

Half-Term Assessment at the Department of Geological Sciences, Stockholm University: Instructions for the Committee

On behalf of the Department of Geological Sciences, Stockholm University, we would like to thank you for taking of your valuable time to support our PhD students. We have designed the Half-Term Assessment to (i) help students reflect on their project and its feasibility for completion in the allotted time; (ii) get students writing on their thesis; (iii) provide an assessment of the student's progress, the formulation of the project and catch any critical issues; and (iv) give students a feeling of a PhD defence. The students should have completed 24 months of their PhD studies. An outcome of the Half-Term Assessment is a recommendation by the committee as to whether a licentiate or PhD is more appropriate for the student.

Prior to the assessment the student will provide the committee with:

1. A *PhD Thesis Proposal* that summarizes the work done so far and plan for the completion of study.
2. A *draft manuscript* to be appended to the PhD Thesis Proposal.
3. Record of *completed coursework*.

The committee is comprised of two reviewers, the supervisor and co-supervisors. The supervisor comes to an agreement with the committee on the timeline of submission for the required documents and the date of the exam. The documents are not provided to anyone other than the committee.

On the day of the exam

1. The student makes a 30-minute presentation based on the *PhD Thesis Proposal*.
2. There is a discussion with the committee and the audience based on the written documents and the presentation. In that this should give a taste for the real defence, questions can be on their knowledge of the field, critical concepts or future plans.
3. There is then a closed discussion with the committee where the focus is on the feasibility of the proposed plan.
4. The student is invited back for a discussion about the the committee's assessment and recommendation.

The final outcome is a (i) recommendation from the committee if it is more appropriate for a student to carry on to a licentiate or a PhD degree, (ii) written comments on the manuscript draft and (iii) general feedback on the project and planned completion.