Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies

Application Guideline for admission to the doctoral programme in 2020

Thank you for your interest in the doctoral programme at the 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**. Please note:

- **We will only consider your application if it is complete. If for any justified reason you are unable to upload a required document, please upload a pdf-file with an explanation about the unavailability of the required document.**
- **Please do not send any other materials except those listed in the call for applications.**
- **We do not offer a pre-submission check of your application package.**

1. Outline of your dissertation project

The outline of your proposed dissertation project should have a maximum of six pages, and 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 (separate document).

Please note that you can upload an outline for <u>one</u> project only. Please format the outline properly, and include your name and page numbers.

2. Choice of discipline

PhD students at BGSMCS 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.

3. Suggested Principal Investigators (PIs)

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 BGSMCS – please select their names from 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 BGSMCS 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

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 upload their recommendations directly** to the application platform **as signed electronic letters** (either a scan of the signed letter or a pdf with an electronic signature). We do not accept Emails as recommendation letters. 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

As **English** is the primary language of instruction and communication at BGSMCS, you are expected to have advanced English-language proficiency. A proof of your proficiency in English is a formal requirement for admission for PhD studies at Freie Universität Berlin and at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. **Please note that only 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. There are no other exemptions and this requirement is not negotiable.**
Please upload 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 January 15, 2020.

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. Original and certified copies of degrees

You should submit original and certified scans 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 upload an official confirmation from your University that indicates 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. **Curriculum Vitae (CV / Resume)**

Please upload your CV as a pdf-file. It should detail your educational career, and list any relevant work experience. Your publications can be uploaded in a separate file.

8. **Submission of application**

The application package, complete with all documents, can only be submitted via the application platform.

The application deadline is **7 October 2019, 12:00 noon Central European Time**.

9. **Schedule**

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 results of the evaluation after January 20, 2020.

Interviews will be scheduled between 4 and 14 February 2020. If you cannot be present in Berlin, the interview can be organised via Skype or telephone. The admission process will be completed on 21 February.

If you have further questions, please contact us under this Email address: **application@bgsmcs.fu-berlin.de**

Please do not send the same Email to other addresses at the Graduate School. We will answer all questions, but it sometimes may take a few days until we can get back to you.

We look forward to receiving your application!