

Regulations of the Joint Examination Board for the Joint Master Programme in Applied Geophysics

Article 1 - Subject and scope

These regulations set out the requirements according to which students of the Joint Master Programme in Applied Geophysics (programme) may acquire their Master degrees in Applied Geophysics. This programme is the shared responsibility of the following three universities:

1. The Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geosciences at Delft University of Technology (**TUD**),
2. The Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences at ETH Zurich (**ETH**), and
3. The Faculty of Geo-resources and Material Engineering at RWTH Aachen University (**RWTH**).

These regulations are set by the Joint Examination Board (JEB) and are referred to as the Regulations of the Joint Examination Board. The programme is detailed in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER) plus their annexes.

For TUD and RWTH, it is required that each program or faculty has at least one Board of Examiners¹.

Article 2 - Governance of the Joint Examination Board

Local boards at each partner university are responsible for local credit examinations. Details are specified in the local rules and regulations of each partner university.

The JEB is independent of the Board of Examiners at each of the partner universities, and is responsible for all decisions concerning credit examinations that are not part of local rules and regulations. The JEB is formed by one senior academic from each of the partner universities. The members of the JEB, who are nominated by their home universities, each have one vote. As a rule, the position of JEB Chairperson rotates on a two-yearly basis between the partner universities. The duties of the JEB are specified either explicitly or implicitly in these Regulations as well as the Agreement.

Article 3 - Degree programme, registering and application for degree certificate

Students must draw up their degree programme following the requirements laid down in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER) for the programme. If the examination programme deviates from the TER, the programme must be presented to the JEB for final approval, with a motivation for the deviation from the TER.

The decision whether a student has met all the requirements for the degree is made by the JEB.

Registration for the degree audit and the application for the degree certificate must be submitted to the Student Administration by the student no later than 20 working days before the intended date of graduation.

The Student Administration has the possibility of putting a student forward for the degree audit if it has established that the student has met all the obligations for the degree audit. The Student Administration will inform the student of its intention to put the student forward for the degree audit. The Student Administration will drop its intention when the student indicates within the specified period that there is a wish to improve a result or wish to supplement the examination programme. In that case, the student will have the opportunity to do so in the rest of the current academic year.

Article 4 - Grading system

4.1 National grading scales and conversion to absolute A-F grades

Each partner university uses its local grading scale. On the degree certificate the grades of all courses are converted to absolute A-F scale according to the following table:

¹ For the TUD, this is stated in the Higher Education and Research Act, article 7.12 (<https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0005682/2025-01-01#Hoofdstuk7>) and for the RWTH in the general rules for the university, article §11.1 (www.rwth-aachen.de/global/show_document.asp?id=aaaaaaaaddqknak)

A-F grading scale	Description	TU Delft	RWTH	ETH
A	Excellent	9.2 to 10	1.0 to < 1.5	> 5.5 to 6.0
B	Very good	8.4 to < 9.2	1.5 to < 2.1	> 5.0 to 5.5
C	Good	7.6 to < 8.4	2.1 to < 2.8	> 4.5 to 5.0
D	Satisfactory	6.8 to < 7.6	2.8 to < 3.5	> 4.0 to 4.5
E	Sufficient	6.0 to < 6.8	3.5 to 4.0	4.0
F or FX	Fail	< 6.0	> 4.0	< 4.0
X	Exemption			
> larger than, < less than				

ECTS and local grades will be listed on the diploma supplement.

4.2 Obtaining credit points

A student will receive the allocated number of credit points for each course provided he/she has obtained a minimum grade of E in the respective examination or has been granted an exemption.

4.3 Final average grade

TUD is responsible for providing the final average grade. For calculating this average, the marks of the courses from each university are converted to the TUD grading scale that has the finest scale and uses the scale 1 to 10, rounded off to one decimal. For these conversions, the following table is used:

ETH mark	TUD-equivalent		RWTH-mark	TUD-equivalent
6.00	10.0		1.00	10.0
5.75	9.5		1.30	9.6
5.50	9.0		1.70	9.1
5.25	8.5		2.00	8.7
5.00	8.0		2.30	8.3
4.75	7.5		2.70	7.7
4.50	7.0		3.00	7.3
4.25	6.5		3.30	6.9
4.00	6.0		3.70	6.4
			4.00	6.0

Then the weighted average, with the ECTS credits of the courses as weights, is determined. Finally, the TUD-scale average is converted to the average in the absolute A-F grading scale using the table under 4.1.

Article 5 - Master thesis

The regulations for the Master thesis are common to the three partner universities and are laid down in the TER. Deviations thereof, special cases, requirements and the assessment of the Master thesis fall under the responsibility of the JEB. These regulations are laid down below.

5.1 Conflicts in choice of master thesis

From RWTH, a list and description of research themes for the Master thesis are published, according to the procedure as given in the TER. Students give their ranked preferences. If a conflict in the choice of the Master thesis arises, the JEB will decide.

5.2 Master thesis projects outside of the partner universities

Master thesis project may be conducted outside of the partner universities but requires the explicit approval of the JEB. Proposals for such projects must be submitted to the JEB at least ten days before the presentation of research themes. The JEB will take the decision of approval before the thesis presentation day. Acceptable outside organisations include companies, government agencies and other university groups, all of which work in various fields of Applied Geophysics.

5.3 Requirements for starting the Master thesis project

A student may only begin the Master thesis project once the student has passed all core modules and can reach 83 ECTS by the end of the first exam period at RWTH.

Should there be cogent grounds for a student not obtaining the required 83 ECTS, the JEB may allow the student to begin the Master thesis project.

5.4 Extension of the Master thesis project

The duration of the Master thesis project up to the submission of the report is 22 weeks. The JEB may extend the duration of the Master thesis project, if cogent grounds are provided by the thesis supervisor. In its final decision, the JEB takes into account that the effective duration of the thesis will not exceed the duration of a standard thesis, i.e., 22 weeks

5.5 Requirements for principal supervisor of a Master thesis project

For becoming the principal supervisor of a Master thesis, local rules apply.

5.6 Composition of the Master-thesis assessment committee

Each Master thesis is assessed by an ad hoc thesis committee which consists at least of:

- Two members, one of whom is the principal supervisor and one from a partner university.
- Each of these members must be a full professor, associate professor, assistant professor or senior lecturer at one of the partner universities.
- Each of these members must be qualified to assess courses/theses at her/his own university.

The principal supervisor is responsible for forming the ad hoc thesis committee. The ad hoc thesis committee might be extended to additional members (e.g., the external supervisors from external master thesis projects) without voting right.

5.7 Grading the Master thesis

The ad hoc committee assesses the thesis, the public presentation and the defence, and the final decision on the grade is made by the committee members with voting rights. These committee members have to be involved in assessing the thesis, the public presentation and the thesis defence.

The JEB establishes a list of general evaluation criteria, including scientific approach, quality of the results, behavioral competences, and quality of written and oral presentation, but it is the mandate of the ad hoc thesis committee to determine an appropriate (thesis dependent) weighting scheme of these criteria.

The ad hoc thesis committee makes recommendations concerning the grades (in the local grading system) to be given to the thesis including colloquium. The final decision concerning the grades is the responsibility of the two committee members with voting right.

The principal supervisor shall declare the results to the student after the colloquium presentation and the thesis defence. He/she will also inform the respective administration units and in particular the coordinating office at TUD.

5.8 Repetition of a failed Master Thesis

A failed Master thesis may be repeated once. A repetition of a failed Master thesis must be on a different topic and may be conducted with the same or a new supervisor. To repeat a failed Master thesis, the student has to submit a proposal to the JEB who then assigns a principal supervisor for the Master thesis project. The student must start the repeated Master thesis within three semesters after the failed first attempt. For the duration, supervision, form, completion, presentation and grading of the Master thesis the same rules apply as for the failed Master thesis (Art. 5.4 – 5.7). If the repetition of the Master thesis fails or if the time limit to start the repeated Master thesis is exceeded, the student is expelled

from the Programme. However, the student has the possibility to choose another track within the Earth, Climate & Technology Master programme at TUD.

Article 6 - Graduation

6.1 Award of degree

A student is eligible for the award of his/her Master degree once his/her grade list is complete and all the final grades are passes (A through E).

6.2 Documents and title

As proof that candidates have successfully gained their Master degree, the students receive a joint-degree diploma certificate from the three partner universities and a corresponding diploma supplement which also includes the grades. This gives the student the right to use the title of Master of Science Applied Geophysics.

6.3 With honours

A student will be awarded a degree "with honours" provided the following conditions have been satisfied:

- a) The grade given for the Master thesis is an A;
- b) The weighted average grade gained in the course list as being statutory for the Master's degree is at least a B;
- c) The grades list contains no grades lower than a D;
- d) The study duration for the Programme is 2 years. Exceptions can be requested from the examination board of the JMAG program when study delay is due to extenuating circumstances unrelated to the student's study behaviour.
- e) Not more than 1 re-sit has been taken on all courses of the program

If the candidate has been awarded a Master degree "with honours", then the term "with honours" will be printed on the degree certificate.

6.4 Graduation ceremony

A joint graduation ceremony will be held annually at TUD.

6.5 Leaving without completion of the programme

Students who have successfully passed one or more credit examinations, but who leave the Programme without eligibility for a degree certificate, may receive a declaration of such from the JEB provided that they submit such a request.

Article 7 - Appeals

Appeals, including appeals regarding the master thesis project, fall under the appeal regulations of the institution where the incident occurred.

Article 8 - Regulations coming into effect

The Regulations of the JEB come into effect at the beginning of the autumn semester 2026. They apply to students who enter the degree programme from that date onwards.