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# CHEATING AT EXAMS – PROCEDURES AND SANCTIONS

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A GUIDE FOR UNIVERSITY STAFF

Did you know that all members of staff at AU who encounter or suspect cases of cheating at exams have an obligation to report such cases?



AARHUS UNIVERSITY



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# PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CHEATING AT EXAMS

All members of staff at Aarhus University including external co-examiners who encounter or suspect cases of cheating at exams have an obligation to report such cases.

If cheating at an exam is suspected, this must be reported to Educational Law which handles these cases on behalf of the dean. This leaflet contains a description of the procedures.

The leaflet "Avoid pitfalls at exams" contains more information about what is considered cheating at exams at Aarhus University.

If you are uncertain whether a specific case is a case of cheating at exams, or if you have any questions in connection with the reporting procedure etc, please contact Educational Law.

## THE ADMINISTRATION

If administrative staff e.g. examination supervisors suspect cheating at an exam, the case must be reported to Educational Law in writing.

In cases where cheating is suspected in connection with an on-site examination, the on-site examination is not stopped, but the student is informed that the case will be reported to Educational Law.

## EXAMINER AND CO-EXAMINER

If the examiner and/or co-examiner suspect(s) cheating at an exam, the examiner must investigate and document the case to the extent necessary. This means that the examiner must document the type and extent of the cheating. Educational Law does not perform any additional investigation to establish whether more extensive cheating can be documented than what is already stated in the documentation from the examiner.

During the investigation, the assessment of the examination must be put on hold for the student in question, if the mark for the examination has not been announced already.

If the investigation strengthens the suspicion of cheating, the examiner must report the case to Educational Law in writing. When reporting the case to Educational Law, the examiner must also inform the director of studies of the degree programme in question about the report at the same time e.g. by putting the director of studies cc on the report.

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The examiner or perhaps a department secretary must inform the student that the case has been reported to Educational Law. The template prepared by Educational Law must be used to inform the student.

Any planned oral defence is postponed until it has been decided whether this is a case of cheating at exams.

### THE REPORT

The template prepared by Educational Law must be used when writing the report. The actual circumstances of the case must be described in the report.

If administrative staff is reporting the case, the report is sent to Educational Law along with the student's exam paper.

If examiners are reporting the case, a copy of the exam paper must be submitted along with the report and the specific part(s) of the exam paper where cheating is suspected must be indicated. In addition, a copy of the sources, which the student has allegedly copied, and other relevant documentation to clarify the matter, e.g. a system-generated plagiarism report, must be enclosed.

Please note that the report, which Educational Law receives, will be sent to the student to make it possible for the student to become familiar with the case. The report must therefore be written in a language that makes it possible for the student to read it. If the case concerns a student who does not speak Danish, the report must be written in English.

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The issue of possible sanctions should not be addressed by the report.

### EDUCATIONAL LAW

When a case of cheating at exams is reported to Educational Law, the case is assessed and a decision is made to either reject the report or continue the case handling.

If a report is rejected, Educational Law informs the student about the decision in writing with copy to the person who reported the suspected cheating, and the assessment of the exam will be resumed.

### CONSULTATION PROCEDURE

If the case handling is continued, Educational Law offers the student in question a consultation meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to give the student the opportunity to comment on the case.

The meeting invitation contains a copy of the report and additional documentation concerning the case.

The meeting invitation also informs the student that he/she is entitled to have an observer present at the meeting.

The student, the person who reported the case and Educational Law attend the meeting. The person who reported the case may ask the director of studies or another expert to participate on his/her behalf or as an observer.

After the meeting Educational Law will

send a resume to the student which the student will be given the opportunity to comment on.

If the student does not wish to participate in a meeting concerning the case or if it is not possible for the student to participate, the consultation of parties involved will be in writing instead.

If the suspicion of cheating is disproved during the consultation procedure, the case will be rejected. Educational Law informs the student about this in writing and a copy is sent to the person who reported the case. The exam assessment is then resumed.

### THE DEAN

Based on the report and the consultation procedure with the student involved, Educational Law prepares a recommendation for the dean who then makes a decision concerning the case.

The decision is sent to the student from the dean. Educational Law then receives a scanned copy of the decision.

### ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AFTER THE DECISION

When Educational Law receives a copy of the final decision, the decision is filed with the student's student case file.

Educational Law informs the person who reported the case and the director of studies about the decision. At the same time, Educational Law informs the relevant

administrative staff so the decision can be implemented in the studies administration systems e.g. to stop payments from the Education Grant and Loan Scheme in Denmark (SU), termination of enrolment at AU or annulment of an examination result.

If the student has been expelled, any application for exemption cannot be processed until the student is re-enrolled in the degree programme.

### THE STUDENT'S RIGHTS DURING THE CASE HANDLING PROCESS

A student who is suspected of cheating based on a submitted report has the same rights as his/her fellow students during the case handling process. This means that the student can participate in other courses or exam activities in spite of the pending case.

When a report concerning suspected cheating at exams is submitted, the student involved is at the same time informed that this may lead to an annulment of the exam in question and that it is possible to participate in a reexamination (where relevant) even though a decision has not been made concerning the specific case. If the case is rejected and the student has participated in a reexamination, the student is entitled to keep the highest score.

After a student has been sanctioned for cheating at an exam, she/he is still a student on the same terms and conditions as her/his fellow students. This means that no extra measures will be taken in connection

with the individual student and there will be no increased supervision in connection with this specific student's exam papers. If one or more exams are annulled, the student in question must be in the same position as if she/he had failed this/these exam(s).

In some cases concerning cheating, the student will need an exemption from the board of studies as a result of the decision e.g. if the student's third examination attempt has been annulled. In these cases, the student must follow the usual procedure and submit an application for exemption to the relevant board of studies or to the director of studies who will then handle the case.

Moreover, it is important to be aware that cases concerning cheating at exams are confidential. If you are involved in handling a case concerning cheating at exams either as a member of administrative staff, a person who has reported suspected cheating or in any other way, you must be aware that you have a duty of confidentiality concerning the case.

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# SANCTIONS IN CASE OF CHEATING AT EXAMS

In accordance with AU's disciplinary rules, one or more of the sanctions below can be used in cases concerning cheating at exams.

## WARNING

A warning is the mildest sanction. The warning will be registered in the student's student case file.

## ANNULMENT OF EXAM

The annulment applies to the exam at which the cheating took place. An exam may be annulled regardless of whether an assessment has already been announced.

It will be registered that the student has used one attempt to take this exam.

## ANNULMENT OF EXAMINATION PERIOD

An annulment of the examination period applies to all the exams the student is registered for during the examination period when the cheating took place. A distinction is made between an ordinary examination period and a reexamination period. The annulment applies whether the examination is completed or not and regardless of whether an assessment has already been announced.

It will be registered that the student has used one attempt to take all the exams in the examination period in question.

## TEMPORARY EXPULSION

When a student is expelled this means that the student's enrolment at the univer-

sity is terminated and the student cannot participate in any form of courses, exams or other university activities during the period of expulsion.

The period of expulsion begins when the student is informed about the decision concerning expulsion – i.e. the decision date. When the period of expulsion is over, the student must contact the university to be re-enrolled.

It is the student's responsibility to apply for re-enrolment at the university before or immediately after the end of the period of expulsion. If the student's request to be re-enrolled is received at a later time, the case will be handled according to the general rules regarding re-enrolment.

## PERMANENT EXPULSION

Permanent expulsion is the most severe sanction.

Permanent expulsion means that the student is permanently excluded from any courses, exams or other university activities.

The permanent expulsion begins when the student is informed about the decision concerning expulsion - i.e. the decision date.

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Educational Law

 [staff.au.dk/cheating-at-exams](https://staff.au.dk/cheating-at-exams)