

Università
della
Svizzera
italiana

Faculty
of
Biomedical
Sciences

Study regulations 2021

7 October 2021



The University Council (USI Council), taking into account the Law on the Università della Svizzera italiana, the University of Applied Sciences, and Research Institutes of 3 October 1995 (art. 11), and the Regulation for admission and enrolment at USI of 14 April 2000, decrees:

Art 1. Scope and referral

1. The present regulations govern the procedures for examination and validation required to obtain the medical qualifications awarded by the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences:
 - Bachelor of Medicine (B Med);
 - Master of Medicine (M Med).
2. The awarding of a doctorate in medicine (Dr. med.), a research doctorate in biomedicine (PhD), a continuing education qualification (Certificate, Diploma, Master of Advanced Studies), and any other qualification is governed by separate specific regulations.
3. For the Master in Cognitive Psychology in Health Communication (MPHC), whose title is issued by the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences jointly with the Faculty of Psychology of the University San Raffaele, Milan, applies of the Study regulations for students enrolled from the academic year 2020/2021 of the Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society, and the *Directives completing and supplementing the Regulations of the Master in Cognitive Psychology in Health Communication*, of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences. For litigation, however, reference is made to the instances of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences.
4. The conditions for admission to the Faculty and relative tuition fees are defined in the Regulation for admission and enrolment at USI.

Art 2. ECTS credits

1. The calculation of study credits is made in observance of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The amount of ECTS credits per learning unit shall correspond to the average real effort. It is assumed that one ECTS credit corresponds to 25-30 hours of actual student work.
2. The Bachelor of Medicine consists of 180 ECTS, corresponding to a standard study period of three years full-time.
3. The Master of Medicine includes 180 ECTS, corresponding to a standard study period of three years full-time¹.

* Translation of the official Italian language version.

4. The Master of Cognitive Psychology in Health Communication consists of 120 ECTS, corresponding to a standard study period of two years full-time.
5. The acquisition of credits is the result of passing the relevant examinations or other forms of evaluation.

**Art. 3
Language**

1. The Bachelor of Medicine courses are taught in German. Individual teaching units can be held in English.
2. The Master of Medicine courses are taught in English. Individual teaching units can be held in Italian.

**Art 4.
Start of
studies**

A Bachelor of Medicine, Master of Medicine or Master in Cognitive Psychology in Health Communication can be started in the autumn semester only.

Chapter II

Admission to medical studies

**Art. 5
Admission
to the Bachelor
of Medicine**

1. The requirements and procedure for admission to medical studies and the allocation of study places are defined in the *Sectoral Regulations for limitation of admission to medical studies at the Università della Svizzera italiana*, in the *General Regulation for admission and matriculation at USI*, and in the present *Study regulations*.
2. The application deadline for medical studies is set by Swissuniversities, every year on 15 February. Late applications shall not be considered.
3. Admission to medical studies is gained through Swissuniversities, while the enrolment in subsequent semesters follows the provisions of USI.

**Art 6.
Admission
to the Master
of Medicine**

1. Admission to the Master of Medicine requires a Bachelor of Medicine of 180 ECTS or equivalent, obtained at a university acknowledged by USI.
2. Bachelor of Medicine graduates from a Swiss university are admitted to the Master in Medicine without any conditions, depending on the availability of study places.
3. For all other Bachelor's degrees from an acknowledged university, equivalence to the Bachelor of Medicine is validated for its content.
4. Students who have been excluded from medical studies at any other university or from a comparable course of study, or who have already completed such a course at a Swiss university at the Master's level, are not admitted to the USI Master in Medicine.
5. The priority for the allocation of study places is defined in the *Sectoral Regulations for limitation of admission to medical studies at the Università della Svizzera italiana*. Please refer to this text for additional information.
6. For details, please refer to the *Sectoral Regulations for limitation of admission to medical studies at the Università della Svizzera italiana*.

Chapter III Bachelor of Medicine

Art. 7 Bachelor of Medicine

1. Students enrolled at USI shall complete the Bachelor' of Medicine at the University of Basel (UniBas) or at the University of Bern (UniBE).
2. The regulations for the Bachelor of Medicine of the Faculties of Medicine of UniBas and UniBE shall apply to the organization of the studies and for the validation of knowledge acquired.
3. The Bachelor of Medicine Diploma and Diploma supplement are issued by USI.
4. The Bachelor of Medicine Diploma and Diploma supplement are issued by USI.
5. The degree transcript (Zeugnis) supplementing the diploma is provided by the respective universities (UniBas or UniBE).
6. Any measures of exclusion from medical studies are the responsibility of USI upon proposal of the Faculty of Medicine of UniBas or UniBE.

Chapter IV Master of Medicine

Art 8. General structure

1. The Master's degree program includes:
 - four semesters of theoretical and clinical training (I-IV semester)
 - one semester of clinical practice (V semester);
 - one final semester for the complementary topics, the completion of the Master thesis, and repetition blocs (VI semester).
2. The clinical training consists of
 - 2 days a week, for 12 weeks, during the I-IV semester in affiliated health care facilities
 - 16 days at private practices during the second year of the Master of Medicine, 8 days at general practitioners and 8 days in pediatrics practices
3. Participation in clinical training is mandatory and supervised as indicated by the Curriculum Committee².

Art 9. Bodies and responsibilities

1. The bodies responsible for organizing the study program and the examinations are
 - a. the Study officer (DS)
 - b. the Examination officer (DE)
 - c. the Study Board (CS)
 - d. the Examination Board (EC)
2. The DS is a full professor of the Faculty, coordinator for the organization of the Master's program.
3. The DE is a full professor of the Faculty that ensures the application of the present regulations in all matters related to the examinations.
4. The CS includes 4 professors, the person responsible for clinical practice and the DS who chairs the Board. It defines the study program in all its details and oversees the Master's thesis.
5. The EC includes 4 professors responsible of the study modules, the head of the clinical exams (OSCE) and the DE who chairs the Board. It defines the examination program in all its details and, in particular, decides in the first instance on disputes relating to the examinations.

Art 10. Obtaining the title	<p>The Master of medicine is obtained after:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • passing the exams at the end of each of the first four semesters, which are related to the modules taught during the corresponding semester (30 ECTS for each semester); • completing one semester of clinical practice (30 ECTS); • writing the Master's thesis (15 ECTS); • receiving approval for the required portfolio cases; • attending the exams of the VI semester.
Art 11. Assessment of knowledge	<p>The knowledge acquired is assessed by means of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple-choice written exams; • Objective structured clinical examinations (OSCE); • Master thesis.
Art 12. Conditions of progress during studies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enrolment to semester III is subject to the successful completion of the first year's examinations (60 ECTS). 2. The start of the elective term during semester V is subject to the successful completion of multiple choice exams in the second year (60 ECTS). 3. Enrolment to semester VI is subject to the documented completion of the clinical practice during the elective term. 4. Repetition of the first or second year implies the repetition of both theoretical education and clinical practice.
Art 13. Evaluation system	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The assessment grade, depending on the type of evaluation, is either pass/fail or numerical, on a scale of 1 to 10 with increments of 0.5, where 10 is the highest and 6 the minimum pass mark³. 2. The assessments of written examinations are numerical. Assessments for clinical examinations are pass/fail. 3. The written examination assessed with a grade less than 6 may be repeated a maximum of two times (disregarding recovery sessions). 4. A failed clinical examination may be repeated the following year and does not imply the repetition of the year. 5. The ECTS credits corresponding to each teaching unit are acquired when the relevant examination obtains a pass mark or validated otherwise. In the pass/fail assessment, pass is required in all cases.
Art 14. Examination sessions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two exam sessions are foreseen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One regular session; • One retake session. 2. At the end of each semester there is a regular session (winter and summer). Before the beginning of the autumn semester, a make-up session (autumn) is foreseen. 3. At least one written multiple choice examination is scheduled for each session. It covers the study program of the previous semesters. 4. Clinical examinations (OSCEs) take place at the end of semesters I, II, IV and VI. 5. The autumn retake session is organized based on registered candidates.

Art 15. Registration for exams	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A student duly enrolled to the Faculty, who paid the tuition fee in accordance to the <i>General regulations for admission and enrolment at USI</i> and who meets the conditions set out in the present Regulations may be registered for the exams. 2. The exam registration for all students enrolled in the semester is automatic. 3. The Studies Administration Office is responsible for communicating any impediments. However, with regards to the deadlines set out in both the study plan and the present Regulations, the responsibility lies with the student itself. 4. If the candidate has registered or has been admitted or has taken an exam without being entitled to it, the exam will be considered null and void by the Studies Administration Office at the time of registration of the grade.
Art. 16 Withdrawal from exams	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student may withdraw from an exam up to five days before the date set for the latter, communicating this in writing (by post or e-mail) to the Studies Administration Office. The date of the postmark or of the electronic transmission applies. 2. The registration is, in the above mentioned case, considered as not having taken place. For exams already taken in the same session, the grades obtained for each exam are retained, whatever the result, regardless of the justification for withdrawal from other exams 3. A student who fails to appear or to complete an examination without valid justification shall be deemed to have failed that examination. 4. Any justification is considered only if it is submitted by the student to the Studies Administration Office in writing within ten days of the exam itself. The reason for the absence must be compelling (serious health problems or other severe impediment) and duly substantiated by the student. The DE may ask for more in-depth clarifications regarding the justification or a medical certificate and, if necessary, may refer the matter to a trusted physician.
Art. 17 Multiple-choice written examination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The multiple-choice written examination (Multiple choice, MC) is a test in which the knowledge and skills acquired during the prior semester are evaluated. 2. Starting from the second semester, the knowledge and skills acquired in all prior semesters are evaluated. 3. The definition of the MC exam questions is the competency of each responsible of module and of transversal topics in collaboration with the designated teachers. 4. EC validates all MC exam questions. 5. For each semester one MC exam is organized. The exam duration is four hours for semesters I and II and four and a half hours for semesters III, IV and VI. 6. The validation criteria for the MC exam questions are defined by the EC. 7. The evaluation of the MC exam questions may be performed by a third-party specialized institute.

Art. 18 Objective structured clinical examination

8. For the transition to the following year, the average of the two semesters MC exams is applied.
9. A maximum of two exam retakes per year are permitted. A third failure leads to exclusion from medical studies at any Swiss university.
1. The Objective Clinical Structured Examination (OSCE) is a practical test that evaluates the clinical capabilities of students.
2. There are 4 examinations:
 - a formative examination with feedback at the end of the semester I, with 6 stations on the contents of the same semester.
 - a formative examination with feedback at the end of the semester II, with 4 stations on the contents of the same semester.
 - a summative examination at the end of semester IV with 10 stations on the contents of semesters I, II, III and IV,
 - a formative examination with feedback at the end of semester VI, with 6 stations on the contents of the entire study course.
3. Participation at the OSCEs is compulsory.
4. The assessment and satisfaction criteria of the OSCE are defined by the EC.
5. The OSCE assessment of semesters I-II-VI is formative. The evaluation of the OSCE at the end of the IV semester is summative. There are no OSCE retake sessions. The OSCE failed at the end of Semester IV may be repeated the following year and does not entail repeating the year.
6. For each individual station, the active participation of simulated patients referred to a clinical case prepared by the CE is planned.

Art. 19 Final Master examination

1. The exams of the IV Master are considered final summative examinations and include
 - an MC exam that tests, in addition to the notions acquired in the 4th semester, all the knowledge set out in the syllabus
 - an OSCE consisting of 10 stations.
2. Repetitions
 - These examinations may be repeated a maximum of 2 times.
 - Retakes are only organized in the summer session

Art. 20 Optional courses

1. The study curriculum includes a wide range of optional courses whose list is defined annually by the Study Commission. An optional course is activated with at least 5 applicants.
2. Each optional course includes 12 hours of lessons and is awarded with 1 ECTS.
3. Students enroll in two optional courses per semester. Each student is required to take 4 optional courses in each of the first two years of the Master of Medicine if the student has not acquired the requested number of optional courses, these can be attended during the following year.
4. Attendance at selected optional courses is mandatory. Only one absence per course is allowed. The teacher may grant additional absences. In this case he/she may assign additional homework.

Art. 21 Additional support and assistance for exams

5. The form and mode of assessment is the responsibility of the teacher.

1. Information concerning the use of additional tools for examinations is communicated to students well before beginning the exams' sessions.
2. Students needing special assistance or arrangements for medical reasons in order to take the exams must notify the DS before registering for the exams.

Art. 22 Unlawful acts

If, in the course of an examination, there are indications that a student is resorting to illicit means, the supervisors must submit a written report to the DE, which, if appropriate, will initiate the procedure provided for in Art. 31 of the present Regulation.

Art. 23 Collecting and disclosing examination questions

1. Given the prevailing public interest in providing reliable and valid examinations, it is prohibited to collect or disclose examination questions.
2. Any written or digital recording of examination questions during an exam session will result in failing the exam with grade 1.
3. The collection or disclosure of exam questions after the examination may be punished by disciplinary measures in accordance with Art. 31 of the present Regulations.
4. The EC may also request the Rectorate to exclude the student from one or more semesters or to exclude them completely from the program.

Art. 24 Examination review

In a complaint or appeal instance, the student concerned has the right to view the examination for a period limited to one hour for MC and half an hour for OSCE, limited to the parts deemed to be incorrect.

Art. 25 Portfolio

1. The portfolio is a collection of clinical cases discussed and approved by the referring lecturer in the context of the patient's bedside training or in the medical practices provided in the individual modules.
2. The clinical case is described in the form of a structured report.
3. Clinical cases are defined by the module responsible.
4. The number of clinical cases is defined annually by the CS based on the proposals of the module owners and communicated to the students.

Art. 26 Master's thesis

1. The Master thesis (MT) is a paper written individually that proves the student's ability to apply a suitable methodology to analyze and investigate a topic in clinical, biomedical, bioinformatic or leading up to humanistic fields.
2. The list of MT topics with indication of the corresponding thesis director is made available to students.
3. The thesis director is a member of the Faculty (full professor, assistant professor, associate professor, private lecturer, teacher researcher, MER, group leader of affiliated institutes) or a

professor of a Faculty of (bio) medicine at another Swiss university or a third party with the prior approval of the board of professors.

4. The thesis director may be assisted by a co-director appointed by him/her.
5. The supervision of MT may be delegated to third parties, while the responsibility remains with the thesis director in these cases as well.
6. The thesis director defines the content, the plan and the method of the MT in the structured form provided for and signed jointly with the student and provides, if necessary, for its submission and approval by the competent Ethics Committee.
7. The final version of the MT must be submitted by 31 May of the third year of the Master's.
8. The thesis director approves or rejects the MT.
9. In the latter case, the student submits a new MT on a new topic. A second failure leads to exclusion from medical studies at a Swiss university.
10. For further details, please refer to the "Directives for the Master's thesis".

Art. 27 Elective term

1. The Elective term (semester of clinical practice) consists of at least six months of clinical activity in an acknowledged institution in Switzerland or abroad.
2. For more details, please refer to the "Directives for the Elective term".

Chapter V General provisions

Art. 28 Acknowledge- ment of studies undertaken at other Faculties

1. The Faculty may accept the enrolment of students who have studied at another Faculty after the first semester of the USI Bachelor's program, on the basis of the equivalence of the courses attended and passed at the given Faculty with the courses given at the USI Faculty of Biomedical Sciences, following the principles applicable for student mobility and equal treatment.
2. For examinations taken within the framework of mobility programs, the relevant regulations apply.

Art. 29 Request for equivalence

Due to the fact that the examinations are semester-long, no requests for equivalence are allowed.

Art. 30 Leave

1. In the event of maternity, compulsory military or community service, severe illness or other circumstances which, in the opinion of the Dean, represent significant obstacle for the proper conduct of studies, the student may be granted leave which, as a rule, may not exceed two semesters. Any exception is subject to the authorization of the Dean.
2. The student on leave shall maintain his or her enrolment by paying a reduced tuition fee, in accordance with the *General regulations for admission and matriculation* at USI and shall benefit from the legitimacy as a student without attending any educational activity.
3. As a rule, students on leave do not have the right to take exams or defend their Master's thesis.
4. The student on leave in the autumn semester is suspended from the following winter examination session. Students on leave in the spring semester are suspended from the following summer and autumn exam sessions. During proven maternity, military or community service or severe illness leave, it is possible to take the exams of courses that have already been attended.

**Art. 31
Disciplinary
measures**

1. The Faculty Council may sanction with the disciplinary measures provided for in the following paragraph related to the following behavior of students:
 - Indiscipline and violation of the internal university rules;
 - Recourse to illicit means during a written or oral examination;
 - Plagiarism in the drafting of a written work (semester paper, internship or project report, Master's thesis, etc.); in particular, plagiarism is committed when a student delivers a written work that has not been drafted, even if only in part, by him/herself or in which the research results or third-party research are passed off as his/her own.
2. For the cases mentioned in Art. 31 para 1, the Dean, who carried out the investigation by the DE and the Dean himself, in accordance with the student's right to be heard, may pronounce (even cumulatively) the following disciplinary measures, taking into account the student's responsibility and the seriousness of the offence:
 - A warning;
 - The cancellation of the exam or written work in which the illegal act was found; in this case, the exam or written work will be marked with the grade 1 and considered as failed;
 - The suspension from one or more examination sessions, with the possibility nevertheless to attend courses;
 - The suspension for one or more semesters from the possibility to acquire credits relating to written works;
 - The suspension from one or more semesters and consequently from the exams related to the courses given in the suspended semesters;
 - The cancellation of all examinations taken in the session in which the offence was found; in this case, the examinations will be marked with the grade 1 and considered as failed.
3. Other university bodies are reserved the right to pronounce the exclusion of the student or to report the facts to other authorities.
4. The concerned student may file a complaint against the Dean's decision to the Faculty, on behalf of which the Complaints Commission decides.

**Art. 32
Litigation**

1. All decisions relevant to the student's rights or expectations, including exam assessments, shall be communicated in writing.
2. If such decisions are taken in particular by the Dean, the DE, individual instructors, examination juries, commissions or services, the student may file a complaint and seek a decision by the Faculty, on behalf of which the Complaints Committee shall decide.
3. The student may appeal against the Faculty's decisions to the Cantonal Administrative Court, Via Pretorio 16, 6901 Lugano.
4. Complaints and appeals must be submitted within 30 days from the notification of the decision and justified in writing. The law of procedure for administrative cases of the Canton of Ticino applies by analogy, excluding interruptions for judicial holidays.
5. A fee of up to CHF 500 may be charged for rejected appeals in whole or in part and usually requested on deposit prior to the decision.

**Art. 33
Revision**

1. These Regulations or the individual provisions thereof may be amended by the Faculty Council by an absolute majority of its members.
2. Any proposed amendment must be placed on the agenda in advance and communicated to the members at least 10 days before the meeting of the Faculty Council.

**Art. 34
Effective
date**

These Regulations enter into force on 16 February 2023 and replace the previous Regulation of 7 January 2021. It applies to all students enrolled from the academic year 2020-21.

1. The training program of the 1. – 4. semester shall be calculated as follows:

- 2 introductory weeks = 3 ECTS
- 2 transversal disciplinary hours per week x 12 weeks = 3 ECTS
- 2 multidisciplinary hours per week x 12 weeks = 3 ECTS
- 4 hours per week in groups of 24 x 12 weeks = 5 ECTS
- 4 hours per week in groups of 8 x 12 weeks = 5 ECTS
- 2 optional courses = 2 x 12 hours = 2 ECTS
- 2 days at a clinic of hospital = 15 hours effective x 12 weeks = 180 hours = 6 ECTS
- 8 hours of individual study = 8 x 12 = 96 hours = 3 ECTS

A total of 30 ECTS per semester, in accordance with the criteria in force under the "Bologna system":

- 1 ECTS= 25-30 hours total work time
- 1 semester = 30 ECTS = 750-900 hours total.

2. For example: via Checkpoint platform

3. Valutazione scalare:

ECTS grade A	10	6	Excellent
ECTS grade B	9 – 9,5	5,5	Very good
ECTS grade C	8 – 8,5	5	Good
ECTS grade D	7 – 7,5	4,5	Satisfying
ECTS grade E	6 – 6,5	4	Sufficient
ECTS grade F	5 – 5,5	3,5	Insufficient
ECTS grade FX	4 – 4,5	3	Largely insufficient
ECTS grade FX	3 – 3,5	2,5	Poor

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