

## **Guidelines for third semester evaluation of PhD candidates at the Department for Informatics (IFI)**

All PhD candidates must complete a third semester evaluation, according to the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences' supplementary regulations to the *Regulations for the Degree of PhD at the University of Oslo*. A third semester evaluation must take place 12-15 months after admission to the PhD program<sup>1</sup>. The PhD candidate presents the results achieved in this period to an evaluation committee and they clarify any deviations from the progress plan.

The main purpose of the evaluation is to give the PhD candidate the opportunity to present their work, to get external input and new ideas for further research, rethink their project, and ultimately increase their job satisfaction and confidence in their own work. It also provides an opportunity for the candidate, their supervisors, and the PhD Committee, to identify challenges related to the PhD project and take appropriate actions. The expectation for the evaluation is not for the candidate to show a significant academic production, but rather to ensure that the project is developing as planned.

### **1. Planning and coordination of the evaluation meeting**

The principal supervisor is responsible for appointing the evaluation committee. The PhD coordinators send a list each semester to supervisors indicating which candidates who needs to complete the third semester evaluation. The principal supervisor informs the PhD coordinators about the planned date for the evaluation and the suggested committee members.

It is the responsibility of the principal supervisor to coordinate the evaluation meeting. The principle supervisor sends the following to the evaluation committee in due time and no later than one week before the evaluation.

- Original application for admission and project description
- The status report from the candidate
- The evaluation form for the committee

### **2. Composition of the evaluation committee**

The composition of the committee should promote an independent and relevant evaluation. The committee must have the following composition:

- Two members with PhD
- The supervisors of the candidate cannot sit in the committee
- One member can be from the same research group as the candidate

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<sup>1</sup> [Supplementary Regulations at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences to the Regulations for the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor \(PhD\) at the University of Oslo - The Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences \(uio.no\)](#)



- One member must be from a different research group than the candidate
- One committee member can be external to IFI if this is relevant. External committee members will not receive a honorarium

### **3. Status Report**

The evaluation will be based on the original PhD project description and a status report written by the PhD candidate. The report should not exceed 10 pages (references and front page not included) and accompanied by any relevant paper(s) written by the PhD candidate. The status report will give the committee an overview over:

- The candidate's current understanding of the project and its challenges
- Changes and deviations from the original plan
- The project implementation plan

The candidate should follow this outline for the status report:

#### **1. Introduction**

- Main research aims and objectives
- Project and scientific background

#### **2. Research questions and scientific challenges**

- Scientific challenges
- Research questions
- Status regarding reaching beyond the state-of-the-art

#### **3. Scientific method**

- Theoretical framework
- Research methodology and research methods

#### **4. Ethics**

- Discussion of relevant ethical issues and how they have been dealt with

#### **5. Changes in the project**

- Deviations from the plan

#### **6. Project plan**

- Detailed project implementation plan
- Overview of publications that are accepted, submitted, or in progress.
- Will the project be completed as (now) planned and on time?

#### **7. References**

### **4. Presentation by the PhD candidate**

The presentation is public. The meeting starts with a 30-minute presentation by the candidate, followed by a discussion between the candidate and the evaluation committee. The committee is expected to ask

questions and engage the candidate in a discussion on relevant topics. The supervisors are expected to be present.

#### **5. Meeting with the committee**

After the public presentation, the candidate's current progress and relationship with supervisors are discussed in a separate meeting with the two committee members only (without supervisor(s)). The aim of this meeting is to reveal any challenges affecting working relations, like issues related to team work and colleagues; issues related to supervision and co-authorship and/or improper attention or behavior by supervisors or colleagues.

#### **6. Report from the committee and follow-up**

Based on the status report, the presentation, and the meeting with the committee, the committee write a report according to the evaluation form template. The committee members are responsible for submitting the report to the PhD coordinators ([phd-adm@ifi.uio.no](mailto:phd-adm@ifi.uio.no)), supervisors and the candidate.

If the committee sees the need for follow up and action beyond what the supervisors can do, they should indicate that special measures are needed. The PhD coordinators and if necessary the Head of the PhD committee at IFI will consider any special measures suggested in the progress report and immediately take adequate action.

In the case of conflicts or other issues having negative impact on the progress of the PhD candidate, the committee is expected to inform the PhD coordinators in person (and not by email).

Reports that do not suggest any concrete actions are summarily reported to the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences.