



Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies

Application Guideline for admission to the doctoral programme in 2018

Thank you for your interest in the doctoral programme at Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies. This guideline will help you to prepare your application. **Please take some time and read the guideline carefully.**

1. Outline of your dissertation project

The outline of your proposed dissertation project should have a maximum of six pages and should include the following points:

- Summary (max. ½ page);
- Context, scientific questions and objectives of your research project;
- Current state of research and most relevant literature;
- Tentative theoretical framework and research methods;
- Source material;
- Time schedule.

Please note that you can submit an outline for one project only. Please format the outline properly, and include your name and page numbers.

2. Choice of discipline (see application form)

PhD students at BGSMS are concurrently enrolled in a university department – either at Freie Universität Berlin or at Humboldt-Universität Berlin, depending on the discipline and your first supervisor's affiliation. We therefore ask you to select the discipline in which you wish to obtain your PhD. It is important that the choice of discipline should relate to your previous academic achievements. Please select the discipline from the list enclosed in the application form (dropdown menu).

3. Suggested Principal Investigators (PIs) (see application form)

Two to three academic supervisors, so called Principal Investigators (PIs), are supervising every doctoral researcher. Please make sure that the discipline of your first PI corresponds with the discipline of your dissertation project (i.e. Islamic studies, Political Science etc.). Your first supervisor must be a PI of the Graduate School. Your second supervisor should be officially affiliated with BGSMS – please select their names from the list enclosed in the application form (dropdown menu) to indicate your preferred choices. **This selection is not binding and there is no need to contact the PIs during the application process.** Your supervisory committee will only be constituted after admission to our programme.

All the Principal Investigators affiliated with BGSMS are listed on our homepage:

<http://www.bgsmcs.fu-berlin.de/people/pis>. Please note that, as a rule, an *associate* PI cannot be chosen as your first Principal Investigator.

4. **Letters of recommendation (referees must be indicated in the application form)**

Two letters of recommendation by academic scholars (usually teaching at universities or colleges) are required. It is advisable to choose scholars who are familiar with your previous academic performance and/or your dissertation project. **Your referees should email their recommendations directly** to application@bgsmcs.fu-berlin.de **as signed electronic letters** (either a scan of the signed letter or a pdf with an electronic signature). Please make sure that the letters of recommendation arrive in good time. There are no formal requirements for the issues to be addressed in the letters. Holders of PhD scholarships that were awarded on the basis of academic references for the same project with which they are now applying to the Graduate School can submit copies of these references.

5. **Language skills (see application form)**

As **English** is the primary language of instruction and communication at BGS MCS, you are expected to have advanced English-language proficiency. Please hand in one of the following certificates as proof of proficiency in English:

- ETS TOEFL certificate (minimum score of 600 for the paper-based test, 250 for the computer-based test and 100 for the internet-based test);
- Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English, CPE (any grade);
- Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English, CAE (grade A or B);
- IELTS test (level 7.0).

If you cannot submit the test results with your application package because you have not received your score report yet, please inform us about the results as soon as possible. If you are invited, the last deadline for handing in the certificate is the date of your interview. Native speakers or applicants who have graduated from an English-speaking university in a country with English as an official language are exempt from this requirement.

In addition, we ask you to list the **language(s) relevant to your dissertation project** (e.g. Arabic, Turkish, Urdu etc.). As proof of your proficiency, you may hand in a transcript of records from your university, a certificate from a language school or the like.

6. **Certified copies of degrees**

You should submit certified copies of the following degrees:

- High school diploma (i.e. Abiturzeugnis, A-level, Baccalauréat or IB) or your country's equivalent document, qualifying for admission to university. A high school diploma is the last non-academic degree before a bachelor degree.
- Bachelor's certificate
- Master's certificate – if you cannot submit your MA degree with your application package either because you have not received the document yet but expect it to arrive shortly or because you are in the final stage of your exams or thesis, you may hand in your application anyway – please indicate the expected date of completion of your M.A. studies. The admission and grants committee will decide whether your (incomplete) application can be assessed as qualified. It is not possible to do a PhD in our programme without an M.A. degree.

Certified copies of your degrees can be issued by your university. If your certificates are issued in languages other than English or German, please submit certified English or German translations.

7. Submission of application

The application package, complete with all documents signed and scanned and compiled into **one PDF file**, should be sent by email to:

application@bqsmcs.fu-berlin.de

We will only consider your application if it is complete and sent in one PDF file. Please do not send any other materials except those listed in the call for applications, and do not hand in documents as separate files. We do not offer a pre-submission check of your application package.

The application deadline is **31 January 2018 12:00 pm Central European Time**.

We send out confirmations of receipt as soon as possible after receiving your application – this may take a few days after the deadline. Please refer from asking us for a confirmation.

8. Schedule

Interviews with shortlisted applicants will take place in early May 2018. If you cannot be present in Berlin, the interview can be organised via Skype or telephone. We will contact shortlisted candidates in late April 2018.

Please understand that we are unable to give you information on the application process or provide you with an individual review of your application before the Admissions and Grants committee has nominated applicants for admission. We will inform all applicants about the outcome after the admission process has been completed in May 2018.

If you have further questions, please contact: application@bqsmcs.fu-berlin.de

We look forward to receive your application!