

Administrative Procedure for Reports relating to Suspicions of Disciplinary Offences

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Decision-maker Vice-Chancellor

Responsible body Section of Administrative Law

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Period of validity Until further notice

Summary This Administrative Procedure applies at the University of Gothenburg for the administration of matters concerning students who are suspected of disciplinary offences. The Administrative Procedure describes the administration of disciplinary matters and how the responsibility for tasks in the administration is allocated within the University.

Contents

Scope	3
Disciplinary offences.....	3
Attempted deception during examinations.....	3
Disruptive acts.....	4
Harassment and sexual harassment	4
The administrative process	4
1. Investigation at the department concerning whether there is well-founded suspicion	4
Communication with the student.....	5
Formal requirements for the report	5
Collaboration and jointly written examination assignments	5
Language	5
Content of the report	5
2. Administration at the Section of Administrative Law.....	6
3. Meetings and decisions of the Disciplinary Board	7
Decisions concerning disciplinary measures	7
Decisions to take no further action in a matter	7
4. Implementation of a suspension decision.....	7
Consequences of a suspension.....	7
Administration of an appeal	8
Marking of an examination assignment	8
Checklist for the report (appendix).....	9

Scope

- 1 This Administrative Procedure applies at the University of Gothenburg for the administration of matters concerning students who are suspected of disciplinary offences ('disciplinary matters'). The Administrative Procedure describes how the responsibility for tasks in the administration is allocated within the University.
- 2 Provisions concerning disciplinary measures and the procedure for disciplinary matters can be found in the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100). The administration of disciplinary matters is also governed by the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (2017:900).
- 3 Disciplinary matters shall be administered consistently within the University. They shall be administered as simply, rapidly, and efficiently as possible, without neglecting legal security.
- 4 The Vice-Chancellor or Disciplinary Board may decide on disciplinary measures for students. Disciplinary measures may not be taken in respect of students through any other arrangement than as described in this Administrative Procedure.
- 5 Those participating in contract education and foundation year programmes are not students in the sense of the Higher Education Ordinance and are thus not encompassed by this Administrative Procedure.
- 6 Issues concerning measures to prevent cheating or other disciplinary offences are not dealt with in this Administrative Procedure.

Disciplinary offences

- 7 Disciplinary measures may be taken against students who attempt to deceive during examinations and against students who disrupt or obstruct activities or harass other students or employees at the University.

Attempted deception during examinations

- 8 'Attempted deception during examinations' means that a student has attempted to give a misleading impression of their study performance. The Vice-Chancellor or Disciplinary Board conducts an assessment in two stages to determine whether this involves attempted deception. Firstly, to conclude that the action is not permitted. Secondly, to conclude that the student should have been aware that the action is not permitted.
- 9 Common categories of attempted deception during examinations are plagiarism, unauthorised cooperation, unpermitted aids and combinations of these categories. 'Plagiarism' means that a student has presented another person's text or other material as their own material. 'Unauthorised cooperation' means that students have cooperated in violation of the instructions for the examination. 'Unpermitted aids' means that a student has used aids that were not permitted according to the instructions for the examination.
- 10 Other acts that do not fit into the categories above may also comprise attempted deception during examinations.

Disruptive acts

- 11 'Disruptive acts' means that a student disrupts or obstructs teaching, tests or other activities within the framework of courses and study programmes at the University. This may, for example, involve the student, through their actions, preventing other students from assimilating teaching or the teaching having to be stopped or adapted owing to actions that create real concern among other students or among employees at the University.

Harassment and sexual harassment

- 12 'Harassment' means conduct that violates a person's dignity and is associated with one of the grounds of discrimination: sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. 'Sexual harassment' means conduct of a sexual nature that violates someone's dignity.
- 13 If you suspect harassment or sexual harassment, please also see *Handläggningsordning avseende trakasserier, sexuella trakasserier och kränkande särbehandling (dnr GU 2020/1695)*.

The administrative process

- 14 1. The head of department in which the suspected disciplinary offence was committed is responsible for promptly reporting to the Vice-Chancellor if there is well-founded suspicion that a disciplinary offence has been committed. The head of department is also responsible for informing the student about the process and for the report fulfilling the requirements regarding form and content which are indicated by this Administrative Procedure.
- 15 2. When the report has been submitted to the Vice-Chancellor, the matter will be investigated further by a case officer at the Section of Administrative Law.
- 16 3. As a rule, disciplinary matters are determined by the Disciplinary Board. The Disciplinary Board makes decisions about whether disciplinary measures are to be taken or whether no further action will be taken in the matter.
- 17 4. In the case of a decision concerning suspension, it is the department that drew up the report that is responsible for implementing the decision.

The four main stages are amplified on below.

1. Investigation at the department concerning whether there is well-founded suspicion

- 18 Disciplinary matters are to be dealt with promptly and with high priority. The head of the department where the suspected offence was committed is responsible for the matter being investigated to the extent required to determine whether there is well-founded suspicion that a disciplinary offence has been committed.
- 19 If there is well-founded suspicion, the head of department, or the person to whom the head of department has delegated the task, will promptly submit a report to the Vice-Chancellor. 'Well-founded suspicion' involves a low threshold in respect of the level of suspicion. However, there shall be a solid basis indicating that a disciplinary offence has been committed. A suspicion of a disciplinary offence may arise before or after a decision concerning grading has been made or communicated to the student.

Communication with the student

- 20 As a rule, the student should be informed about the suspicion and about the ongoing administrative process before the suspected offence is reported to the Vice-Chancellor. The student should then also be afforded an opportunity to give their views on the matter.
- 21 The student shall be informed that the matter will be administered by the Section of Administrative Law following the report to the Vice-Chancellor. The student shall also be informed about the email address through which the University will contact the student during the ongoing administration.
- 22 The information communicated to the student and the information that the student may have submitted shall be documented and attached to the report.

Formal requirements for the report

- 23 The report shall be signed by the head of department or the person to whom the head of department has delegated the right to report disciplinary matters. The report shall be sent to the Records Management together with appendices. Only documents where the originals are in paper form, for example a report signed by hand, need to be sent both as a paper original and as a digital copy. The remaining documents shall only be sent digitally.

Collaboration and jointly written examination assignments

- 24 As a rule, the department shall draw up one report for each student.
- 25 Only one report shall be drawn up for all suspected students in the case of suspected unauthorised cooperation and where several students are suspected of deception during an examination assignment that they wrote together.

Language

- 26 The report shall be drawn up in English if the student does not understand Swedish.

Content of the report

- 27 A report concerning attempted deception during examinations shall be drawn up in accordance with the checklist attached to this Administrative Procedure. If any of the information or documents according to the checklist are not available to the department, the report shall include a comment concerning why the information or document is missing. The Section of Administrative Law provides support if questions or ambiguities arise during the administration of the matter by the department.
- 28 A report concerning suspected attempted deception during examinations shall be drawn up based on the following points of departure.
- 29 Plagiarism Similarities between the student's performance and another person's text or material shall be clearly marked if the similarities are suspected of constituting

plagiarism. The information that the student has received concerning the terms and conditions for taking the examination and about plagiarism and academic writing shall be reported.

³⁰ Unauthorised cooperation

Similarities between several students' submissions shall be clearly marked if these similarities are suspected of indicating unauthorised cooperation. The information that the students have received concerning the terms and conditions for taking the examination shall be reported.

³¹ Unpermitted aids

The suspected offence shall be described in detail. If the suspicion arose owing to similarities between the student's performance and an unpermitted original document, the similarities shall be clearly marked. The information that the student has received concerning the terms and conditions for taking the examination shall be reported.

³² Other cheating

The suspected offence shall be described in detail. The information that the student has received concerning the terms and conditions for taking the examination shall be reported.

³³ It is recommended that the department contacts the Section of Administrative Law for advice when drawing up a report for matters relating to disruptive acts, harassment or sexual harassment. The suspected offence shall be described in detail and relevant supporting documentation for the matter shall be reported.

2. Administration at the Section of Administrative Law

³⁴ When the report has been submitted to the Vice-Chancellor, the matter is investigated further by a case officer at the Section of Administrative Law.

³⁵ The report shall be complete according to the checklist when it is submitted to the Vice-Chancellor. A case officer at the Section of Administrative Law will compile the documents submitted in the matter. The case officer will contact the department for clarification or supplementary information if there are any ambiguities, or documents or information are missing.

³⁶ The case officer at the Section of Administrative Law is responsible for the student being given access to the documents in the matter and being afforded an opportunity to express their views before the matter is determined. In those cases where the report encompasses several students, they will be afforded an opportunity to have access to the views expressed by each other.

³⁷ When the matter has been carefully investigated, the case officer is responsible on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor for the matter being referred to the Disciplinary Board for consideration, unless the Vice-Chancellor decides otherwise. When the matter has been referred to the Disciplinary Board for consideration, the case officer will summon the student and relevant representatives of the department to a meeting of the Disciplinary Board. The student will make their own decision about whether they wish to attend.

3. Meetings and decisions of the Disciplinary Board

- 38 The case officer at the Section of Administrative Law ensures that members of the Disciplinary Board have access to all the documents in the matter prior to the meeting of the Disciplinary Board.
- 39 The student is afforded an opportunity at the meeting to express their opinions verbally before the Disciplinary Board. The Board can also put questions to the student or staff of the department who have been summoned to the meeting.
- 40 If the Board does not decide otherwise, the Board will, following a private deliberation, deliver its decision on the same day in conjunction with the meeting. The case officer will notify the student in writing about the decision no later than on the day after the meeting, regardless of whether the student is present at the meeting or not.
- 41 The Secretary of the Disciplinary Board will take minutes of the Disciplinary Board's meeting and decision. When the minutes are ready, the case officer at the Section of Administrative Law will forward the minutes to the student and relevant staff at the department.

Decisions concerning disciplinary measures

- 42 The Disciplinary Board will make a decision concerning a *disciplinary measure* when what emerged in the matter supports the conclusion that the student has committed a disciplinary offence.
- 43 The disciplinary measures are suspension from the education, for no more than six months, or warning. In the event of a decision concerning a warning, the student may continue participate in their education.

Decisions to take no further action in a matter

- 44 The Disciplinary Board will decide to *take no further action in a matter* when what emerged in the matter does not support the conclusion that the student has committed a disciplinary offence. This decision means that the matter is closed and that the student may continue their studies as normal.

4. Implementation of a suspension decision

- 45 In the case of a suspension decision, the head of the department reporting the matter is responsible for implementing the decision. The case officer at the Section of Administrative Law is responsible for registering the suspension in Ladok and for notifying the Swedish Board of Student Finance (CSN).

Consequences of a suspension

- 46 A suspension decision means that the student may not participate in teaching, tests or other activities within the framework of their courses or study programmes at the University. The suspension applies throughout the University. However, the student may continue to be entitled to study guidance during the period of suspension and to spend time in the University's premises to which members of the public have access.
- 47 As a rule, a suspended student shall be registered on a course to which they have been admitted and that starts during the period of suspension. The student may also register for examinations that are held after the period of suspension. The department shall assess whether a suspended student's access to a learning platform should be restricted during the period of suspension to be able to implement the suspension.

Administration of an appeal

- 48 The student is entitled to appeal to the administrative court against a decision of warning or suspension. The case officer at the Section of Administrative Law considers whether an appeal has been submitted on time and is responsible for the appeal being forwarded to the administrative court.

Marking of an examination assignment

- 49 It is the examiner who determines whether to assess the examination assignment to which a report relates pending determination of the disciplinary matter. This assessment should normally be postponed until the Disciplinary Board has decided in the matter.
- 50 The student may participate in teaching and examinations in the same way as previously pending a decision in the disciplinary matter. The student is also entitled to attend and be examined at a re-examination for the relevant course pending a decision in the disciplinary matter. The student will be notified as normal of the grades for a re-examination and other examinations, pending a decision by the Disciplinary Board.

Checklist for the report (appendix)

The report shall be complete when it is sent to the Vice-Chancellor. If any of the information or documents in the checklist are not available to the department, a written comment shall be made concerning why the document is missing.

Information and appendices to be included with all reports

- Information about the type of suspected offence to which the report relates and how the incident occurred.
- The student's name, personal identity (ID) number, telephone number and email address.
- A copy of an email that the student received about the email address on which they will be contacted during the administration and any response from the student.
- Designation and name of the course.
- Scope of the relevant examination in the matter in terms of higher education credits. An estimate should be made of the scope of the examination if the examination does not include a specific number of higher education credits.
- The date of the incident, for example when the student submitted their examination assignment.
- Information about the teacher or examiner, including contact details.
- A copy of the instructions for the examination assignment, i.e., the information, both written and verbal, provided to the student regarding the implementation of the examination.
- A copy of the examination assignment in question, e.g., examination questions.
- A copy of the student's performance/answers in their entirety.
- Official notes of any conversations with the student.
- Any written statement of views from the student.
- Adopted course syllabus and study guide or equivalent.
- Other information that may be of relevance to the investigation into the matter.

Appendices to be included in reports relating to plagiarism

- Suspected plagiarised text in the student's performance is to be clearly marked. It is important that the markings are made in such a way that clearly indicates what is considered to be plagiarised. If the student is suspected of having plagiarised several texts, the text considered to be plagiarised from each original document shall be indicated. Explanations and clear references shall be made to the material forming the basis of the suspicion.

- A copy of original documents, i.e., original sources, clearly marking the suspected plagiarised text in the original documents.
- A report from any text matching tool if this helps to make the suspected plagiarism visible.
- The information, both written and verbal, provided to the student regarding plagiarism, academic writing, dealing with sources, referencing, etc.

And/or

Appendices to be included in reports relating to unpermitted aids

- The information that may have been received from the invigilator reporting the matter.
- When applicable, copies of unpermitted aids, such as crib sheets, lecture notes, old examinations or text from a website. If an unpermitted original document has been used, clear markings shall be made in both the student's performance and in the original document.
- Information about the unpermitted aid's relevance to the content of the examination.
- The information, both written and verbal, provided to the student regarding permitted and unpermitted aids before and during the examination.

And/or

Appendices to be included in reports relating to unauthorised cooperation

- The information, both written and verbal, provided to the students regarding authorised and unauthorised collaboration.
- The similarities that exist between the students' answers shall be clearly marked

And/or

Appendices to be included in reports relating to other cheating

- Copies and a description of the supporting documents that gave rise to the suspicion.
- Any other information that may be of relevance to the investigation into the matter.

Content of a report concerning disruptive behaviour or harassment

Contact the Section of Administrative Law for advice in respect of drawing up a report relating to suspected disruptive behaviour or harassment.