

## International Master Program in Buddhist Studies M.A.

### Application information

**Application period:** 15 February - 31 March (winter semester)

**Semester start:** 1 October (winter semester)

**Language(s) of instruction:** English

## Introduction

### Goals and Content

The International Master Program in Buddhist Studies consists of several study tracks. The regional foci are Buddhism in India, Tibet, China, Japan and Thailand. This International Master is aimed at students with a solid background in one of the above-mentioned regional specializations. We consider language competence in one of these regions the most crucial factor. Most of our courses are based on primary sources and philological training is required in order to be able to follow the classes.

Offered courses vary year by year and deal with topics related for instance to the intellectual history or the literature of a particular region. We consider Buddhism to be one of various factors which constitute and shape culture, society, and the intellectual and religious history of a particular region. In order to understand Buddhist ideas and history properly it is therefore necessary to know equally well about the region this particular strand of Buddhism has developed in, the ways Buddhist traditions have interacted with other sectors of society and how Buddhist thinkers in that region have been influenced by other religious systems and socio-political settings.

In each semester of the first year you will further join the class Topics in Buddhist Studies, whose focus lies on themes spreading across cultural and regional differences, particularly important for Buddhist Studies as a discipline. This course regularly brings together graduate students in Buddhist Studies from all different regional specializations at the Asien-Afrika-Institut. Topics of this course can deal with Buddhist modernity such as Socially Engaged Buddhism, Buddhism in Europe, Buddhist stands on environmentalism and animal rights or Buddhism's contribution to the dialogue with other religions.

Participating in the courses will train your skills in dealing with Buddhist primary sources and advance your competence in cross-cultural and interdisciplinary communication with your fellow students. It will prepare your academic career in terms of joining international post-M.A. graduate schools which emphasize thorough intimacy with Buddhist primary sources on the one hand and interdisciplinary research skills on the other.

### **Specific characteristics:**

- Generally one semester at a partner university outside Germany.
- Courses in the study track India, China, Tibet and Thailand are held in English. In the track Japan also German language is required.

### **Admission requirements**

**(List of all admission requirements as per the current admission bylaws)**

#### **University degree**

for each specialization are:

- India:

Legally attested certificate of a university degree: this may be a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a Licentiate ("Staatsexamen"). The degree can be a Bachelor "Sprachen und Kulturen des Indischen Subkontinents und Tibets" from the Universität Hamburg or a comparable Bachelor of a German or international academic institution. It can be a Bachelor with the specialization in Buddhist or Religious Studies as long as a minimum of 30 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Sanskrit or Pali have been acquired. Alternatively you will need a degree from a German or international academic institution with a minimum of 45 credit points (ECTS) related to Buddhist Studies, Religious Studies or Indology which include a minimum of 30 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Sanskrit or Pali or equivalent language training.

In case no sufficient evidence for competence in Pali or Sanskrit can be provided within the application period the candidate will have the possibility to undergo a placement test conducted by the Universität Hamburg which has to be passed.

- Tibet:

Legally attested certificate of a university degree: this may be a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a Licentiate ("Staatsexamen"). The degree can be a Bachelor "Sprachen und Kulturen des Indischen Subkontinents und Tibets" from the Universität Hamburg or a comparable Bachelor of a German or international academic institution. It can be a Bachelor with the specialization in Buddhist or Religious Studies as long as a minimum of 30 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Classical Tibetan have been acquired. Alternatively you will need a degree from a German or international academic institution with a minimum of 45 credit points (ECTS) related to Buddhist Studies, Religious Studies or Tibetology which include a minimum of 30 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Classical Tibetan or equivalent language training.

In case no sufficient evidence for competence in Classical Tibetan can be provided within the application period the candidate will have the possibility to undergo a placement test conducted by the Universität Hamburg which has to be passed.

Candidates whose mother tongue is Tibetan will need to document at least 20 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in classical Tibetan.

- China:

Legally attested certificate of a university degree: this may be a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a Licentiate ("Staatsexamen"). The degree can be a Bachelor "Ostasien" from the Universität Hamburg or a comparable Bachelor of a German or international academic institution.

- Japan:

Legally attested certificate of a university degree: this may be a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a Licentiate ("Staatsexamen"). The degree can be a Bachelor "Ostasien" from the Universität Hamburg or a comparable Bachelor of a German or international academic institution.

- Thai:

Legally attested certificate of a university degree: this may be a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a Licentiate ("Staatsexamen"). The degree can be a Bachelor "Sprache und Kultur Südasiens" from the Universität Hamburg or a comparable Bachelor of a German or international academic institution.

If you have not received your degree certificate yet, you can submit this by the end of the first semester of your master's program. Please see the "Documents to submit" section below for details.

### **Additional special admission requirements**

All applicants must provide evidence for proficiency in English (equivalent to B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)); English native speakers don't need evidence B2.

#### Specialization China:

a minimum of 50 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Chinese (not necessary for applicants whose mother tongue is Chinese).

Applicants with focus on China must provide evidence for proficiency in German

#### Specialization Japan:

Prove of competence in the Japanese language:

- a minimum of 50 credit points (ECTS) for language courses in Japanese, or
- 44 semester hours per week (SWS) of Japanese language courses, or

- you must have passed the level 3 of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT)
- proof of competence in the Japanese literary language (bungo); this course may be completed at a later date.

The attained degree for language competence must not be older than two years. In case none of the above-mentioned three documentations can be provided within the application period, the candidate will have the possibility to undergo a Japanese language placement test conducted by the Universität Hamburg which has to be passed. The need to prove competence in the Japanese language is not necessary for applicants whose mother tongue is Japanese.

Applicants with focus on Japan must provide evidence for proficiency in German

Specialization Thai:

Language skills: a minimum of 25 Credit points (ECTS) in Thai. The need to prove competence in the Thai language is not necessary for applicants whose mother tongue is Thai.

For details of the legal basis for this regulation, please see the admission bylaws for your chosen degree program: [www.uni-hamburg.de/zugang-master](http://www.uni-hamburg.de/zugang-master)

### **Recognition of transcripts for degree programs completed at foreign higher education institutions**

If you obtained your first degree abroad, your certificate will be reviewed during the application procedure in the Faculty of Humanities (Fakultät für Geisteswissenschaften).

If your degree certificate is not in German or English, please include a certified German or English translation of this together with your application documents.

### **Application**

#### **Online application**

You will need to complete the online application available on Universität Hamburg's application portal during the application period: [www.uni-hamburg.de/online-bewerbung](http://www.uni-hamburg.de/online-bewerbung)  
Please create a user account, enter your information online, and submit your application electronically.

You will then need to print out your online application and submit it together with the following documents to the application address indicated below.

### Documents to submit

Please submit uncertified copies of all documents. For documents not issued in German or English, a certified German or English translation is required.

- **Signed printout of your online application**
- **Degree certificate or provisional Transcript of Records**  
If you are still studying when you apply and cannot yet provide a final certificate containing your grades, please submit your current Transcript of Records confirming your provisional grade point average. You will then need to submit your degree certificate by the end of the first semester of your master's program.
- If the relevance for Buddhist Studies of the area (or sub-area) in which you completed your first university degree is not evident from the certificate, please enclose further certification (e.g. Transcript of Records). See above for the specific requirements of each specialization (BA degree and language skills).
- Curriculum Vitae
- A brief statement of motivation. Please mention the specialization you apply for.
- Proof of English language skills (equivalent to B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)) (paper copy)
- Applicants with focus on Japan and China must provide evidence for proficiency in German (paper copy)

### Application address

Universität Hamburg  
Numata Center for Buddhist Studies  
att. Prof. Dr. Michael Zimmermann  
Alsterterrasse 1  
20354 Hamburg

E-Mail: michael.zimmermann@uni-hamburg.de

Please note that your application can only be considered if your complete application documents reach the **application address** by the application deadline. The date on which your application is received and not the postmark is decisive! This deadline is final; no extensions can be granted.

Please bind (staple) all supporting documents required for your application or ensure that loose pages are otherwise bound. The printout of your online application should be the top page. Do not use paper clips, folders, or transparent sleeves.

If you want to submit an **additional special application** (e.g., hardship application), you will need to send this directly to the Application and Admissions Team (Team Bewerbung und Zulassung) together with the required proof separately from the application documents indicated above by the application deadline. For more information on special applications, please see [www.uni-hamburg.de/sonderantrag](http://www.uni-hamburg.de/sonderantrag) and [www.uni-hamburg.de/info-master](http://www.uni-hamburg.de/info-master).

### **Selection criteria**

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, a selection procedure will be necessary:

For details of the legal basis for this regulation, please see the selection bylaws for your chosen master's program: [www.uni-hamburg.de/auswahl-master](http://www.uni-hamburg.de/auswahl-master)

### **Admission and enrollment**

Once your application has been reviewed, an acceptance or rejection letter will be made available in your STiNE account under the *Dokumente* (Documents) tab. Please see the information on applying online for a master's program for details of when this will become available: [www.uni-hamburg.de/international-master](http://www.uni-hamburg.de/international-master). An enrollment deadline will be indicated in your acceptance letter—please submit the documents required for enrollment to the Application and Admissions Team (Team Bewerbung und Zulassung) by this date. Please submit certified copies of all documents—see [www.uni-hamburg.de/beglaubigung](http://www.uni-hamburg.de/beglaubigung) for details.

### **Contact**

If you have questions or require further information, please contact Prof. Dr. Michael Zimmermann at [michael.zimmermann@uni-hamburg.de](mailto:michael.zimmermann@uni-hamburg.de)

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