



**INFORMATION ABOUT RULES CONCERNING
CREDIT TRANSFER ON FIRST AND SECOND CYCLE COURSES
AND STUDY PROGRAMMES**

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1. Introduction

This document is aimed at students and members of staff at Örebro University. Compiled and adapted by the Faculty Office, it contains information on national and local rules, decisions of the Higher Education Appeals Board¹, as well as reports concerning credit transfer from the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education/Swedish Council for Higher Education.

The information is only published as a PDF document, and is available on the university's website². Any underlined parts in the document are clickable links.

Credit transfer refers to the process through which a student's knowledge/skills acquired from a particular course or study programme or in a professional or vocational capacity may count towards a course or degree³. The right to credit transfer is in place to prevent students from having to study and be examined on knowledge/skills that he or she has already acquired.

2. Application and the handling of applications

Students who wish to transfer credits for previous courses or study programmes and/or skills acquired in a professional or vocational capacity must submit an application. The previous course or study programme and/or professional or vocational skills must be confirmed by means of certified copies of certificates, transcripts of records etc.

An application for credit transfer is to be processed speedily by the university⁴.

If the information provided in the application is not considered as sufficient for a review to be made, the applicant shall be requested to supplement his/her application with the required documents no later than on the date specified by the university. The official handling the matter shall also consider the possibility of him/herself obtaining information from other authorities, if required⁵.

For more information about the application process, see the university's [website](#).

3. Credit transfer – for what?

3.1 Credit transfer for higher education courses or study programmes

3.1.1 Higher education in a Nordic country

If a student at another higher education institution in Sweden⁶ has successfully completed a course or study programme, he or she is entitled to transfer the credits awarded for that course or study programme at Örebro University. This does not apply, however, if there is a substantial difference between the courses or study programmes in question⁷.

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

¹ Higher Education Appeals Board, www.onh.se

² www.oru.se/utbildning/tillgodoraknande

³ Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), Chapter 6, Sections 6-8; *Begreppsmanual för uppföljning av högskolan* (manual of concepts), Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, reg.no. 63-1157-08, 2008-03-04

⁴ Administrative Procedure Act (1986:223), Section 7

⁵ Administrative Procedure Act, Section 7

⁶ Higher education authorities for which the Government is the accountable authority (Annex 1, Higher Education Ordinance) or independent education providers authorised by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education to award qualifications (<http://www.hsv.se/examensratter>)

⁷ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 6, first paragraph

European Region (Swedish Treaty Series 2001:46), or at Nordiska högskolan för folkhälsovetenskap (NHV — The Nordic School of Public Health)⁸.

3.1.2 Non-European higher education

A student is entitled to transfer credits from a course or study programme other than from the Nordic countries 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 towards which the credits are to be transferred⁹.

For a student to be entitled to credit transfer for his/her non-European higher education courses or study programmes, one of the following criteria must be met:

- 1) the course/study programme is provided or recognised by the government or under government control,
- 2) the course/study programme is recognised by a regional authority with a government mandate to recognise courses and study programmes,
- 3) the course/study programme is recognised by an organisation with a government mandate to accredit courses and study programmes or by a generally accepted accreditation organisation,
- 4) the course/study programme is part of a study programme at a Swedish post-secondary education institution.

In addition, there are specific provisions applying to certain countries¹⁰.

3.1.3 Higher education courses and study programmes within the university

There are no specific provisions in the Higher Education Ordinance concerning credit transfer for courses or study programmes towards other courses or study programmes within the same higher education institution. In practice, however, students have the right to have such credit transfer reviewed. The review is then based on the provisions in the Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 7, that is, through an assessment of whether the course or study programme completed by the student on the whole corresponds to the course or study programme towards which the credits are to be transferred¹¹.

3.2 Contract education

Students may have credits for contract education transferred towards first or second cycle courses or study programmes, provided that the contract education meets the same quality criteria as those applying to the corresponding higher education courses and study programmes. One condition for contract education to be considered as meeting the same quality criteria as those applying to first and second cycle courses and study programmes is that there are course syllabuses and programme syllabuses respectively and that examiners are appointed in the same way as within first and second cycle courses and study programmes¹².

⁸ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 6, second paragraph

⁹ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 7, first paragraph

¹⁰ Swedish National Agency for Higher Education regulations on which post-secondary education institutions outside the Nordic area are considered to be of acceptable standard (HSVFS 1996:8, last revised through HSVFS 1998:4)

¹¹ Comp. decision of the Higher Education Appeals Board 2005-03-18, reg. no. 41-1070-04

¹² Sections 6 and 7 in ordinance on contract education at higher education institutions (*Förordning om uppdragsutbildning vid universitet och högskolor*, 2002:760). See also information from Örebro University (*Information om regler för uppdragsutbildning vid Örebro universitet*), reg. no. ORU 1.2.1-713/2013. There are also special rules for certain other types of contract education, please see <http://www.oru.se/Utbildning/Regler-for-utbildning/Regler-for-utbildning-pa-grund--och-avancerad-niva/Tillgodoraknande/Tillgodoraknande-av-respektiv-inom-uppdragsutbildning/>.

3.3 Credit transfer for other courses and study programmes or professional/vocational skills

A student is entitled to transfer credits from a course or study programme other than those mentioned in sections 3.1 and 3.2, 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 towards which the credits are to be transferred. A student may also transfer credit for corresponding knowledge and skills that have been acquired in a professional or vocational capacity¹³.

3.4 Credit transfer approved by another higher education institution

If a student has previously had credits transferred for certain knowledge or skills towards a course or study programme at another higher education institution and wishes to have credit transferred for the same qualifications towards a course or study programme at Örebro University, the matter shall be reviewed based on the original qualifications – that is, the course or study programme or professional or vocational skills that the student has actually completed or acquired – and not on the previous decision regarding credit transfer¹⁴.

3.5 Credit transfer in the case of joint degrees

The university may take part in educational cooperation and issue a joint degree with another higher education institution if this cooperation is based on a written agreement¹⁵. Students shall without special review be able to transfer credits towards his/her course or study programme at Örebro University for parts of a study programme that are covered by such an agreement and that he/she has completed successfully at another higher education institution¹⁶.

4. Who is entitled to a review?

4.1 Students at Örebro University

Örebro University shall review whether previous courses or study programmes or skills acquired in a professional or vocational capacity can be recognised. To have credits transferred the person in question must be a student at Örebro University¹⁷. *Student* here refers to being admitted to and undertaking a course or study programme¹⁸. In this context, this means that a student is a person who is, or has previously been, registered on a course at Örebro University. Örebro University has no right to limit a student's right to credit transfer review based solely on the grounds that a long time has passed since the student was registered on a course at the university¹⁹.

4.3 Students who have completed contract education

Students who have completed such contract education that meets the same quality criteria as those applying to higher education courses and study programmes may transfer credits for the contract education towards first or second cycle courses or study programmes²⁰.

¹³ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 7

¹⁴ Comp. decision of Higher Education Appeals Board 2006-05-19, reg. no. 41-329-06

¹⁵ Higher Education Act (1992:1434), Chapter 1, Section 17; Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 11a

¹⁶ Higher Education Act, Chapter 1, Section 18; Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 11d

¹⁷ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 8

¹⁸ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 1, Section 4

¹⁹ Comp. decision of Higher Education Appeals Board 2008-04-11, reg. no 41-180-08

²⁰ Section 7 in ordinance on contract education at higher education institutions (*Förordning om uppdragsutbildning vid universitet och högskolor*, 2002:760). See also information from Örebro University (*Information om regler för uppdragsutbildning vid Örebro universitet*), reg. no. ORU 1.2.1-713/2013.

5. Credit transfer assessment

5.1 Review based on intended learning outcomes

As described above, students are entitled to credit transfer for higher education courses and study programmes provided these are not substantially different to the course or study programme towards which the credits are to be transferred. Correspondingly, credits shall be transferred for other courses or study programmes or professional or vocational skills if the knowledge and skills acquired by the student on the whole correspond to the course or study programme towards which the credits are to be transferred. The review of a previous course or study programme or professional or vocational skills shall always be based on the intended learning outcomes for the course or study programme in question. The intended learning outcomes for the course/study programme are set out in the Higher Education Act, in Annex 2 to the Higher Education Ordinance, as well as in programme and course syllabuses. This means that the decisive factor is not the way in which the knowledge/skills were acquired, but rather the result and how well it corresponds to the intended learning outcomes for a certain course or study programme. When reviewing a credit transfer request in connection with an application for the issue of a degree certificate for instance, the university shall therefore consider the intended learning outcomes for the degree as a whole, and not just make comparisons course by course based on a certain programme syllabus²¹.

5.2 Calculation of credits to be transferred for studies completed at a university abroad

If at the university abroad there is a system for expressing the extent of the studies in terms of course or programme length equivalent to the Swedish credit system, that system shall be used for conversion of the number of credits to Swedish credits.

If, however, the extent of the studies is not expressed in such a way, the calculation of a reasonable number of credits to be transferred for a semester or academic year is performed by calculating the credits (equivalent) as part of the total number of credits for the award of the degree²².

5.3 Credit transfer and grading

Higher education courses and study programmes for which credits have been transferred will not be graded. Instead, the grade awarded by the examining university applies. This means that study results for which credits have been transferred shall not be graded using the grading scale that otherwise applies for the course/course component at Örebro University towards which the credits have been transferred. It is, however, important that the documentation of the credit transfer for higher education courses or study programmes clearly states which grade was awarded the student by the examining higher education institution (comp. section 6.4).

If a student has had credits for previously acquired knowledge/skills transferred as part of a course and a final grade is to be awarded on the course, the examiner shall determine how the component/-s in question shall be assessed, based on the course syllabus and grading criteria for the course.

²¹ The importance of universities being generous in their review of credit transfer, within the framework provided by the provisions in the Higher Education Ordinance, is emphasised in various reports from the authorities involved: *Tillgodoräknande av kurs – Tillsynsrapport* (Swedish National Board of Higher Education, 1998), *Tillgodoräknande av utländsk högskoleutbildning – riktlinjer och god sed* (Association of Swedish Higher Education, 1999), *Värdering & erkännande av utländsk högskoleutbildning* (Swedish National Board of Higher Education, 1998), *Tillgodoräknande av tidigare utbildning och yrkesverksamhet* (Swedish National Board of Higher Education, 2004), Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Swedish Treaty Series, 2001:46). See also decision of Higher Education Appeals Board 2001-01-24, reg. no. 41-960-00.

²² This means that the total number of credits/equivalent required for a certain qualification at the higher education institution abroad is divided with the number of semesters/academic years it takes for a full-time student to meet the course requirements for that qualification. If for example three years is the standard programme length for a study programme of 108 credits, this corresponds to 18 credits per semester. 18 credits shall then be considered as the equivalent of 30 Swedish credits.

6. Decisions on credit transfer

A decision on credit transfer is a form of exercise of public authority in relation to the individual and therefore there are certain requirements that need to be met to ensure a fair and lawful credit transfer process²³.

Decisions on credit transfer shall always be made following a presentation of the case by the official handling the matter, unless otherwise specified in the university's delegation decision²⁴.

6.1 Credit transfer not in connection with the application for degree certificates

A credit transfer which is unrelated to an application for the issue of a degree certificate shall be reviewed by the school in question. The decision is taken by the head of school or a person to whom the head of school has delegated this authority²⁵.

The university is obliged to make a decision on credit transfer upon request from a student and may not postpone the decision until the student applies for the issue of his/her degree certificate²⁶.

6.2 Credit transfer in connection with the application for degree certificates

The decision on credit transfer in connection with the application for the issue of a degree certificate for a professional qualification is made by the head of school in question. The head of school also decides on the credit transfer in connection with the application for the issue of a degree certificate for a general qualification, in cases where the standard procedure cannot be applied. In both cases, the head of school has the right to further delegate his/her authority²⁷.

In cases where the standard procedure can be applied, decisions on the credit transfer in connection with the application for the issue of a degree certificate for a general qualification are made by the Head of Student Services. This authority may be delegated further²⁸.

On issuing the degree certificate, the possibility of any overlapping, that is, if the content of a number of courses entirely or in part is the same, is reviewed. Courses with partially identical content may be part of the same degree with the total number of credits left after a deduction has been made for the joint content²⁹.

6.3 Advance notice on credit transfer in connection with exchange studies

When planning international exchange schemes, the practice is that universities give an advance notice to students who are nominated to a place on the scheme. An advance notice signifies a preliminary assessment of the university's position at an upcoming credit transfer review. Such a notice can, in contrast to a credit transfer decision, not be appealed against. Decisions on credit transfer are made upon request from the student once the exchange studies have been completed³⁰. The advance notice is given by the person authorised to decide on the matter³¹.

²³ It is for example important to consider the applicant's right to be informed and to the university's obligation to communicate information under Sections 16 and 17 of the Administrative Procedure Act.

²⁴ *Myndighetsförordningen* (Public agency ordinance) (2007:515), Section 20. General conditions for the delegations at Örebro University are included in the Vice-Chancellor's delegation decision. For details on authorised decision-makers and any exceptions to the requirement concerning the officials handling the case, refer to the university's delegations for educational matters.

²⁵ University delegations for educational matters

²⁶ Comp. decision of Swedish National Agency for Higher Education 2005-05-09, reg. no. 31-1067-05

²⁷ University delegations for educational matters

²⁸ University delegations for educational matters

²⁹ Comp. decision of Higher Education Appeals Board 2002-03-15, reg. no 46-72-02

³⁰ Comp. Swedish National Agency for Higher Education's report 2011:5 R, Inspection at University West 2010, pp 19-20

³¹ See the university's delegation for educational matters

6.4 Documenting the decision

Decisions on credit transfer shall be made in writing. The decision document must contain the date of the decision, its content, who has made the decision and who has handled the matter³². If the decision supports the application it may be documented in the designated section on the application form. If the decision goes against the applicant, entirely or in part, a separate decision document must be drawn up. This also applies to situations when credits are being recognised albeit differently to what was requested in the application. The decision document shall, in addition to the above, account for any respects in which the credit transfer is not approved as well as the grounds for the decision³³, and contain instructions on how to appeal. A copy of the decision shall be sent to the applicant³⁴.

Decisions on credit transfer shall be documented in the student registry LADOK³⁵. For all decisions on credit transfer, LADOK must contain information not only of what the decision refers to but also the grounds on which it was made. When it comes to higher education courses and study programmes it must for instance be clear at which higher education institution the course/study programme was completed, its scope, grades awarded and which grading scale was applied.

In degree certificates, credit transfers shall be documented with clear references to the original documentation³⁶.

6.4.1 University records

All documents relating to a certain credit transfer case shall be registered in the university records. These documents include any appendices, decisions and other documentation³⁷.

6.5 Corrections and second review

If a decision on credit transfer is obviously incorrect owing to a typographical error, miscalculation or similar oversight, the decision may be corrected by the university. If a correction is to the student's disadvantage, he/she must be given the opportunity to express his/her opinion on the matter³⁸.

If the university finds that a decision is obviously incorrect owing to new circumstances or for some other reason, the university shall change the decision if this can be done quickly and easily and without detriment to any individual party. This obligation applies even if the decision is appealed against, unless the appellant requests that the decision be invalid until further notice. The obligation does not apply, however, if the university has submitted the documents in the matter to a higher authority or if there are otherwise special grounds for the university not to amend its decision³⁹.

6.6 Appeals

A decision on credit transfer for courses or study programmes or skills acquired in a professional or vocational capacity can be appealed to the Higher Education Appeals Board⁴⁰.

More information on appeals can be found on the university's [website](#).

³² *Myndighetsförfordningen* (Public agency ordinance) (2007:515), Section 21

³³ For example, the university must, if a student may not transfer credit for his/her previous higher education courses or study programmes, demonstrate what constitutes the substantial difference between the previous course or study programme and the course or study programme towards which the credit transfer was intended.

³⁴ Administrative Procedure Act, Section 21

³⁵ *Förordning om redovisning av studier m.m. vid universitet och högskolor* (Ordinance on recording study results etc. at higher education institutions) (1993:1153), Chapter 2, Section 3

³⁶ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Section 10

³⁷ *Arkivförfordningen* (Archives ordinance) (1991:446), Section 3; guidelines for handling public documents at Örebro University (*Riktlinjer för hantering av allmänna handlingar vid Örebro universitet*), 2012-06-04, reg. no. CF 10-448/2009

³⁸ Administrative Procedure Act, Section 26

³⁹ Administrative Procedure Act, Section 27

⁴⁰ Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 12, Section 2, point 3