



Statute Berlin School of Mind and Brain

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The Scientific Council of the Berlin School of Mind and Brain adopts the following statute:

Article 1 **Status at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin**

The graduate school is a research institute of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and bears the name “Berlin School of Mind and Brain” (called M&B hereafter). M&B is a joint project combining mind-related disciplines (humanities and social sciences like philosophy, psychology, linguistics) and brain-related disciplines (such as neurophysiology, neuroanatomy, biology, neurology, psychiatry, computational neuroscience).

Article 2 **Objectives and Tasks**

M&B’s main objective is to train and supervise junior researchers for a doctoral degree over a period of three years. This goal is to be achieved by developing a new, sustainable doctoral candidate culture, which will involve a structured training program comprising subject-specific and interdisciplinary components, personalized supervising (by thesis committees), as well as available mentoring and coaching.

(1) Overall objectives of M&B

M&B’s participating researchers are dedicated to fostering research on the interaction of mind and brain, a field which so far has not been systematically investigated at a theoretical and methodical level, and supervise doctoral candidates at the same time. Up to now, many questions in this field have generally been approached either from a medical or a cognitive science point of view, leaving possible intersections unexplored. M&B combines approaches from the mind sciences and brain sciences to address such questions by creating an interdisciplinary platform that enhances contacts across traditional research boundaries and helps educate a new generation of researchers. With this approach, M&B contributes to the research profile and training structure of participating academic disciplines.

M&B’s research and training efforts emphasize the five research areas “conscious and unconscious perception”, “decision-making”, “language”, “brain plasticity and lifespan ontogeny”, “brain disorders and mental dysfunction”, and “human sociality and the brain/social cognition”. These six core areas will be closely interlinked in joint research projects and embedded in clinical and basic research efforts. In addition to empirical research, philosophical analysis of the meaning of key terms like “decision”, “free will”, and “perception and consciousness” – particularly their ethical and anthropological implications – form an

other core methodical area of research at M&B. The Scientific Council may designate additional fields of study within the framework of this statute or revise the thematic content of existing fields mentioned above.

(2) Academic training and career development

(a) Students with university degrees in philosophy, linguistics, psychology, neuroscience, medicine, computer science, law, economics, or any other area of research concerned with the mind and brain are eligible for enrollment as doctoral candidates at M&B.

(b) Doctoral candidates at M&B will receive research guidance by members of M&B's senior faculty. Each doctoral candidate in the program is assigned two supervisors, one representing the mind sciences, the other the brain sciences. Rights and obligations of both candidates and supervisors are specified in a supervision agreement ("Betreuungsvereinbarung").

(c) Doctoral candidates will partake in a structured training program. Augmenting their efforts to attain their degrees, candidates will undergo training designed to instruct them in the relevant fundamentals and methods of an interdisciplinary mind/brain approach to research. Within the curriculum's framework, candidates and their supervisors set up customized training programs that take the specific demands of candidates' individual research project and their personal interests into account. Teaching the basics of best scientific practice is part of the curriculum.

(d) Beyond subject-specific instruction, M&B and Humboldt Graduate School will jointly provide candidates with training options in academic soft skills (e.g. scientific presentation, academic writing, or grant application writing).

(3) Integration of doctoral candidates in the research environment

Integrating doctoral candidates in the research environment at M&B will be accomplished by a number of measures including the following:

- Joint academic activities with Berlin universities as well as other neuroscience doctorate programs and clusters;
- interactions with leading mind/brain researchers during M&B lectures, workshops, and meetings;
- contacts via supervisors' research groups;
- travel grants for attending conferences, or for the purpose of lab-visits.

(4) Equal opportunity and family-friendliness objectives

M&B is committed to the principles of equal opportunity and family-friendliness for doctoral candidate selection, staffing, supervising, and teaching assignments. Humboldt Graduate School will assist M&B in these efforts.

Article 3 Institutions

M&B institutions are:

- Member Assembly (Article 6),
- Scientific Council (Article 7),
- Academic Directors (Article 8),
- Junior Researchers' Representatives (Article 9),
- International Advisory Board (Article 10),
- Admissions Committee (Article 11),
- Curriculum Committee and Examination Board (Article 12),
- Equal Opportunity Officer (Article 13),
- Ombudsperson (Article 14).

Article 4 Membership

(1) M&B's members are physical persons. Membership is conditional upon active participation in M&B in one of the following groups:

(a) founding members, namely professors and/or heads of research groups at university or non-university research institutions. These individuals make up M&B's faculty and convene in the Scientific Council.

Currently, researchers from the following institutions are M&B partners: Humboldt-Universität, Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, Universität Potsdam, Universität Magdeburg, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Fraunhofer Institut für Rechnerarchitektur und Softwaretechnik, Berlin, Max-Delbrück-Centrum für Molekulare Medizin, Berlin, Max-Planck-Institut für Bildungsforschung, Berlin, Max-Planck-Institut für Kognitions- und Neurowissenschaften, Leipzig, Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt, Berlin, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Zentrum für Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft, Typologie und Universalienforschung, Berlin;

(b) junior researchers with doctoral degrees employed by M&B;

(c) doctoral candidates supervised by M&B. Usually, candidates are M&B members for a period of three years until they complete their doctoral degree. Depending on existing academic qualifications and relevant authorization to award doctorates, doctoral candidates are enrolled at the various departments of M&B's participating universities, and are considered members of their respective institution in accordance with Article 43, Section 1, Item 5 of the "Berliner Hochschulgesetz".

(d) the managing director and the employees at the office of M&B management;

(2) Any researcher with verifiable personal experience in M&B's field of research and with outstanding academic achievements is eligible for membership in M&B's faculty. Approval of new faculty members is the privilege of the Scientific Council (see Article 7).

(3) A candidate who meets the admission requirements for a doctorate in a relevant field of research, and who wants M&B supervision is eligible for membership. Admission of doctoral candidates for M&B is governed by a procedure specified by the Selection Committee. This admission procedure is designed to make sure that doctorate projects fit into M&B's research program.

Admissibility depends on the following criteria:

(a) prior excellence in research achievement, usually verified by an outstanding master's or bachelor's degree;

(b) a relevant doctorate project in an area of research covered by M&B;

(c) existing knowledge required for successfully pursuing the doctorate project;

(d) proficiency in English.

(4) M&B membership may be terminated under any of the following conditions:

(a) resignation (in writing) vis-à-vis the academic directors;

(b) termination of employment at M&B;

(c) discontinuation of membership at Humboldt-Universität or any other institution listed in Article 4 Section 1a;

(d) doctoral candidates: completion of doctoral degree, usually after three years. A candidate's M&B membership may be terminated ahead of time if quality checks by supervising professors or any M&B institution reveal that the continuation of a particular doctorate project at M&B seems inadvisable (see supervision agreement / *Be-treuungsvereinbarung*).

(e) members do not meet their obligations and assignments in accordance with Article 5 of this statute. The Scientific Council will rule on such cases on an individual basis.

Members may approach the M&B academic directors for a request for a temporary discontinuation of their membership.

Article 5 Member Rights and Obligations

(1) Members are obliged to contribute to M&B's objectives and tasks in accordance with Article 2, to join in M&B's administrative efforts as stipulated by this statute, and to actively support M&B. This includes active collaboration of members regarding applications, evaluation, and record keeping.

(2) The faculty is obliged to supervise doctoral candidates and to participate in M&B's training program. In addition, all members are expected to ensure a reasonably quick doctoral process in keeping with M&B's tasks and objectives. Rights and obligations of doctoral candidates and supervisors will be specified in a supervision agreement.

(3) Members are obliged to comply with DFG utilization guidelines for the Excellence Initiative. This applies in particular to regulations governing publications, rights of use, reporting, and best scientific practice.

(4) All M&B members have voting rights in the Member Assembly.

Article 6 Member Assembly

(1) The Member Assembly convenes at least once a year, to be summoned in writing by the academic directors at least 14 days prior to the event. The agenda will be mailed to all members at least one week before the session commences.

(2) Convening an unscheduled meeting of the Member Assembly requires a request by at least two thirds of M&B's members; summons must be issued within a period of two weeks. The request must include a proposal for an agenda.

(3) One of the two academic directors will act as chairperson and preside over Member Assembly sessions.

(4) The Member Assembly's areas of responsibility comprise:

- the endorsement of the academic director's report;
- the inclusion of additional fields of research suggested by the Scientific Council;
- proposals for the dissolution of M&B.

Article 7 **Scientific Council**

The Scientific Council is a gathering of all M&B faculty members and convenes for a scheduled session once a year. Invitations should be issued four weeks in advance. In the case of urgent motions by the Steering Committee, decisions may be made by circular letter via e-mail to all members and with at least one week's notice.

(1) The tasks of the Scientific Council are as follows:

- supporting the admission of doctoral candidates;
- development of a research-friendly environment for doctoral candidates;
- development of M&B's academic profile and research agenda (by suggesting additional fields of study, if necessary);
- development of the training program and the subject-specific supervision concept;
- election and dismissal of academic directors;
- endorsement of the academic directors' work report and formal approval of academic directors;
- resolutions regarding the M&B statute and possible changes suggested by the academic directors;
- selection of the Curriculum Committee and Examination Board and the Admissions Committee suggested by the academic directors;
- selection of the International Advisory Board upon suggestions by the academic directors;
- resolutions regarding member admission or dismissal upon International Advisory Board recommendation.

(2) The Scientific Council elects and dismisses the academic directors by a two-thirds majority of its members with voting rights.

(3) The Scientific Council rules on all questions regarding the M&B statute and possible changes to it with the votes of at least two thirds of its members.

(4) M&B members may be dismissed by a two-thirds majority of the Scientific Council's members with voting rights.

(5) New members may be admitted by recommendation of the International Advisory Board and by resolution of at least 51 percent of Scientific Council members present.

Article 8 **Academic Directors**

(1) The M&B Scientific Council elects two academic directors, one of them representing the mind sciences, the other the brain sciences. The two academic directors represent M&B within Humboldt-Universität and to outside parties. They summon the Scientific Council and Member Assembly, with one acting as chairperson on each occasion. Academic directors are elected for the duration of one DFG funding period and/or for a maximum of five years. Reelection is permissible.

(2) Academic directors meet with junior researchers' representatives for consultations at least once per semester.

(3) Academic directors are charged with the following tasks:

- preparation of M&B work reports and funding requests to DFG;
- appropriate distribution of funds and general M&B budget oversight;
- hiring of academic staff for M&B;
- implementation, quality control, and development of the M&B doctoral program
- equal opportunity measures planning and quality control;
- cooperation with users;
- coordination of university and non-university partner integration;
- duty to advise on rulings of the academic directors and to inform the M&B staff accordingly.

(4) Should an academic director resign prematurely or no longer see fit to exercise their duties, the remaining academic director will summon the Scientific Council within 14 days in order to elect a new academic director. Until then, the academic director will continue performing their duties provisionally.

(5) The office of academic director includes the entitlement to attend all sessions of M&B's various committees and the right to vote during such sessions.

Article 9 Junior Researchers' Representatives

(1) Junior researchers (doctoral candidates and postdoctoral scholars) elect three representatives on an annual basis.

(2) In addition to their presence in the Member Assembly, junior researchers' representatives are responsible for ensuring that the interests of their group of peers are sufficiently taken into consideration by the various M&B bodies and committees. They are also charged with ensuring that their members' interests are appropriately considered with respect to the M&B program and to the schools development.

Article 10 International Advisory Board

(1) Based on suggestions by the academic directors, the Scientific Council appoints an International Advisory Board consisting of not less than five and not more than nine members. Only internationally recognized researchers (German or non-German) in M&B's field of study are eligible for the International Advisory Board.

(2) The International Advisory Board's specific tasks are as follows:

- making recommendations on how to shape M&B's doctoral program;
- making recommendations on M&B's scientific and structural development;
- making recommendations (based on suggestions by the academic directors) on the addition of new faculty members for approval by the Scientific Council;
- participating in M&B's internal evaluation.

(3) The International Advisory Board elects a chairperson one of whose task is to convey the board's recommendations and decisions to the academic directors. The International Advisory Board will convene once a year, to be summoned by the board's chairperson with a summons period of 14 days. The board may also invite the M&B academic directors to attend sessions.

(4) The International Advisory Board may establish its own rules of procedure.

(5) Members of the International Advisory Board are appointed for the duration of a DFG funding period, but not longer than five years. Reappointment is permissible.

Article 11 **Admissions Committee**

- (1) The Admissions Committee consists of at least five M&B faculty members, selected to provide a balanced representation of the various academic disciplines.
- (2) Should the disciplinary background or individual project proposals of the applicants for the M&B doctoral program require it, the chairmen of the committee may appoint further M&B faculty members to the admission committee on an ad hoc basis for the duration of a selection procedure.
- (3) Based on suggestions by the academic directors, the Scientific Council will elect the Admissions Committee's members, its chairperson, and the chairperson's deputy every two years when in session. The committee's chairperson is also a member of the M&B academic directors, to be represented in this function by their deputy. M&B's managing director is a consultant member of the Admissions Committee.
- (4) The Admissions Committee is tasked with coordinating the identification and admission of doctoral candidates for M&B. In particular, the committee is responsible for M&B job advertisements, for assessing student applicants for M&B, and for compiling lists of possible candidates for M&B enrollment.
- (5) Should an Admissions Committee suggested by the academic directors fail to get elected, a repeat ballot has to be conducted within a period of six weeks.
- (6) The Admissions Committee convenes at least twice a year. If a member of the committee resigns, the chairperson may appoint a new member. Any such appointment requires the Scientific Council's endorsement by vote during its next session. Until then, the appointee's membership in the committee is provisional.

Article 12 **Curriculum Committee and Examination Board**

- (1) The Curriculum Committee and Examination Board consists of at least five M&B faculty members, selected to provide a balanced representation of the various academic disciplines. Two junior researchers' representatives and the managing director act as consultant members of the committee.
- (2) Based on suggestions by the academic directors, the Scientific Council elects the Admissions Committee's members, its chairperson, and the chairperson's deputy every two years when in session.

(3) The Curriculum Committee and Examination Board's task is to conceive and develop M&B's doctoral program. The committee is also charged with coordination, quality control, and harmonization efforts vis-à-vis Humboldt Graduate School and the management of the participating universities.

(4) Should a Curriculum Committee and Examination Board suggested by the academic directors fail to get elected, a repeat ballot has to be conducted within a period of six weeks.

(5) The Curriculum Committee and Examination Board convene at least once per semester. If a member of the committee resigns, the chairperson may appoint a new member. Any such appointment requires the Scientific Council's endorsement by vote during its next session. Until that time, the appointee's membership in the committee is provisional.

(6) The Curriculum Committee and Examination Board determine the accreditation of training courses. It is responsible for the appointment of suitable examiners and for issuing separate M&B report cards, certificates, and transcripts.

Article 13 Equal Opportunity Officer

The M&B academic directors appoint an equal opportunity officer for a period of two years. The officer is in charge of enforcing equal opportunity principles in admission processes, supervision, and instruction efforts, and is responsible for ensuring that M&B faculty members charged with admitting doctoral candidates undergo training in unbiased interviewing methods (e.g. with the help of appropriate manuals). The equal opportunity officer heads M&B's effort to implement a procedure designed to assist doctoral candidates with families. M&B is committed to organizing its program schedule in a family-friendly way.

Article 14 Ombudsperson

In order to deal with complaints from members or institutions against decisions made by any of M&B's agents, the academic directors appoint an ombudsperson for a period of two years. The ombudsperson functions as an arbitration authority at M&B and may be informally approached by all members. The ombudsperson may or may not be a member of M&B and is an unpaid volunteer.

Article 15 Management

The managing director, who is appointed by the academic directors, heads the M&B management. The management assists the academic directors and the International Advisory Board and is tasked with organizational matters such as:

- personnel and financial affairs (e.g. hiring new staffers to be paid from M&B funds, preparing a budget plan, managing funds, compiling the annual statement and the report on expenditure of funds);
- preparation of and minute keeping during sessions of the Member Assembly, the Scientific Council, the International Advisory Board, the committees and sub-committees, if necessary;
- student applicant counseling and preparation of doctoral candidate admission procedures;
- general doctoral candidate assistance;
- preparation and supervision of training program events;
- non-departmental exams management (minute-keeping during business meetings between doctoral candidates and supervisors, filing of supervision agreements, records, and work schedules).
- preparation and supervision of lectures, conventions, conferences, and workshops;
- public relations activities (e.g. via in-house or external web portals, folders, posters, brochures, media relations, advertisements in international publications, attendance of college fairs and conventions).

Article 16 Resolutions, Elections, Reporting

(1) M&B institutions have a quorum when a majority of all duly summoned members with voting rights are present (30 percent in the case of the Member Assembly and the Scientific Council). All M&B members have voting rights. Voting rights cannot be delegated. Should a duly summoned session fail to constitute a quorum, the next scheduled session will have a quorum irrespective of the number of members present, if so stated explicitly in the summons.

(2) Unless ruled otherwise in this statute, M&B institutions pass resolutions with the majority of votes cast. Abstentions are considered non-votes and not counted. A member's request for a secret ballot must be granted. Election or dismissal of academic directors always requires a secret ballot.

(3) Resolution minutes of all sessions of M&B institutions are to be drawn up and to be made available to all members of the respective institution for the next session at the latest. The minutes are considered approved unless objected to within 14 days after dispatch.

Article 17 Doctoral Program

(1) M&B offers a doctoral program tailored to meet the school's objectives (outlined in Article 2). The Curriculum Committee is charged with the program's conception, coordination, and quality control.

(2) Beyond subject-related academic supervision, M&B and Humboldt Graduate School jointly offer specific career-enhancing measures, some of which are part of M&B's mandatory training program. Among other things, equal opportunity measures receive particular attention.

(3) Subject-specific supervision of each individual doctoral candidate and doctorate project is conducted by a team of supervisors (thesis committee). This team is composed of at least one representative from both the mind sciences and the brain sciences. One of the supervisors acts as the primary supervisor. If necessary, a third supervisor may join the team. The team's personnel are chosen by mutual agreement between the candidate and the M&B academic directors at the onset of a doctorate project.

By mutual consent of the parties involved and the academic directors, the composition of the team may change in the course of a project for subject-related or unrelated reasons. A supervision agreement specifies all rights and obligations of the parties involved and of the academic directors.

In case of conflicts, the ombudsperson may be called in for arbitration.

(4) Doctorates at M&B are governed by the statutes of the relevant academic institutions involved (universities, schools, departments, institutes). Upon graduation, candidates are awarded their academic titles (e.g. Dr. phil., Dr. rer. nat., Dr. rer. medic.) by the respective school or department or, should the situation arise, from M&B. In addition to the doctoral diploma, M&B furnishes a certificate and a transcript describing the contents of its training program and listing all of a candidate's academic credits and examinations at M&B.

Article 18 Scholarships (grants)

- 1) M&B awards scholarships (grants) for doctoral students. The admission committee decides on the award of scholarships during the selection process. The maximum duration of the scholarship is three years. Scholarships are generally advertised internationally.
- 2) A separate scholarship guideline approved by Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, dated 8 October 2019, regulates the awarding of scholarships at the Berlin School of Mind and Brain: <http://www.mind-and-brain.de/overview/scholarship-guideline/>

Article 19 Appointments

Appointments for positions funded by M&B or appointments for core junior professorships or full professorships must take into account relevant input from M&B. Current “Landeshochschulrecht” as well as appointment guidelines of Humboldt-Universität / Charité apply (see Appendix B of this statute).

Article 20 Junior Researchers

- (1) In accordance with Article 15 of this statute, the term “junior researchers” applies to all doctoral candidates at M&B (with or without a doctorate project) as well as postdoctoral students not employed as team leaders.
- (2) Junior researchers working on their doctorates are required to comply with a supervision agreement and a defined supervision structure to meet the conditions for graduating at M&B. This includes progress evaluation (meetings with supervisors on a regular basis, work schedules, lectures, presentations of posters etc.), involvement in the international academic community, publishing incentives and assistance.
- (3) Supervision for doctoral junior researchers comprises progress evaluation (meetings with expert faculty members on a regular basis, work schedules, lectures, presentations of posters etc.), involvement in the international academic community, publishing incentives and assistance.

Article 21 **Research Results and Inventions**

- (1) Members with a labor contract or a similar type of employment governed by law are required to notify their respective employers about research results and information emanating from their M&B efforts. Any such results may be submitted for domestic and/or international registration for patent or sample.
- (2) Collective inventions involve contributions from members working for various employers and may not be submissible for individual property rights protection. In such cases, the inventors will see to it that the respective institutions involved reach a fair agreement regarding procedures like registration, cost splitting, utilization and exploitation.
- (3) Members or their respective employers have the right to retain the services of an exploitation company for the purpose of managing all property rights efforts.

Article 22 **Right of Use**

- (1) If possible, members will share research results, information, and inventions emanating from M&B projects for the duration of the projects and for M&B purposes unless third-party rights or legitimate personal interests of members or bailees are violated. Members may grant more comprehensive rights of use by mutual agreement if necessary. In cases where members have no personal claim to research results and inventions, they will facilitate an agreement among the bailees in accordance with sentence 1 and 2 of this Section.
- (2) The ruling outlined in Section 1 equally applies to research results, information, and inventions from outside M&B if they are necessary for M&B efforts. Instead of free access, non-gratuitous arrangements may be made, particularly regarding granting rights of use for profit.
- (3) Members do not guarantee that no third-party claims apply to rights of use granted under this contractual agreement. Any member learning of such claims will immediately notify all other members involved.

Article 23 Publications

- (1) Results from research of M&B members are to be published in appropriate form. Any funded publication must include references to Excellence Initiative funding as well as internal M&B funding.
- (2) Joint-effort research results may only be published by mutual consent of all parties involved.
- (3) Members intent on publishing results must make sure that property rights claims of other M&B members remain unimpaired.
- (4) DFG best scientific practice principles apply.
- (5) All members are obliged not to disclose to third parties recognizable confidential procedural and business information of other members they may obtain at M&B. This obligation does not apply to information available to members prior to their enrollment at M&B or legally obtained otherwise. DFG is not considered a third party as defined by this ruling if it is entitled to such information in accordance with its procedural guidelines and conditions of approval.

Article 24 Severability Clause

- (1) Invalidation in full or in part of some of the provisions of this statute does not affect the validity of the other provisions.
- (2) The Scientific Council will replace any invalid provision by a substitute that best approximates the spirit and the purpose of the original.

Article 25 Commencement

This version of the statute takes effect on the day of its adoption by the Scientific Council on 15 October 2019.

The following addendum to the Statute (§ 26), by Scientific Council decision of 26 May 2011, was included primarily with a view to the implementation of the 2012–2019 postdoctoral program. Since the program expired at the end of 2019, the addendum has lost its actual addressees. Since then, the tasks described have been taken over by the Executive Board.

Article 26 **Research Committee**

- 1) The Research Committee consists of members of the M&B faculty representing the various disciplines and core research areas as equally as possible. The representatives are authorized voting members of the Research Committee and of its Executive Committee. The scientific coordinator of the postdoctoral program is a voting member of the Research Committee. Two Junior Scientist Representatives and the Managing Director act as advisory members of the Research Committee. Should a member resign from the Committee, the Executive Committee may appoint a new member.
- 2) The Research Committee
 - conceives and develops the scientific profile and makes suggestions with regard to M&B's research agenda. Concepts and suggestions are to be submitted to the Scientific Council for approval;
 - is responsible for advertising and awarding postdoctoral positions and grants;
 - is responsible for conducting ongoing monitoring of postdoctoral projects, usually in monthly sessions;
 - is responsible for conducting the annual doctoral project evaluation event;
 - initiates and is responsible for planning and conducting scientific events;
 - initiates and is responsible for fundraising efforts.

Research Committee activities are funded by means of an annual budget to be passed by the Scientific Council.

- 3) The representatives are official members of the Executive Committee of the Research Committee. Every two years, the Scientific Council will elect into the Executive Committee a third member as well as two deputies recommended by the representatives. The individuals to be elected should preferably represent an M&B area of research not already present in the Executive Committee. One of the three members of the Executive Committee will act as its chairperson for one semester.
- 4) In case a chairperson or one of the deputies recommended by the representatives fails to get elected by the Scientific Council, a repeat ballot is to be held within a period of six weeks.
- 5) The Executive Committee and its deputies are authorized to appoint Associated Researchers of M&B to the Research Committee as voting members.