

# **PROCEDURE FOR THE REPORTING OF SUSPECTED DISCIPLINARY OFFENCES SUCH AS PLAGIARISM AND OTHER FORMS OF MISLEADING CONDUCT AMONG STUDENTS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

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Responsible body

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The University of Gothenburg has a “Procedure for the handling of suspected disciplinary offences” (policy document V 2017/670), which specifies the legal framework within which said cases must be administered. For example, the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance provides that each Swedish higher education institution must have a special disciplinary board in place and that suspected offences must always be reported. The University’s procedure guides the administration of suspected offences at central level and specifies the responsibilities of departments. The list below outlines the procedure that applies when a student enrolled in a programme or course at the Department of Political Science is suspected of plagiarism or other misleading conduct.

1. Suspected misleading conduct in connection with an examination must always be reported by the grading teacher to the course coordinator, who in turn must notify the respective director of studies. If the assignment is in the process of being graded, a notification stating that the assignment is under review should be made. If the allegations concern an assignment that has already been graded, the suspicion must still be reported.
2. If the director of studies agrees with the assessment of the grading teacher and course coordinator, that the reported allegations are reasonable following an initial analysis, the education coordinator must be notified.
3. The education coordinator should review the case together with the director of studies, the course coordinator and the grading teacher. This review often consists of assessments of Urkund analyses, but also of other material if deemed relevant. If the education coordinator finds the allegations justified following consultation with the other staff members, the process moves on to Step 4 below. If not, the notification should be removed and the assignment graded.
4. The student should be given the opportunity to provide a written comment on the allegations. If the allegations have been deemed well founded, the course coordinator must notify the student. The email message shall explain why the student is suspected of misconduct and then ask the student to respond to the allegations. The education coordinator has a form that shows how the email should be formulated. If the student does not respond to the request, a reminder must be sent after one week.
5. The course coordinator should inform the respective director of studies and education coordinator about the student’s response (or lack of response).
6. The education coordinator should then decide, in consultation with the director of studies and the course coordinator, whether the case should be submitted to the University’s disciplinary board or whether it is an educational/training matter. If the case is submitted to the University’s disciplinary board, then the documents that are to be submitted are specified in the University’s central instructions. These documents include the student’s response to the allegations (see item 4 above).
7. The grading of the assignment in question should be postponed until the disciplinary board has made a decision.
8. The student is entitled to participate in all teaching activities as usual until a penalty suspension has been decided upon by the disciplinary board. If a make-up assignment or exam is offered on the assignment under investigation, the student is entitled to complete that assignment.
9. The student is encouraged to utilize the assistance of a student ombudsperson referred by the disciplinary board.

10. The education coordinator and the course coordinator are often asked to attend the meeting of the disciplinary board, together with the student. Everybody who is asked to attend the meeting has a responsibility to do so unless he or she is unable due to extenuating circumstances.

11. If the disciplinary board finds that the student is not guilty, the student's assignment should be graded without delay. If the disciplinary board decides to suspend the student, the student's assignment should be assigned a failing grade. If the student's assignment had already been graded before the misleading conduct was suspected, then the grade should be changed to reflect a failing grade. The education coordinator is responsible for informing the director of studies, the course coordinator, the course administrator and the study counsellor about the disciplinary board's decision.

12. If the student is enrolled in other courses at the University of Gothenburg during the suspension period, the course administrator must inform the other departments about the student's suspension.

13. All documents and decisions made by the disciplinary board are considered public information.

14. The suspended student should be instructed to schedule a meeting with the department's study counsellor to plan out how they will return to their studies.