



Qualifying exam

WHY:

- To ensure that the PhD project and study is on the right track
- To train written and oral presentation of the research project
- To discuss and validate plans for the rest of the study period
- To obtain feedback and suggestions from internal and external researchers
- To obtain an MSc degree if the student was enrolled without such a degree

WHEN:

- For students enrolled with an MSc degree: no later than 1½ years after enrolment
- For students enrolled without an MSc degree: after six years of university studies, with two years left of the PhD study. The exam should be held no later than the last day of the given month.
- A notification email with practical information about procedures is sent to the student and main supervisor 3 months before the exam
- A registration form must be submitted 6 weeks prior to the exam

WHAT:

- A 30 page *progress report* submitted 3 weeks prior to the oral exam. Contents:
 - **Total number of pages: max. 30, including everything.** The students own contribution to the work must be clearly specified. Excerpts from published, submitted or draft manuscripts may be included as part of the report, but the total length should not exceed 30 pages.
 - Short introduction to field of research
 - Aim of project
 - Detailed account of methods, results and conclusions so far
 - Detailed plan for remaining study period
 - The progress report may contain a link to supplementary material with, for instance, raw data, video clips or program code. The supplementary material must not contribute to the assessment of the progress report but solely serve as documentation for the results presented in the progress report.
- An *oral examination* (max 2 hours in total) containing
 - 30-45 minutes (as agreed with the internal examiner from the programme committee) presentation by the PhD student of key elements from the progress report
 - Discussion of progress report and presentation, including discussion of the wider thematic framework
 - Discussion of plans for completion of project and studies



WHAT NOT:

- The progress report is a report on the progress so far. It is not meant to be a polished dissertation, mini-master's thesis or the like.
- Work on the progress report and preparation of the presentation should not take more than 2-4 weeks. For students who have already written or drafted manuscripts for publication, reuse of such material is permitted. For students who have not already drafted manuscripts, this is an opportunity to begin formulating material which can be part of future publications and/or part of the PhD dissertation
- The oral examination deals with the project and the wider thematic framework of the project. It is not meant to be a general examination in the scientific field of the PhD programme to which the student is affiliated

WHO:

- The examination committee consists of
 - The supervisor(s)
 - 1-2 internal examiner(s) (at least one must be a member of the programme committee)
 - An external examiner (an expert in a field close to the project. If the student does not have an MSc degree, the external examiner must be a member of the Danish national body of external examiners)
- The examination committee
 - Decides if the exam is passed/failed
 - Writes a brief (1 page) statement containing
 - Description and assessment of progress report
 - Assessment of oral presentation, discussion, and plan for completion
 - Overall assessment

WHAT IF:

- If the PhD student does not pass the examination
 - The student can once, within a period of two weeks after receiving the statement from the examination, apply for a re-examination. A revised progress report must be submitted at least three weeks before the re-examination, which must be held no later than three months after receipt of the application for re-examination
 - If the PhD student does not apply for re-examination, the enrolment as a PhD student is cancelled by the end of the month in which the examination was held
 - If the PhD student does not pass the re-examination the enrolment is cancelled at the end of the month in which the re-examination was held
 - Re-examination postpones any cancellation of the PhD enrolment, but does not extend the total time of study
 - If the student is enrolled as a PhD student without a Master's degree, and he or she fails the qualifying examination, the PhD student can still enter for his or her Master's degree, although the failed qualifying examination counts as one examination attempt.



- If the PhD student decides to terminate the PhD studies before sitting the qualifying examination
 - He or she can still be enrolled as a Master's student unless he or she has been expelled from the university. The PhD student is still entitled to supervision for the Master's thesis and to obtain a Master's degree. GSST may issue documentation on request and in both Danish and English with regard to those elements of the PhD programme that have been completed

WHERE to find further details:

- Rules and regulations on the GSST webpage
- The notification email sent to student and main supervisor 3 months before the exam
- The GSST secretariat