

Study Organizational FAQ

During the last years several questions regarding study organizational issues arose repeatedly. To answer most of these questions beforehand, here is what you need to know about:

- **Organisation of your master thesis**
- **Repetition of module examinations**
- **Recognition of modules from other universities**

Please consider, that all HSE-students are **legally bound to the Examination Regulations** and the **Study Regulations**. It is recommendable for **every student to read them at least once during his/her studies**. Even though the officially valid language for these documents is German, the English translation contains exactly the same content. However, if any questions arise about the meaning of certain words or phrases you are welcome to ask your tutors anytime for explanations.

The Study Regulations define the general purpose and setup of the study program "Hydro Science and Engineering". It can be found under the following link:

http://tu-dresden.de/die_tu_dresden/fakultaeten/fakultaet_forst_geo_und_hydrowissenschaften/fachrichtung_wasserwesen/fachrichtung/dateien/dokumente/study_regulations_hse.pdf

The Examination Regulations contain more detailed information about exams and tests. How they have to be written? What do I have to do when I get sick? How many times am I allowed to repeat an exam? Whatever you are unsure about, when you are organizing your master thesis, exams, internships, etc., you should first take a look into the examination regulation before taking one step into the wrong direction. You can find them under the following link:

http://tu-dresden.de/die_tu_dresden/fakultaeten/fakultaet_forst_geo_und_hydrowissenschaften/fachrichtung_wasserwesen/fachrichtung/dateien/dokumente/examination_regulations_hse.pdf

If you want to get more detailed information about certain modules, you can always take a look into the **module compendium**, to see the outline of the necessary exams, responsible professors, etc. You can find it here:

http://tu-dresden.de/die_tu_dresden/fakultaeten/fakultaet_forst_geo_und_hydrowissenschaften/fachrichtung_wasserwesen/fachrichtung/dateien/dokumente/module_compendium_hse.pdf

Please keep in mind that **all of what is written in these documents is legally binding to you as well as to the professors**. So, even exceptional cases (sickness, family issues, etc.) can only be considered by the university, when you act according to the regulations. Thus, if anything unexpected comes up, take a look there and contact your tutors as soon as possible.

Master Thesis

The master thesis for all students is scheduled for the 4th semester. Since it might take some time to organize your desired topic, you should start the process of master thesis organization at the beginning of your 3rd semester. By this time, you should become clear about where your interests are and what kind of thesis you want to do (Laboratory, Modeling, etc.). For this, you can check the homepages of the different institutes at the Hydro Science Department, in order to find out about current research projects of the single institutes. The more clear you become about what exactly you want to write about, the better. Therefore, invest sufficient time and energy in finding out about what the research groups are actually doing and where you and your work could fit in there.

However, don't focus too much on one single topic only. Think about one or two alternatives in case that your desired topic is not available right now.

After becoming clear about this and organizing yourself, you should contact the person, which you consider most important for the desired topic. This can be a professor, but also Post-Docs or Ph.D.-students, who are active in the field, you want to write your thesis about.

Try to avoid making appointments with one or several professors, without having defined at least your field of interest yet. Don't make an appointment with a professor with nothing more on your agenda than "I need to write a master thesis. Give me any topic available!". Remember, that you are about to achieve a Master of Science with this thesis and that it's you, who chooses the topic. Thus, it's your own responsibility to find a topic for yourself, not the professor's. These people are only there to help you with your decision.

If you should plan to write an "external" master thesis (in a company, at another university or at a non-university research institution), try to collect as much information about this institution as possible. A well-established partner of the Hydro Science Department of TU Dresden is the "Umweltforschungszentrum" in Leipzig/Halle/Magdeburg (www.ufz.de), but there are plenty of research institutes with a huge variety of topics all over Germany and most of them accept master students for one of their research projects. Remember that you always need at least one supervisor at TU Dresden, so if you find an interesting topic at another institution, think about who of the professors at TU Dresden might match best with your chosen topic and contact him/her about this.

If you want to start your master thesis at the beginning of your 4th semester, you should try to have this process completed in January of your 3rd semester, so that you can start the exams without too many organizational issues on your mind.

To register your topic of master thesis, you need to have **90 CP** completed. This means, that all of your marks have to be available for the Examination Office to allow the registration. Sometimes this can be problematic, when exam correction takes longer than expected. For the registration your supervisor has to give a task description to the examination office, where your **starting date** and the **date of submission** are denoted. Mostly he/she will write it his-/herself, but if he/she wants you to write it, don't give it to the Examination Office yourself but give it to him so that he can then take a look at it and give it to the Examination Office. Also during the working process of your thesis it is essential to **stay in close contact with your supervisor** and try to update him/her continuously about the stage of your work. Please be aware of the fact that you, as HSE-students, only have **4 months** to write the master thesis, whereas the German students of "Wasserwirtschaft", "Hydrologie", etc. have 5 months. Sometimes your supervisors might not be aware of this.

If you should become aware of unexpected problems, which might delay your work, and therefore should require an extension of the submission date, please contact your tutors and your supervisors as soon as possible. They will know, whom to contact and what to do exactly. For extensions of the master thesis, you have to sign up **at least 4 weeks before the official submission date**.

The same counts for problems arising between you and your supervisor: Before taking any "official" steps by changing the topic or leaving the working group, contact your tutors first. Very often, personal problems can be sorted out by having a mediator between you and your supervisor. All this especially applies to DAAD-scholarship holders, who are obliged to finish their thesis by the end of the 4th semester: If you see any problem coming up, which might require extensions of study and scholarship times, please contact your tutors. Scholarship extensions are difficult to achieve, so they need good preparation.

After finishing your master thesis, you have to **apply for your master certificate**. Normally the university needs **4 weeks** after this to hand out the certificate. For the application, fill out the following document:

http://tu-dresden.de/die_tu_dresden/fakultaeten/fakultaet_forst_geo_und_hydrowissenschaften/fachrichtung_wasserwesen/fachrichtung/dateien/formulare_pa/application_bachelor_master_certificate.pdf

TU Dresden offers all of its graduates to **certify two copies of their bachelor/master certificate**. You should take advantage of this possibility, since you might need them for applications coming up and getting certified copies in hindsight can become quite expensive. You can find information about this under the following link:

https://tu-dresden.de/studium/organisation/beglaubigungen/index_html/document_view?set_language=en

This is especially important for **DAAD-scholarship holders**, since they have to send **one certified copy to the DAAD** after their graduation. If you should leave the country before getting your certificate, you should find another way to send this document to DAAD. In this case, ask your tutors.

Repetition of Module Exams

As you probably know and as you can read in the Examination Regulations, it is only possible to **repeat an exam twice**. After failing the second repetition (meaning the third attempt), you won't be able to write this or any other exam with the same content again. In consequence you will have to cancel your studies, if passing this exam is compulsory for your degree.

Therefore: If you should foresee that you will face serious problems with a certain exam, please let the tutors know **as soon as possible** that you need support, especially when you are facing your 3rd attempt. Neither you need to panic nor do you have to feel ashamed for failing an exam twice. You are not the first person with this problem and most of the other students with a similar problem accomplished to pass their 3rd attempt after setting up a systematic study plan in preparation for this exam. The best would be to contact your tutor directly after you receive the information that you have failed an exam twice. He/she can then help you to develop the aforementioned learning plan to prepare for the last exam. The longer you wait to contact your tutor, the less will he/she be able to help you.

Recognition of Modules from other Universities

To apply for recognition of formerly completed modules you should use the following document:

http://tu-dresden.de/die_tu_dresden/fakultaeten/fakultaet_forst_geo_und_hydrowissenschaften/fachrichtung_wasserwesen/fachrichtung/dateien/formulare_pa/acknowledgment_study_work.pdf

As in the last years students again and again tried to include modules from former studies into their HSE-program in order to save time and effort for writing certain exams the general rules of recognition are listed here:

1. First of all it can be stated that recognizing a former module as **a substitute for one of the optional modules is much easier than for any of the compulsory modules**, since for the compulsory ones the module description has to match exactly in order to allow the recognition. Recognition of optional modules is less strict.
2. Since you are studying in a master program, **only modules from other master programs** can be considered as equivalent to the modules of this program by the Examination Board. Thus, you cannot include any module from your bachelor studies into your HSE-studies, even if it should be content-wise equivalent to the one in this master.
3. If you should have studied in a master program at another university, please **think exactly about what you want to include** and what you don't want to include into your HSE-studies from there. Especially, if you should plan to focus more on a certain subject, it might make sense to take part in a module connected to this subject and write the examination there, even though you could, in theory, use one of your "old" modules to avoid the examination. Due to the differences in working and research activities between universities, countries and research groups, you might discover new aspects of the topic during the module as well as you will get in closer contact with the members of the working groups. This might ease your activities, e.g. if you should plan to write a master thesis about this topic.
Please also note, that it won't be possible to transfer your mark. In consequence, the final mark of your master degree will be calculated only with the marks you achieved at TU Dresden.
4. If you should go abroad during your studies, you can use modules from your exchange semester at another university at TU Dresden, as long as they could – in theory – be part of the module compendium of your study program at TU Dresden (after the so-called "Lissabon-Convention"). The marks from the other university won't be transferred, though. Before going abroad, you should try to set up a study program for the time at the foreign university with your coordinators (for ERASMUS: **Prof. Dornack**, for other exchange programs: **Prof. Gräber**). They will be able to tell you the best, where you have possibilities for recognition of modules and where you might face difficulties. However, even they cannot give you a 100% guarantee for that.