

Università
della
Svizzera
italiana

Faculty
of
Biomedical
Sciences

Study regulations 2024

6 June 2024 (status as of 23.05.2025)



The USI Senate taking into account the Law on Universities (LSU) of 3 October 1995 (Art. 11); the Statute of the Università della Svizzera italiana of 20 March 2020; and the Regulations for admissions and matriculation at Università della Svizzera italiana of 14 April 2000, decrees:

Art. 1
Scope and referral

The present regulations govern the procedures for examination and validation required to obtain the medical qualifications awarded by the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences:

- a. Bachelor of Medicine (BMed).
- b. Master of Medicine (MMed).
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 *General regulations for admission and matriculation 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 BMed consists of 180 ECTS, corresponding to a standard period of study of three years full-time.
3. The MMed includes 180 ECTS, corresponding to a standard period of study of three years full-time .
4. The MPHC consists of 120 ECTS, corresponding to a standard period of study of two years full-time.
5. The acquisition of credits is subject to passing the relevant examinations or other forms of assessment.

* Translation of the official Italian language version.

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| Art. 3 Language | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The BMed courses are taught in German. Individual teaching units can be held in English. 2. The MMed courses are taught in English. Individual teaching units can be held in Italian. |
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| Art. 4 Start of studies | The BMed, MMed and MPHIC studies can be started in the autumn semester only. |
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Chapter II

Admission to medical studies

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| Art. 5 Admission to the Bachelor of Medicine | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The requirements and procedure for admission to medical studies and the allocation of study places are defined in the <i>Sectoral Regulations for limitation of admission to medical studies at the Università della Svizzera italiana</i>, in the <i>General regulations for admission and matriculation at USI</i>, and in the present <i>Study regulations</i>. 2. The application deadline for medical studies is set by Swiss universities, every year on 15 February. Late applications shall not be considered. 3. Allocation of applicants to study places is done through Swiss universities. |
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| Art. 6 Admission to the Master of Medicine | <p>Admission to the MMed requires a BMed of 180 ECTS or equivalent, obtained at a university recognized by USI.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Taking into account the admission capacity, holders of a BMed from a Swiss university are unconditionally admitted to the MMed. 3. For all other Bachelor's degrees from a recognized university, equivalence to the BMed from a Swiss university is verified 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 MMed at USI. 5. The priority for the allocation of study places is defined in the <i>Sectoral Regulations for limitation of admission to medical studies at the Università della Svizzera italiana</i>. Please refer to this text for additional information. |
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Chapter III Bachelor of Medicine

Art. 7 Bachelor of Medicine

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

Chapter IV Master of Medicine

Art 8. General structure

1. The MMed program includes:
 - a. four semesters of theoretical and clinical training (semesters 1-4).
 - b. one semester of clinical practice (semester 5).
 - c. one final semester for the complementary topics, the completion and conclusion of the Master thesis, and the repetition blocs of the modules and the transversal topics (semester 6).
2. The clinical activity consists of
 - a. 2 days per week at contracted clinical institutions for a total of 12 weeks for each of the first 4 semesters.
 - b. 16 days at private medical practices during the second year of MMed; 8 days at general practitioners and 8 days in pediatrics practices.

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)
 - e. The Complaints Committee (CR)
2. The DS is a full professor of the Faculty. He or she coordinates the organization of the MMed program.
3. The DE is a full professor of the Faculty. He or she shall supervise the application of the present Regulations in all matters related to the examinations.
4. The CS consists of the DS who chairs it, the head of Medical Education, the DE, the head of clinical examinations, the Faculty Manager, and one student representative per year of MMed. The Dean, a representative from the EOC, a representative from private clinics, and support staff are invited permanently. The CS monitors the progress of the MMed program and coordinates its revision, if necessary.
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. The EC consists of a full professor representative for each of semesters 1-4 (responsible of module or transversal topics), the head of clinical examinations, and the DE who chairs it. The EC defines the examination program in all its details. In addition, the EC validates the questions of the written examinations and defines the evaluation and passing criteria for the written and the clinical examinations.

6. The CR consists of two full professors and one MMed student. It decides disputes in the first instance (see Art. 33).

Art. 10 Obtaining the title

Obtaining the MMed degree requires:

1. Passing the semester examinations of semesters 1 to 4 (28 ECTS for each semester).
2. Participation in 4 elective courses per year of study during the first two years of MMed (1 ECTS for each elective course).
3. Completion of one semester of clinical practice (30 ECTS).
4. Writing of a master's thesis (15 ECTS).
5. Attending the examinations of semester 6 (15 ECTS).

Art. 11 Assessment of knowledge

The acquired knowledge is assessed by:

- a. Multiple-choice written examinations (MC exam).
- b. Objective structured clinical examinations (OSCE).
- c. The Master thesis.

Art. 12 Conditions of progress during studies

1. Enrolment to semester 3 is subject to passing the first-year examinations.
2. Beginning the elective term in semester 5 is subject to passing the MC exams of the second year.
3. Transition to semester 6 is contingent on successful completion of the clinical practice semester.
4. Repetition of study year 1 or 2 involves repetition of both theoretical and clinical training.

Art. 13 Attendance

1. Attendance at theoretical lessons is not subject to verification. Exceptions are optional courses (see Art. 14, para. 4).
2. Participation in clinical activity at contracted clinical institutions (see Art. 8, para. 2, lett. a), is mandatory and subject to audit. A minimum attendance of 80% is required for each of semesters 1 to 4.
3. Participation in clinical training at medical offices (see Art. 8, para. 2, lett. b) is mandatory and subject to supervision. A minimum attendance of 80% is required for each of semesters 3 and 4.
4. Failure to comply with paragraphs 2 or 3 will result in the exclusion from the semester's MC exam and in severe cases the exclusion from all examinations of the study year.

Art. 14 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 study. If the student has not acquired the requested number of optional courses, he/she is required to attend the during the following year.
4. Attendance at the chosen optional courses is compulsory. Only one absence per course is allowed. The teacher may grant additional absences. In this case he/she may assign additional assignments.
5. The form and manner of optional course assessment is the responsibility of the teacher.

Art. 15 Master thesis

1. The MMed Master Thesis (MT) is a paper written individually that demonstrates 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 topic proposals for MTs with indication of the corresponding thesis director is made available to students.
3. The thesis director is a member of the Faculty (Private Lecturer or Professor) or Group Leader of an Institute collaborating with the Faculty or another university in Switzerland.
4. The thesis director may be assisted by a co-director appointed by him/her.
5. The thesis director defines the content, the plan, and the method of the MT in the structured form provided for and jointly signed with the student and arranges for its submission to and approval by the appropriate ethics committee, if appropriate.
6. The final version of the MT must be delivered in final form by 31 May of the third year of MMed.
7. For students with Biomed ID from the academic year 2023/2024 (S-23) and onward, the thesis director evaluates the MT, giving a grade from 1 (minimum) to 10 (maximum). The sufficiency is set at 6. For students with Biomed ID prior to the academic year 2023/2024, the thesis director approves or rejects the thesis. Any repeating students is subject to what is in effect for the class he/she is in.
8. In case of failure, the student submits a new MT on a new topic. A second failure results in exclusion from medical studies at a Swiss university.
9. For more details, please refer to the "Directives for the Master thesis".

Art. 16 Elective term

1. The Elective term (semester of clinical practice) consists of six months of clinical activity in a recognized institution in Switzerland or abroad, and it is worth 30 ECTS.
2. For more details, please refer to the "Directives for the Elective term".

**Art. 17
Evaluation
system**

1. Grading, depending on the type of evaluation, is either binary ("pass" / "fail") or scalar. In scalar grading, the grade is defined according to a scale from 1 to 10, in of 0.5 increments, where 10 is the highest and notes below 6 are considered insufficient.
2. Evaluation of summative MC exams is scalar. The grading of summative OSCEs is binary.
3. ECTS credits corresponding to each teaching unit are acquired when the corresponding examination is passed with a sufficient or validated grade. A pass mark is required in the binary assessment.

**Art. 18
Examination
sessions**

1. A regular MC exam is scheduled at the end of semesters 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6. MC1 and MC3 are scheduled in the winter session, and MC2, MC4 and MC6 in the summer session.
2. At the end of study year 1 and 2, a re-take MC exam is scheduled in the fall session.
2. The fall make-up session is organized if there are candidates.
3. OSCEs are held at the end of semesters 1, 2, 4 and 6. Each OSCE covers the training given in the relevant semester. In addition, starting from semester 2, each OSCE also covers the training given in the previous semesters.
4. There are no OSCE re-take sessions.

**Art. 19
Registration
for
examinations**

1. A student who is regularly enrolled in the Faculty and has paid the fees in accordance with the *General regulations for admission and matriculation at USI*, who has completed all modules of the Academic Integrity course of the Faculty and meets the conditions stipulated in these Regulations may participate in the examinations.
2. Registration for examinations, for all students enrolled in the relevant semester, is automatic.
3. The Student Administration Service of the Faculty is responsible for notifying any impediments. With regards to meeting the deadlines stipulated in both the study plan and these Regulations, the responsibility lies with the student.
4. If the candidate has been enrolled or admitted or has taken an examination without being entitled to do so, the test will be considered null.

**Art. 20
Withdrawal
from
examinations**

1. The student may withdraw from an examination up to five days before the date set for the latter, communicating this in writing (by post or e-mail) to the Student Administration Service. The date of the postmark or of the electronic transmission applies. In such a case, the examination registration is considered as not having taken place.
2. For examinations already taken in the same session, the grades obtained for each examination are retained, whatever the result, regardless of the justification for withdrawal from other examinations.
3. A student who fails to appear or to complete an examination without valid justification is considered to have failed that examination.

4. Any justification is considered only if it is submitted by the student to the Student Administration Service of the Faculty in writing within ten days of the examination itself. The reason for the absence must be compelling (health problems or other severe impediments) 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. 21
Multiple-choice
written
examination**

1. The MC exam scheduled for semesters 1 and 2 last 4 hours, and for semesters 3, 4 and 6, they last 4 1/2 hours. Each regular MC exam covers the training given in the relevant semester. In addition, starting from MC2, each MC exam also covers the training given in the previous semesters.
2. For study years 1 and 2, a single re-take MC exam is organized for each year. The duration is 4 hours for study year 1, and 4 1/2 hours for study year 2. Each re-take MC exam covers the training given in the relevant year of study. In addition, the re-take MC exam of study year 2 also covers the training given in the previous year of study.
4. The MC exam of semester 6 is formative. All other MC exams are summative.
5. Determining the questions for the MC exam is the task of the module responsible respectively the transversal topic responsible, in collaboration with designated teachers.
6. The analysis of the outcome of the MC exam may be entrusted to a specialized institute.

**Art. 22
Objective
structured
clinical
examination**

1. The OSCE is a practical examination that tests candidates' clinical skills.
2. Four OSCEs are scheduled:
 - a. At the end of semester 1 on the contents of the same, with 6 stations, formative with feedback.
 - b. At the end of semester 2 on the contents of the same, with 4 stations, formative.
 - c. At the end of semester 4 on the contents of semesters 1, 2, 3 and 4, with 10 stations, summative.
 - d. At the end of semester 6 on the contents of the whole course of study, with 6 stations, formative with feedback.
3. Participation in OSCEs is mandatory.
4. There are no re-take OSCEs. If the OSCE at the end of semester 4 not passed, it must be repeated the following year and does not result in repeating the year.
5. Active participation of simulated patients is planned for each individual post.

**Art. 23
Passing
conditions**

1. The passing of study year 1 is subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The average of the grades of MC1 and MC2 exams is greater than or equal to 6.
 - b. Participation in OSCE1 and OSCE2.

2. Successful completion of study year 2 is subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The average of the grades of MC3 and MC4 exams is greater than or equal to 6.
 - b. The achievement of the "pass" rating of OSCE4.
3. If the average of the grades of the MC exams of a study year results in a grade with a quarter point (.25 or .75), the annual average is rounded up if the trend of results is upward, or rounded down if the trend of results is downward.
4. In the case of rounding down, if the student has completed in Checkpoint at least 80% of the required EPAs (Entrusted Professional Activities), the annual average grade is rounded up. (See "Checkpoint Directives" for details).
5. If, despite applying para. 3 and 4, the annual average of a student's MC exams is less than 6, he/she must sit the MC re-take exam and pass it with a grade greater than or equal to 6.

**Art. 24
Repetition**

1. In the case of failure to meet the conditions listed in Art. 23, the year of study needs to be repeated.
2. A maximum of one repetition of the same year of study is allowed. The second failure of the same year of study results in exclusion from medical studies at any Swiss university.
3. The OSCE4, with a "fail" mark, can be repeated the following year and does not result in a repetition of the year of study.
4. The OSCE4 may be repeated a maximum of two times. The third failure results in the exclusion from medical studies at any Swiss university.

**Art. 25
Additional support and assistance for examinations**

1. Information concerning the use of additional tools for examinations is communicated to students well before beginning the examination sessions.
2. Students needing special assistance or arrangements for medical reasons to take the examinations must notify the Student Administration Service of the Faculty before registering for the examinations. For further details, please refer to the *Examination directive for students with identified specific learning needs*.

**Art. 26
Unlawful acts**

If, during 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. 32 of the present Regulation.

**Art. 27
Collecting and disclosing examination questions**

1. By virtue of the overriding public interest in reliable and valid examinations, it is prohibited to collect or divulgate examination questions.
2. Written or digital recording of examination questions results in the awarding of grade 1 to the examination in question.
3. The collection or divulgate of examination questions after the examination may be punished by disciplinary measures in accordance with Article 32 of these Regulations.

4. The CE may also request the Faculty to suspend the student from the current semester. In addition, in case of serious disciplinary misconduct, the University Council, upon the proposal of the Faculty and subject to the approval of the Rector, may decide on expulsion from USI.

**Art. 28
Examination review**

A student who scored a failing grade on a semester MC exam may request to see the incorrect questions upon a reasoned application to the DE submitted within two weeks of receiving the exam result. If so, the DE summons the affected student to view the questions as part of an individual interview of no more than 2 hours to be held within no more than one month after acceptance of the request.

Chapter V

General provisions

**Art. 29
Acknowledgement of studies undertaken at other Faculties**

1. General collaborative agreements with other universities and institutions of higher learning may replace individual recognition procedures.
2. For examinations taken within the framework of mobility programs, the relevant regulations apply.

**Art. 30
Request for equivalence**

Due to the structure of the semester examinations, no requests for equivalence are allowed.

**Art. 31
Leave of absence**

1. In the case of maternity, compulsory military or civil service, serious illness and other circumstances that represent in the judgment of the Dean significant difficulties to the regular course of studies, the student may be granted a leave of absence as a rule not exceeding two semesters. Any exceptions must be authorized by the Dean.
2. The student on leave maintains matriculation by paying a reduced tuition fee, in accordance with the *General regulations for admission and matriculation at USI* and benefits from the legitimacy as a student without attending any teaching activities.
3. A student on leave of absence is not entitled to take examinations.

**Art. 32
Disciplinary measures**

1. The Faculty may sanction with the disciplinary measures provided for in the following paragraph related to the following behavior of students:
 - a. Indiscipline and violation of the internal university rules. This is without prejudice to the competence of the USI Executive Board for the adoption of disciplinary measures and actions in case of violation of the Code of Ethics, in accordance with the procedures set forth in the *Regulations Implementing the Code of Ethics*.
 - b. Recourse to illicit means during a written or oral examination.
 - c. Plagiarism in the drafting of a written work (semester paper, internship or project report, Master 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. A warning.
 - b. The cancellation of the examination or written work in which the illegal act was found; in this case, the examination or written work will be marked with the grade 1 and is considered as failed.
 - c. The suspension from one or more examination sessions, with the possibility nevertheless to attend courses.
 - d. The suspension for one or more semesters from the possibility to acquire credits relating to written works.
 - e. The suspension from one or more semesters and consequently from the examinations related to the courses given in the suspended semesters.
 - f. 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 are 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.
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**Art. 33
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.
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 (LPAm) applies by analogy. This is without prejudice to the rules on interruptions for judicial holidays, which do not apply to complaints lodged with the Faculty Complaints Committee.
5. No fee is due for complaints.

**Art. 34
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. 35
Effective date**

These Regulations enter into force on 6 June 2024 and replace the previous Regulation of 16 February 2023. The present Regulations apply in their entirety to all students matriculating in and after the 2024/2025 academic year.

Note

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. Grades:

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|---------------|---------|-----|----------------------|
| 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 |

**List of
updates**

Art. 19 cpv1, 32 cpv1a and 33 cpv 4 and 5 modified with decision of the Faculty Council on 23.05.2025.

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Study regulations

6 June 2024