

“Muslim Worlds in Russia (History and Culture)” Master’s Programme (for international applicants)

The selection process for the “Muslim Worlds in Russia (History and Culture)” Master’s programme is implemented on a competitive basis (portfolio competition). Participants must submit: 1) a selection of documents and 2) pass the verbal interview stage. Marks for all elements of the competition are provided according to a points-based system, with a maximum grade coming to 100.

Composition, Structure and Methods for grading Competition Documents

Portfolio section	Criteria and explanations	Maximum grade
Questionnaire (an application uploaded to Applicant’s personal account)		Pass/fail
1. Motivation letter	1,500-3,000 words (3-6 pages; line spacing – 1.5, font size – 12); written in English or Russian. Provide reasons behind your interest in the field, experience acquired and professional plans. It is important that: 1. the reviewers of your motivation letter understand that you are: 1) motivated; 2) competent; 3) have research/practical potential in regard to your selected specialization; 2. Your motivation letter should not be a copy of your CV – it should be supplemental.	
	General maximum grade Letter format:	16
	Part 1 (motivation, short form): Provide a short description of your interests and what motivates you to pursue a Master’s degree in the field.	1
	Part 2 (education, academic achievements, practical experience): 2.1. Provide a short description of your previous education and the role it played in your selection of this Master’s programme; 2.2 Provide a short description of your previous research projects (e.g., topics and conclusions). If you have written articles or delivered papers at conferences, provide information about them as well. Provide information about your academic accomplishments (e.g., scholarships, grants, etc.); 2.3. Provide information about your previous work experience, especially if related to this Master’s specialization.	2
	Part 3 (most important):	

	Comment on what you would like to study under this Master's programme and why:	
	3.1. Reasons for your interest in the given topic: provide details about your sphere of professional interests and explain them; consider the research questions of interest for you in the field; visit the website of this Master's programme, and read further about the works and interests of its instructors and researchers; specify whose interests are closest to your own.	5
	3.2. A short description of your planned Master's project: ideally, develop a research issue and identify a research question, or indicate a topic that is interesting for you. The more precise the description of your academic interests, the better marks your portfolio will get.	5
	3.3. Comment on your professional plans after graduating from the Master's programme.	1
	Style, logical cohesion	2
2. Interview results	General maximum grade	40
	1. Discussion of the content of the motivation letter: research interests and proposed research topic; relation between future Master's work with previous academic and professional experiences; how do you envision your future professional activity?	15
	2. A review of the applicant's knowledge of the specific academic field (as per his/her Bachelor's degree), e.g. in the history and culture of Russia and/or the peoples of the former Russian Empire, of Islamic civilizations, religions, etc. The candidate should demonstrate an orientation in scholarly literature, historical sources, and cultural	15

	monuments according to and on the level of her/his Bachelor's specialization.	
	3. An examination of one's command of English and/or Russian; if necessary, of other European and/or Eastern languages. The applicant will be provided with a fragment of a scholarly article in English or Russian (up to 2,000 symbols) to retell it in Russian or English (if necessary – to translate specific parts of the text) and to express their opinion about the contents. If the candidate has a certificate about their knowledge of eastern languages, s/he may be asked to read, translate and comment upon a text in the corresponding language (up to 1,000 symbols);	10
3. Copy of document, confirming level of education (diploma of higher education – Bachelor's/Specialist);	Total maximum grade	7
	A diploma of higher education with a specialization in: History, Philology, Asian and African Studies, Cultural Studies, Philosophy, History of Arts, Sociology, Anthropology and Religious Studies, Political Science, other fields of the Humanities or Social sciences	up to 5
	or a diploma of higher education in another specialization;	up to 3
	A diploma with honor (top grade for the thesis on a topic related to this Master's specialization);	7
4. Recommendation letter (letters)	A recommendation letter from an academic supervisor or another specialist, who has extensive knowledge of the academic experience of the candidate; a supervisor of a seminar where the candidate took part; a coordinator of an academic practicum; an organizer of an academic conference where the candidate was a participant, etc.	2

	The referring party should specify the extent of their knowledge of the applicant and his/her work.	
5. Additional documents (on qualification enhancement, course performance, professional certificates, etc.);		2
6. Document confirming level of knowledge of a foreign language	General maximum grade;	10
	If the applicant is not a native speaker of Russian: knowledge of Russian at an advanced level (reading an academic text without a dictionary and fluent verbal communication); and/or: If the applicant is not a native speaker of English: knowledge of English at an advanced level (reading an academic text without a dictionary and fluent verbal communication). <i>Note: Knowledge of Russian and English (not lower than intermediate) is essential for reviewing documents;</i>	3
	Second/third European language (German, French, Italian, Portugal, Spanish, <i>in addition</i> to one's native language)	2
	Eastern language (Arabic, Turkish, Persian <i>in addition</i> to one's native language);	3
	Second eastern language	2
7. Copies of documents, confirming issue of academic publications, presentations at academic seminars/conferences, or on internships;	General maximum grade	11
	Participation in conferences;	3
	Academic articles published in peer-reviewed journals, indexed in the Scopus, WoS/Russian indexes VAK, RINTs/other publications in one's professional field and related to the chosen field;	up to 6/5/4

	Academic internships, participation in academic grants;	up to 2
8. Synopsis of your original written work in a professional sphere related to the selected specialization: history (especially, the history of Russia and peoples of the former Russian empire), history of culture, history of literature, Islamic studies, religious studies, cultural and social anthropology, other fields of the humanities and social sciences.	In Russian or English, 3,000-4,500 words (6 - 9 pages, Word, line spacing 1.5, Times New Roman, 12-font size). You may submit a synopsis of your thesis (diploma), another type of qualification work (e.g., an essay, term paper, etc.) or any written text that, in your view, is your most academically successful one. If possible, provide feedback from an academic supervisor and/or the official reviewer of the work of which you are providing a synopsis. Synopsis format: - research topic; - purpose; - short review of the related academic literature, emphasizing the academic relevance and innovative aspects of the given piece of research; - primary sources used; - strategy and methods of research; - core results and conclusions; - list of the key primary and secondary sources used.	
	General maximum grade	12
	Originality and accuracy of the main questions and objectives of the research;	2
	Correlation of the research with the current level of academic literature;	3
	Grounds for the selection of sources, methods and skills of their analysis;	3
	creativity and innovativeness in conclusions and proposals;	2
	logical and complete presentation	2
9. CV	- contact information; - degrees received; - positions, grants, internships; - publications; - conferences.	Pass/fail grade
Total		100

Appendix

MOTIVATION LETTER (pattern, for more details refer to point 1 above)

PHOTO

*National Research University – Higher School of Economics
Admissions board
from (1st & 2nd names)
e-mail
telephone No.*

- I, _____, wish to take part in the competition of candidates applying to the “Muslim Worlds in Russia (History and Culture)” MA programme,
- short biographic information;
 - education (name of attended academic institutions and diplomas/degrees received, courses taken, participation in professional development programs, academic schools, etc.);
 - practical experience in academic activities (name and location of academic institutions, positions, period of employment; names of projects; lists of conferences, seminars and other events in which the candidate has taken part);
 - goal of studying at this Master’s programme;
 - reasons inspiring the applicant to choose this particular Master’s programme at the HSE University;
 - proposed Master’s topic;
 - short description of a planned Master’s project;
 - professional plans.

Date / Signature