Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating is breaking the rules, which Umeå University views seriously. Every year students are warned by the Vice-Chancellor or suspended from their studies because they have tried to deceive on examinations. In such cases, the right to financial support may also be suspended. If these students had been familiar with the rules and acted in accordance with them, this would maybe not have happened.

This information is directed toward students at Umeå University and contains information about how cheating and plagiarism are defined, what happens if you cheat and how you can avoid it.

What is defined as cheating?
Cheating is when one uses unauthorized help aids or in some other way tries to mislead on a test or when another type of task is being evaluated.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is when one uses others’ work or material, both printed and from the Internet, and makes it appear as though they are one’s own.

When you use the work of others the source shall be stated. Otherwise, in the worst case you can be required to reimburse the person who owns the work.

It is, of course, not allowed to purchase essays or other material on the Internet or from someone else and turn it in using one’s own name.

Cheat sheet and other unauthorized help aids
To use unauthorized help aids, for example, cheat sheets, other notes, cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA) or books, can be perceived as cheating. Sometimes it is permitted to use certain help aids during an examination. In such cases you will receive information about it in advance.

Unauthorized collaboration
During an in-class exam it is not permitted to talk to other students. If you collaborate more than permitted in connection with an examination and, for example, turn in a text or material that is more or less identical to someone else’s, this can be perceived as cheating.

What are the consequences if you cheat?
If a teacher suspects that a student has attempted to cheat, the teacher is obliged to report this to the university’s Vice-Chancellor for further investigation. According to the Higher Education Ordinance the university may take disciplinary measures toward the student who has attempted to cheat. You can read more about what this implies in Code of Rules (see footnote).

How do you avoid cheating and plagiarism?
Cheating can be the result of stress and a strained study situation. Cheating can also be the result of ignorance about how one should write academic texts and what requirements are stipulated for scholarly work. By learning the rules and how you could use text of others, you can avoid being reported for cheating.

Follow the teacher’s instructions
Be careful to follow the teacher’s instructions when you receive an assignment. The instructions can be different for different assignments. If you are absent when instructions are given, you have to contact the teacher in question and make sure that you receive instructions as to how the assignment should be completed.

Others’ texts
Learn which rules apply when you use other people’s material. It must be clear as to what are your own ideas and wording and what you have taken from other texts or people. This applies both for material that you take from books and that which you find on the Internet.

When you quote
• Copy the text exactly as it is written
• Offset the text within quotation marks
• State the source in the citation
• State the source in the reference list

When you paraphrase someone else’s text
• State the source in the citation
• State the source in the reference list

When you summarize
• Summarize the text with your own words
• State the source in the text
• State the source in the reference list
University rules and insurance coverage for students

As higher education studies in Sweden are governed by a large number of acts, ordinances, rules and regulations, it can be difficult for students to know where to look for answers to questions they may have about their studies. Below you will find some of the rules that are binding on both students and staff at Umeå University.

How long before a course starts must the syllabus, required reading list and timetable be made available?
The course syllabus, required reading list and a skeleton timetable covering the first four weeks of the course must be available at least four weeks before the course starts.

According to my teacher, attendance is compulsory at all timetabled teaching sessions. Is that really so?
Sessions where compulsory attendance is required must comprise some form of examination and must be clearly marked in the timetable.

Must I have completed all course modules before I can take a final exam?
No. Participation in a written exam cannot be denied to a student as long as he or she abides by the university’s rules concerning exams. However, if a particular exam involves a potential risk to a third party, the syllabus may state that certain modules must have been successfully completed before that specific exam can be taken.

How soon after an exam must the exam results be published?
Normally within three weeks (15 working days) after the date of the exam.

Are exam papers and students’ exam scripts matters of public record?
Exam papers become public as soon as they have been handed out to the examinees and the time allowed for late arrivals to the exam hall has expired. Students’ exam scripts become public when all examinees have been graded, and will remain so for as long as they are kept at the examining department. Exam results are also accessible to the general public.

How soon after an exam may a resit exam be scheduled?
A resit exam may be arranged no sooner than 10 working days, and no later than 3 months, after the exam results have been published and students have had the opportunity to study the marking of their exam papers.

When should the date of a resit exam be announced?
The date of the resit exam must be announced no later than on the occasion of the first exam.

Can an examiner be asked to explain the criteria on which his or her marking of an exam is based?
Yes, a student has the right to know why his or her exam answers have been assessed in a particular way.

Can I appeal against a grade I have been awarded?
No. Grades cannot be appealed against. However, you can let the examiner know that you are not satisfied with the way your exam has been graded and ask him or her to review his/her decision.

If I am not satisfied with the marking of my exam, can I ask that another examiner be appointed?
If you have failed the same course module twice, you may request that another examiner be appointed to assess your next exam. If you have failed a placement period, you have the right to change examiners after the first fail.

What happens if I fall ill and cannot complete my study programme on time?
Provided that you have notified the university in writing of your sick leave, and if there are special reasons for this, you will be guaranteed re-admission in a later semester so that you can complete your programme.

What happens if I have an accident during my studies?
All students are covered by personal accident insurance through the Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency. The insurance is valid in Sweden only and covers accidents during teaching hours and during travel between your home and locations where the teaching for your courses is provided. In specific cases, the insurance also covers illnesses contracted through exposure to viruses, bacteria or other infectious matter.

Students exposed to special risks in the course of their studies are also covered by the Occupational Injuries Insurance, administered by the Social Insurance Agency.

Students are advised to check the insurance they have and that it provides the coverage they need.

More information can be found in “Code of Rules and Procedures relating to First and Second-cycle Studies at Umeå University” www.student.umu.se/english/code-of-rules/