed as failed.

Extensions can be granted only in accordance with the details in section 5.5 (exam postponement, hindrance and absence, and failure to meet due dates).

#### **4.4.6.6 Submission of the master's thesis**

The students must submit the required copies (see MSD factsheets for focus areas) of the master's thesis to the coordination office on time (due date specified in the learning contract).

#### **4.4.6.7 Grading of the master's thesis and report**

The master's thesis is awarded a grade. The reviewer creates a report within eight weeks, in which he/she justifies award of the grade. The report is sent to the coordination office, which forwards it to the student.

If more than one reviewer evaluates the master's thesis, the final grade is calculated from the arithmetical mean of all grades.

If a reviewer grade is insufficient, or if or if there is a difference of one grade or more in the case of two reviewers, the teaching committee will request a further, independent report, including grading. If the final grade for the master's thesis is still 3.9 or below after this additional review, the thesis will be deemed as failed.

#### **4.4.6.8 Repeat attempt of a failed master's thesis**

A failed master's thesis can be repeated once. In such cases, the student must select a new topic and reapply for the master's thesis in accordance with the requirements.

If the master's thesis is failed at the second attempt, the teaching committee can request that the student is excluded from the master's degree program. The examination committee will communicate this to the student.

### **4.5 Completion of master's degree**

#### **4.5.1 Master's grade**

The final master's grade is calculated on the basis of the average graded course performance weighted according to credit points and rounded to one decimal place. Half decimals are rounded up.

#### **4.5.2 Documents: certificate, diploma and diploma supplement**

Students receive the diploma and the diploma supplement together with the certificate. These documents are created twice a year and, if possible, presented to the graduates at a graduation ceremony.

## **5. Course formats and assessment formats**

### **5.1 Types of courses**

- **Core lectures (CL)**

Core lectures provide students with the most important content, knowledge and approaches for the interdisciplinary, specialized master's degree program. They form the essential basis for progression through the MSD. A core lecture can be attended once and the examination can be retaken once. If the examination and repeat examination are failed, the student will be excluded from the program.

- **Lectures (L)**

Lectures with or without practical courses introduce the students to a specific area. As a rule, they provide an overview of the sub-areas of sustainable development. Often, lectures also provide initial orientation for more specialized classes and can therefore be a prerequisite for subsequent classes.

On **practical courses**, the students learn practical skills, build on material that has been covered in detail in the lectures, or practice new basic skills.

- **Seminars (S)**

In seminars, sub-aspects of sustainable development are covered in more detail. By means of selected issues, the students learn how to address and handle topics independently using relevant literature. Both lecturers and students are involved in preparation of the individual classes of a seminar.

- **Colloquia (Coll.)/courses (C)**

The colloquia and courses are used for the professional discussion and exchange of course material, current topics and research findings. Both lecturers and students participate. External experts from science and practice can also be involved.

- **Field trips (FT)**

On field trips lasting one or more days, acquired knowledge is demonstrated and methods are practiced. Insights are provided into ongoing research work and practical areas of application.

- **Internship (I)**

During internships, the students learn and practice methods. Various internships are offered, such as laboratory or research placements. A non-university vocational internship is not offered.

- **Project (Pro.)**

The students learn how to work in a project-related and research-oriented way. By means of specific questions, they learn how to work target-oriented in small interdisciplinary groups. In addition to subject-specific skills, the students use their methodical and social skills in particular.

## **5.2 Limit to number of participants, depending on course format**

For some MSD classes, the number of participants is limited; a separate application is therefore required in addition to the official course registration on MOnA. Details of the requirements are provided in the online detailed course directory.

## **5.3 Assessment formats**

An oral or written assessment must take place for each class before credit points can be awarded. This can include a graded final paper for a course. Individual and team performance can also be assessed with presentations, moderated discussions, written reports and essays. The assessment format for each class is announced in the course directory.

Aid material may be used for the assessment in accordance with the lecturer's guidelines, and is announced to the participants in due time.

If aid material or special measures are required for medical reasons, the students must inform the lecturer when applying for the assessment (usually = course registration).

### **5.3.1 Seminar paper performance record**

The **focus area Social Sciences/** Preparation Master's Thesis module includes a seminar paper. It is used to address a selected topic in more detail and always represents an additional award of 5 credit points. The seminar paper may be connected with attendance at a seminar (application and assessment directly via MOnA) or freely selected. In the latter case, the students apply in the form of a learning contract.

Students with **focus area Natural Sciences** have the opportunity to write a seminar paper as part of the Preparation Master's Thesis in Natural Sciences module. The application and specific terms for a seminar paper are stipulated in the learning agreement drawn up for the above-mentioned module.

## **5.4 Right to view**

After the assessment results have been announced, the students have the right to view the results and any reports. The inspection deadlines are announced by the relevant lecturers.

## 5.5 Exam postponement, hindrance and absence; failure to meet due dates

If students are unable to take an examination for valid reasons, or cannot meet the due dates for submitted work (essays, seminar papers, master's theses, etc.) on classes managed through the MSD, they must apply to the MSD teaching committee for a postponement.

- This must be done at least three weeks before the due date with assertion of the valid grounds;
- if the examination or due date is missed for health reasons, a medical certificate must be provided. If this is not possible immediately, then no later than five days after the missed examination or due date.

Students who do not deregister or submit proof of participation and do not apply for an extension in accordance with the requirements will be assessed as fail or non-attendance, or awarded the grade 1.0 (based on the grading scales in the course directory).

## 5.6 Unfair examination conduct

If the student uses dishonest means to influence or attempt to influence an examination result, the examination will be deemed as failed or awarded the grade 1.0; in the case of written papers, dishonest behavior is considered in particular to be unauthorized use of material by claiming authorship (plagiarism). The lecturers will report any such cases to the teaching committee.

In case of serious unfair examination conduct, in particular severe plagiarism, the student will be excluded from the program. The teaching committee will submit the request for exclusion to the examination committee, which will communicate the exclusion to the student.

## 6. Recognition of credit points

Students who wish to have study and examination credits earned before starting the master's degree program recognized for the MSD must apply to the teaching committee in writing, if possible by the end of the first semester. Such applications can be considered only if the academic achievement in question has not already been taken into account in this or another admission (i.e. is not part of the 180 CP of the bachelor's CP relevant for admission).

Applications for recognition of academic achievements acquired on the MSD program as part of a mobility semester must be submitted to the TC in due time; i.e. before the semester in question.

A factsheet is available for students with details regarding application for the recognition of credits that have or will be earned, as well as a template for submission of the application. The committee reserves the right to reject applications in justified cases.

## 7. Program responsibility and student advice

The three participating faculties are jointly responsible for the content and execution of this degree program.

The program distinguishes between the following responsibilities:

The teaching committee (TC) determines the strategic direction and the content on the master's program. The duties and composition of the TC are governed in the regulations for the master's degree program. It constitutes itself and is re-elected every two years. The TC issues the guidelines approved by the faculties, determines the medium-term syllabus and requests the assessment formats and credit points for the classes offered specifically on the MSD. In addition, it decides on any differences in the grading of assessments and informs the deans of studies accordingly. The rules for recognition of study and examination results are issued by the TC.

The deans of studies of the participating faculties form the examination committee (EC) and elect a chairperson from among their ranks according to the rotation principle. The chairperson ensures that decisions are made in accordance with the principle of collegiality, and also serves as the contact person. The EC decides on the admission recommendation of the TC for the master's degree program

and applies to the President's Board for admission. At the request of the TC, the EC approves the range of courses each semester, the number of credit points available for the courses, and the assessment formats.

Students who fail the course will be officially notified by the EC of their exclusion from the Master's Degree in Sustainable Development at the University of Basel.

As a central point of contact, the coordination office<sup>5</sup> is available to students for advice and questions related to the content of the master's degree program. In agreement with the TC, it performs the public relations work and ensures smooth execution of the classes and is the contact point to the relevant faculty representatives.

## 8. Transitional provisions

MSD students who started the program before August 1, 2017 can apply to switch to the new curriculum that applies from the fall semester 2017. The application must be submitted by 31 January 2018 at the latest. Details on switching, the recognized courses and the application will be announced at the beginning of the fall semester to the students enrolled under the old study regulations.

Approved by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Faculty of Science, and the Faculty of Business and Economics:

On behalf of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Dean of studies Prof. Dr. Miriam Locher

Basel, 1 June 2017

On behalf of the Faculty of Science

Dean of studies Prof. Dr. Stefan Antusch

Basel, 20 June 2017

On behalf of the Faculty of Business and Economics

Dean of studies Prof. Dr. Pascal Gantenbein

Basel, 8 May 2017

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<sup>5</sup> Coordination Office MSD Master's Degree in Sustainable Development  
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