



Guidelines for transfer of credits at the first-cycle level and second- cycle level¹

These guidelines have been established by the Faculty Board on the 8th September 2021 and takes effect on the same date.

Registration number HS 2021/404

¹ This is a translation of the Swedish version (Riktlinjer för tillgodoräknande av utbildning på grundnivå och avancerad nivå). In the event of any discrepancy, the Swedish version of this document shall prevail.

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1 General

1.1 National regulations and recommendations

1.1.1 Regulation in the Higher Education Ordinance

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Sections 6-8, the following applies when crediting:

Section 6 If a student at a higher education institution in Sweden has successfully completed a higher education course or study programme, she or he is entitled to transfer the credits awarded for a course or study programme at another higher education institution. This does not apply, however, if there is a substantial difference between these courses or study programmes.

The same applies for students who have successfully completed a course or study programme

1. at a university or higher education institution in Denmark, Finland, Iceland or Norway or a signatory to the Council of Europe's Convention of 11 April 1997 on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Swedish Treaty Series 2001:46), or

2. at Nordiska högskolan för folkhälsovetenskap (NHV – The Nordic School of Public Health). Ordinance (2006:1053).

Section 7 A student is entitled to transfer credits from a course or study programme other than that laid down in Section 6 if the nature and extent of the knowledge and skills cited by the student are such that they correspond on the whole to the course or study programme for which the credits are to be recognised. A student may also be given credit for corresponding knowledge and skills acquired in a vocational or professional capacity. Ordinance (2006:1053).

Section 8 The higher education institution shall assess whether credits can be awarded for the prior course or study programme or professional or vocational experience.

Credits may only be awarded to those who are students unless otherwise provided by statute or ordinance. Ordinance (2010:1064).

Decisions on transfer of credits may, in accordance with Chapter 12 of the Higher Education Ordinance, be appealed to the Board of Appeal for Higher Education.

There is also international regulation on the recognition of education, in the Lisbon Convention (Convention on the Recognition of Higher

Education Certificates in the European Region)². The meaning of the convention is that countries that have acceded to it must recognize each other's educations for access to education, credit of study periods and admission to further studies. These principles of mutual academic recognition of higher education have, as stated above, been incorporated into the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance

1.1.2 National recommendations

Universities and higher education institution have, as a complement to the regulation of the Higher Education Ordinance, agreed on a number of principles regarding transfer of credits. They are collected in the form of recommendations from The Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF):

- Recommendations on the transfer of credits of foreign higher education in undergraduate education (no. 27/99)
- Recommendations for the work of validating real competence within the university (no. 42/03)

SUHF's recommendations state that credits in issued degrees at a certain university or college must normally be accepted by another higher education institution. However, the decision can be reconsidered for a degree at the other higher education institution if there is a significant difference between the two higher education institutions' assessments or practice.

Recommendations and comments concerning transfer of credits can also be found in reports that have been published by the then National Agency for Higher Education³:

- Transfer of credits of previous education and professional activities
- Prior learning in assessment of eligibility and transfer of credits (2009: 21 R).

1.2 Definition

According to the concept manual provided by the Swedish Higher Education Authority, transfer of credits is defined as follows: "Decisions that certain education, knowledge or skills acquired in professional activities may be included in a course or degree."⁴

As is clear from the definition above and the text of the Higher Education Ordinance, transfer of credits can be made in different

² Sweden's international agreements (SÖ 2001: 46)

³ The National Agency for Higher Education was replaced in 2013 by the University Chancellor's Office and the University and College Council

⁴ Basic concepts in the presentation of official statistics in the higher education sector, University Chancellor's Office 2016

ways, at different levels and in different contexts. The transfer of credit may apply to education at Swedish higher education institutions, foreign higher education institutions or other qualifications (education other than higher education or knowledge or skills that have been acquired in professional activities). The decision must always be related to a specific course or a specific degree at the higher education institution that receives the application. Credited education is not graded.

Transfer of credits must be distinguished from eligibility testing that is done prior to admission to higher education⁵. The eligibility test concerns the prerequisites for being able to take advantage of the education, while transfer of credits is about previous qualifications being included in the course or degree. A decision on transfer of credits thus constitutes a recognition of knowledge and skills that an individual already has. This means that the applicant does not have to go through the corresponding education, which means that the education time can be shortened. Assessment of real competence can be made both when deciding on eligibility and transfer of credits, see section 3.3.

The examination that is made upon admission to higher education cannot be the basis for a transfer of credits. A new examination is always made when applying for transfer of credits. According to SUHF's recommendations, however, the higher education institutions must work to ensure that the decisions on transfer of credits are in accordance with the decisions on eligibility that have previously been made.

1.3 Approaches and assessment principles

The purpose of a transfer of credits is that you as a student do not have to study something in which you already have corresponding knowledge and skills. A decision on transfer of credits can be of great importance to the student, for example in terms of opportunities for further studies and degrees.

The University of Skövde (University) shall, in accordance with SUHF's recommendations, promote a generous approach to transfer of credits. The right to credit is an important element in favoring lifelong learning, mobility within the country and between countries, and the University's work with internationalization. Transfer of credits must therefore be able to take place, for example, even if similar education does not exist at the University of Skövde or if the content of syllabuses and bibliographies from studies abroad do not fully correspond to the education at one's own university. In many

⁵ Eligibility testing is regulated in the Admission Regulations at the University of Skövde - regulations for admission to education at undergraduate and advanced level

cases, however, it is required that special subject competence is available at the University (see section 2.3).

In assessing an application for transfer of credits, the following aspects of the merits relied on must be analyzed:

- Are the qualifications university-related?
- What is the subject affiliation of the qualifications?
- Which level of specialization corresponds to the qualifications?
- Are set course objectives and degree objectives met?

Transfer of credits made at other Swedish higher education institutions must be recognized unless there is a significant difference between the programs in question (see section 1.1.1).

1.4 Only students can apply for transfer of credits

According to the regulations in the Higher Education Ordinance, only those who are students can be considered for transfer of credits. Student refers to anyone who is or has been registered for a course or educational program at the University of Skövde⁶.

Persons who are not yet students at the University of Skövde receive, upon request, information about the possibility of transfer of credits. However, no prior information regarding transfer of credits is given before registration for a course or study program at the University.

2 Responsible functions

2.1 Degree Evaluations Officer

At the University of Skövde, matters concerning the transfer of credits of education at the first-cycle level and the second-cycle level of the function Degree within the School or Department within the administration are handled. The administrators within the function, the degree evaluations officers, receive and record applications for transfer of credits and then process the cases in consultation with the other relevant functions (see below). The degree evaluations officer also make the formal decisions on transfer of credits, in accordance with what is stated in the University's delegation arrangements.

2.2 Study and career counsellor

The study and career counsellors, within the Student Support function at the School or Department within the administration,

⁶ Exceptions are made for staff employed at the University of Skövde. Such staff have the right to apply for credits relating to education in higher education pedagogy

provide students with support related to transfer of credits. The support mainly concerns educational planning prior to a possible application for credit. As credit, depending on the context and circumstances, can in some cases be simple and in other cases more complicated, the students are recommended to initially always contact the relevant study and career counselor (see section 4.1).

2.3 Subject Coordinator

In many cases, an opinion from a subject coordinator is required as a basis for the degree evaluation officer's decision on transfer of credit. The study and career counsellor also often consult with these functions in connection with counseling for the student. The subject coordinator or the subject-responsible teacher must also approve the planning that is done prior to exchange studies (if the corresponding subject is available at the University of Skövde).

As stated above, the University must apply a generous approach to transfer of credits. However, in cases where special subject competence is required to make decisions, teachers with competence in the relevant subject (or related subject) must be present at the higher education institution.

If such competence is not available, a decision on transfer of credits can not be made.

Examples of when subject competence is normally required are transfer of credits for courses that are to be included in the main field of study in a general degree or in a professional degree.

3 Different forms of transfer of credits

The cases of transfer of credits at the University are divided into three different categories:

- credit for studies in Sweden (studies at university level)
- credit of studies abroad (studies at a level corresponding to the Swedish university level)
- transfer of credits of other qualifications (education other than higher education or knowledge and skills acquired in professional activities)

3.1 Transfer of credits of studies in Sweden

3.1.1 Transfer of credits for degree

If a student has completed courses at university level at another Swedish higher education institution, no formal decision on transfer

of credits usually needs to be made. When the student applies for a degree, the courses are included directly in the Degree Certificate.

If the course is to be included in the main field of study in a general degree or a professional degree, a special examination may need to be made. In these cases, there may be a need to ensure that the content of the course is relevant to the education in the main field of study or professional degree.

The course can either be included in the degree certificate or credited towards a course or part of a course at the University of Skövde (see below).

In some cases, part of a course can also be credited in a degree. However, the course part must then be clearly definable. A course part is counted as clearly definable if, according to the course syllabus, it constitutes a specific, scored module. When the module is credited, it becomes its own whole course, which is then considered completed. Only completed courses can be included in a degree.

3.1.2 Transfer of credit for another course

A completed course - from the University of Skövde or another Swedish university - can in some cases be credited against another course or part of another course at the University of Skövde.

If the credited course is included in a Degree Certificate, it states the name of the credited course. Reference to the original course is, however, made in the footnote.

If a student has uncompleted courses at the University or another Swedish higher education institution, in some cases credits can be made against either another full course or part of another course. Part of a course refers to one or more credit examination parts in a course. The course for which the transfer of credits is made must have a course syllabus established at the University. If the credited course is included in a Degree Certificate, it is stated in the footnote that parts of the course have been credited from another course.

3.1.3 Overlap

As stated above, a decision on transfer of credits is in many cases related to a degree. If a decision on transfer of credits is made before the studies for the degree have been completed and thus do not take place in relation to the degree's other courses, an examination of the overlap will be made when the degree is issued. The credit can thus change in relation to the degree content. If the content of two courses overlaps, only one of the courses can be included in the degree certificate.

3.2 Transfer of credits of studies abroad

Study abroad, ie. studies that have been carried out at foreign higher education institutions at a level corresponding to the Swedish higher education level shall, according to SUHF's guidelines, be considered to be of acceptable quality if any of the following conditions are met:

- the education is given at a university with which the University of Skövde has concluded an agreement
- the education is state, state recognized or placed under state supervision
- the education is recognized by a regional authority that has the state's task of recognizing higher education
- the education is recognized by an organization that has the state's mandate to accredit education, or by an accreditation organization that is generally accepted.

If there is a system at the foreign higher education institution to express the scope of the studies in terms of study time, that system shall be used for conversion to Swedish higher education credits. ECTS should normally be accepted as a conversion factor (60 ECTS = 60 higher education credits). If there is no system at the foreign higher education institution to express the concept of normal study time, one year of full-time studies must normally correspond to 60 higher education credits and one semester (in the traditional two-semester system) to 30 higher education credits.

For outgoing students at the University, a special planning form - with information about which courses are to be studied - must be filled in before departure. The form must be updated if changes occur in the courses that are planned, for example if courses at the foreign higher education institution are canceled and new courses are added.

In other respects, the same rules apply as when transfer of credits education at Swedish higher education institutions. As a rule, however, there are no prerequisites for transfer of credits modules at foreign universities. The Degree Certificate does not state grades for courses that have been credited from studies at foreign courses. Reference is instead made to a performance certificate for the original course where the grade appears.

3.2.1 Professional degree and reference to educational programs in Degree Certificate

Professional degrees are normally issued only if the studies have been conducted entirely in accordance with the study plan. Exceptions are made when transfer of credits studies abroad, if the student has conducted these studies according to approved planning. It must then

be clear from the planning that the requirements for the professional degree are met.

References to educational programs in Degrees certificates are normally made only if the studies have been conducted entirely in accordance with the educational plan. Exceptions are made, however, when transfer of credits studies abroad, if the student has conducted these studies according to approved planning. It must then be clear from the planning that the requirements for reference to educational programs are met.

3.3 Transfer of credits of other qualifications

Transfer of credits of other qualifications means transfer of credits of education other than higher education or of knowledge and skills that have been acquired in professional activities. Anyone who has knowledge and skills that correspond to the content and goals that exist in the University's courses has the opportunity to apply for a transfer of credits and thus shorten the time in their education. The transfer of credits, which takes place against a full course or part of a course, is then done by the prior learning.

3.3.1 Prior learning, validation and Validation Network West

Prior learning is the total competence a person has, regardless of whether he has formal proof of it or not. Those who apply for transfer of credits for prior learning must be able to prove that the knowledge and skills they have mainly correspond to the content and the goals that the syllabus covers. The merits that make up the prior learning must be clearly described (see section 4.2).

In connection with the assessment of prior learning, the term validation is used. Validation is a process that involves a structured assessment, evaluation and documentation as well as a recognition of knowledge and competence a person has regardless of how they were acquired (Skollagen 2010: 800).

In order to create lasting structures for assessment of prior learning and validation, seven higher education institutions in western Sweden collaborate in a network, Validation Network West⁷. Within the framework of the network, a support manual has been prepared for validation processes⁸. The manual provides support and inspiration for the University's work with transfer of credits prior learning.

⁷ Validation Network West includes the following higher education institutions: Chalmers University of Technology, University of Gothenburg, University of Borås, Halmstad University, Skövde University, University West and Jönköping University

⁸ Support manual for the work with validation processes at higher education institutions within Validation Network West, Validation Network West 2019

Prior learning is assessed, in addition to credited, also in the eligibility test for admission to higher education. According to the regulations in the Higher Education Ordinance, the basis for assessing prior learning in the examination of eligibility is wider than in the case of transfer of credits. A person can be judged to be competent through education, practical experience or some other circumstance that provides the conditions to assimilate the education. When assessing transfer of credits, the prior learning must have been acquired through education other than higher education or professional activities.

3.3.2 General decision concerning qualifications from older nursing education

At the University, a general decision has been made regarding the transfer of credits of qualifications from older nursing education (nursing, specialist nursing and midwifery education) combined with professional experience, no. HS 2012 / 384-54. The credit relates to the bachelor's degree with the main field of study of nursing.

4 Processing of transfer of credits

4.1 Initial contact with study and career counsellors

Students are advised to always, before a possible application for transfer of credits, initially contact the relevant study and career counsellor. The study and career counsellor can, in consultation with the degree evaluations officer and subject coordinator or subject teachers, facilitate the process for the students.

Contact should be made as early as possible. As stated above, transfer of credits can sometimes be done easily and quickly, while in other cases a process that is more time-consuming may be required. The initial contact should therefore be made in good time before the start of the course to which the application for transfer of credits applies.

For certain transfer of credits, no special application needs to be made, but the credit takes place in connection with the application for a Degree Certificate.

4.2 The application

Special application forms are available for applying for transfer of credits. The forms are available on the University's website and in the

Student Portal⁹. The student is informed, by text in the form, that the right to study grants can be affected by a transfer of credits.

When the application is received or initiated¹⁰, the case is recorded by the degree evaluations officer. The record keeping includes information about the incoming date or initiation date.

4.2.1 Documentation

Information on which documents must be attached to the application can be found on the forms. The requirements for documentation are different depending on which case of credit the case applies to:

- When transfer of credits completed or uncompleted courses at the University of Skövde, as a rule, no documents are required in addition to the application form itself.
- When transfer of credits completed or uncompleted courses from other Swedish higher education institutions, the syllabus and bibliography for the original course or module and the transcript of records must be attached.
- When transfer of credits courses from foreign higher education institutions, the original transcript of records must be attached. The transcript of records must be signed by a competent executive at the university and stamped with the university's official stamp. If the course is to be included in the main field of study of a general degree or a professional degree, a course description must also be attached. If the results description and course description are in a language other than Swedish or English, a translation into English must be attached (see below).
- Other qualifications (education other than higher education or knowledge and skills that have been acquired in professional activities, ie the prior learning) must be clearly described. It must be stated what the applicant has done to acquire knowledge and skills that correspond to what is stated in the course objectives for the education in question. It must also be clear during which time period this has taken place. The description can be supplemented with relevant documentation, such as a service certificate, job description, letter of recommendation or reference to a previous employer or manager.

⁹ Web portal where study-related information is collected and made available to students.

¹⁰ In some cases, an application is initiated by a degree evaluations officer or study and career counsellor, on behalf of the applicant (student).

4.2.2 Completion

If documents are missing or additional documentation is needed for the assessment of the application for transfer of credits, the University shall primarily assist the student within the framework of its general service obligation in accordance with section 6, second paragraph of the förvaltningslagen (FL).

Section 20 FL states that the University may decide to "order the student to remedy a deficiency that remains, if the deficiency means that the petition can not be used as a basis for a substantive examination". This means that the University may request that the student complete his application. Such a request must include a deadline for completion and information on what happens if completion is not received.

If the supplement is not received by the last completion date, the case may be decided with the incomplete information received so far, which may mean a rejection of the application.

4.2.3 Translation

In cases where the original documents are in a language other than Swedish or English, a translation into English of the documents must be attached. The translation must be done by an authorized translator or by a competent executive at a foreign university. A translation signed by an executive at a foreign university must also be stamped with the university's official stamp.

In some cases, special agreements may exist with foreign higher education institutions, primarily concerning students' opportunity to apply for a degree at the University of Skövde. If curricula and other relevant documentation at the foreign higher education institution are not available in English, there should be staff at the relevant department at the University who can provide support for translation.

4.3 Workflow and processing time

As stated above (see section 2), matters concerning the transfer of credits of administrators within the Degree function at the Department of Education and Student Support are handled. The application must be submitted to the degree evaluations officer, who then, if necessary, consult with subject coordinator or subject-responsible teachers as well as study and career counselors.

The degree evaluations officer must make a note of the application's date of receipt, normally by arrival stamp, and the application must also be given a record number.

The processing time for matters relating to transfer of credits should not normally exceed two months. For applications received during the

summer (June - August), the processing time may be slightly longer. In cases where an application needs to be supplemented, the examination may also take longer than two months.

4.4 Decision

Decisions on transfer of credits are made by the degree evaluations officers, in accordance with the University's delegation arrangements. The decision is sent to the applicant by e-mail or regular mail. If approved, the credit is registered in the national study documentation system Ladok.

Decisions to reject the application for credit must be justified. The justification must be based on the national regulation in the Higher Education Ordinance, which must also be stated in the decision. The appeal reference must be attached to the decision (see section 4.6 below).

Furthermore, a decision can be made to reject the application or dismiss the case. Such decisions must also be justified and provided with an appeal reference (see section 4.6 below). An example of when a case can be rejected is if the applicant is not a student at the University of Skövde (see section 1.4). Depreciation is applied in cases where a student wishes to withdraw his application.

4.5 Appeal

Chapter 12, Section 2, first paragraph, fourth paragraph of the Higher Education Ordinance states that decisions on the transfer of credits of education or professional activities may be appealed to the Board of Appeal for Higher Education. Appeal references must be included in decisions on refusal.

The appeal must be in writing. The letter states the decision that is being appealed, the change of decision that is desired and the reasons that are invoked in support. The appeal is addressed to the Board of Appeal for the University (ÖNH) but is sent to the University of Skövde within three weeks from the day on which the appellant was notified of the decision.

According to section 45 FL, the university must examine whether the appeal has been received in due time. If the appeal has been received too late, the University may decide that it may not be considered but rejected. This means that the documents must not be forwarded.

As stated above (section 4.5), decisions on rejection or depreciation can also be appealed. According to § 41 FL, a decision may be appealed "if the decision can be assumed to affect someone's situation in a not insignificant way".

More detailed information on how appeals are handled at the University can be found in the Instructions for handling appeals.

5 The document is valid from

The document is valid from 2021-09-08 and replaces Guidelines for transfer of credits at the first-cycle level and second-cycle level (dnr HS 2019/806)