

Centre for Ice and Climate PhD panels

At Centre for Ice and Climate, the progress of a PhD project is evaluated twice annually. This is done in two ways – the PhD student gives a short presentation at PhD day, and the PhD student meets with the affiliated PhD panel. The objective is to support the student, project, and supervisor and make sure that the project plan, publication strategy, and career plan of the student are reviewed periodically. As a beneficial side effect, the paperwork required by the PhD school will be of higher quality and can be used more actively in the planning of the project's next steps.

The students are encouraged to be honest in their assessment of the progress. Both the PhD day presentation and the panel meeting are opportunities to reflect on the plans made 6 months ago, find out how to define and meet the next set of goals, make adjustments to plans, and so forth. The purpose is not to evaluate the scientific quality of the work, but to evaluate the project plans, progress and support needs.

Each panel will be composed of the supervisor, any co-supervisors, and one additional CIC colleague from another area/research group (who chairs the panel). The aim is diversity in age, topic and experimental vs. theoretical focus. The additional panel member is selected by Dorthe and Sune after consultation with the supervisor and student. In case of “bad chemistry”, panels can be changed.

PhD day

The CIC PhD day is held in March and September of each year. All PhD students give presentations of their status. The standard format is 10-15 minutes' presentation + 5 minutes' questions. Students who just started give short outlines of their planned project. Students who recently presented their work in a talk to the centre staff (e.g. at a Friday meeting) can skip or shorten their presentation (but not for two PhD days in a row). The presentations are mainly on the science objectives and results (but not so much the details), and should also include one opening status slide (what have I been doing: courses, teaching, side projects etc.) and one closing slide with plans for the next 6 months. Questions from both fellow students and the panel should be expected.

Panel members are expected to attend, and all centre team members are welcome. If the PhD students wish to organize this, the centre will support a social event and/or dinner in the evening.

PhD panel meetings

The panels meet around the same time as, and preferably just before, the PhD day. The PhD student gives a status overview (not a science presentation) commenting on the progress over the last 6 months in relation to the plan made at the previous meeting and presenting any updates to the PhD plan. The section on the next page contains suggestions for how the student can prepare for the meeting.

A tentative list of the panel meeting objectives comprise:

- Reviewing the progress, identifying barriers, and planning side-projects / additional elements as supplements to the main project or as “plan B” in case of problems/delays.
- Making, and following up on, a plan for publications and/or thesis writing.
- Reviewing any reports to the PhD school and improving the plan for future work

- Identifying collaborators in/outside CIC that can contribute with needed or desirable expertise.
- Ensuring that the PhD student has at least one good senior scientific contact outside the centre that knows the PhD student and project well enough to act as referee for future grant or job applications. This can be a person related to the stay abroad, but does not need to be.
- Following up on teaching and coursework requirements

Within a week after the meeting, the panel chair writes a short summary which is used in the discussion at the next panel meeting 6 months later. The summary is sent to Lone, who maintains an archive.

Other roles of the PhD panel chair

The PhD student is always welcome to contact the PhD panel chair (as well as Dorthe or Sune) for advice outside the PhD panel meetings. Because the panel chair often has other specific research interests than those relevant for the PhD project, specific guidance about the project's methods or results cannot be expected, but the panel chair can be helpful for discussions about the project plan, publication strategy, and career plans. The panel chair can also advise about the form and amount of supervision, questions about (co)-authorship and research integrity, etc., in case the student does not feel comfortable discussing this with the supervisor(s).

Panel Meeting Agenda

Before the meeting, the student fills in part 1 below, either in the form or in a separate document. The student reflects upon the questions in part 2, identifies points of particular importance and/or makes personal notes.

For the meeting, the student brings copies of the filled-in part 1 and the list of discussion points from part 2 for all meeting participants. The panel chair brings the minutes from last meeting.

At the meeting, the panel reviews part 1 and the student comments on the questions in part 2 as a basis for a discussion. The panel chairman makes notes of decisions / action points. The minutes need not summarize the discussion, but should contain a list of all agreements made and must detail the plans for the next 6 months. It is often most efficient to write the minutes at the end of meeting and let everybody agree on the wording right away.

After the meeting, the minutes are distributed to the participants. After approval, they should be archived with Lone. The panel chairman is responsible for this.

Part 1: Review of status and context

Student:

List the main scientific projects undertaken since the previous meeting (or, at the first meeting, since the start of the PhD study).

Task	Partners	Status / timetable

(add more fields if appropriate)

Review the status of

teaching and other obligations:

course requirements:

change of environment (stay abroad):

How is progress coming along relative to the time plan?

(For the above, it could be useful to run through the most recent PhD plan and/or the most recent report to the Faculty).

Panel chair, based on summary from last meeting (skip at first meeting): If not already discussed above, summarize any action points and/or concrete goals / initiatives agreed upon at the previous panel meeting as a basis for a discussion, for example touching upon:

- Which goals have been achieved since the last review?
- Did the most recent agreement lead to changes, and have these been positive or negative?

Part 2: Discussion of status and future plans:

The list below is a guideline, and on the other hand not exhaustive. Aim to focus the time and discussion where it makes most sense – do not try to cover all points if they are not relevant.

Project

1. Is the project progressing as planned?
2. Which problems have been encountered?
3. Are adjustments to the strategy needed?
4. Are there relevant side projects / plan Bs that should be given more attention?
5. Discuss publication plans
6. For the stay abroad, discuss if a plan B is needed for what to do during the stay, especially if critical data or persons turn out not to be available as envisaged.
7. Does the PhD student have at least one good senior scientific contact outside the centre that knows the PhD student and project well enough to act as referee for future grant or job applications? If not, how can such a contact be established?

Work conditions/collaboration/supervision

8. How is the collaboration with colleagues / supervisor / external partners working?
9. Is there anyone with whom you need to collaborate with more closely? (in-house or out)
10. What is the most important form of support you need to do your work?
11. Is there a need for additional resources (knowledge, equipment, assistance or other)
12. Is there any information that you feel you are missing?
13. Are there circumstances regarding your family/health/personal situation that have an impact on your work life (or may do so in the future) and that you would like to discuss?

Plans for the next 6 months

14. Make a prioritisation of new as well as current academic projects and set realistic goals for the next period.
15. List any agreements about changes in working conditions, supervision, equipment, courses, equipment, or other resources