

Guidelines for midway evaluations of PhD students at VID Specialized University

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All PhD students at VID are subject to a midway evaluation, normally within 18 months after the start of the PhD programme, calculated on the basis of full-time studies.

The programme coordinator for the PhD programme is responsible for arranging the midway evaluation.

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Legal basis

The midway evaluation is undertaken pursuant to the Regulations relating to the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) at VID Specialized University, which stipulate the following:

Section 9-2. Midway evaluation

A midway evaluation of the PhD project should normally take place in the third or fourth semester, or somewhat later for part-time projects. The PhD student must present his/her project and receive an evaluation from a group of at least two members appointed by the Specialized University. The evaluation group considers the academic status and progress of the PhD student and submits feedback to the PhD student, the supervisor and the Specialized University.

The midway evaluation is a mandatory activity in the doctoral programme and included in the preconditions for applying to submit a thesis for public defence. The midway evaluation is therefore also encompassed by Sections 4-7, 4-8 (3) and 4-13 (3) of the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges and Section 5-5 of the Regulations relating to the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor at VID Specialized University.

If the evaluation group reports considerable weaknesses in the research project, corrective measures must be taken.

Purpose

The purpose of the midway evaluation is to assess the status of the project. The Assessment Committee shall submit proposals for possible changes to the student's project and progress plan if this is deemed necessary.

Appointment of Assessment Committee

The programme coordinator at the PhD centre is responsible for appointing the Assessment Committee, in consultation with the student and the team of supervisors. The committee shall consist of two members: one external and one internal. The internal member acts as the committee chair. The Assessment Committee members must have a PhD degree and be familiar with the student's field of study, but they must not be involved in the candidate's project and they must be impartial. The evaluators in the mid-term evaluation may subsequently be appointed members of the adjudication committee for the candidate's PhD thesis.

The programme coordinator is also responsible for appointing a representative of the centre to be in charge of the midway evaluation.

The evaluators undertake to familiarise themselves with all documentation sent to them before the midway evaluation. The internal member of the committee is responsible for contacting the external member to agree on how the work should be divided between them.

Duties of the candidate

No later than three weeks before the midway evaluation, the candidate shall ensure that the following documents for use by the Assessment Committee are submitted to the research administration after a quality check has been made by the programme coordinator:

- A revised and approved project description of the PhD project
- For article-based theses: at least one article in draft version
- For monographs: draft table of contents and at least one chapter in draft form
- The student's self-reporting form
- Copies of approvals, if relevant, for example from the Regional Committee for Research Ethics (REK) or a recommendation from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD)

The self-reporting form is found by following the path *www.vid.no – forskning- forskerutdanning: info til PhD.- studenter*.

The student can make the documents to be presented at the assessment seminar available to other participants by posting them in Canvas.

In addition, the student shall prepare an oral presentation to be held in association with the midway evaluation. This should give a brief account of the PhD project, including the results that have been achieved, challenges encountered in the project, if any, deviations from the original progress plan, if any, and the plan for further progress.

The presentation shall have a duration of 15 minutes.

Documentation for the Assessment Committee

The research administration is responsible for forwarding the student's documents to the Assessment Committee, the supervisors and the person responsible at the PhD centre without undue delay.

In addition, the group shall be informed about the Assessment Committee's remit (see below).

Remit of the Assessment Committee

Each member of the Assessment Committee should prepare a written note of 1–3 pages, which will form the basis for the assessment to be presented at the seminar. The committee members shall exchange notes before the seminar.

Based on the submitted documentation, the group shall assess the following:

- Have the correct approvals for the research project been obtained?
- The candidate's knowledge of previous research, theory and methods that are relevant for the PhD project.
- The candidate's ability to present, analyse and assess research findings.
- The candidate's academic independence.
- Are the educational component and any other courses relevant and in line with the progress plan?
- Comments and recommendations for the further work.

Midway evaluation – implementation

The midway evaluation is open to all interested parties. The assessment will normally be announced under 'Events' on the VID website.

The candidate's supervisors shall participate in the midway evaluation, in order to ensure that the respondents' assessments are followed up in the further work on the thesis.

The person in charge of the midway evaluation is responsible for ensuring that the midway evaluation protocol is completed and signed by the committee members.

The time schedule will be as follows:

Public part:

- *Welcome by a representative of the centre concerned*
- *Presentation of the project by the candidate (max. 15 min.)*
- *In dialogue with the candidate, the external respondent gives feedback on the work with the thesis (max. 30 min.)*
- *In dialogue with the candidate, the internal respondent gives feedback on the work with the thesis (max. 30 min.)*
- **BREAK (15 min)**
- *Plenary discussion (max. 30 min.)*

Closed part (the representative of the centre, the Assessment Committee, the supervisors and the candidate):

- Completion of the protocol (max. 30 min)

The midway evaluation has a **maximum duration of 2.5 hours in total**.

Submission of the evaluation protocol

The protocol and written feedback are forwarded to the head of the centre, the programme coordinator and the research administration for registration and archiving. The person in charge of the midway evaluation is also

responsible for ensuring that the protocol and the written feedback from the Assessment Committee are sent to the candidate and the supervisors. The head of centre is responsible for following up the assessment.

Contact us

- Questions about the midway evaluation can be addressed to the programme coordinator of the PhD programme in question. Administrative questions can be addressed to the research administration.