SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Specialized Master's Degree

Master of Science: M Sc in Sustainable Development

Contributing to sustainable development is a contemporary challenge that must be approached in an interdisciplinary manner. Thus, in addition to specific disciplinary competences, the Master's Degree in Sustainable Development (MSD) draws on concerns of sustainability that are generated by the natural, social and economic sciences.
Methodological aspects of the curriculum include the analytical and integrative skills and knowledge necessary to work on complex questions relevant to sustainability, together with reflexive skills and proficiency in dealing with a broad range of instruments. Considerable importance is placed on competences facilitating and providing constructive work in interdisciplinary and research-based settings.

Focal area of teaching and research

The special feature of the MSD is its three-faculty-structure, formally recognizable by the three supporting faculties, but also by the equal treatment of the three pillars of sustainability – environmental, social and economic. Although the master's thesis is written in one of the three offered focus areas, it may be interdisciplinary in its orientation. This guarantees that students can approach sustainability issues from different perspectives.
The research focuses of the three professorships and their research groups anchored in the MSD are incorporated into teaching, and offer students the opportunity to write a master's thesis within the framework of a current research project; for example on microplastics, invasive species, energy management, environmental ethics, inter- and intragenerational justice, resource use, resource economics, etc.
By interrelating the supporting faculties, the three research groups, the responsible professorships and their teams, a very large network within and outside the University of Basel to cooperation partners is ensured.

Course structure

The MSD is a postgraduate degree that requires a successfully completed bachelor (for details see section on «Admission», next page). The program awards 120 ECTS credits in total. It is a so called «monocourse». At the beginning of their studies, students choose one of the three focus areas with corresponding master's thesis.

Curriculum Master's Degree in Sustainable Development	CP
Focus area Natural Sciences	
Complementary Knowledge in Social Sciences module	12
Complementary Knowledge in Economics module	12
Interdisciplinary Research in Sustainability module	24
Core Competences in Natural Sciences module	15
Preparation Master's Thesis in Natural Sciences module	15
Master's Thesis Natural Sciences	30
Focal Areas in Sustainability Research module	12
Total	120
Focus area Social Sciences	
Complementary Knowledge in Natural Sciences module	12
Complementary Knowledge in Economics module	12
Interdisciplinary Research in Sustainability module	24
Core Competences in Social Sciences module	15
Preparation Master's Thesis in Social Sciences module	15
Master's Thesis Social Sciences	30
Focal Areas in Sustainability Research module	12
Total	120
Focus area Economics	
Complementary Knowledge in Natural Sciences module	12
Complementary Knowledge in Social Sciences module	12
Interdisciplinary Research in Sustainability module	24
Core Competences in Economics module	15
Preparation Master's Thesis in Economics module	15
Master's Thesis in Economics	30
Focal Areas in Sustainability Research module	12
Total	120

One ECTS credit point roughly equals 30 hours of study.

Course language

The language of instruction is English; no language certificates are expected, although a good command of English is required (level B2 or higher).

Exams

Student performance is assessed throughout all courses by a variety of assessments: Written examinations, oral presentations, essays etc. Details are fixed in the detailed course directory.

Combination of subjects

There is no possibility to combine this master with other master programs.

Start of program

Students can begin their studies in fall or in spring semesters; although starting in fall is recommended.

Duration of study

The program lasts four semesters (full-time study/30 CP each semester). Part-time studying with a longer study time is possible and according to individual progress plan.
See also examples of optimal course progression plans: https://msd.unibas.ch/en/services/downloads/msd-2017/

Further degrees

The MSD qualifies students for a **doctorate** in natural, social, or economic sciences.

Career opportunities

The MSD teaches key competences in the field of sustainability and transdisciplinary project work. It is a science-based course of study that enables graduates to gain a foothold in the academic environment as well as in other professional areas. Whether at consulting firms, engineering offices, public authorities, large corporations, NPOs, political parties, banks or auditing firms - an enormous spectrum of job entry opportunities are offered to MSD graduates, which receive a challenging supplement through the foundation of start-ups.

Admission

To be admitted to the MSD, 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: Business administration, Economics, Geography, Communication and Media Studies, Philosophy, Political Science, Social and Cultural Anthropology, Social Work and Politics, Sociology, Applied Biosciences, Biology, Earth Sciences, Forestry, Environmental Sciences, or Environmental and Geomatics Engineering.

Further admission requirements:

a) A bachelor's degree with an average grade of at least 5.0/unrounded (Swiss scale) in the degree relevant for admission (formula for the conversion of grades awarded by foreign institutions: https://unibas.ch > Studies > Application & Admission > Admission > Conversion of the final grade into the Swiss grading;
b) Evidence of basic knowledge in mathematics, and in statistics or methods of empirical social research at university level in the form of at least 10 CP;
   i) at least 3 CP in mathematics and
   ii) at least 3 CP either in statistics or in methods of empirical social research.

See study guidelines for more details.

As an alternative to these conditions (a and b), current test results from the Graduate Record Examination® General Test (GRE® General Test) can be submitted. More details are explained in the study regulations or guidelines (on https://msd.unibas.ch > Services > Downloads > MSD 2017).

Details concerning admission requirements are to be found on: https://msd.unibas.ch/en/study-programs/admission-application-msd-2017/
Binding information under: https://unibas.ch/admission

Application

Application under https://unibas.ch/application; the application fee amounts to CHF 100.-. Application deadline for the fall semester is April 30, for the spring semester November 30.

Enrollment

The letter of admission informs students on the procedure of enrollment.

Tuition fees

Tuition fees per semester (also for examination semesters): CHF 850.-
Individual costs of living etc. are not included.
Scholarships and student loans: Applications should be sent to the responsible office of the canton in which the parents are eligible to pay their taxes. International students should find out what scholarships they are eligible for in their home country. The MSD cannot offer any scholarship.

Mobility

Mobility semesters are possible – abroad or within Switzerland. Details for mobility semesters must be clarified with the Teaching Committee MSD before the start of the mobility semester (for details see fact sheet on recognition of credit points: https://msd.unibas.ch (Services > Downloads > MSD 2017)

Further information:
Student Exchange, T +41 61 207 30 28, mobility@unibas.ch, https://unibas.ch/de/Studium/Mobilitaet

Further information

Guidelines and regulations

Guidelines (English and German) and study regulations (only in German) of the Master's Degree in Sustainable Development are available as downloads on: https://msd.unibas.ch (Services > Downloads > MSD 2017).
Detailed course directory, medium-term syllabus and timetable are also available as downloads on the same site.

Information about the University of Basel

- The course directory («Vorlesungsverzeichnis») can be found at: https://unibas.ch/vv
- Basler Studienführer: https://studienberatung.unibas.ch
- Homepage: https://unibas.ch

Student advice

Coordination office MSD, Camelia Chebbi, MA/MAS ETHZ/MAS NPPM FHNW (head)
Appointments for study counseling etc. are possible on agreement via: coordination-msd@unibas.ch
Opening hours of the coordination office according to information on the website:
https://msd.unibas.ch/en/organization/coordination-office/contact/

Contacts

Coordination Office MSD

Vesalgasse 1/2nd floor, room 02.07, 4051 Basel, T +41 61 207 04 20
https://msd.unibas.ch/en/organization/coordination-office/contact/
e-mail: coordination-msd@unibas.ch

Student Administration Office of the University of Basel

Petersplatz 1, 4001 Basel, T +41 61 207 30 23
https://unibas.ch, Enquiries: https://unibas.ch/studseksupportEN

Student Advice Center Basel

Steinengraben 5, 4051 Basel, T +41 61 207 29 29/30
https://studienberatung.unibas.ch, e-mail: studienberatung@unibas.ch

Imprint

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