



Guidance for written examinations due to the coronavirus

Designing a written examination assignment

This guidance is for people who are going to design a written examination assignment. The contents of this guidance are based on experiences gained when processing disciplinary cases.

Guidance has also been produced with information about what to do if you suspect students of plagiarism or unauthorised collaboration, *Vägledning kring plagiat och/eller otillåtet samarbete med anledning av coronaviruset [Guidance on plagiarism and/or unauthorised collaboration due to the coronavirus]*. Please make sure you are familiar with what it says before you design an examination assignment and associated instructions.

Tips for designing a written examination assignment.

Check the syllabus. What form of examination does the syllabus say must be used? What is stated in the syllabus is binding. If the syllabus says that a module must be examined through seminar assignments and group work, you may not add a take-home examination.

Please note that in exceptional circumstance, such as the coronavirus pandemic, the form of examination may need to be adapted to the situation. The vice-chancellor has decided that such deviations from the syllabus must be documented and approved by the examiner's line manager.

Avoid asking the same questions as those used in previous exams. Varying the type of questions and their contents is good for the students. There are fewer previous answers for students to refer to so it may influence how autonomous the student is in solving the examination assignment. Remember to design examination assignments so that they correspond to the intended learning outcomes in the syllabus. If the student, according to the intended learning outcomes, must be able to “describe” the requirement in the examination cannot be that he student must “analyse”, as this is a higher level of complexity.

Provide the students with clear instructions for the examination assignment. Check that the instructions for the examination assignment are compatible with other information the students have received about the examination assignment, e.g. in manuals or on SH-StudyWeb. Give the students the grading criteria with the instructions for the examination

assignment so they know what they must do to achieve a G (pass) or VG (pass with distinction).

Inform the student about whether they may work together when they do the examination assignment. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Can the students discuss or otherwise cooperate at any stage of the work on the individual examination assignment, e.g. when gathering material?
- May the students read each other's texts before they are submitted for examination?

Be clear in the information you give the students. If the students are going to cooperate during the module, you must provide information that clarifies when this cooperation must cease if students must write individual examination assignments. If students are encouraged to work together during the module, there may be similarities between the students' examination assignments that the examiner must accept when marking them.

Inform the students about what demands you have, for example about how they must refer to sources. You can give them a link to the library's webpage about writing references, <https://www.sh.se/english/sodertorn-university/library/write/writing-references> and information about SH-StudyWeb.

Remind the students about the course room *Lyckas med dina studier!* [*Succeed with your studies!*] in SH-StudyWeb. The Study Support Unit has gathered material that may be useful for students; it both produced by them and by other higher education institutions.

Make students aware of the rules in the document on rights and obligations. Students are responsible for being aware of the rules and regulations that apply to the university and to their own education. However, to prevent plagiarism and unauthorised cooperation, it is important that students are aware of the sections in *Rights and obligations* that relate to individual examination assignments. You can paste in sections from *Rights and obligations* (18.3 - 18.6) into information about the module or the study guide, or in the instructions for the examination assignment.

18.3 Individual examination tasks

An individual examination task is one that shall be completed autonomously. The student's own performance is the basis for assessment.

The basic rule is therefore that during work with an individual examination task, there may be no collaboration with other students. In cases where collaboration is permitted during some part of the work on an examination task, this shall be stated in the instructions for the examination task.

18.4 References and sources

In the examination task, it shall always be clear what are the student's own words, ideas, conclusions, structures, reasoning, analyses, questions, etc. The basic rule is that everything the student takes from another source – published or unpublished – shall be

presented in the manner stated in the assignment's instructions. Sources include reading lists, articles, other students' work, a student's own previous work, the Internet, interviews, observations, television and radio programmes, statistics, pictures, tables, maps and lab results.

The instructions for a written examination assignment should always state the requirements for the list of sources. There are different systems for references. More information about managing sources is available on Södertörn University Library's website.

18.5 Reuse of the student's own text

The general rule at the university is that each examination requires a new performance by the student. This means that a student may not reuse a piece of work for which he/she has been examined on a previous occasion. Exceptions may be made, such as the re-examination of essays or additions to take-home examinations. In cases where the re-use of previous text is permitted, it shall be stated in the instructions for the examination task.

18.6 Plagiarism checks

Written examination tasks are usually checked using a text matching tool when they are submitted. The aim of this is to prevent and discover plagiarism in examinations. Employees are obliged to make a disciplinary report if there is a suspicion of plagiarism or other attempts at deception in association with examination. Read more in section 28. Disciplinary measures.

The Disciplinary Board at Södertörn University has noted an increase in the number of disciplinary reports that relate to short examination texts, such as seminar assignments and assignments that are to compensate for absences from seminars. In some cases, disciplinary reports of this kind have resulted in the student being disciplined (receiving a warning or suspension). In other cases, the disciplinary report has not resulted in any action, often because the information to the students on that module has been unclear.

Remember that the students' route to achieving the learning objectives in the syllabus does not only go via written examination assignments where the text is checked in Urkund. SH-StudyWeb allows teachers to use different forms of examination, even ones that are marked automatically (self-marked). These include forms that are appropriate for use when students are going to compensate for absences or present what they know at a seminar. Another option is that their classmates read and comment on each other's short written assignments. It is important to think about the overall effect of a module's content and how students will show that the learning outcomes have been achieved. The workload must be reasonable for both students and the teacher.