

Framework Study and Examination Regulations
(FSER) of the IPU Berlin
(Version dated 2.2.2024)

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§ 1

Scope

This regulation establishes cross-curricular procedural rules for studies and examinations. Details are stipulated by the examination and study regulations of the degree programs.

§ 2

Standard Period of Studies and Study Interruptions

- (1) The standard period of studies for the Bachelor study courses amounts to three years. 180 ECTS credits must be achieved and recognized for completion.
- (2) The standard period of studies for the Master study courses amounts to two years. At least 300 ECTS credits must be achieved and recognized, including those from the first academic degree leading to a professional qualification.
- (3) Anyone intending to interrupt their studies starting in the second semester or who is prevented from having proper and orderly studies is required to take a leave of absence. The application to take a leave of absence should be submitted at the latest six weeks prior to the beginning of the lecture period and include the reasons for the interruption.

Reasons for a leave of absence include especially:

1. Study abroad,
2. Completion of an internship,
3. Illness,
4. Maternity leave,
5. Care of a dependent requiring nursing,
6. Full-time employment.

Verification of these reasons may be required. The application to take a leave of absence is granted provided no considerable doubt arises with respect to the existence of the reasons provided. As a rule, the leave of absence is granted for one semester only in each case. It may be increased to two consecutive semesters only in exceptional cases with valid reasoning.

- (4) There is no legal right to attend lectures for the period of the leave of absence; the other rights continue to exist and apply. In particular, examinations may be taken at the IPU provided the preconditions and requirements have already been fulfilled. A semester on leave does not count as a study semester.
- (5) No study fees are due for the period of the semester on leave. The student remains a member of the IPU during the semester on leave. They must also pay the semester fees to the extent that no exemption has been granted.

§ 3

Study Courses and Options

- (1) A Bachelor study course leads to a first degree from a university qualifying the graduate for professional work. It consists of three study areas:
 1. Core Subject
 2. Affine Subjects
 3. General Career Preparation (GCP)
- (2) Master study courses can
 - a) Build upon a Bachelor study course as in-depth, broadening or interdisciplinary study courses, or
 - b) Require a prior university degree resulting in a professional qualification, but do not build upon specific Bachelor study courses (consecutive Master study courses), or
 - c) Convey study content which as a rule require a prior first degree from a university qualifying the graduate for professional work and subsequent qualified professional work experience lasting not less than a year as a rule (Master study courses as advanced studies).

§ 4

Modularization and Examinations during Studies

- (1) Modules are thematically and chronologically self-contained study units that are awarded credit points.
- (2) Modules are conceived specifically for each Bachelor and Master study course, with corresponding teaching content provided with them. Any modules already completed during a Bachelor study course must not be completed again in a Master study course.
- (3) For each module, a graded examination must be passed. The details in this regard are regulated in the study and examination regulations.
- (4) Examination papers may be written in German or English, provided the supervising lecturer is in agreement.
- (5) Regulations are laid down in the study and examination regulations through which the planned completion of the study and exam work within a respective study plan is guaranteed within the standard period of studies.

§ 5

Student Counseling

- (1) In order to support the students in achieving their study aims, the IPU offers student counseling and academic advising. The staff of the Studies and Teaching Office provide guidance on general questions about studies and the study courses.
- (2) All university lecturers and elected student representatives are available to advise students on specific questions relating to the degree programs.
- (3) The study course coordinators are available to provide subject-specific advice before the second repetition of examinations.
- (4) Students whose period of study exceeds more than 50% of the standard duration will be required by the Examination and Admissions Committee to attend academic advising.

§ 6

Examination and Admissions Committee

- (1) An Examination and Admissions Committee is to be appointed for each study course. It is responsible for defining proper study and examination achievements, the ECTS recognizing of the achievements, the organization of examinations, the appointment of examiners, the admission to the examination, as well as defining the study course degree. The Examination and Admissions Committee ensures that the provisions in the respective statutory regulations are complied with and is responsible for the adequacy of the study and examination requirements and the maintenance of academic standards. An Examination and Admissions Committee can be in charge of several study courses.
- (2) The Examination and Admissions Committee is appointed by the Academic Senate. It consists of six members, of whom four are professors, one is a member of the academic staff, one is a member of the technical and administration staff, and one is a student. The term of office for the members of the Examination and Admissions Committee amounts to two years.
- (3) The Examination and Admissions Committee appoints from among its members a chairperson who must be a professor. The Examination and Admissions Committee can revocably transfer its authority to make decisions on specific tasks to the chairperson.
- (4) The Examination and Admissions Committee meetings are not open to the public. The members are required to maintain confidentiality. If they are not already subject to bound to confidentiality, they are to be obliged in writing by the chairperson to maintain their confidentiality.

§ 7

Assessing Achievements

The assessments of module achievements must always be justified in writing. The reasons for the assessment must be stated.

§ 8

File Management & Access

- (1) When requested, an application to inspect files must be granted within one year after the decision on study or exam results has been taken, including third parties who have written authorization to access the files in question. As a rule, reviewing files occurs in the respective Studies and Teaching Office, handwritten notes may be made. Any entitlement to make copies occurs only in the context of a formal lawsuit.
- (2) Student files containing examination documentation (written exams, reports, term papers, minutes of oral exams, final theses) are stored for five years in the Studies and Teaching Office at the IPU. Electronic storage is possible. Copies of certificates are stored in the IPU for 50 years.

§ 9

Remonstrance Proceedings

Those concerned may lodge a written objection to examination assessments with the Examination and Admissions Committee within three months. The concerned party must be granted access to the examination file. The remonstrance will be forwarded to the respective examiners. They will review their assessment and forward the reasons for the new assessment to the Examination board within one month. The Examination board decides on the remonstrance, if necessary, with the involvement of an independent assessor. The Examination Board shall inform the concerned party of the assessor's decision.

§ 10

Recognizing ECTS Credits

- (1) Study achievements and examination results obtained at a higher education institution in Germany or an equivalent foreign higher education institution can be credited by the IPU Berlin in a study program, insofar as no significant differences to the corresponding requirements at the IPU Berlin can be identified (Lisbon Convention Art. V). This is the case if the scope and requirements of the qualification goals and competences to be acquired through the respective achievement essentially correspond to the study program at the IPU Berlin. In this case, no schematic comparison is to be made, but rather an overall consideration and assessment.
- (2) Competences acquired outside the university and equivalent to the achievements in the respective study program at IPU Berlin can be credited up to half of the credit points provided for the study program.
- (3) Achievements and competences according to paragraphs 1 and 2 may only be credited once.
- (4) The burden of proof for claiming significant differences lies with the IPU Berlin. Applicants can prove in a placement examination that they have competences which allow them to be placed in a higher subject semester or to skip a module. For individual modules, courses are offered which must be attended prior to a classification examination ("bridging courses").
- (5) If a module is credited, the grade obtained in the credited module is taken over for the credit points required by the IPU Berlin in this module. Grades which are taken over after conversion from another grading system are taken over with one decimal place without consideration of further decimal places. If a module was shown as passed in the previous performance, it will be shown as passed after credit transfer. A module for the acquisition of key qualifications can be credited as completed in the Bachelor's study program if proof of completed university studies has already been provided.
- (6) In the case of a university partnership of the IPU Berlin with a domestic or foreign university, the agreements made between these two universities shall apply.
- (7) Relevant practical work experience can be credited up to half of the credit points provided for the study program according to ECTS. The Examination and Admissions Committee or, for corresponding modules, the internship coordinators shall decide on the recognizing.

§ 11

Disability Compensation for Physical Impairments and Disabilities and Substitute Achievements

- (1) Anyone who, due to a disability in accordance with § 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act, chronic illness, pregnancy, the care and upbringing of a small child, the care of close relatives in need of care within the meaning of the Care Act, or for other valid reasons, is not able to complete a course achievement, place, in the intended form or otherwise in the intended manner, shall receive compensation for these disadvantages. Compensation is made by specifying a different date, an extended duration or completion time, a different location, a different form, the admission of aids or assistants or in another suitable manner. If it is not possible to participate in a course, another academic achievement can be determined. The coursework to be completed in order to compensate for disadvantages must be equivalent.
- (2) The application for compensation for disadvantages should be submitted to the Office for Studies and Teaching at the earliest possible date and will then be processed by the Examination and Admissions Committee. With the application for compensation for disadvantages a valid certificate justifying the entitlement to compensation for disadvantages must be submitted. The applicant can propose a specific form of compensation. The decision will be communicated in writing by the Examination and Admissions Committee; rejections will be justified in writing.

§ 12

Attendance & Participation Obligations

In order to attend the lectures, students must register for classes in the allotted time and, in cases where attendance at lectures is required as part of their study course achievements, they must attend such lectures regularly. Regular attendance is deemed to be at least 80% attendance at the lecture hours in a given course.

§ 13 ECTS

Credits

- (1) To the extent that examination achievements are recognized and graded by means of an ECTS credits system, the ECTS credits for a module denote the student workload usually needed to fulfil the respective requirements and achieve the learning aims. In addition to attending lectures within the module, this also includes complete preparation and follow-up work on the material being taught, preparation and elaboration of the students' own contributions, as well as preparation for and participation in the achievement checks.
- (2) One European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credit point corresponds to a student workload of 30 hours; any deviations to the course of study are regulated in the study and examination regulations of the respective study course. As a rule, one semester in a full-time study course amounts to 30 ECTS credits, corresponding to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), with 60 ECTS credits intended for a complete year of studies. 15 ECTS credits are intended for a semester of part-time studies, with 30 ECTS credits envisaged for a complete year of part-time studies.
- (3) The ECTS credits are certified by the member of the lecturing staff responsible for the respective lecture or for the module, provided the requirements contained in § 12 have been fulfilled and a minimally sufficient achievement (4.0) is passed where this is intended, or this is regarded as the rendering of an achievement passed when no grading is stipulated.
- (4) An extract from the study block (transcript), which lists individual completed modules or module parts, is provided to the students in each study semester upon request.

§ 14

Registering

Registering for the module examinations occurs automatically at the next intended examination date as soon as the active and regular attendance at the module lectures has been confirmed by the respective lecturer, unless otherwise regulated by the examination regulations specific to the course of study. In the event that a module examination is not passed, the next available examination date must be taken.

§ 15

Final Theses

- (1) Admission to a final thesis (Bachelor's or Master's thesis) requires that at least half of the credit points required for the overall course of study have been achieved in the respective study program.
- (2) Group work is permitted for final theses (maximum of four authors). The individual contributions of the authors should be indicated.
- (3) Any authorized examiner who is familiar with the subject can generally be appointed as the appraiser for a thesis. They must at least have the qualification as defined by the thesis, or one of equivalent value. At least one reviewer of the thesis must hold a doctorate. When requested, a maximum of one external appraiser can be permitted by the Examination and Admissions Committee, provided they are an authorized examiner in the subject they represent. The first appraiser is the supervisor responsible for the thesis and is usually a member of the IPU Berlin. The Examination and Admissions Committee decides on study course specific exceptions to the appointment of first and second reviewers.
- (4) The processing time for the final thesis (Bachelor or Master thesis) begins upon permission being granted, and the length of time available is limited by the respective examination regulations (3, 6 and/or 12 months). At least four weeks must pass between admission to the thesis and submission.
- (5) Any extension of the processing time for theses provided in the respective examination regulations can only be permitted under special conditions and only on submission of an appropriate certificate. Such a certificate has to confirm the reason (e.g. limited ability to work, unforeseen difficulties in surveying or evaluating data) and the length of time required (e.g. two weeks) and has to be issued by the thesis supervisor or a medical doctor. The certificate must be handed in at the Office for Studies and Teaching before the end of the processing time. An official medical certificate may also be required.
- (6) Any extension of the processing time for theses by more than one semester is not permitted.
- (7) If a thesis is abandoned, it can be repeated twice at IPU Berlin with a new attempt. When repeating a thesis, a recognizably new topic must be worked on.
- (8) Theses have to be submitted to the Studies and Teaching Office by the due date in an electronic format, as well as in two identical printed copies. The Studies and Teaching Office notes the date of receipt in all of the copies, archives the thesis in the electronic format and forwards the printed copies to the appraisers.
- (9) The thesis report contain grading according to the IPU grading scale as well as the justification for the assessment. The theses are assessed independently from each other by the two appraisers.
- (10) In the event that the grades by the appraisers for a thesis deviate from each other, the average grade from them is determined and rounded off to the benefit of the student with any further decimal points after that being ignored in accordance with the IPU grading scale. In the event that the grades by the appraisers deviate by two or more complete grades, a third appraiser will be appointed by the Examination and Admissions Committee.
- (11) Students will receive a copy of all reports after they have been received.

§ 16

Oral Examinations

- (1) Oral examinations may only be conducted in the presence of a competent assessor and last from 25 to 35 minutes.
- (2) A record must be prepared which contains the date and the names of the candidate, the examiner, the assessor, the subject of the examination, the questions asked, an assessment and the signatures of the examiner and assessor.

§ 17

Remote Digital Examinations

- (1) Remote Digital Examinations are exams that are proctored remotely that are conducted electronically and without the obligation to be physically present in the examination room.
- (2) Remote Digital Examinations can take the form of written examinations completed electronically or by hand or as oral examinations.
- (3) Remote Digital Examinations will be individually organized to take place in a specific time window and through the use of electronic means of communication including video supervision.
- (4) Oral remote examinations will take place through video conferencing.

§ 18

Examination Modalities

- (1) If a digital remote examination is offered, this must always be specified at the start of the course, but in any case, within a reasonable period of time before of the examination.
- (2) Persons to complete examinations will be informed of the following in a timely manner:
 1. processing of their personal data,
 2. the technical requirements for the communication device to be used, which fulfill a proper conduction of this examination, especially with regards to a suitable transmission of video and audio during video supervision or video conferencing, as well as a sufficient internet connection,
 3. the organizational requirements for examinations in accordance with regulations.
- (3) The persons to complete examinations should have the possibility to test out the examination conditions in advance of the examination with regards to technical equipment, materials, and the physical space.

§ 19

Authentication

- (1) Students' identities should be verified before the start of an examination by showing valid photo identification, which must be presented upon request; a different method of identification is allowed if deemed appropriate. Authentication can also take place after the start of an exam, and repeated verification of identification is allowed.
- (2) Saving data related to authentication is not permitted past the technically required temporary storage. Personal information is to be deleted from temporary storage immediately.

§ 20

Remote Digital Written Examinations

- (1) The persons completing a digital examination are obliged to keep their cameras and microphones activated for the duration of the exam (video supervision). Furthermore, video supervision must be set up in such a way that the personal protection and privacy of those concerned are not restricted more than for legitimate control purposes in accordance with the supervision in face-to-face examinations.
- (2) In selecting the location of completing an exam and the direction of the camera and microphone, persons completing examinations are responsible for ensuring that third parties are not recorded on audio or video. Room monitoring beyond this will not take place.
- (3) Video supervision is performed by IPU Berlin personnel. Automated assessments of video and audio information, recorded examinations, or other storage of video and audio data is not permitted. Personal data is to be deleted from temporary storage in a timely manner.

§ 21

Remote Digital Oral Examinations

- (1) During a remote oral examination, the persons completing the examination are obliged to keep the camera and microphone of their digital device activated for the duration of the exam. Furthermore, video supervision must be set up in such a way that the personal protection and privacy of those concerned are not restricted more than for legitimate control purposes in accordance with the supervision in face-to-face examinations.
- (2) In selecting the location of completing an exam and the direction of the camera and microphone, persons completing examinations are responsible for ensuring that third parties are not recorded on audio or video. Room monitoring beyond this will not take place.
- (3) The content of a remote digital oral examination will be documented in writing by the examiner or an assistant.
- (4) Automated assessments of video and audio information, recorded examinations, or other storage of video and audio data is not permitted. Personal data is to be deleted from temporary storage immediately.

§ 22

Right of Choice

If a digital remote supervisory examination is to be offered, the persons to be examined must be offered a face-to-face examination and in compliance with the principle of equal opportunities, a face-to-face examination or another equivalent examination must be offered as an alternative. The responsible examination board shall set a date by which the right to choose may be exercised. § 25 remains unaffected.

§ 23

Technical Disturbances

- (1) If the transmission of the examination task, the processing of the examination task, the transmission of the examination performance or the video supervision of a digital remote examination cannot be carried out at the time of the examination, the examination will be terminated, and the examination performance will not be assessed. The examination will not be counted as an attempt.
- (2) If video or audio transmission are interrupted during a remote digital oral examination, the examination will continue after the problem is resolved. If the technical interruption persists so that the examination cannot be completed according to regulations, the examination will be repeated at a later time. The examination will not be counted as an attempt. If the technical disturbance first happens after a large portion of the examination has been completed, the remote oral examination may continue without the use of video transmission.
- (3) Persons completing examinations who face technical disturbances must, according to regulations, report all interruptions to studienbuero@ipu-berlin.de by email. Such interruptions will be made note of by the IPU Berlin.

§ 24

Data Processing

- (1) Within the Framework of a remote digital examination, personal data may be used to the extent that it is absolutely necessary for completing and grading an examination according to regulations. Personal data may be used and transmitted when necessary for:
 1. authentication of one's identity,
 2. performance within the examination including filming the person completing the examination for the duration of the exam,
 3. handling technical disturbances,
 4. taking further measures in ensuring equal opportunity and ruling out cheating.
- (2) The IPU Berlin ensures that the use of information in the context of a remote digital examination is in accordance with data protection regulations, especially the General Data Protection Regulations and the Berlin Data Protection Act.

- (3) Data to be used include:
1. necessary personal information for the purpose of authenticating one's identity,
 2. information important for the completion of the examination, including individual examination responses and their individual evaluation, evaluation comments, and the overall grading, as well as technical notes on the examination process,
 3. audio and video data,
 4. text and communication data,
 5. log-in and account information,
 6. other information relevant to the protocol and digital connection.
- (4) The legitimacy of the creation and use of separate records by supervisors in accordance with these and the subject-specific examination regulations, in particular regarding the conduct of examinations and in the event of indications of cheating, remains unaffected.
- (5) Storage of information regarding the examination result, including individual examination responses and their evaluation, evaluation comments, overall grades, and examination progress reports and protocols, will be executed in accordance with the general IPU Berlin regulations for storing examination files. Video and audio data will not be stored insofar as temporary storage is not necessary for grading purposes. All further protocol information, including technical connection and other related information, is to be deleted at the latest after ten days. This does not apply to situations in which further data processing is necessary for raising, administering, or defending legal claims.
- (6) The persons to complete examinations must be informed in an appropriate and accessible form, which personal data will be used and for what purpose, as well as when the data will be deleted.
- (7) In the case of remote digital examinations, use of learning management systems, examination platforms, video conference programs, and other technological tools may be required. As such, it must be ensured that necessary installations on the examinee's devices occur such that:
1. the functionality of their electronic device is not impaired,
 2. the data security of the device is not impaired at any time,
 3. the confidentiality of the device's data is not impaired at any time, and
 4. a complete deinstallation after the remote examination is possible.

§ 25

Special Cases

In the case that, for reasons such as risk of infection or other exceptional circumstances, examinations cannot take place or only under restricted capacity, the IPU Berlin will offer examinees alternate examinations to the full possible extent. If, after this, the number of registrations exceeds the possible in-person examination capacity, students may be made to wait until the next examination period. In selecting individual persons, those with particularly difficult situations must be given priority. The executive board of the IPU Berlin makes decisions regarding the circumstances mentioned in sentence 1. These are to be restricted to one examination period. If the situation continues, restrictions must be formally extended.

§ 26

Multiple Choice Methods

In the event that in a written examination, more than 60% of the exam paper to be answered consists of questions from multiple choice methods, a normal prose text answer is also permitted in each case without this being disadvantageous to the student.

§ 27

Absence and Cheating

- (1) An examination is assessed with the grade of "Not Sufficient" or "Failed" when the student does not attend an examination date which is binding for them without providing a valid reason, or when they withdraw from an examination which they must take without providing a valid reason. This is also applicable when a written examination achievement is not rendered within the prescribed processing time.
- (2) Any medical certificate to excuse the student's absence from an examination must be received by the Studies and Teaching Office (incoming post) at the latest on the third working day after the set examination date. The Examination and Admissions Committee is entitled to demand an official certificate from a doctor to substantiate the candidate's inability to take the examination, for which the student bears the costs.
- (3) If a student does not attend the fourth examination date for a module examination, the examination is then conclusively failed, unless the reason for the inability to attend is not caused by their own fault. In the event that each of the four reasons from the inability to attend consists of a doctor's certificate confirming the inability to take the examination, a further (fifth) examination is only then scheduled by way of exception and the examination is not yet regarded as being conclusively failed if the examination candidate is able to completely dispel any concerns about their inability to attend the exams to date as determined by means of a further official doctor's statement.
- (4) In the event that a student attempts to influence the result of study or examination achievement through cheating, the use of inadmissible resources or bribery, the work concerned is assessed as "Failed". Anyone who disrupts the examination process can be excluded for the remainder of the exam; in this case the examination achievement is assessed as "Failed".
- (5) The student can demand that decisions in accordance with Paragraphs 1 and 4 are examined immediately by the Examination and Admissions Committee. The student concerned is to be informed in writing about any negative decisions including a reasoning. In grievous cases where the revocation of the intended university degree would be justified, the Examination and Admissions Committee can decide that the overall examination has been conclusively failed.
- (6) The decision on the individual study or exam work achievements, or the complete examination or the determination of the degree overall can be subsequently adjusted or revoked by the Examination and Admissions Committee if it becomes known that they were achieved by means of cheating or the use of inadmissible resources or bribery.
- (7) The student is to be given an opportunity to provide their views prior to the decision in accordance with Paragraphs 5 and 6.

§ 28

Repeating Examination Achievement

- (1) Any failed examinations may be repeated three times. Failed Bachelor or Master theses may be repeated twice.
- (2) The first repeat examination is to be scheduled in such a way that the intended examination achievements can still be rendered within the standard period of studies.
- (3) In the event that an examination is also failed at the second attempt, the student should participate in academic advising in accordance with § 5 paragraph 3 at the latest by the end of the subsequent semester. The study advisor sets a deadline by which an application for a second repeat must be submitted to the Examination and Admissions Committee.
- (4) The Examination and Admissions Committee can approve second repeats of examinations when a substantiated application is submitted. The second repeat must be assessed by at least two examiners. In the event that the second repeat is also completed without sufficient success, the student is given a third repeat attempt in accordance with BerIHG § 30 Paragraph 4 by participating in a further course guidance session. If this third repeat attempt is also taken without sufficient success, the examination is then conclusively failed. The student is to be informed of this in writing.

- (5) Repeating an exam in order to improve the grades is not permitted.

§ 29

Grading System

- (1) In order to assess an examination achievement in modularized study courses, which are awarded ECTS credits, the following grading scale is applicable according to the German grading system (1; 2; 3; 4; 5) and the German denotations:

ECTS Grade	German Grade System	ECTS Definition	German Denotations
A	1.0 – 1.5	Excellent	Hervorragend
B	1.6 – 2.0	Very Good	Sehr gut
C	2.1 – 3.0	Good	Gut
D	3.1 – 3.5	Satisfactory	Befriedigend
E	3.6 – 4.0	Sufficient	Ausreichend
F	4.1 – 5.0	Failed	Nicht bestanden

- (2) In order to have a differentiated assessment basis, a grading scale with the following grades is utilised: 1.0; 1.3; 1.7; 2.0; 2.3; 2.7; 3.0; 3.3; 3.7; 4.0. Examination results below 4.0 are assessed as "Failed". An exception to this are grades determined in accordance with § 10 (4).
- (3) The overall grade for the respective degree is calculated from all of the graded module examinations. With this calculation, the module grades are weighted with the respective ECTS credits. The average grade is rounded off to the first decimal point, with the points after that being ignored.
- (4) An appendix to the diploma supplement will show the relative ECTS grade, which is calculated in comparison to a relevant reference group.: A = the best 10%, B = the following 25%, C = the next 30%, D = the following 25%, and E = the lowest 10%

§ 30

Conclusion of Studies/Graduation

- (1) The requirements for the conclusion of studies and graduating are that
1. the ECTS credits required in the respective study and examination regulations have been successfully recognized, and
 2. the degree thesis has been submitted to the IPU Berlin or to an associate university with a corresponding cooperation agreement.
- (2) On the basis of the examinations passed, the graduates are awarded a certificate, a degree certificate and a diploma supplement (with the latter in English or also in German on request).

§ 31

Applicability

These regulations replace the prior articles for general examination matters dated 9.1.2022. The amendments were agreed upon by the Academic Senate on 2.2.2024 and approved on 12.3.2024 by the Berlin Senate Administration. They are applicable and binding starting on 1.4.2024 and published on www.ipu-berlin.de.