

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for the M.Sc. Data Science programme

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Application & Admission

Is the language of instruction of my Bachelor's degree sufficient to prove English language proficiency?

Yes, if your Bachelor's degree was taught in English then you can apply with a certificate from your university stating the the language of instruction for your degree has been in English.

Is submission of APS certificate mandatory during the application procedure for Indian students?

The APS certificate is mandatory for the application procedure at FAU as well as for applying for the study visa.

How long will it take to make a decision about my application to MSc Data Science course?

Due to a high number of international applications each semester the admission committee requires a lot of time to evaluate all application documents. Usually, you should receive a decision notification about 4 weeks after the application deadline. If you have not received any answer yet after 4 weeks, please be patient. If you have not received any answer to your application after 8 weeks, we recommend you politely ask the Master's Office about the current state of your application.

Can I apply for the study course programme with a degree from a technical university or university of applied sciences?

Yes, any degree from a technical university or university of applied sciences will be treated equally with a degree from a university.

Can I apply for the study course programme with a degree from a dual study programme?

Yes, your degree from a dual study programme will be treated equally with a degree from a university *if it consists of at least 180 ECTS being completed at a university.*

Why did I get a rejection for my application?

We are sorry that your application did not lead to admission to this study course programme. In many cases the reason for rejection is that students have not the required qualification for this study course programme, i.e., a completed B.Sc. degree in Mathematics, Industrial Mathematics, Mathematical Economy, Computer Science, Data Science, or Physics from FAU or another equivalent domestic or international degree that is not significantly different with regard to the competence profile taught in the respective degree.

Is it possible to defer my admission to an upcoming semester?

Yes, it is possible to defer your admission. Just re-apply for the next semester and upload the current admission letter you received. You will be granted admission provided that there are *no*

significant changes to the regulations and selection criteria.

Studying at FAU

Where can I find accommodation to perform my studies at FAU?

FAU itself and its staff cannot help you with finding suitable accommodation for your studies in general, but please start by reading the following website with helpful links:

<https://www.fau.eu/education/student-life/accommodation-2/>

We are aware that it is difficult to find a nice flat as the region around Erlangen and Nürnberg is very popular for living and thus costs for accommodation are very high. For this reason we recommend sharing a flat with other students, e.g., by taking one of the offers on the following websites:

<https://www.wg-gesucht.de/wg-zimmer-in-Erlangen.34.0.1.0.html>

<https://www.immobilienscout24.de/Suche/de/bayern/erlangen/wg-zimmer> <https://www.wg-suche.de/wg-zimmer/deutschland-bayern-erlangen>

Additionally, you can join dedicated groups for accommodations in Erlangen in social networks, e.g., on Facebook. In case you have trouble finding a suitable accommodation you can also send an email to accommodation@fau.de.

Structure of Study Course

Is it possible to change the major subject?

Yes, you can change your major at any time without any formal process. You should discuss changes of your study plan agreement with your mentor.

Can I combine modules from different application subjects?

Yes, you are free to choose the modules from any of the application subjects and combine them.

How can I transfer ECTS for a module from one module group to another?

Please send a polite email to the examination office and ask for the transfer of credits. This should best be done near the end of your studies to collect all changes necessary and hence minimize the work effort for the examination office.

Can I count modules from my major subject for the minor subject?

No, modules for your minor subject must be chosen from specialisations other than your major subject.

Can I use my werkstudent experience to get ECTS as a technical qualification?

You can use your working experience as a technical qualification if you work longer than 4 weeks in a company and if your tasks are related to Data Science. The examination committee has to agree to your work description in order to be usable as a module. Usually, you will have to hand in a short report (~ 10 pages) about your working tasks.

Examinations

Can I participate in an examination without having registered before?

No, you can only participate in an examination if you have previously registered for it on the Campo portal within the exam registration period. You can find details on the current exam registration periods at <https://www.fau.de/education/beratungs-und-servicestellen/pruefungsamter/pruefungsamt-naturwissenschaftliche-fakultaet/>. Please note that if you miss the exam registration period the examination office will not register you for examinations subsequently.

How can I register for a module's examination in Campo within the right specialisation area?

Indeed, there exist modules in this study course programme that can be counted for two different module groups, e.g., two different specialization areas. Currently, the Campo system pre-selects one of these module groups, making the other one inactive. If you cannot find the register button in the correct module group and have not registered for the module yet, please proceed as follows:

1. Please log in to Campo and click **Home** → **My studies** → **Study planner with module plan**
2. Use the view options in the top to show all examinations, hide all lectures and expand all modules.
3. Use the your browser's search function to search for your module. Make sure you find the module name in the desired module group.
4. If you click on the title of the module in the desired module group as shown in the image below, the **Register** button becomes available and you should be able to register.
5. If this does not work and the module is shown in gray than there is problem in the system, which cannot be solved by you. In this case please send an email to studiengangskoordination-datascience@math.fau.de.



Is it mandatory to attend the next attempt of an examination if I fail the first examination?

Yes, you will automatically be registered for the next attempt by the examination office and can only step back from it with a medical certificate verifying that you are unable to attend the examination. This certificate has to be send as original via post mail to the examination office. Not attending the examination will be counted as a failed attempt.

Can I step back from an examination?

If you have not yet attended this examination before you can step back from it without further reasons until three working days before the examination. Use the button **Deregister** in the Campo system for this. If you have attempted this examination before you can only step back from it with a medical certificate verifying that you are unable to attend the examination. Not attending the examination will be counted as a failed attempt.

I cannot attend an examination because I am sick. What should I do?

In this case please submit a notification of illness to the examination office by filling out the following form: <https://www.fau.de/files/2015/08/Krankmeldung.pdf> within three days. Also submit a medical certificate about your illness in original to the examination office. If you don't submit these two mandatory documents in the specified time and don't attend the examination it will be counted as failed attempt.

What happens if I fail an examination three times?

After three unsuccessful attempts for an examination the module will be counted as not being passed. This state cannot be changed any more and you cannot pass this module in the future any more. If the module is an **elective mandatory module**, also denoted as **core elective module** in Campo, you can simply choose another module and continue your studies. If the module is a **core module** of your study course (Mathematics of Learning, Selected Topics of Mathematics of Learning, or Deep Learning) you cannot continue your studies in this study course programme at FAU unfortunately.

Can I improve my grades by repeating a completed module?

No, you cannot repeat a module that you have passed previously. The only way to improve your certificate grades is by completing additional modules with a better grade within the same module group.

Can I improve my grades by completing additional modules?

You can improve your overall grade only before you reach the mandatory 120 ECTS of the study course. Once you reached the required amount of ECTS in all module groups (including Master seminar and Master's thesis) you will be exmatriculated automatically at the end of the current semester.

Master's Thesis

How many ECTS are required to start writing my Master's thesis?

It is highly recommended that you complete 75 ECTS of your study curriculum and subsequently choose a Master's seminar topic. You should have completed all core modules and all modules of your major subject first. Afterwards you can start writing your Master's thesis. The topic of your Master's thesis should ideally fit the chosen specialisation and the topic Master's seminar, following §54 of the examination regulations ("Mentoring") and your individual study agreement.

How can I find a topic for my Master's thesis?

The easiest way to find a topic for your Master's thesis is to attend a Master's seminar near the end of your studies and work on a topic that you are interested in. In many cases your supervisor in the Master's seminar can suggest you a topic for your Master's thesis that directly builds upon the subject of your Master's seminar. Since you have already invested time in literature research for this topic, this will save you a lot of work effort for your Master's thesis.

Alternatively, you can also search for a Master's thesis topic independently of your Master's seminar. For this you should contact the chairs at FAU that perform research in the area of Data Science in which you are interested and politely ask for the possibility to write a Master's thesis at this chair.

Who can be the supervisor of my Master's thesis?

To start your Master's thesis you need an official supervisor from FAU first. There are certain requirements that have to be met by your supervisor. The person has to be a professor or at least have a finished habilitation (recognizable by the title "Dr. habil." or "PD") and needs to have a membership in one of the following departments:

- Department of Data Science
- Department of Mathematics
- Department of Computer Science
- Department of Artificial Intelligence in Biomedical Engineering (AIBE)

Professors who are a secondary member in one of these listed departments can also supervise your thesis. If you are not certain if they fulfil these requirement, please ask the person directly. Your official supervisor is also the first examiner of your thesis and should propose you a second examiner for your thesis that has to fulfill the same requirements, but can be from any department at FAU. Your Master's thesis can additionally be supervised or guided other FAU staff, e.g., PhD students, who are working in the subject of your Master's thesis. However, they cannot be your official supervisors.

Can the supervisor of my Master's thesis also be from an alternative department?

In a few cases the examination committee might allow for exceptions if the proposed topic suits your study programme well and the proposed supervisor agrees to meet the requirements of the examination committee.

In case you would like to write your thesis with a professor, who is not member of any of the above mentioned departments, please ask the admission committee about permission in advance. Please also make sure that the second examiner of your Master's thesis belongs to one of the four departments mentioned above.

Can my Master's thesis be completed in a company?

Yes, it is possible to carry out the Master's thesis in a company. However, as previously mentioned, the thesis topic must align with the research conducted at the four departments mentioned above. Consequently, it is necessary to contact professors from these departments to serve as your official supervisor at the university.

Is having a supervisor from the university mandatory for a company-based thesis?

Absolutely, it is mandatory to have an supervisor from the university for a company-based thesis. The supervisor together with a second examiner at FAU are responsible for grading your Master's thesis. This cannot be done by externals at a company.

How can I register my Master's thesis?

Thesis registration requires the completion of a form, which can be obtained from the following location:

https://www.math-datascience.nat.fau.de/files/2023/12/Anmeldung_Masters-Thesis_LE_Mathematik_und_DataScience_englisch.pdf

It is essential to discuss the thesis registration with your respective professor before sending the form. Please fill out the form with the assistance of your supervisor and submit it to the examinations office via post mail to petra.frosch@fau.de. Once the registration form is submitted and your thesis is registered, you will have a total of six months to submit your final Master's thesis.

What should I do once I have completed my Master's thesis?

When you have finished your Master's thesis and your supervisor is content with the result, you have to print your Master's thesis twice and send it to the examination office to complete the process. If you developed own code for your Master's thesis please give your supervisor a copy of this code on a USB stick. The two examiners will get the hard-copies of your Master's thesis and will review it for the final grade.