

M.A. Governance and Public Policy

A degree programme of the Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences

The information in this infosheet is pertinent for the degree programme starting in winter semester 2025–26.

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[Web page of the degree programme](#)
Information for prospective students

PDF download



Application process

Programme start: October (winter semester)

Language of instruction: The degree programme can be studied entirely in English. Module areas B and C include a number of German-taught modules that are offered as electives; however, students do not have to take these and they are not necessary for successful completion of the programme.

Entry requirements

To apply for this degree programme, you need an undergraduate university degree in one or more social sciences or in economics or a law degree. The final grade for your degree must be **2.5** (or better) according to the German grading system.¹ If your degree falls short of the minimum grade requirement, you can still be admitted if you can provide an official document from your prior university stating that you were among the best 70% of your cohort (i.e. your fellow students in the same exam period).

You must provide the following documents:

- The (final or preliminary) transcript/Transcript of Records for your prior undergraduate study. Your transcript should show that you have completed
 - **60 ECTS credits'** worth of modules in the **social sciences and/or economics and/or law** as well as
 - **social and/or economic research modules** in the amount of **10 ECTS credits**. Examples of such research modules are mathematics, statistics or empirical social research.
- A recognised certificate showing **English language skills at level B2** of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

International applicants with a university degree from abroad must provide proof of [German language skills at level A1](#) CEFR. This is generally done by means of a recognised language certificate. If you cannot provide this at the time of application or enrolment, you can still be enrolled on the programme; however, you will have to complete a free German language course at our Language Centre and submit the certificate before the end of your first year at the University of Passau.

Starting your studies before completing your prior undergraduate degree

You can begin your studies before obtaining your first university degree if you have earned at least **140 ECTS credits** in your first degree programme by the start of the first semester of your master's degree programme in Passau. To do so, you must be able to show that you have gained 60 ECTS credits in social sciences and/or economics and/or law as well as 10 ECTS credits in social research methods. (NB: One ECTS credit equates to 30 hours of study, including lectures and self-study.)

Please submit a transcript of records showing the number of semesters studied, the coursework and examinations completed to date and the ECTS credit points earned, as well as the provisional final grade (2.5 or better).

If you are enrolled in this manner, you will have to submit the degree certificate and final transcript for your prior undergraduate degree to the Student Registration Office by the end of your first year at the University of Passau (no later than 30 September). This deadline stands, even if you take official leave of absence during your studies. Proof of **English language skills at level B2 CEFR** must already be available at the time of application.

How to apply

[Please apply online.](#)

The application deadline for the winter semester is **15 July** for **direct applications** at the campus portal of the University of Passau. If you have to apply via **uni-assist**, the deadline is already **30 June**.

If you have any questions about the application process, please get in touch with the [Student Registration Office](#), Innstrasse 41, 94032 Passau, Germany; phone: +49 851 509 1127; e-mail: registry@uni-passau.de.

¹ Your final grade will be converted by the University during the application process. Try out our [grade converter](#) to find out your probable German grade. Please keep in mind that lower numbers denote better grades in the German grading system, so that, for instance, a 2.0 is a better result than a 3.0.

Information for new students

Please visit our website to find out everything you need to know as you're [starting out on your studies](#) and for information on the [Orientation Weeks](#).

The following **videos** are particularly helpful for new students:

- [At the start of the degree programme](#)
- [Semester cycle](#)
- [Important documents for your studies](#)
- [ECTS credits and the standard period of study](#)
- [Course types](#)
- [Language courses and placement tests](#)
- [Examinations](#)
- [Online portals for your studies](#)
- [Scientific methods](#)
- [Leisure activities](#)
- [Advice centres](#)

Modules, module catalogue, overall grade calculation, courses

The curriculum is modularised, and each module has a specific ECTS credit load. When you pass a module exam, you acquire the number of ECTS credits allotted for that module. You will also get a mark on your exam; however, this does not affect the number of ECTS credits awarded. As this master's degree programme comprises a total of 120 ECTS credits, you should aim to secure **approx. 30 ECTS credits each semester** to complete the programme within the standard period of study.

In the **module catalogue**, you will find detailed descriptions of the content of all modules and courses, as well as any module prerequisites and information on the examination format. There is no fixed sequence in which you should complete your module examinations; however, you should generally pass the introductory modules before attempting the more advanced modules.

All modules of the degree programme are examination modules and are graded, with the exception of the modules in module area C and the Master's Seminar module. The final grade for your degree is calculated based on the ECTS-weighted module marks and the mark you attain on your master's thesis.

The individual courses for the modules can be found in **Stud.IP**, the University's learning management system: [master's programmes on Stud.IP](#)

OVERVIEW OF MODULES

When planning out your degree programme, please use the **module catalogue** and check that they are applicable to the specific version of the [study and examination regulation](#) under which you are studying the programme.

Module area A: Foundation

You will complete two module groups and acquire a total of **40 ECTS credits**.

Module group Governance and State in Globalised Societies

This module group comprises modules amounting to **25 ECTS credits**. The modules *Perspectives on Governance (and Tutorial Academic Research and Writing)* and *Political Theory and Comparative Politics* are compulsory modules. You will choose between the compulsory elective modules *International Politics and Political Aspects of Development* and *Sociology*.

Course format	Module name	Type of assessment	WCH	ECTS
(L) and (E)	Perspectives on Governance (and Tutorial Academic Research and Writing)	written exam	3	5
(MC)	Political Theory and Comparative Politics	Written assignment/portfolio/ oral exam	2	10
(MC)	International Politics and Political Aspects of Development	Written assignment/portfolio/ oral exam	2	10
(MC)	Sociology	Written assignment/portfolio/ oral exam	2	10
Total: three modules			7	25

Module group Empirical Research Methods in the Social Sciences

The module group comprises compulsory modules amounting to **15 ECTS credits**.

Course format	Module name	Type of assessment	WCH	ECTS
(S)	Research Design	Written exam/written assignment	2	5
(MC)	Qualitative/Quantitative Research Methods	Written assignment	2	10
Total: two modules			4	15

Total in module area A: two module groups	11	40
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Module area B: Specialisation

Module area B comprises compulsory modules amounting to **40 ECTS credits**.

Module group Integration and Governance

Course format	Module name	Type of assessment	WCH	ECTS
(MC)	Power, Authority and Democracy	Written assignment/portfolio/oral exam	2	10
(MC)	Conflict, Inequality and Violence	Written assignment/portfolio/oral exam	2	10
Total: two modules			4	20

Module group Regulation and Governance

Course format	Module name	Type of assessment	WCH	ECTS
(MC)	Regulation and Transformation	Written assignment/portfolio/oral exam	2	10
(MC)	Sustainability and Values	Written assignment/portfolio/oral exam	2	10
Total: two modules			4	20

Total in module area B: two module groups	8	40
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Module area C: Transfer

Module area C has a scope of **10 ECTS credits**. You can choose between the modules *Language Course*, *Internship* and *Research Tutorial*.

If you opt for the Language Course module, you will complete foreign language courses amounting to 10 ECTS credits. You can choose between the specialised language programmes for Cultural Studies, Business/Economics and Law (subject-specific foreign language training).

The following languages are offered:

- German as a foreign language (starting from level A2 CEFR)
- Czech
- Chinese
- French
- English (starting from level C1 CEFR)
- Indonesian
- Italian
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish
- Thai

If you choose the **Internship module**, you will complete an internship of at least eight weeks (see [internship guidelines](#)).

Course format	Module name	Type of assessment	WCH	ECTS
(E)	Language Course	Written exam/combined written and oral exam	4-8	10
(PT)	Internship	Report	–	10
(S)	Research Tutorial	Portfolio	2	10
Total: one module			up to 8	10

Master' Seminar

In addition to the master's thesis, you will complete the ungraded, compulsory Master's Seminar module. This is one of the research seminars offered – and should preferably be supervised by the same person who supervises your master's thesis.

Course format	Module name	Type of assessment	WCH	ECTS
(S)	Master's Seminar	Presentation	2	5
Total: one module			2	5

Abbreviations used

ECTS credits: Credit points under the *European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System* (ECTS)

WCH: Contact teaching hours per week during the semester

(MC): Masterclass

(PT): Internship

(S): Seminar

(L): Lecture

(E): Exercise course

During your studies

Internships

In module area C, you can complete an internship of at least eight weeks in accordance with the [internship guidelines](#). The University will not issue you a ready-made internship; you will need to organise the internship yourself.

Our Future: Careers and Competencies Section (ZKK) is on hand to support you in your internship search. Please note that you may be eligible for a [scholarship](#) for internships abroad. Visit our website for [internship recommendations](#).

Studying or working abroad; double degree options

As part of your studies you can [study or complete an internship abroad](#). In addition, the University of Passau offers various double degree options as part of the M.A. Governance and Public Policy programme:

- [German-Hungarian double degree programme "Multi-level Governance – International Relations/Governance and Public Policy"](#) with Andr ssy University Budapest, Hungary
- [German-Slovenian double degree programme with a focus on International Relations](#) with the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

The degree programme is also included in the Helmut Schmidt Programme, an English-language [DAAD scholarship programme](#) in the field of Public Policy and Good Governance. The aim of the [Helmut Schmidt Programme](#) is to train tomorrow's executives from developing and emerging countries, who will play an active role in the social and economic development of their home countries.

Master's thesis

You will be given six months to write your master's thesis on a political-science or sociological topic (maximum length: 200,000 characters). The thesis must be written in English, German or, if agreed with the supervisor, another language appropriate to the thesis topic. While writing your master's thesis, you will complete the ungraded Master's Seminar module (5 ECTS credits).

Before you can commence writing your master's thesis, you need to have accumulated a minimum of 60 ECTS credits during the degree programme.

You are awarded **25 ECTS credits** when you attain a pass mark on your master's thesis.

Completing your degree studies

You have successfully completed the degree programme once you have passed all required modules and the master's thesis and have acquired at least 120 ECTS credits. You will then be awarded the degree of **Master of Arts (M.A.)**.

At that time, you should send a [written request for your final degree documents](#) (i.e. the final transcript, degree certificate etc.) to the Examinations Office.

Key competencies and career planning

With the so-called ZKK courses (ZKK stands for the [Future: Career and Competencies Section](#)), the University of Passau offers you a comprehensive range of transferable skills seminars and computer courses for free. ZKK also offers a wide range of careers and internship advice services (such as the [careers portal](#)) that make it easier for you to start your career later on.

Voluntary completion of additional modules

If you earn more than the required 120 ECTS credits in your degree programme, these additional credits will be listed separately in your final transcript. However, the marks attained in these additional modules do not count towards the final grade for your degree.

Moreover, you can acquire various [additional qualifications and certificates](#), and all students enrolled at Bavarian universities can take advantage of the virtual course offers of the [Bavarian Virtual University \(Virtuelle Hochschule Bayern\)](#).

Doctoral study

A doctorate is an important step if you are planning to embark on an academic career. This may be the right career choice for you if you enjoy exploring a given topic in great depth whilst using your critical thinking ability to reflect on complex problems. Following the doctorate, the next step on the academic career ladder, in Germany, is usually the so-called habilitation – which qualifies you to teach and conduct research in a professorial position. However, you can equally well find work in a non-university environment.

[Information on doctoral study at the Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences](#)

Important examination-related rules and regulations

Study and examination regulations; module catalogue

- [General study and examination regulation for the master's degree programmes of the faculty](#)
- [Subject-specific study and examination regulation](#)
- Module catalogue (link to follow)

Standard and maximum length of the programme

The standard period of study is **four semesters** (120 ECTS credits).

The maximum duration of study is six semesters. If you have not passed all required examinations after the sixth semester, you will fail the degree programme in the first instance; however, you will then be given an additional two semesters in which to complete the missing assessments. This period is not interrupted by a leave of absence or de-registration (termination of enrolment).

If you have not passed all required modules by the end of the eighth semester, you will fail the programme without the possibility of re-sitting the examinations. It is important to understand that this “endgültig nicht bestanden” status, which means “final fail”, also bars you from enrolling in the same degree programme at other German universities.

Resitting failed examinations

You may resit failed module examinations up to **two times**. You may re-attempt a failed master's thesis *once*; however, you must do this with a new topic.

Resitting passed examinations for mark improvement

A maximum of two passed examination modules can be repeated once for voluntary mark improvement. Only the better mark attained is shown on the degree certificate and included in the final grade calculation. The last opportunity to repeat an examination for mark improvement is in the semester following the last examination taken during the degree programme. You can [register for mark improvement](#) at the Examinations Office.

Credit transfers

If you wish to have coursework and assessments completed elsewhere or for another degree programme counted towards your degree, please contact the [degree programme coordinators](#).

Cheating in examinations; plagiarism

If you attempt to influence the result of an assessment by cheating (e.g. plagiarism or use of unauthorised examination aids), the assessment in question is assigned a mark of 5.0 (“insufficient”, “nicht ausreichend”) or “fail” (“nicht bestanden”).

When preparing written work such as seminar papers, master's theses, etc. you must do so in compliance with the [University of Passau's Rules for the Ascertainment of Good Research Practice](#). Such written work should usually be submitted in electronic form.

Illness and inability to attend examinations

If you fall ill before an examination, you must decide before the examination whether you want to withdraw from the examination due to illness. You will need a medical certificate. If you become ill during an examination and have to abort the examination, you also have to provide a medical certificate.

In either case you must submit the completed [Inability to Attend Examinations Due to Illness Form](#) at the earliest opportunity. You should submit the form and medical certificate to the Examinations Office as described in the [information sheet on inability to attend examinations](#).

If you fall ill for a longer period of time during the semester, it may be expedient for you to take [leave of absence](#) for the whole semester. If that is the case, please seek advice from the Student Registration Office and the Advice Centre for Students with Disabilities and Chronic Illnesses.

Academic adjustments (exam access arrangements)

If you have a disability, are chronically or psychologically ill, you may be able to apply for [academic adjustments](#), including access arrangements (e.g. extra time for written exams). The advice centre for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses will be happy to advise and support you with your application.

Service and advice centres

Academic Advice Service

The [Academic Advice Service](#) staff provide general advice on all degree programmes and on questions that may arise during your studies. Please make an appointment if you wish to talk to us in person, by telephone or online.

Academic Advice Service, Innstr. 41, 94032 Passau
Drop-in hours: Wednesdays 9:00–12:00
Phone: +49 851 509 1154
E-mail: advice@uni-passau.de

Programme advisers and programme coordinators

If you have a more in-depth questions about your degree programme (e.g. on specialisation, integration of periods of study or work abroad, or credit transfers), please contact the [programme coordinator](#):

Dr Christian Dölle
Innstrasse 40 (Nikolakloster Building), Room 227b, 94032 Passau
Phone: +49 851 509 2623
E-mail: christian.doelle@uni-passau.de

Examinations Office

The [Examinations Office](#) has overall responsibility for all exam-related matters. Visit the Examinations Office website for important information and applications concerning your degree programme.

Student Committee of the Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences

The [student committee](#) can help you with matters related to student life from a student perspective. It organises the Orientation Week before the start of studies, represents student interests in the University's policy committees and organises numerous leisure activities.

Innstrasse 40 (Nikolakloster Building), Room 235, 94032 Passau
Phone: +49 851 509 2613
E-mail: fachschaft-sobi@uni-passau.de

Information on all [advice services and student societies](#) can be found online.