

Guidelines for Midway Evaluation for the PhD Degree at the Faculty of Medicine

The guidelines were last revised and approved by the Program Committee for PhD Education on 12.06.2024.

1. PURPOSE

All PhD candidates admitted to the PhD program at the Faculty of Medicine must undergo a midway evaluation¹.

The midway evaluation is an integral part of the quality assurance of the research education and should be a comprehensive, academic review of the project, contributing to the candidate completing the project on time and with high quality². The midway evaluation is not an oral exam or an in-depth academic discussion or “mini-disputation”.

The midway evaluation should help the candidate and supervisor to reflect on the candidate’s progress in the PhD program and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the project. The supervisor can reflect on the supervisory relationship and whether there is a need for adjustments in the supervision strategy. The midway committee is encouraged to emphasize on academic dialogue to promote progress towards the completion of the doctoral degree within the stipulated time. The committee can help identify any challenges or obstacles in the project and suggest alternative solutions, possibly with necessary adjustments to the project description. The committee can also support the supervisor with feedback on the supervision situation and suggest measures for improvements.

Midway evaluations should be held both in the autumn and spring semester. The departments can choose whether to conduct the evaluation collectively once per semester or individually per candidate.

2. THE COMMITTEE

All candidates shall have a midway committee appointed by the department, consisting of at least two members. The committee is an advisory and consultative body. Candidates must be notified of the date and committee composition at least two months in advance.

Committee members must have a PhD degree but do not need to hold a permanent academic position. At least one of the committee members must be employed at the Faculty of Medicine, but the committee members do not need to be employed at the relevant department.

The committee should identify factors that pose a risk of the project stalling or being delayed by assessing the following elements:

- Progression
 - Number of publications
 - Completion of the training component
- Scientific activity and results
- Overall plan for completing the doctoral degree

¹ [Regulations for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor \(PhD\) at the University of Bergen - Lovdata](#)

² [Kvalitetssystem for ph.d.-utdanningen ved UiB | Ansattsider | UiB](#)

The committee may also point out other factors that need to be followed up to ensure completion and suggest necessary changes to the project description, if needed.

The task of the midway evaluation is not remunerated.

3. CONDUCTING THE MIDWAY EVALUATION

3.1 Timing of The Midway Evaluation

The midway evaluation is conducted approximately halfway through the PhD program, but no later than 2/3 of the PhD period. For candidates with a standard period of three years, this means they should be called in for a midway evaluation no later than when they have three semesters left of their PhD period. If candidates have duty work or work on the doctoral degree part-time, this should be adjusted for when determining the timing of the midway evaluation. The timing can also be adjusted if the candidate has or has had leave of absence or long-term sick leave. Besides this, there is no possibility of postponing the midway evaluation.

If the main supervisor cannot participate in the midway evaluation, either in person or digitally, the timing of the midway evaluation should be adjusted so that it is still conducted within 2/3 of the PhD period. Normally, this means that the midway evaluation must be moved to one semester earlier.

3.2 REPORT

No later than two weeks before the evaluation, the candidate must submit a short written report outlining the progress and status of:

- Scientific activity and results
- Publications
- Training component (transcript from student web must be attached)
- Plan for completion and planned submission date
- Ethical approval. For projects requiring such approval, documentation from the appropriate authority must be presented to the committee.
- Any challenges/comments

The report should be at least two pages long, but the institutes are free to determine a larger scope and whether additional written documentation (project outline, manuscript, articles, etc.) is required.

3.3 On the Day of Midway Evaluation

The midway evaluation begins with the candidate giving a presentation of at least 15 minutes on the status of their doctoral work to the committee, followed by questions/discussion (approx. 10 min.). The main supervisor should be present, but the department may allow digital participation from the main supervisor if necessary to conduct the evaluation. Co-supervisors should also be present as much as possible. The report forms the basis for the candidate's presentation, but the main focus should be on methods, status of achieved goals, and scientific results. The department can define whether the presentation should be more comprehensive than this.

The candidate's presentation should be open to the public and preferably held in English. The discussion afterward can be held in the language in which the dissertation is written.

After the presentation, the committee, supervisor, and candidate should review the summary and any other comments from the committee in a closed meeting. A concluding conversation

between the committee and the candidate, without the supervisors present, should also be conducted. If the committee or supervisors wish, a short conversation between the committee and the supervisor(s) can also be held. Note that significant academic changes to the project must be applied for to the faculty, while minor changes are approved internally at the department.

The midway evaluation concludes with the committee completing and signing a separate evaluation form and protocol for the midway evaluation.

3.4 REGISTRATION OF COMPLETED MIDWAY EVALUATION

The midway evaluation is mandatory for all PhD candidates. The midway evaluation is approved if the following **two** elements are completed:

1. Submission of the preliminary report according to the institute's specifications no later than two weeks before the scheduled date for the midway evaluation.
2. Completion of the oral midway presentation (15-minute presentation + 10-minute discussion in plenary) and a subsequent meeting with the committee.

Upon approved presentation/midway evaluation, the candidate receives one (1) credit, which is included in the training component. The department is responsible for producing the protocol and registering the credit under the correct course code according to the current study administrative routine. Approval is not dependent on the candidate's progress in the PhD program.

4. FOLLOW-UP AFTER THE MIDWAY EVALUATION

The completed evaluation forms, attached to the candidate's report, are collected, archived in Ephorte, and reviewed later by the department. Any problems and delays identified during the midway evaluation should be addressed with the candidate and/or supervisor to come up with measures that can help the candidate complete the PhD period.

The administration can report which candidates need follow-up after the midway evaluation but is not responsible for the follow-up. The responsibility for following up candidates with concerning progress is assigned to the Head of research (research leader) at the department to which the candidate is affiliated. The research leader at the department ensures that follow-up meetings with the candidate and supervisor are conducted within one month after the midway evaluation.

The guidelines are revised as needed.