



Regulations of the Board of Examiners

(Rules & Guidelines pursuant to Section 7.12 (b)(3) of the Higher Education and Research Act)

Regulations of the Board of Examiners adopted by the Board of Examiners for the Undergraduate and Graduate School of Geosciences at Utrecht University, on 15 May 2024.

Valid from 1 September 2024.

Disclaimer: This translation is provided for information purposes only. Inevitably, differences may occur in translation, and if so, the Dutch version will prevail.

Preamble

The Board of Examiners of the Undergraduate School of Geosciences and the Graduate School of Geosciences consists of a central Board of Examiners and three executive panels.

The chairs of the executive panels, together with an external member, form the Board of Examiners of the Undergraduate School of Geosciences and the Graduate School of Geosciences.

The Board of Examiners acts as a framework-setting and supervisory body that:

- determines the examinations policy;
- establishes frameworks in the form of regulations and procedures;
- adopts these regulations of the Board of Examiners (which apply to everyone who is enrolled in this academic year and/or takes courses of the program in this academic year);
- monitors the quality of the decisions and the implementation of the examination policy by the executive panels.

The executive panels independently implement examinations policy, within the framework set by the Board of Examiners. Requests to the Board of Examiners are received centrally and are subsequently assigned to the executive chambers. The appendix specifies which executive panel processes requests.

As a subcommittee to the Central Board of Examiners, the Assessment Committee investigates the quality of assessment within the framework of the faculty assessment policy and is accountable to the Central Board of Examiners.

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PARAGRAPH 1 – GENERAL STIPULATIONS

Art. 1.1 – scope of application

These regulations apply to the tests and examinations of the study programmes of the Graduate and Undergraduate School of Geosciences. These regulations do not apply to the PhD programmes.

The terms defined in the Education and Examination Regulations of these study programmes also apply to these regulations.

Art. 1.2 – Board of Examiners

1. The Dean appoints the chair and the members of the Board of Examiners (see EER art. 5.2.2)
 - a. the chair is in charge of managing the daily course of affairs of the Board of Examiners.
 - b. the chair appoints a vice chair, excluding the external member, to replace the chair in case of absence.
2. The Board of Examiners will take decisions by an ordinary majority of votes. If the votes are equal, the chair, or their replacement, has a casting vote.
3. The chair and all members of the Board of Examiners, excluding the external member, are authorized signatories.
4. The Board of Examiners takes a decision within six weeks of receipt of an application. During academic vacation and fieldwork periods this term can be exceeded.
5. The Board of Examiners is supported in its work by an official secretary. This official secretary is not a member of the Board of Examiners. The official secretary is responsible for:
 - preparing, convening and taking minutes of the meetings;
 - monitoring the implementation of decisions taken;
 - communicating decisions to students and other stakeholders;
 - preparing periodic reports;
 - archiving processed requests, objections and decisions taken.
6. The Board of Examiners can mandate the official secretary to communicate and sign decisions on behalf of the Board of Examiners. To this end, the Board of Examiners issues a written mandate to the official secretary, containing the frameworks and general instructions regarding the exercise of the mandated authority.
7. The Board of Examiners can mandate the official secretary to check on its behalf whether all units of study belonging to the examination programme of the degree programme have been successfully completed and the student has therefore passed the examination. To this end, the Board of Examiners issues a written mandate to the official secretary, containing the frameworks and general instructions regarding the exercise of the mandated authority.

Art. 1.3 – standards

In its decisions, the Board of Examiners will be guided by the following standards:

- a. the retention of quality criteria in an examination or test;
- b. efficiency requirements, expressed *inter alia* in efforts to:
 - limit as far as possible loss of time for students, who can thereby make rapid progress with their studies;
 - encourage students to terminate their studies as quickly as possible, if it is unlikely that they will pass an examination or test;
- c. protecting students from themselves in the event that they wish to take on an excessive study load;
- d. leniency towards students who, through no fault of their own, have experienced delays in the progress of their studies.

Art. 1.4 - examiners

1. Based on the "examiners profile" (Appendix 2), the Board of Examiners appoints members of the academic staff who are responsible for teaching a course as examiners. The Board of Examiners can appoint other members of the academic staff and experts from outside the degree programs as examiners in accordance with the criteria laid down in the examiners profile.
2. The Board of Examiners may withdraw the appointment as an examiner in the event that the examiner fails to comply with the applicable legislation or regulations or guidelines of the Board of Examiners, or if the competence of the examiner concerning the making, administering or marking of tests repeatedly proves to be of insufficient quality.
3. The Board of Examiners registers all examiners, so that it is known which persons are authorized to administer tests and to determine the results.

PARAGRAPH 2 – ORGANIZATION OF TESTS AND PROPER PROCEDURE

Art. 2.1 – times of tests

1. Written tests are to be administered at times set by the course examiner at least 14 days before the start of the term in question.
2. In setting the times of the tests any overlap of tests must be prevented as far as possible.
3. Changes to times set may be made only in cases of force majeure.
4. If possible, oral tests are to be administered by the examiner(s) in question at a time set after consulting with the student.
5. The times of written supplementary and replacement tests will be determined and announced at least two weeks in advance. At least five working days will pass between the announcement of the results and the supplementary test.

Art. 2.2 – registration for tests

When registered correctly for a course, students are also signed up for the course test(s).

Art. 2.3 – order during an examination or test

1. The examiner will ensure that an adequate number of invigilators are appointed for the written examinations. These invigilators will ensure that the test proceeds properly.
2. The students must identify themselves on request by or on behalf of the Board of Examiners by valid proof of the student's identity. Admission to the test will be denied if students are unable to identify themselves.
3. The student must follow instructions of the Board of Examiners, or the examiner or invigilator, which are given before, during and immediately after the test.
4. Should the student fail to follow one or more instructions as referred to in Art. 2.3.3, the student may be excluded by the Board of Examiners or examiner from further participation in the test in question. As a consequence of the exclusion, no result will be determined for that test. The Board of Examiners must give the student the opportunity to be heard on the matter before it takes a decision.
5. The duration of a test must be such that students reasonably have enough time to answer the questions.
6. Latecomers will be admitted to a test no more than 30 minutes after the start of the test. If a student is prevented by force majeure from being present within this time limit, the Board of Examiners, or examiner, will decide whether the student can still be admitted to the test. Latecomers may not claim extra time for the test.
7. Students may not leave the room where the test is being administered within 30 minutes of the start of the test.
8. After one or more participants have left the room, no latecomers will be admitted to the test.
9. Students must hand over their bags, coats and electronic devices to the invigilators at the start of the test.

PARAGRAPH 3 – ASSESSMENT OF TESTS, THESIS

Art. 3.1 – marking of test

1. The Board of Examiners will ensure that written tests are to be marked on the basis of predetermined, written standards, possibly adjusted on the basis of a correction.
2. The weighting of the interim results in reaching the end result is laid down in the course manual.
3. If more than one examiner is involved in the marking of a test, the course coordinator must ensure that all examiners mark it on the basis of the same standards.
4. The manner of marking must be such that the student can check how the result of the test was reached.
5. With only one examiner present a recording of an oral test is made. In case of more than one examiner present, one of the examiners makes notes listing the topics that are being addressed and whether the students masters the subject(s). Recordings or notes are kept by the examiner for three months and can be viewed or listened to by the student who took the oral test.
6. If, in case of assessing, several students contribute towards a single joint project, the following rules apply:
 - a. the guideline for the individual or collective marking of group work must be established beforehand by the lecturer and notified to the student;
 - b. the supervisor will regularly check that all students make a proportional contribution to the end product;
 - c. students may be marked individually on the basis of the work they have performed.
7. The last mark given will apply in assessing the result of a test/course.

Art. 3.2 – assessment of theses and final papers

1. The assessment of theses and final papers takes place on the basis of the assessment method with associated assessment criteria laid down in the course guide for the component.
2. The assessment is done by two assessors. Both assessors are designated as examiners, with at least one examiner being a member of the academic staff of Utrecht University¹ and in possession of a Basic Teaching Qualification (BKO). An internal guideline for appointing examiners can be found in appendix 3.
3. If the first and second examiners fail to reach agreement, the thesis coordinator will appoint a third assessor, who will issue a binding final assessment.
4. The assessors both use an assessment form to provide insight into the way in which the assessment was made.
5. The student receives one motivated final assessment on behalf of all assessors.
6. If several students contribute to a thesis or master's research, the following additional guidelines apply:
 - a. the Examination Board ensures that assessment criteria for the thesis are established and that these laid down in the study guide.
 - b. agreements about the division of tasks for the work to be performed by the students are laid down in writing by the responsible examiner(s) before the work commences;
 - c. students are assessed individually on the basis of the work they have performed.

Art. 3.3 – subsequent evaluation

7. As soon as possible after the result of an oral test is made known, if a student so requests or on the initiative of the examiner, a subsequent evaluation will take place between the examiner and the student, in which the examiner will give reasons for the decision.
8. During a period of 30 days, starting on the day after the results of a written test were made known, the student may request an evaluation with the examiner. The evaluation will take place at a place and time determined by the examiner.
9. If a collective evaluation is organized, the student can submit a request as referred to in the second paragraph only if the student was present at the collective evaluation and the student

¹ or has been appointed at one of the joint degree partner universities if it concerns GIMA program components

substantiates their request, or if the student was prevented by force majeure from attending the collective evaluation.

10. The provisions of the preceding paragraph will apply by analogy if the examiner offers the student the opportunity to compare the answers with model answers.

Art. 3.4 – recording the final results

Final results of a course unit will be entered in Osiris following authorization by the examiner.

PARAGRAPH 4 – ASSURING THE QUALITY OF EXAMINATIONS

Art. 4.1 – assuring the quality of testing

The Board of Examiners will ensure that:

- a. a testing policy/testing plan is in place, and that this is implemented;
- b. tests are compiled in line with the learning objectives and final attainment levels for the course in question;
- c. uniform agreements are made on the way in which tests are compiled.

Art. 4.2 – determining the quality of testing

1. The Assessment Committee is tasked with providing analysis and advice concerning the quality of the tests. To this end, it will test the quality of individual tests on the basis of random samples – and following complaints, evaluation of results, pass rates, et cetera– in relation to the validity (do tests measure knowledge, skills and competences) and reliability (are tests consistent and accurate) and will inform the Board of Examiners of their findings.
2. The Board of Examiners may ask the Assessment Committee to provide information, undertake research and make proposals concerning the structure of the tests. The Assessment Committee is obliged to follow these instructions. The Assessment Committee is accountable to the Board of Examiners for carrying out these instructions.

Art. 4.3 – assuring the quality of examinations (final level of the graduates)

1. If it becomes apparent that the test has such serious quality shortcomings that it cannot be ascertained whether and to what extent students have achieved the learning objectives of the course, by virtue of its quality assurance role pursuant to Section 7.12b (1)(a) of the Higher Education and Research Act, the Board of Examiners may decide immediately that the examination concerned is invalid, and that all participants must repeat the entire examination as soon as possible. The Board of Examiners will set the date on which the examination will be repeated. This date will be no later than two weeks after establishing the quality shortcomings, so that the participants will still be able to benefit from their preparations for the examination.
2. Except in the event of fraud or plagiarism, as referred to in Art. 5.15 of the Education and Examination Regulations, the Board of Examiners may no longer declare a test invalid if the final test results have already been published.

Art. 4.3a – declaring void online proctored exam in case of irregularities

1. The Board of Examiners can declare the online proctored exam of one or more students invalid if, during the exam, there was insufficient insight into the possibility of fraud or if there were circumstances that enabled fraud.
2. If the situation described in section one of this article is the consequence of an irregularity at the expense and risk of the student, the student will not be offered an extra possibility to take the exam.
3. In case of force majeure, reported by the student during the exam, the student can submit a request for an extra exam. If the irregularity is at the expense and risk of the university, a new exam will be offered.

4. The irregularity is at the expense and risk of the student when the student has not followed the instructions of the online proctored exam.

Art. 4.4 – assuring the quality of examinations (final level of the graduates)

The Board of Examiners will ensure that:

- a. the exit qualifications for the course as described in the Education and Examination Regulations are translated into testable learning objectives for each course;
- b. it is systematically examined whether there is a sufficient connection between the course objectives and the final attainment levels, or the sum of the learning objectives for each course corresponds to the exit qualifications for that course.

Art. 4.5 – Board of Examiners’ own investigation to maintain quality of examination

1. A student has passed the examination if all parts of the examination programme have been successfully completed. Contrary to this, the Board of Examiners may decide that in order to pass the examination the student must have complied with the requirements relating to the Board of Examiners’ own investigation as referred to in Section 7.10(2) of the Higher Education and Research Act into the knowledge, understanding and competence of the student.
2. The Board of Examiners will only conduct such an investigation if it establishes that there are certain facts or circumstances leading to the conclusion that the Board of Examiners cannot vouch for the student having obtained the exit qualifications of the programme (as referred to in Art. 3.1 of the Education and Examination Regulations).
3. If the Board of Examiners exercises its authority to conduct an investigation as referred to in the first paragraph, it will inform the student(s) concerned in writing of its decision, giving reasons and drawing the student’s attention to the option to submit an appeal to the Examination Appeals Board.

PARAGRAPH 5 - EXEMPTIONS, APPROVAL OF COURSE UNITS

Art. 5.1 – exemption

1. Students who wish to receive one or more exemptions, must submit a request with argumentation to the Board of Examiners. The request must be signed and contain:
 - the student's name, address and student number;
 - a description of the reasons on which the exemption is being requested;
 - for which course(s) the exemption is being requested;
 - an authenticated copy of the student’s diploma, examination results or proof of tests previously taken;
 - and/or a description of the knowledge and experience the student has obtained outside of higher education, accompanied by the relevant documents showing this.
2. The Board of Examiners will forward the request for advice to the examiner(s) in charge of teaching the course(s) for which the exemption is being requested.
3. The Board of Examiners will decide within six weeks of the date of receipt of the request on whether the exemption will be granted. With the exception of academical holidays as laid down in the academical calendar and during fieldwork periods.

Art. 5.2a – approval of course units bachelor

1. Students wishing to include course units, which require prior permission of the Board of Examiners on the grounds of the Education and Examination Regulations, must submit a substantiated request to the Board of Examiners. The request must be signed and contain:
 - the student's name, address and student number;
 - a description of the contents, level and assessment of the courses for which approval is being sought;
 - an indication of the way in which the student wishes to include the course(s) in the education programme.
2. The Board of Examiners will, if necessary, forward the request for advice to the programme coordinator or a specialist lecturer of the programme.
3. The Board of Examiners will decide within six weeks of the date of receipt of the request. With the exception of academical holidays as laid down in the academical calendar and during fieldwork periods.
4. If approval concerns course units outside UU, following their completion the student will submit a certified transcript or a document detailing the student's progress.
5. Based on the certified transcript, course content description(s) and, if so requested, further substantiation by the student, the Board of Examiners grants course level 1, 2 or 3 to a course taken outside UU in accordance with the UU teaching model.
6. If the course information (as referred to in art. 5.2.5) proves to be insufficient to determine course level and EC, the Board of Examiners will grant level 1 and/or 1 EC.
7. The Board of Examiners does not grant a course level (1, 2 or 3) to courses taken abroad.
8. Contrary to the provisions of 5.2a.7, at least the level of the course to be replaced will be granted if the Board of Examiners decides to approve courses taken abroad as a replacement component in the major.
9. If a student can demonstrate that they cannot meet the course level requirements of the elective course profile, they have to submit a substantiated request to the Board of Examiners to grant level 2 or 3 to the courses required to meet the course level requirements.
10. The Board of Examiners will decide about the request (as referred to in art. 5.2.9), if necessary after consulting the programme coordinator or a specialist lecturer of the programme.

Art. 5.2b – approval of course units master

1. Students wishing to include course units, which require prior permission of the Board of Examiners on the grounds of the Education and Examination Regulations, must submit a substantiated request to the Board of Examiners. The request must be signed and contain:
 - the student's name, address and student number;
 - a description of the contents, level and assessment of the courses for which approval is being sought;
 - an indication of the way in which the student wishes to include the course(s) in the education programme.
2. The Board of Examiners will, if necessary, forward the request for advice to the programme coordinator or a specialist lecturer of the programme.
3. The Board of Examiners will decide within six weeks of the date of receipt of the request. With the exception of academical vacation periods as laid down in the academical calendar and during fieldwork periods.
4. If approval concerns course units taken outside UU, following their completion the student will submit a certified transcript or a document detailing the student's progress.
5. Based on the certified transcript, course description(s) and, if so requested, further substantiation by the student, the Board of Examiners grants a number of credits to a master's course taken elsewhere.
6. If the course information (as referred to in art. 5.2b.5) proves to be insufficient to determine a number of credits the Board of Examiners will grant 1 EC.

PARAGRAPH 6 – COMPLAINTS

Art. 6.1 - complaints about testing and marking

1. The first point of contact for students who have a complaint about testing and marking is the lecturer, who as examiner is responsible for determining the result of the test. If there are several examiners for the course, the course coordinator is the first point of contact as the 'representative' for all examiners involved in the test (provided that the course coordinator is also an examiner). The lecturer or course coordinator will endeavour to reach a solution in an informal manner.
2. 'Testing and marking' is understood to mean all situations where there is a formal assessment moment that leads to a mark or an alphanumerical result relating to learning objectives and exit qualifications that are laid down in the Education and Examination Regulations.
3. If the quality of the test is at issue and the complaint has implications for the result of the test, the lecturer and/or course coordinator will ensure that a quality analysis is carried out to assess whether the test meets the general quality requirements as referred to in paragraph 4. In the case of wide-ranging complaints or complex issues concerning content, third parties will be consulted if necessary, such as a specialist lecturer, a testing expert or the faculty's Assessment Committee. The quality analysis will be conducted as soon as possible, preferably before the test results are published.
4. If the quality analysis reveals that the test does not meet one or more quality requirements, the lecturer and/or course coordinator may decide to adjust the marks and the standard. If the final test result has already been published, the amended result may no longer be to the disadvantage of one or more students.
5. The Board of Examiners may make use of its statutory authority pursuant to Section 7.12b (1)(b) of the Higher Education and Research Act: *'to lay down guidelines and rules from within the framework of the education and examination regulations (...), to assess and establish the result of tests and examinations'*. The lecturer and/or course coordinator will observe the guidelines and rules laid down by the Board of Examiners.

Art. 6.2 - appeal against decisions concerning testing and marking

1. Students may submit an appeal against the decisions of examiners or the Board of Examiners to the Examination Appeals Board within six weeks of publication of the mark/alphanumerical result. See <https://students.uu.nl/en/practical-information/policies-and-procedures/complaints-objections-and-appeals/examination-appeals-board>
2. Art. 54 of the Administration and Management Regulations of UU stipulates that a formal complaint will not be dealt with if it concerns conduct against which the person involved may lodge an appeal. Since an appeal may be submitted to the Examination Appeals Board against decisions relating to testing and marking, complaints about testing will not be dealt with according to the formal complaints procedure of Utrecht University. This means that the complaints procedure described in Art. 6.1 is not formal in nature.

PARAGRAPH 7 – FINAL PROVISIONS

Art. 7.1 – annual report

1. The Board of Examiners will draw up an annual report of its activities for each academic year and send this to the dean.
2. The annual report will contain the following parts:
 - a. composition of the Board of Examiners;
 - b. monitoring of quality of the tests and examinations (final level of the graduates):
 - description of procedures and guidelines for marking and setting standards for tests;
 - way in which it is ascertained that these are applied;

- description of guidelines for marking and setting standards for research assignments and theses; way in which it is ascertained that these are applied;
 - way in which and number of times that the quality of the tests has been examined.
- c. quantitative information, numbers:
- diplomas awarded (plus number with distinction (*cum laude*));
 - requests for exemption or approval;
 - requests for a special examination dispensation;
 - cases of fraud;
 - binding study advice.
- d. interpretation of trends
- e. recommendations.

Art. 7.2 – amendments

1. Amendments to these regulations will be laid down by the Board of Examiners in a separate decision.
2. Any amendment to these regulations does not relate to the current academic year, unless the interests of the students are not harmed as a result in all reasonableness.

Art. 7.3 – entering into force and publication

1. These regulations enter into force on 1 September 24.
2. The Board of Examiners will ensure the publication of these regulations, as well as any amendment thereto, via the internet.

APPENDIX 1

Overview of the executive panels to the Board of Examiners

Executive panel Earth Sciences (ES)

Undergraduate school (bachelor degree programme):
Aardwetenschappen

Graduate school (master degree programme):
Earth Sciences

Executive panel Sustainable Development (SD)

Undergraduate school (bachelor degree programmes):
Global Sustainability Science
Natuurwetenschap en Innovatiemanagement

Graduate school (master degree programmes):
Energy Science
Environmental Sciences
Science and Innovation

Executive panel Human Geography and Planning (HGPL)

Undergraduate school (bachelor degree programme):
Sociale Geografie en Planologie

Graduate school (master degree programmes):
Development Studies
Geographical Information Management and Applications (joint degree)
Human Geography
Human Geography and Planning
Spatial Planning

APPENDIX 2

Examiners profile Board of Examiners Geosciences

The Geosciences Examination Board assesses against a number of criteria before proceeding to appoint an examiner:

- a. The nominated person has a permanent or fixed-term contract with Utrecht University².
- b. The nominated person is in possession of a BKO or an SKO.
- c. The nominee has at least a PhD degree.
- d. The nominated person is an expert in the field covered by the examination component. The Board of Examiners assesses whether the person nominated has a PhD or has other demonstrable experience in the field covered by the examination component.
- e. The nominated person has not been stripped of his examinership in the academic year preceding the intended academic year.

If a nominated person does not meet the above criteria, the Board of Examiners may make an exception with regard to the criteria referred to under a to e. An additional substantiation will have to follow with the nomination. The Board of Examiners will include the following questions in its assessment:

- Does the nominated person have sufficient knowledge of the field?
- Does the nominee have sufficient knowledge of testing?
- Is the nominated person affiliated with a (Dutch) university?
- If it concerns a bachelor's or master's thesis, who is the intended first or second examiner besides the nominated person?
- If the examinership was withdrawn, are the grounds for the removal of the examinership still present?

Adopted by the Board of Examiners on: 26 April 2021

² or has been appointed at one of the joint degree partner universities if it concerns GIMA program components

APPENDIX 3

Guideline for the appointment of Examiners

This guideline is applied by the Board of Examiners committee when appointing examiners. The term 'Researcher' in this guideline refers to all staff members under the UFO profile Researcher (1, 2, 3, and 4), including postdocs. 'Teacher' refers to the UFO profile Teacher (1, 2, 3, and 4). 'PhD candidates' include not only PhD students but also junior university lecturers and other staff members in a combined profile of teacher and PhD candidate.

General

An examiner has been appointed at Utrecht University³, holds a PhD, is an expert in the relevant subject, and possesses at least a basic teaching qualification (BKO) as specified in the Examiners Profile. The executive panel within the educational institute is authorized to deviate from this guideline using the decision framework in the Examiners Profile. The executive panel will annually review the proposed deployment of examiners in education when it is presented by the Board of Education. If a proposed examiner does not meet the above criteria, the proposal must be substantiated.

Final projects

A bachelor's or master's thesis must be independently assessed by two examiners. Each bachelor's and master's thesis requires at least two independent, separate, and well-reasoned assessments, and the rubric assessment forms are structured to reflect this. At least one of the examiners must meet the criteria in the Examiners Profile. Additionally, for the assessment of theses, an examiner can be appointed who at least meets the following criteria:

Master's Thesis

- Is appointed at Utrecht University, and
 - Is at least a PhD candidate (\geq 2nd year) or Researcher.
- This examiner is not required to possess a teaching qualification.

Bachelor's Thesis

- Is appointed at Utrecht University, and
 - Is at least a Teacher, PhD candidate (\geq 2nd year), or Researcher.
- This examiner is not required to possess a teaching qualification.

After being appointed by the Board of Examiners, both examiners are independent and equal assessors.

Adopted by the Board of Examiners on: 24 June 2024

³ or has been appointed at one of the joint degree partner universities if it concerns GIMA program components