

Avoid exam cheating - a guide for students

Exam cheating is an offence that Business Academy Aarhus takes very seriously, because it means that our degrees cannot be trusted.

Why is exam cheating serious?

Your degree is a guarantee that Business Academy Aarhus issues, stating that you possess the competencies and qualifications stated in the diploma. The credibility of our diplomas is crucial, and if your diploma is not correct due to cheating, it is not only your diploma that loses its value, but also the credibility of all Business Academy Aarhus' degrees.

If we cannot count on our graduates to uphold the standards set by Business Academy Aarhus, the reputation of all our programmes will be damaged. We need to vouch for our programmes and the individual students' and graduates' diplomas; therefore, exam cheating is an act that Business Academy Aarhus sanctions severely.

What is exam cheating?

The purpose of an exam is to show exactly what **you** can do.

An exam is a test where you indicate your individual knowledge, skills and competencies for the exam in question, which is carried out within set limits and conditions.

If you or others do something at an exam that gives you better conditions than usual, or better conditions than the other students, you cheat yourself into getting an incorrect assessment, and that is exam cheating.

This applies regardless of whether you deliberately cheat, or you cheat by mistake because you do not know the rules. It is therefore important that you know the rules for exam cheating – and that you ask if you are in doubt.

Situations to avoid in connection with exams

The following are examples of what constitutes exam cheating. Please note that these are only examples, so even if something is not mentioned here, it may still be cheating.

If in doubt, ask yourself these two questions:

1. Am I demonstrating my own qualifications for this exam? Am I solving the task independently and showing my own knowledge, skills and competencies?

For example, if you copy from an author who has written something about the particular topic your exam paper is about without quoting the author, it appears as though you have written the text.

It is also exam cheating if, for example, you get an AI robot to write all or part of your assignment and pretend that it is your own work, as you are not solving the task individually or independently.

2. How can I stay within the limits and conditions of the exam?

For example, if you use reference works at an exam where you are not allowed to use any aids, you give yourself better conditions for the exam than the purpose and framework of the exam allows; therefore, you cheat your way to better conditions than your fellow students. Thus, you do not solve the exam within the frameworks, and this is exam cheating.

1.1. Contributing to others cheating at exams

It is not just your own exam cheating that is sanctioned. If you contribute to others cheating on their exams, it is also exam cheating, which will have consequences for both you and everyone else that you help cheat. For example:

- You solve the exam assignment yourself through a written exam, but then you pass on the solution to a fellow student in the exam room. Whether the other person chooses to use your solution or not, you have contributed to exam cheating, and this will have consequences for both of you.

1.2. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is when 'one imitates or directly transcribes other people's texts, without specifying the source and pointing out that it is a quotation or summary in your own words' (our translation, Hanne Leth Andersen and Jens Toftskov: *Eksamen og eksamensformer. Betydning og bedømmelse*. Samfundslitteratur. 2008)

In an exam context, plagiarism means that in your assignment, you let a text, an illustration, a structure, or an idea, etc., appear as your own work, while in reality it is someone else's.

Referring to other people's texts, ideas, etc., is not in itself plagiarism. You just need to be very careful and make sure you clarify where the text and ideas come from with correct quotation marks, source references and bibliographies.

It is often easy to find texts on the Internet that are interesting for an exam paper. Books and articles, and other assignments may also be relevant. If you follow the rules on source referencing so that there is never any doubt where the material comes from, there is no possibility of exam cheating.

If you make it very clear when your own work and that of others is involved, you will avoid cheating in exams, no matter how much you quote and refer to other people's work in your exam paper. Whether it is a good idea to provide a quote in every other line is another matter entirely. You cannot expect a good mark when excessively using quotes, as it is your own individual and independent work that is assessed in an exam.

The rules of thumb are:

- If you copy – directly or slightly rephrased – from someone else's old assignment or an official source (including AI robots) you found online without indicating this, you are guilty of plagiarism.
- If, on the other hand, you use quotation marks and refer to the source used, it is not exam cheating. However, keep in mind that only your own text and your own reflections are assessed.
- You are welcome to use notes that have been written jointly with your study group. However, because the notes are not your own, but are the joint property of the group, you must clearly indicate the source here too. If you simply add the joint note into your own assignment text, this is plagiarism.
- Also, be careful if you quote from a textbook used in class. Although you may think that the examiners know it, you must stick to the general rules of quotation marks and citation. The textbook is a source like any other source.
- There are grey areas where the need for citations to sources may be called into question. In a subject, a model, for example, can be such banal knowledge that you can state it in your assignment without further explanation. But if you have the slightest doubt, please indicate the source.

1.3.Collaboration in connection with exams

Unless otherwise clearly stated in the exam description, you may not work with others to solve an exam assignment. If you do so anyway, this is exam cheating because the prerequisite for the exam in question is that you submit an answer that you must have prepared independently and individually. For example:

- If you submit a group assignment requiring an indication of who wrote which paragraphs, it will be exam cheating if all the sections of the assignment have been prepared jointly by the group. This also applies even if you state that the assignment is written jointly.

1.4.External help

If you let outsiders help you solve parts of your exam paper or maybe even the entire assignment, it is not your work that is assessed, but someone else's. This is exam cheating.

In the case of written on-site exams, any contact with others inside or outside the exam room is considered cheating, regardless of whether it helps with the assignment or not. E.g.:

- If you let a fellow student or family member solve a homework assignment for you, it is exam cheating, regardless of whether it is the entire assignment or a minor part of the assignment.
- If you send or receive an e-mail or instant message during a written on-site exam, you are in contact with others, and this is exam cheating, regardless of the content of the messages.

1.5.Using chatbots/AI

If you use AI (e.g. ChatGPT or similar) in connection with your exam. For your exam, it is your own individual and independent performance at the exam that is being assessed, and the use of chatbots/AI is exam cheating, as you provide answers that you have not individually and independently prepared.

This applies to all exams, unless specifically stated in an exam description that you are permitted to use chatbots/AI in connection with the exam in question.

1.6.Aids and assistance not permitted

If you solve the exam assignment under conditions other than the permitted ones, you will be assessed incorrectly, as you give yourself different conditions for the exam than the framework that is the prerequisite for the exam in question. For example, if there are restrictions on the use of aids and assistance or the requirement for no use of aids and assistance in connection with the exam, you will be committing exam cheating if you violate these restrictions. E.g.:

- If you are not allowed to use aids at all, you must not have any formulas or a dictionary with you. All types of aids and assistance are exam cheating in this case.

- It is also exam cheating if you have prepared notes with academic information at home and then use them for a written on-site exam where aids and assistance are not permitted.
- If you are only allowed to use calculators of a certain type, it is also exam cheating if you bring a more advanced calculator.

Please note: You can, for example, have your mobile phone (on silent) in a closed bag during the entire exam. However, if you open your bag during the exam, it is considered exam cheating, as you may have used your mobile phone, and thereby may have unlawfully used aids and assistance in connection with your exam.

1.7.Reuse of own responses

If you reuse texts, etc., that you previously produced and used in another exam, you must clearly state the source reference exactly as mentioned in the description of plagiarism. You must therefore quote yourself or refer to your previously submitted assignment. If you do not do so, it is exam cheating, as the reuse of your own materials is sanctioned in the same way as plagiarism of other people's texts.

You are welcome to reuse your own material in your paper, but it must be clearly stated that you have previously produced and submitted the material as well as where and when (at which exam or assignment).

1.8.Falsification of own collected data

If, as part of an assignment, you have to collect empirical data, then 'inventing' data will be a forgery, and this is exam cheating. If you cheat and claim that you have collected data that you did not collect, you are cheating by pretending that you have collected data, just as you are falsifying the assignment results. E.g.:

- If you need 40 answers in a statistical sample survey and you have only managed to collect 30 answers, then it is exam cheating if you produce the last 10 answers yourself. The solution here is to acknowledge that you did not collect the expected number of responses and reflect on what impact this could have on your result. Also, talk to your supervisor or lecturer about what you can do.

1.9.Exceeding time limits

You must meet the deadlines set for the exam. The assessment of written exams includes time factors, and if you continue to work on an answer after the end of the exam period, you give yourself better conditions for the exam than were intended for the exam. This is, therefore, also exam cheating. E.g.:

- If you continue to work in the closing confusion at an on-site exam after the official end of the exam, you are committing exam cheating.

- If, after submitting an exam paper, you make changes or additions to your paper, this is also a case of exam cheating.

1.10. Prior knowledge of the exam

If you know about the exam assignment in advance, and you still participate in the exam, you are cheating on the exam. You have had more time for the solution than provided for in the exam conditions.

- If, for example, due to an error, you become aware of the exam assignment before the exam, you are not allowed to participate in the exam. This will be exam cheating, regardless of whether it is your mistake or the Academy's mistake that is the cause. If the fault lies with the Academy, you will be offered a new exam option.

1.11. Incorrect attendance information

For some teaching activities, attendance is compulsory. This means that your class participation is considered part of the exam. Providing incorrect information about attendance is, therefore, exam cheating.

- If you indicate on the attendance sheet that you were present, even though you were not, you are committing exam cheating. And this also applies if you get someone else to do it.
- If you put an incorrect cross on the attendance sheet for a fellow student, you contribute to exam cheating – and this has consequences for both you and the fellow student you are helping to cheat.

Ask if you're still unsure

What is described here are typical examples of exam cheating. But of course, other situations may arise that you can't find here.

Therefore: If you have the slightest doubt about the rules for exam cheating, rather ask once too much than not at all. Ask your lecturer, your supervisor, or your examiner.