M.A. in International Security Management

Apply Now:
Application Period
15 September to 15 November

https://www.hwr-berlin.de/master-ism/

Why choose the M.A. in International Security Management?

An interdisciplinary approach

The M.A. in International Security Management aims to prepare students for careers in international security management by helping them to develop the critical, interdisciplinary understanding and practically-oriented skills relevant for an evolving and fast-paced industry.

The curriculum is interdisciplinary and internationally-oriented. Its content draws on numerous academic disciplines including law, economics, politics, psychology, criminology and sociology. The programme is underpinned and supported by leading research and practical knowledge. Students will be taught by academic experts in risk and crisis management; criminological analysis, security and international and comparative law, applied psychology, human rights standards and accountability via a variety of methods including team-teaching, expert guest presentations and field trips.

People of all ages and backgrounds study at the BSEL Department for Police and Security Management and they do so for a range of reasons. These include:

Reasons to study the M.A. in ISM

- Gaining an academic qualification
- Broadening existing skills
- Enhancing career prospects
- Changing career
- Seeking new challenges
- Studying in Berlin

Employability

The M.A. in ISM is tailored to ensure that our students are prepared to meet global security challenges and to enter employment in the security sector as educated professionals with practical and relevant skills. Our students will graduate with capabilities which will equip them for employment in security management-related positions in the commercial, public and civil society sectors.

The M.A. ISM is aimed at graduates who already have a good undergraduate degree in risk and security management OR in related subjects such as public administration, law, social science, as well as tourism, logistics, facility management or information technology. The M.A. ISM is a FULL-TIME postgraduate programme. During the teaching period (April-July and October-February), students are expected to be in Berlin. It is not suitable for those in full-time employment. If you are a security professional who wishes to study for a postgraduate degree part-time, we recommend our distance-learning M.A. in Security Management, which is taught predominantly in German (www.berlin-professional-school.de).

Key Facts

Degree	Master of Arts (M.A.), 120 credit points
Duration	2-year full-time (campus-based), Start: April
Organisation	The M.A. ISM programme is structured over four academic semesters as follows: • Semester 1: Introductory phase to focus and expand the current knowledge base • Semester 2: In-depth instruction phase with the possibility for specialisation • Semester 3: Six-month internship to develop the theoretical knowledge into practical skills while obtaining invaluable professional experience and contacts. • Semester 4: Research phase accompanied by a colloquium as part of the master thesis.
Admission Requirements	• An internationally recognised undergraduate degree (Bachelor, Diploma), with at least 180 ECTS credit points • Very good knowledge of English (equivalent to Level B2 of Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages). We highly recommend C1. • CV and letter of motivation
Fees	There are no tuition fees for this programme. Students are required to pay a semester fee for each semester of study.
Cost of Living	Students are responsible for paying their own living costs. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) estimates that a student requires a monthly budget of € 1200 to study in Germany

Module Overview

Module 1 - Research and Methodology (semesters 1 to 3 or 4)

This is a research theory and research skills focused module and is taught over three semesters. Each section of the module will address a different stage of research, and research methodology in theory and practice. Students develop skills in research methodology, and they are trained to design own research. In the final section of this module students receive support and feedback on the research conducted for their Master's thesis, in order to support them during the writing phase of the thesis.

Module 2 - International and Global Security Challenges (semester 1)

This module deals in comprehensive and multi-scalar fashion with contemporary international security challenges, global security transformations and regional security governance. In the first section, students will learn to understand the essential characteristics of the international system. They will become familiar with the most important schools of thought in the sub^-discipline of International Relations. Such theoretical background will help them to analyse different security challenges and threat scenarios in the international environment. The section on global security transformation focuses on far-reaching technological and social change processes. Students learn to empirically assess the scope and intensity of these changes and systematically derive implications for policy instruments and strategies within an ever more complex security environment. Regarding regional security governance, the module focuses on distinct emerging approaches to, and patterns of, security governance in regions across the global South. Working with cases drawn from African, Latin American and Caribbean, and Southeast Asian contexts, students learn to elucidate and act upon the challenges, constraints and possibilities of regional security governance in an increasingly complex world of regions.

Module 3 - Risk Management and Security Regulation (semester 1)

The module begins in section 1 with key terminology and concepts in risk management and then covers the practice of risk management. It supports students in developing a comprehensive understanding of the importance, difficulties, and possibilities of risk management in an international context. In particular, students are introduced to the current thinking on assessment, management, and governance. In Section 2, the module covers the most relevant aspects of European and international law in the context of security and risk regulation. Section 3 focuses on the personality of a leader, trying to understand the interaction forces between leadership and the organisational structures.

Module 4 - Ethics and Normative Approaches in International Security Management (semester 1)

This module reflects on the ethical and normative dimensions of international security management. The first section starts from a philosophical viewpoint. Students gain knowledge about the main approaches in ethical theory and are invited to consider controversial issues in the field of security management from moral perspectives. The second section deals with international security from a normative political science point of view. The section develops normative and critical security studies for international security management. Both, cooperative and emancipative approaches are evaluated for the production and maintenance of security, from the global down to the local level.

Module 5 - Information Security, Cybersecurity and Data Protection (semester 1)

Information is crucial in knowledge-based societies. Knowledge creation and technological development are the most substantial prerequisites for welfare, and worldwide information-sharing facilitates intercultural exchange and international cooperation. But information and knowledge are also vulnerable. In international politics, states might steal information to gain advantages in international power competition, or misuse (des)-information to manipulate political opponents and foreign publics. In the economic sector, companies may be deprived of valuable knowledge, trade secrets, and inventions they heavily invested in. Furthermore, corporate information and information infrastructure can be damaged or blocked for ransom or sabotage purposes. It is thus often necessary to protect valuable knowledge and critical information infrastructure for various corporate, private and political security reasons.

In sub-module "Information and Cybersecurity", the students work out the basics of information security, IT security and cybersecurity. A particular focus here is on the concepts behind the basic terms and their interpretation/components. The various players in providing and ensuring information, IT and cybersecurity are identified and their roles discussed. Typical and emerging threats to information security and IT security in companies/authorities are explained (e.g., hacking, DDoS-Attacks, ransomware, advanced disinformation campaigns, supply chain compromise of software dependencies). Possible counter- and preventive measures are discussed (including legal and technical limitations, e.g., use of AI, CCTV). A special focus is placed on threats which exploit human vulnerabilities (so-called social engineering) and the role of awareness creation/management. Known (and less known) information and IT security incidents (e.g., WannaCry) are dealt with using "worst case" scenarios.

The sub-module "Data Protection and Legal Background" covers the basics of data protection and IT security law in particular. One focus of the course is data protection and data protection law. Students are given an introduction to the main features of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation with a special focus on incident management (e.g., in case of a data breach). This will be compared with the regulations of selected other countries (e.g., US and India). In addition, an overview of EU-wide legislation in the area of cybersecurity (in particular the NIS2 Directive) is presented.

The sub-module "Information Security Management" focuses on the technical implementation of the security controls, as well as the fundamentals of cybersecurity engineering. This includes a systematic approach to access controls, cryptographical techniques, electronic signature, and cloud computing. Finally, students are given an introduction to information security management systems (ISMS) and the respective international standards.

Module 6 - Crime Control in a Global Environment (semester 1)

This module covers the major criminal threats to corporations and other organisations operating in an international setting. These threats may stem from individuals, other organisations or state agencies. Perpetrators can be both internal and external parties and the organisation itself.

Module 7 - Economic Approaches and Leadership Skills in International Security (semester 2)

This module wants to create a deeper understanding of selected topics and issues of business-related aspects as well as to develop leadership and communicative skills and competences. Therefore, this module is divided into three sections which are focused on Leadership and Social Competences ("dealing with people"), Entrepreneurial Management ("dealing with business"), and Risk and Crisis Communication ("dealing with risks and crises").

The three sections cover the following topics:

Section 1: Leadership and Social Competences in an International Context

This section deals with leadership in an international context and the social competences which are needed to be a successful leader. This section addresses the issues from a (social) psychological perspective.

Section 2: Entrepreneurial Management

This section introduces economic- and business-related aspects of security management and shows the complexity of strategic managerial decisions. Various tools will be introduced which are necessary for task-oriented decisions in strategic management with a focus on the foundation and the operation of a company in the context of security management.

Section 3: Risk and Crisis Communication

The management of crisis depends crucially on the design and situationally appropriate implementation of risk communication and crisis communication with the population. To this end, fundamental psychological knowledge must be understood and implemented in a socially competent manner by the responsible actors, taking cultural factors into account.

Module 8 - International Conflict Management (semester 2)

Violent conflicts pose a significant threat both to state and human security. For ISM-students it is hence essential to have an understanding of violent conflict at different scales. Against this background, the module offers students an introduction to international and sub-national conflict dynamics. The students learn how conflicts can be analysed, mitigated and managed.

Module 9 - Human Rights and Accountability in International Security (semester 2)

Human rights and accountability present ongoing and important challenges for international security management. As the regulatory framework expands to address the human rights responsibilities of international security companies and their clients, this module continues the reflection on the ethical and normative dimensions of international security management and institutional settings for holding security management accountable.

Module 10 - Current Issues of International Security Management (semester 2)

This module reflects on current issues in international security management. Security issues and the challenges for security management in an international environment are quickly evolving. Recent research results and newly emerging problems lead to new questions needing to be addressed in international security management. Students learn to apply the knowledge gained in the programme to newly emerging fields and problems.

Module 11 - Elective A or Elective B (semester 2)

The topics and the teaching contents of the seminars are modifiable. The elective module offers students the opportunity to develop a competence profile that qualifies them for a job in their desired professional field. In this course, students will deepen their knowledge in specific areas of the occupational fields or in current political, social and economic developments and their effects on security management. The courses are structured as seminars with teaching discussions, students' presentations, and expert lectures.

Why study at the Department of Police and Security Management?

Effective and professional security management is of increasing importance for both commercial competitiveness and global economic and social stability. Consequently, there is a growing demand for highly-skilled and knowledgeable security management professionals with a cutting-edge understanding of the field. In response, the Department of Police and Security Management at Berlin School of Economics and Law (BSEL) has developed an internationally-focused MA programme in International Security Management (ISM) in conjunction with security experts from the public and private sectors.

In Germany, BSEL has an unparalleled teaching and research profile in the field of security management. The Department of Police and Security Management has over ten years of experience in providing specialised undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes focusing on security in both the public and private sectors, at national and international levels. With 50 academic staff-members and almost 2000 students, the faculty is one of the largest departments of its kind in Germany. Our academic staff are engaged in globally recognised research on public and private security and the department works closely with specialists, professionals and policy-makers from the government, the security industry and civil society.

The use of modern teaching and learning methods is given a wide scope. In addition to seminar lessons, the entire course is supported by the e-learning platform "Moodle".

Networks and Partnerships

In 2013, academics in the department founded the Berlin Institute for Safety and Security Research (FÖPS Berlin). The members of FÖPS Berlin conduct research on a broad range of public and private security topics and lead multiple nationally and internationally-focused research projects.

The department and staff also have strong links with the national and international security sectors including more than 80 companies, administrative bodies with security ties from the local region and beyond, and regulatory bodies. Links to the German private sector include the Bundesverband des Sicherheitsgewerbes (BDSW) and prominent companies such as Siemens, Daimler, Vattenfall Europe, Deutsche Bahn, BASF, Securitas, Gegenbauer, Bayer and HiSolutions. In the national and public law sectors, the department works closely with the Berlin Police Department and several Senate Administrations of the City of Berlin. Internationally, our academic staff work with international security companies, governments, policy-makers and civil society. They also have working relationships with the International Code of Conduct Association for Private Security Providers, the UN and EU as well as NGOs such as the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces.

Our academic expertise in teaching and research with an emphasis on security practicalities combine to create a state-of-the-art M.A. in International Security Management.

Academic Staff Profiles

Students will be taught by renowned academic experts and competent referents of practice.

This creates a balanced relationship between theory and practice, while at the same time ensuring a high scientific claim.

Prof. Dr. Hartmut Aden

Prof. Dr. Hartmut Aden has been professor of German and European public law, public policy and public administration since 2009. He also serves as data protection commissioner for the BSEL. His research focuses on accountability, human rights, data protection, police law, right of assembly, law and technology, and environmental law and policy. His research projects primarily examine the interfaces between law, politics, and administration from a national as well as European and international perspective. (For further information click here.)

Dr. Raphael Bossong

Dr. Raphael Bossong is a research associate at the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin, where he is responsible for EU Justice and Home Affairs. He previously worked at the European University Viadrina, the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy, Hamburg and at the Global Public Policy Institute, Berlin. His research interests span the spectrum of non-military security policy, with a focus on counter-terrorism, border security and disaster management. (For further information click here.)

Prof. Dr. Anna Daun

Prof. Dr. Anna Daun has been Professor for political science at the Berlin School of Economics and Law since 2016. Her teaching and research fall within the subfields of International Relations and Security Studies. She is especially interested in security cooperation, fragile states, intelligence and civil protection. Before joining the Berlin School of Economics and Law she worked for the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) in the subject areas of risk perception and risk communication. (For further information click here.)

Prof. Dr. Mischa Hansel

Prof. Dr. Mischa Hansel works at the intersection of social science and cybersecurity studies. Prior to joining HWR Berlin in 2023, he was a postdoc researcher in Cologne, Aachen and Gießen and a guest lecturer in Washington DC, Leiden and Amsterdam. More recently he led an interdisciplinary research team at the Institute for Peace Research (IFSH) in Hamburg, funded by the German Federal Foreign Office. His research focuses on cyber security architectures - from the local to the global level, the role of private actors in cyber and information security and the use of new technologies in geopolitical conflicts.

Prof. Dr. Klaus von Lampe

Prof. Dr. Klaus von Lampe has been a professor of criminology at BSEL since 2018. He was previously a professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York. His research focuses on empirical manifestations of transnational and organized crime, the dynamics of illegal markets, the prevention of crime, and international law enforcement cooperation.

Prof. Dr. Vincenz Leuschner

Prof. Dr. Vincenz Leuschner has been Professor of Criminology and Sociology at BSEL since 2017. Prior to that, he was a professor at the University of Applied Education in Berlin and a research associate at the Free University of Berlin. His main research interests are in the field of research on violence (amok, terrorism), social problems, developmental criminology, crime prevention and sociology of social relations. (For further information click here.)

Prof. Dr. Wim Nettelnstroth

Prof. Dr. Wim Nettelnstroth has been Professor of Psychology (Human Resources Management) at BSEL since 2012 and Quality Officer of Department 5 since 2014. Outside the university, he worked at Daimler AG in the field of psychological customer and product research. His main focus of his work and research is in the fields of personnel and organisational psychology, in particular personnel selection, communication/conflict, leadership and organisational diagnosis. (For further information click here.)

Prof. Dr. Janine Neuhaus

Prof. Dr. Janine Neuhaus has been professor of psychology and research methods since April 2017. Previously, she was working as a research consultant at Potsdam University (2015-2017) and as a research associate within several third-party-funded research projects at Free University of Berlin (2004-2015; in cooperation with the Berlin Criminal Investigation Department/ LKA Berlin, Volkswagen-Foundation etc.). She is an expert on crime prevention, youth violence, intervention research, evaluation research and gender research. (For further information click here).

Prof. Dr. Jan Dirk Roggenkamp

Prof. Dr. Jan Dirk Roggenkamp is Professor of Public Law at the BSEL. His current research agenda focuses on IT Law, especially the legal implications of police work and information technology (e.g. data retention, monitoring and surveillance of IT, use of social networks, data protection and privacy). Prior to joining the BSEL in 2017, Roggenkamp was a Professor at the Police Academy of Lower Saxony. (For further information click here.)

Karsten Schulz, Dipl.-Komm.wirt, B.A., M.A., MBA, M.Sc.

Karsten Schulz has been lecturer in the fields of business administration, management and marketing at BSEL since 1998. He is involved in the conception of several innovative study courses and the formation of cooperation schemes and networks with international universities.

Prof. Dr. Markus Schulze-Kraft

Prof. Dr. Markus Schultze-Kraft is an Oxford and Berlin-trained political scientist with extensive experience in interdisciplinary research, policy analysis and advocacy, and university teaching in/on the global South. Prior to joining HWR Berlin in 2022, Professor Schultze-Kraft worked at the International Crisis Group, the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, and Universidad Icesi in Cali. His areas of interest include political order, organised crime, violent conflict transformation, security, and historical memory and peace education in Latin America, West Africa and the Western Balkans.

Prof. Dr. Birgitta Sticher

Prof. Dr. Birgitta Sticher has been professor of psychology and leadership studies at the BSEL (formerly FHVR Berlin) since 1998, and since 2007 she has been internship coordinator for the Security Management programme at the BSEL. The focuses of her research are public involvement in disaster protection, investigative interviewing and the examination of pro-social behaviour in times of crisis/catastrophe. (For further information click here.)

Prof. Dr. Ekkehard Strauß

Prof. Dr. Ekkehard Strauss has held a professorship on public law, in particular human rights and police law at BSEL since October 2020. Prior to his appointment, he worked in different positions with the United Nations and the OSCE, both in the field and at headquarters, addressing international conflict management and prevention, international human rights protection and strategic policy planning since 1998. Throughout his career, he participated in joint research projects and publications mainly related to the prevention of mass atrocities, the rights of minorities, human rights protection strategies and the institutional development of the United Nations.

Prof. Dr. Tarik Tabbara, LL.M. (McGill)

Prof. Dr. Tarik Tabbara is Professor of Public Law, especially National and European Security Law at BSEL. He was appointed in September 2018 after working many years in several positions in the German Federal Government (inter alia Chancellor's Office, Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conversation and Nuclear Safety) and in the German Federal Parliament (Deutscher Bundestag). His legal expertise covers a wide range of topics in national as well as European and Public International Law, especially migration, citizenship and police law and human rights with a special focus on religious freedom. (For further information click here.)

Prof. Dr. habil. Tamás Szádeczky, CISSP, MBA

Tamás Szádeczky is a full professor and head of the Ludovika University of Public Service, Department of Cybersecurity. He has been working in the information security audit and consultation field since 2003. He has also lectured and researched the topic for over a decade in multiple universities in three countries. He holds several international professional titles, including CISSP, CISM, CISA, GICSP, and IRCA ISO 27001 principal auditor.

Dr. Johannes Thumfart

Johannes Thumfart is a philosopher and historian working at the intersection of security studies, political philosophy, international law, and intellectual history. He is a fellow at the research group Law Science Technology and Society (LSTS) at Vrije Universiteit Brussel. His academic career included work at universities in Germany, France, Mexico, and the US. He published in journals such as the Journal of Global Security Studies, Global Studies Quarterly, the European Journal of International Security, and AI and Ethics. He is author of the monograph The Liberal Internet in the Postliberal Era: Digital Sovereignty, Private Government, and Practices of Neutralization to be published in October 2024. Next to his academic career, Thumfart taught in courses for the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) and published journalistic pieces in leading German newspapers such as Die Zeit and Der Spiegel.

Prof. Dr. Juergen Weichselgartner

Prof. Dr. Juergen Weichselgartner has been professor of crisis and risk management at HWR since 2019. Prior appointments include renowned science centres, such as Harvard University, the University of Tokyo, and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA). His expertise lies in analysing societal transformation and the rich array of responses to risk and global change processes. He has authored several books and articles on risk-related aspects, contributed to various international reports and serves as a reviewer for the IPCC. (For further information click here.)

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