



University Administration
Faculty Office for Higher Education
Christina Joos, Administrator

Procedure for handling suspected attempts to cheat

Introduction

The issue of cheating, and plagiarism in particular, has become increasingly relevant in recent years. Working methods such as searching literature and collating and analysing data are being used to an increasing extent, which places greater demands on the ability of students to follow established conventions for academic writing.

Although the number of cases reported has increased significantly in recent years, in absolute terms they are still relatively few, which means that an individual teacher relatively rarely comes across issues of cheating. This procedure has therefore been drawn up in order to assist teachers and other staff in dealing with these issues and to ensure that cases of suspected deceit/cheating are dealt with uniformly throughout KI. The procedure applies to cases involving students at first-cycle, second-cycle and third-cycle levels.

In order to reduce the number of cases of cheating, it is important to take preventive action. KI has therefore carried out systematic work in recent years to combat cheating; for example, several seminar courses have been arranged for teachers. Furthermore, KI has had a campus licence for the Urkund anti-plagiarism system for several years and the Board of Higher Education has decided that all degree projects at first-cycle and second-cycle level that are submitted for examination must go through Urkund. However, the most important preventive work takes place in the teaching setting. Below are some tips on how teachers can combat cheating:

- Stress the importance of “academic discourse” in higher education and the ability to examine, criticise and evaluate different kinds of academic work. Ensure that the students have a solid grounding in how to write academic papers correctly. In many disciplinary cases, it has been established that the students’ actual skills in terms of academic writing do not meet the formal requirements. Be as specific as possible with example cases and situations. Inform/continually remind students of the rules that apply to dealing with sources and references in memoranda/dissertations.
- The risk of students being tempted to plagiarise texts in their degree projects and dissertations is reduced if the supervisor is able to follow the student’s writing process. You should therefore read the material produced by the student and discuss it with the student at various stages and not just once the entire piece of work is submitted.

- Inform students in writing of the extent to which collaboration is permitted for take-home examinations.
- Avoid setting examination assignments where the answers can be obtained easily from the Internet or from fellow students. Examples of things which we know from experience are plagiarised are lab reports for laboratory practicals which are used on a course for several years.
- Ensure that all instructions prior to an examination are provided in writing. Remember that a teaching situation becomes a legal matter in the event that suspected cheating/plagiarism is reported to the President.
- Write the result on the examination paper using permanent ink and draw a line through unanswered questions.
- Keep a copy of the examination answers.
- Remind the students not to leave their work on public computers.
- Students find it unfair when someone is a “passenger” in group work. Inform them therefore that the examination will be taken individually.
- Cheating and plagiarism are more common on courses which the students consider to be less central to their programme. Therefore try to base the course content on and/or relate it to the professions to which the programme leads.
- Inform the students that KI uses Urkund – this may deter them from plagiarising. From a legal security perspective, it is good for both the teacher and the student if Urkund is used.
- Encourage the students to read: "*Cheating is not allowed*" which can be found on KI's website.

What is cheating?

According to Chapter 10, Section 1 of the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), cheating is where students “use prohibited aids or other methods to attempt to deceive during examinations or other forms of assessment of study performance”.

There are various kinds of deceit/attempted deceit. Below are some *examples* of what KI considers may constitute attempted deceit:

- copying text from the Internet or other sources without acknowledging the source
- *prohibited* collaboration with another student (for example, the students' answers are identical despite the fact that the assignments are individual)¹

¹ The instructions for take-home examinations, for example, must indicate the extent to which collaboration is permitted. This is a grey area. Students discussing different issues is often positive for the learning process, but it is important to indicate whether they are then to complete the examination assignment jointly or individually.

- copying another student's dissertation or other written work
- taking aids or items, other than those permitted for written examinations under KI rules, into or using them at the desk in written examinations.

Measures which can be taken are a warning and suspension. Suspension means that the student is not permitted to participate in teaching, examinations or other activities within the context of university education. Suspension can be for no more than six months in total.

How do we handle a suspected attempt to deceive?

Handling of the matter by the department

- A teacher, invigilator or equivalent who suspects an attempt to deceive during an examination or other form of assessment of study performance must inform the examiner immediately. In order to determine whether or not there is a suspicion of an attempt to deceive, the student is spoken to before a decision is made on any possible report. The department should not investigate the matter, however, but should only confirm whether there is well-grounded suspicion and if so make a report. The investigation is carried out by an official appointed by the President. If the department (examiner) does not find reason to believe that the student has attempted to deceive (cheat) the matter is not reported. Note that a student cannot be reported for cheating in a dissertation if the dissertation has not yet been submitted for examination. Note also that a student suspected of cheating is entitled to complete the examination. This is not marked, however, but kept in a sealed envelope until a decision has been made.
- Each case must be dealt with quickly and correctly. The legal security and the right to integrity of the individual must be taken into account. An open conversation should always be held with the student, where the student is given the opportunity to explain the incident. A student who is informed that the department suspects him/her of attempting to cheat may react with shock, which can make it difficult for them to receive and process information. It is therefore important that the examiner or equivalent ensures that the student understands that the matter will be reported to the President. Ideally inform them of the opportunity to obtain support and assistance from the student union's student representative or doctoral student representative. All contact with the various parties in the case should be documented in writing. With regard to information about how the case will be processed, the student should be referred to the administrator at the Faculty Office for Higher Education in the university administration for studies at first-cycle and second-cycle level. For studies at third-cycle level, the student should be referred to the administrator at the Faculty Office for Research and Doctoral Education.
- If there are still good grounds to suspect an attempt to deceive after the examiner's discussion with the teacher and conversation with the student, a written report must be made to the President. The report must contain the following:
 - o information about the reporter – name, position and department
 - o name and personal ID number of the student
 - o which programme/course the student is studying and which semester this relates to

- o a description of the matter and what type of deceit is suspected, as well as information about how the department has determined that there are good grounds to suspect cheating
- o a copy of the examination assignment it is considered that the student has submitted with the intention to deceive – and in the case of plagiarism, a copy of the original text as well – along with other documents relevant to the case

The report must be signed by the examiner. If the department considers that the student has not intentionally sought to deceive, the matter is not reported to the President. In the event of plagiarism resulting from carelessness, for example, the department must decide, however, whether all or parts of the assignment are to be rejected.

The student is informed that a report has been made. If the student is aware that the department is considering making a report, he/she should also be informed if the decision is made not to make a report.

While the report against the student is being investigated, the student continues to participate in teaching and examinations. However, the assignment to which the report relates is not marked until the matter has been decided.

Handling of the matter by the President/disciplinary board

The matter which is reported to the President is investigated by the university administration. The investigation includes giving the student an opportunity to comment on the report. If the administrator considers there to be sufficient grounds, the President decides – where necessary following consultation with board members knowledgeable in legal matters – whether the case is to:

1. be dismissed without further action,
2. result in a warning from the President, or
3. be referred to the disciplinary board for consideration (the disciplinary board consists of the President as the chairperson, a board member knowledgeable in legal matters, a teaching representative and two student representatives).
 - If the President decides that the case should be dismissed without further action, this shall be the end of the matter. In this case, the reported examination assignment shall be marked.
 - If the President decides to issue a warning, the reported student is able to have this decision reviewed by the disciplinary board. The secretary of the disciplinary board shall inform the student of this right. If the student does not wish to have the President's decision reviewed, this shall be the end of the matter. A warning is not shown in a LADOK extract or on a degree certificate, but note that a warning means that the examination assignment must be declared invalid.

- If the President decides to refer the matter to the disciplinary board, the examiner and/or the person who brought to light the attempt to deceive and the student are called to the meeting of the disciplinary board. Once those involved in the case have been heard, they may leave the room while the board makes its decision.
- The decision of the board results in either no action, a warning or a suspension of up to six months.
- If the decision involves a suspension, the secretary of the disciplinary board informs the relevant study administrators and CSN (Central student finance board). The reporter and the student are informed whatever the outcome in the case.

Appeal

An appeal against the decision of the disciplinary board to issue a suspension or a warning can be made to the administrative court. The appeal against the decision must be made in writing and submitted to the authority that issued the decision, in this case KI. The appeal must be received within three weeks of the date on which the appellant was informed of the decision. If KI finds no reason to review its decision, the matter is referred to the administrative court. All students found guilty of cheating at KI are informed of their option to appeal.

Urkund – supporting our work to uncover and combat cheating

KI has been using Urkund since 1 January 2007. Urkund is an automated system that checks student's examination assignments against the Internet, published material and student material. The teacher is notified if anything in the assignment resembles the content of the sources. Urkund increases the chances of uncovering cheating, while at the same time increasing the legal security of the students, since all examination assignments in a student group are checked. The main aim of Urkund, however, is not to uncover cheating, but to deter students from plagiarising.

Each degree programme has a contact person for Urkund. If you want to know more about how the system is used, you can contact your programme administrator for more information. You can also contact the secretary of the disciplinary board.

Contact

Questions relating to the handling of disciplinary matters should be referred to the Disciplinary Board administrator.