

Criteria for Awarding Phase II Scholarships After the Qualifying Exam

The graduate schools in the “Initiative of Excellence” are required to contribute substantially to building and deepening the profile of academically outstanding and internationally competitive excellent research sites in Germany. They are instruments of quality to promote young researchers and follow the principle of qualifying exceptional Ph.D. students within excellent research environments. As a graduate school of the “Initiative of Excellence” the BMS is committed to these pursuits. Therefore the highest possible criteria have to be met when awarding BMS scholarships.

General prerequisites

The BMS introduced a two-phase study program. Phase I (three to four semesters) leads from a Bachelor’s degree to the Qualifying Exam. Phase II (four to six semesters) is designated to be used for working on the dissertation. Approximately 25% of Phase II students will receive BMS scholarships; funding for all other Phase II students will come from the certified units, from third-party funding available to individual professors, or from the departments’ budgets. Phase II students should preferably work in one of the Research Training Groups (RTG), one of the International Max Planck Research Schools (IMPRS), or within the DFG Research Center Matheon, the Collaborative Research Centre “Space, Time, Matter”, or one of the interdisciplinary projects. The BMS integrates the aforementioned RTGs and IMPRSs as certified units, which guarantee advisors and suitable research environments for Phase II students.

Criteria to Obtain Phase II Scholarships

As a rule, students who completed the BMS Phase I and successfully passed their Qualifying Exam have to meet the following criteria to be eligible to apply for a BMS Phase II scholarship:

1. Average of 1.4 or better in all Phase I courses
2. Grade of 1.3 in the Qualifying Exam
3. Statement from the future dissertation adviser describing the potential of the student and expectations for the dissertation. In addition, the statement must contain:
 - a. details on efforts to secure other means of funding,
 - b. details on current applications for funding, and
 - c. if necessary an explanation why no alternative funding is available
4. Regular attendance of BMS events, such as the BMS Fridays

The BMS Executive Board will award Phase II scholarships based on these criteria and the rules and regulations of the DFG, including the criteria of excellence and the ratio of women or international students. The Board will also evaluate the student’s chances to secure alternative funding for the dissertation project at a later stage.

In justified cases the Executive Board can allow exemptions from the abovementioned criteria.



Gap Funding

To avoid funding gaps during the transition period from Phase I to Phase II all BMS students who have successfully completed the Qualifying Exam can apply for “gap funding”. The length of the period in which gap funding will be paid should not exceed six months. Students who meet the criteria to obtain a Phase II scholarship but who, for budgetary reasons, cannot be awarded one will be considered automatically for gap funding. All other students will be required to submit the following information to apply for gap funding:

1. Grades attained in all Phase I courses.
2. Grade attained in the Qualifying Exam.
3. Statement from the future dissertation advisor explaining the potential of the student and expectations for the dissertation. In addition, the statement must contain:
 - a. details on efforts to secure other means of funding,
 - b. details on current applications for funding, and
 - c. if necessary an explanation why no alternative funding is available.
4. Regular attendance of BMS events, such as the BMS Fridays.

In justified cases the Executive Board can allow exemptions from the abovementioned criteria.