Grading and examination regulations for first- and second-cycle studies

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Grading and examination regulations for first- and second-cycle studies

The examination is both a form of exercise of authority and a step in the student’s learning process. For the examination to be perceived as being conducted in due process, regulations and procedures must be clear to students, teachers and administrators alike. This is the foundation for the provisions in this document. However, the pedagogical aspects of the examination shall not be the subject of centralised regulation.

General examination and grading regulations can be found in Chapter 6 of the Higher Education Ordinance.

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1. Examiner

1.1. The examiner is a teacher who is given grading responsibility by the University. To be appointed as examiner for a course at Umeå University, the person must be employed as a teacher at a Swedish higher education institution.

1.2. The Vice-Chancellor’s delegation procedure and each respective faculty’s delegation procedure specify who appoints the examiner.

1.3. The examiner will normally be appointed at least one month before the course begins.

1.4. In examination matters, the examiner may ask for assistance from another person, such as a teacher or internship supervisor, for assessment of the students’ performance.

1.5. An examiner or other person participating in the processing of an examination matter must act objectively and impartially. If there is a risk of bias, the affected parties should personally inform the head of the department.

1.6. For independent work (degree projects) at first- or second-cycle level, the supervisor and examiner may not be the same person.

2. Change of examiner

2.1. A student who has taken the regular examination as well as a re-sit for a course or a part of a course, without passing either examination, has the right to have another examiner appointed if there are no specific reasons for not doing so.

2.2. In cases where internship, placement (VFU) or similar education periods are limited to two instances, the student is entitled to change examiner before the second examination session.

2.3. If cooperation problems or similar special grounds exist, the student’s request for a new supervisor or examiner for a thesis or degree project shall be processed swiftly.

2.4. The course syllabus specifies who the student should contact to request a new examiner or supervisor.

3. Grades

3.1. Grading is carried out for completed courses unless the University states otherwise.

3.2. The grades that are used are Fail, Pass and Pass with distinction. Dispensation from this three-grade scale can be given by the Vice-Chancellor. The grades that are used shall be specified in the course syllabus.

3.3. However, for courses that fully or partially consist of placement and which result in a Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Pre-School Education or Primary Education, a Degree of Master of Arts/Sciences in Secondary Education or a Higher Education Diploma in Vocational

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1 Chapter 6, Section 18 of the Higher Education Ordinance
2 See the appointment procedure for the higher education institution where the teacher is employed
3 Chapter 6, Section 18 of the Higher Education Ordinance
4 Section 11 of the Administrative Procedure Act
5 Chapter 6, Section 22 of the Higher Education Ordinance
6 Chapter 6, Section 18 of the Higher Education Ordinance
7 Vice-Chancellor’s decision, Ref. no. 540-1133-07
8 Vice-Chancellor’s decision, Ref. no. 100-1190-11
Education, more than one grade shall be used for passing results. This only applies if the placement part of the course covers more than three credits.9

3.4. For completed courses, the grading is carried out by a teacher specially appointed by the University (examiner),10 see Chapter 1.

3.5. A grade decision shall be documented in paper form and in LADOK.11 The decision shall specify who is involved in the final processing of the grading matter, such as reporters or other teachers who have participated in reviewing tests/assignments.

4. **Reviewing grades**

4.1. Grades cannot be appealed, i.e. be tried by a higher instance, but a student can always submit remarks regarding the assessment or request that an examiner reassesses their decision.12

4.2. If an examiner finds that a grade is manifestly incorrect due to new circumstances or for some other reason, the examiner shall change the decision if this can be done quickly and does not result in the grade being lowered.13

4.3. To eliminate any suspected cheating, students who want to remark on the assessment or request a grade review should not retrieve the original copy of their test. Note that the student does not lose their right to a grade review even if they have retrieved the original test.14

5. **Amending grades**

5.1. A grade decision which is manifestly incorrect due to typing errors, calculation errors or similar oversights may be corrected, both to the benefit and the detriment of the student.15 Such a correction decision must be made by an examiner.16 Corrections to the detriment of a student must be made with great care. Before such a correction is made, the student must be offered an opportunity to submit a statement.

6. **Examination**

6.1. An examination means that an examiner sets a grade based on the form(s) of assessment of the student’s performance specified in the course syllabus.17

6.2. The assessment of the examination is carried out based on different forms of tests, also known as examination forms, including on-campus exams, take-home exams, oral exams, participation in compulsory course modules, academic papers, group assignments, memos, lab work, internships/placements and seminars.

6.3. The examination forms included in the course should be clearly stated in the course syllabus.18

6.4. The examination shall be designed so that an individual assessment of the student’s performance is possible.

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9 Chapter 6, Section 18 of the Higher Education Ordinance
10 Chapter 6, Section 18 of the Higher Education Ordinance
11 An “archive list”
12 Chapter 12, Section 4 and Section 2 of the Higher Education Ordinance
13 Chapter 6, Section 24 of the Higher Education Ordinance
15 Section 26 of the Administrative Procedure Act
16 Chapter 6, Section 23 of the Higher Education Ordinance
17 Chapter 6, Section 15 and Section 18 of the Higher Education Ordinance
18 Chapter 6, Section 15 of the Higher Education Ordinance and HSV decision no. 31-5952-09
6.5. For rules on handing out test papers, test answers, project reports and essays, and on publishing results, see Rules for study administration at first- and second-cycle levels FS 1.1-340-16

7. **Compulsory course modules**

7.1. To require compulsory participation from a student, examination must be possible in the individual course element. For safety reasons, demonstrations or similar activities as well as preparations for clinical teaching may be considered eligible for compulsory participation despite not having any testing module. Compulsory course modules shall be specified in the course syllabus.

7.2. A student may request to be excused from compulsory elements. Such a request shall be submitted in advance to the examiner. A decision not to grant a student leave from a compulsory course module can be appealed to the Higher Education Appeals Board. 19

7.3. The same rules apply to missing a compulsory element as to re-taking an exam. See Section 15, Re-taking a test.

7.4. In the event that a compulsory course element cannot be repeated, it should be substituted with another, equivalent course element. The scope and contents of such an element should be in proportion to the missed compulsory course module.

8. **Failing a student during ongoing internship**

8.1. The responsible examiner may, in consultation with the supervisor concerned, decide to fail a student during an ongoing placement if they show such shortcomings in knowledge, skills or approach that these, either individually or in combination, entail a significant risk of the student injuring another person physically or mentally during the placement. The internship will then be ended early, and the student will be given a fail grade for the course in question. This means that one instance of an internship has been used up. The right to fail a student during ongoing internship only applies if it is prescribed in the course syllabus.

8.2. In connection with such a decision referred to in 8.1, an individual development plan shall be drawn up by the examiner in consultation with the student. The development plan shall state what knowledge, skills or approaches the student needs to acquire to recommence the internship and a date when this will be checked. The student is entitled to two such checks per year. However, the total number of checks may not be more than four unless there are special grounds. 8.2 only applies provided that the number of instances of internship has not be used up in accordance with 14.1.

9. **Tests**

9.1. Regular tests shall normally be given on a weekday, Monday to Friday, between 08:00 and 17:00 during the course period.

9.2. In the event of a teacher being ill or another circumstance which can cause delays, the department shall find another solution so that the test can be conducted.

9.3. If a student cannot take the test due to a mistake on the part of the University, the student is entitled to a new test instance as soon as possible, but no sooner than 5 working days after the regular examination session. 20

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19 Chapter 12, Section 2 of the Higher Education Ordinance
9.4. A student is entitled to know afterwards how the assessment has been made. An oral or written review of a test shall be offered after the regular examination session, no later than two weeks before the re-sit.

9.5. Tests cannot be recalled by a student regardless of whether a grading decision has been made or not.  

10. Test results
10.1. Students shall be informed of test results within 15 working days of the examination session, regardless of the examination form. For written assignments, lab reports or similar, the submission deadline is considered to be the examination session. Teacher illness or similar circumstances may not result in delays, with the department being responsible for finding alternative solutions in these situations.

11. Tests taken at another location
11.1. Tests are normally given in the same location where the course is held. If special reasons exist, a student may take a test at another location. A student who wishes to take a test at another location must request this from the relevant department at least one month before the examination session. The prerequisites for taking a test at another location are that approved premises and invigilation can be arranged for a reasonable cost and that the test can be taken at the same time as it is taken at the regular location. Students participating in elite-level sports and who have an agreement with Umeå University are considered to have special grounds for taking tests at another location.

12. Adjusted form of examination
12.1. For students in need of special pedagogical support due to disabilities, individual adaptation of examination forms should always be considered based on the student’s needs. The examination form is adjusted within the framework of the course syllabus’ intended learning outcomes.

12.2. The course coordinating teacher shall, upon request from the student, consult with the examiner to quickly decide on an adjusted form of examination. The decision shall then be conveyed to the student.

13. Test participation
13.1. Assuming that a student adheres to the University’s rules for written examination and does not exceed the applicable maximum number of examination sessions (see Re-taking a test, Chapter 15), a student may not be denied taking a test. This also applies if there are compulsory course modules which must be completed before the element/course is passed. However, in order to pass the student must afterwards complete the compulsory element or apply for exemption from it. For examination forms involving a third party (such as patients) or where dictated by other safety reasons, it may be required for relevant course elements to be completed before the student is allowed to take a test.

13.2. An examination session is considered used up if the student has participated in the test. A student’s absence from a test they have signed up for means that the examination session is

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21 JO (Parliamentary Ombudsman), Ref. no. 977-2010, 30/11/2011
22 JO Ref. no. 3980-1990
23 Vice-Chancellor’s decision “Policy for combining elite-level sports and studies” Ref. no. 102-329-07 and Vice-Chancellor’s decision “Establishing Umeå School of Sport Sciences” Ref. no. 103-2905-12
24 Decisions regarding the right to pedagogical support are made by the pedagogical support coordinator at Student Services
25 Rules and guidelines for written exams Ref. no. FS 1.1.2-784-14
not considered used up. Participating in a test without presenting a result, a “blank submission”, is considered a used-up examination session.

14. **Limitation of examination sessions**

14.1. Limitation of the number of examination sessions shall be done conservatively and must be justified by the fact that an unlimited number of examination sessions would lead to a waste of resources.\(^{26}\) If the University limits the number of instances on which a student may take a test to pass a course or part of a course, the number of instances shall be set at no fewer than five. If a grade of Pass for a course or part of a course requires the student to have completed their internship/placement or corresponding training with a grade of Pass, the number of periods for internship/placement or corresponding training shall be set to at least two\(^{27}\).

14.2. Any limitation of the number of examination sessions shall be specified in the course syllabus and, if the regulations apply to a whole educational programme, also in the degree syllabus.

14.3. At those departments that have introduced limitations to the number of examination sessions, there must be procedures for support measures for students who risk losing their right to take tests for a specific course. The procedures shall be designed in line with the University Management’s decision on goals and local provisions for study guidance.\(^ {28}\)

15. **Re-taking a test**

15.1. Students who have not passed a test may re-take the test (re-sit) on courses where they have been registered at some point, provided that the maximum number of examination sessions is not exceeded.

15.2. Students who have been given a grade of Pass may not re-take a test.

15.3. The first re-sit shall be offered no later than two months after the regular test, but not less than ten working days after the results of the regular test have been announced. For tests given during May and June, the first re-sit may be offered within three months of the regular examination session.

15.4. The dates of re-sits shall be announced no later than at the time of the regular test.

15.5. At least one second re-sit (known as a catch-up) shall be offered within a year of the regular examination session.

15.6. If a decision is made that a course will no longer be given or if the course syllabus has undergone significant revision, the guidelines for how re-sits will be given shall be detailed through transitional provisions in the course syllabus. In these transitional provisions, students shall be guaranteed at least three examination sessions (including the regular examination session) according to the previous course syllabus for a maximum of two years from when the previous course syllabus has ceased to apply or the course has ceased to be offered. Regarding internship/placement, the corresponding rules apply with a limit of one re-sit.

15.7. Taking into consideration that some students have children, and that students have different faiths, the regular test and the re-sit shall be given on different weekdays.

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\(^{26}\) UKÄ inspection report 2014:5

\(^{27}\) Chapter 6, Section 21 of the Higher Education Ordinance

\(^{28}\) Goals and local provisions for study guidance Ref. no. 102-437-07
15.8. In the event that tests or internships/placements cannot be repeated according to existing regulations for re-sits, they shall instead be replaced with another assignment. The scope and content of such an assignment should be in reasonable proportion to the missed test/internship.

16. Supplementary qualification

16.1. If the course syllabus includes provisions regarding this, the examiner may decide that a student is not given a grade of Pass until they have completed a supplementary qualification. The course syllabus shall specify the timeframe for the supplementary qualification and in what way it can be done.²⁹

16.2. If the examiner decides that a supplementary qualification is possible, the student may choose to do an assignment or instead take a re-sit at a later date.

17. Disciplinary measures

17.1.Disciplinary measures regarding tests can be taken against students who³⁰
1. use disallowed aids or in some other way try to mislead during a test or when study performance is otherwise assessed,
2. disturb or obstruct teaching, testing or other activities within the framework of the University’s education.

A substantiated suspicion of such an infraction shall immediately be reported to the Vice-Chancellor,³¹ who will investigate the matter.

17.2. The Vice-Chancellor decides if the circumstances are such that the disciplinary matter shall be dismissed, result in a warning from the Vice-Chancellor, or be referred to the Disciplinary Committee³² for assessment.³³

17.3. If the Disciplinary Committee finds that a student is guilty of an infraction, the Committee will decide on a disciplinary sanction, which can be either a warning or suspension.³⁴

17.4. A suspension decision means that the student cannot participate in teaching, tests or other activities within the framework of the University's education. The decision shall be for one or more periods, but for no more than six months. A suspension decision may also be limited to curtailing access to certain University premises. Suspensions are generally applied during semesters. The Vice-Chancellor informs the Swedish Board for Study Support (CSN) of suspension decisions. A suspension is considered a break in studies when assessing the right to student aid.

³⁰ Chapter 10, Section 1 of the Higher Education Ordinance
³¹ Chapter 10, Section 9 of the Higher Education Ordinance
³² http://www.umu.se/om-universitetet/organisation/kommitteer/disciplinnamnd/
³³ Chapter 10, Section 9 of the Higher Education Ordinance
³⁴ Chapter 10, Section 2 of the Higher Education Ordinance