

Features Assessed in the General Exam

Scientific and scholarly quality

- Does the scientific proposal lead to the testing of an important hypothesis?
- Originality and novelty; a new contribution to the field; opening of a new approach or a new field.
- Inspiration for new experiments.
- Integration of facts, knowledge, and principles fundamental to a field or topic.
- Understanding of the salient background in the field and its significance.
- Adequacy and suitability of methods, quality of data, and depth and perception in analysis.
- Adequacy of data and analysis with respect to justifying the conclusions drawn.

Written Presentation

- Writing: Is it clear, concise, and in good English? Is sentence and paragraph structure sound?
- References: Are more used than necessary? Have key references been omitted? Are all statements suitable and compatible with the source?
- Data: Are any text, figures, and/or tables duplicated? Are data presented clearly, succinctly, and in logical order?
- Units of measure, abbreviations, and symbols: Are there misuses of these? Are units standard and internally consistent? Are units given for all parameters and variables used in equations?
- Tables: Can they be simplified or condensed?
- Figures: Are they sharp and contrast with lettering proportionate to size of the figure? Are there legends? Are they simple yet clear and complete enough to allow understanding? Are units correct?
- Titles: Should be specific, with no superfluous or unnecessary words.

Oral presentation

- Were the evidence and arguments logically organized and convincing?
- Is the presentation clear, logical and professional?
- Is the science presented at a level showing good quality and depth, demonstrating the presenter's thorough understanding of the topic?
- Are answers to the questions thoughtful, direct, and to the point?
- Where information is lacking can the presenter devise a strategy for gaining the information?
- Are the slides well-constructed for clear visualization of the science?

Ethics

- Was there any question of fraud, misrepresentation, misquotation, plagiarism or deliberate or even thoughtless falsification of data?