

School of Languages and Media Studies

English Department

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A HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS



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DALARNA

STUDENT HANDBOOK

What is the purpose of this handbook?

This handbook is a user manual for English studies at Dalarna University. It offers the most important basic information about the following:

- finding information about your courses;
- participating in seminars;
- using online learning tools;
- writing and submitting course assignments;
- communicating with the teachers;
- your coursework in general.

If you read this handbook carefully and follow the guidelines presented in it, you can save yourself a great deal of time and energy. Knowing the information in this handbook will also make it easier for you to pass your courses. Even more importantly, it will enable you to get the most out of your time at Dalarna University.

Unless stated otherwise in the course materials, the guidelines presented here apply to *all students* and *all courses* at the English department. This handbook is available to all students throughout the term.

Some of the information in this handbook may seem obvious to you. However, we felt that it should be included because our students come from very different backgrounds and sometimes have different expectations. We thank you for your understanding and hope that you enjoy your time at Dalarna University.

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If you have a question that is not answered in this handbook,
please see the **list of useful contacts on page 13**.

PART 1

General guidelines

1. Finding information about your courses

Course descriptions, seminar timetables, course assignments and other important information will be available on the Fronter page for your course.

Fronter (<https://fronter.du.se/>) is the online learning platform used at Dalarna University. Each course has its own 'Fronter room'. Once you have a university username and password and you have accepted your place on the course¹, it is your responsibility to check the Fronter room for schedules and other information about the course.

You can also check seminar schedules using the link on the du.se homepage. Go to "Current Student" and then click on "Schedules" under the heading "Study". Note that if the information you find there is different from the information on Fronter, you should follow the information on Fronter.

It is your responsibility to check Fronter and your du.se email daily (Monday to Friday) for new information or last minute changes.

2. Workload

Full-time study consists of 30 credits per term and requires you to spend 40 hours a week studying. All courses have a certain number of higher education credits associated with them. A 7.5-credit course at 100% rate corresponds to 5 weeks' full-time study. In other words, it requires 200 hours of work all in all, including class time, reading, preparation and the assignments you are asked to do before and/or after your seminars or lectures.

Only a few courses, however, are offered at 100% rate. Most are either 50% or 25%.

- If you are taking a 7.5-credit course at 50% rate (half-time), you should study 20 hours a week for that course alone.

¹ * It is your responsibility to make sure you have **applied** and **registered** (2 separate actions) for the course. You **apply** via www.studera.nu; you **register** via *My Pages/Mina Sidor* on www.du.se

If you are unsure about this, please look at the documents which you should have received for information, or access <http://www.du.se/welcome>.

- A 7.5 course at 25% will usually run throughout the entire semester and you should be prepared to study 10 hours a week for that course alone.

It is very important to plan your study time because the course work may not be spread evenly over the weeks of the course.

3. Seminar attendance and participation

Note that the same attendance requirements apply to campus and distance students. For specific guidelines concerning distance students, please go to <http://www.du.se/en/Student1/Study-at-Hogskolan/Distance-studies-at-Hogskolan-Dalarna/Hogskolan-Dalarnas-e-Meeting-Portal/> and study the pdf documents listed on the left-hand side of the page.

- a. The course syllabus states the forms of assessment on which your final grade for the course is based. In most of our courses, there is continuous assessment. This means that any work you do during the course counts towards your final grade. This is why, unless otherwise stated, seminars are obligatory on most courses. In general, 75% of seminars must be attended in order to pass a course. A make-up assignment is required for any missed seminars and for any seminars where you were not sufficiently prepared; but note that this is only possible for a maximum of 25%.
- b. If you miss a lecture due to illness or for other reasons, it is your responsibility to inform the teacher (preferably in advance), as well as to find out from the course materials, Fronter or/and fellow students what you have missed. Missing more than 25% of the seminars means that you will probably not pass the course (even if you are ill).
- c. Students are expected to come to their seminars in good time before the seminar starts. Unless you have a legitimate reason, arriving more than 15 minutes after the stated lecture/seminar time may count as missing the seminar. Whenever possible, please inform your teacher in advance.
- d. As a rule, you will be asked to prepare for the seminar in some way, i.e. by reading, viewing a lecture or doing an assignment. Because seminar participation is part of assessment, you need to show that you are prepared by being active.

4. Seminar etiquette

- a. Mobile telephones must be switched off during all lessons. In special cases, for example if you have a sick child at home, please ask your teacher for permission to leave your phone on in silent mode, and leave the lesson before answering.
- b. On campus, the teacher may choose to ban the use of computers during her/his classes. If there is a special reason why you need to use a computer, please let the teacher know.
- c. Please come to class on time. In fact, you are encouraged to come to class 5 or 10 minutes before the stated lecture/seminar time, which is a great opportunity to socialise with your fellow students. Coming to class late (see Section 3c above) is disruptive both to your teacher and your fellow students and you may be asked to leave.
- d. In class, you will often be asked to give your thoughts on a particular topic or comment on other students' contributions. Discussing a topic is a good way to learn. Your comments should always be relevant to the topic. Remember, however, that listening to your fellow students and giving them helpful feedback is just as important as speaking. **Note:** during discussions you are permitted to politely disagree with a point someone is making – then you have to give clear reasons why you disagree. You are not allowed to make personal attacks or ridicule anyone.

5. Course materials

- a. It is the student's responsibility to obtain and read the course literature according to the information in the Fronter room (click on Syllabus). The course syllabus contains full information about the course literature. For the latest information about any changes to the course literature, check the Fronter room.
- b. You should have a copy of the obligatory course literature well before the first seminar, ideally one week before. Reference literature is optional. All course literature can be found in the library but you should remember that the number of library copies is limited.

- c. The course outline in the Fronter room will normally tell you what to read and when. If there is no such information anywhere in the Fronter room, contact the teacher responsible for the course.
- d. Compendiums and other material will be available for purchase in the reception or available for printing on Fronter. There will be information about this in the Fronter room.

6. Deadlines

- a. Normally, the course outline will tell you when to hand in your essays and assignments.
- b. For some courses, late assignments may not be accepted at all. The reason for this is that in some courses your assignments are the starting point for group work. In other courses, late work may be accepted but lateness may affect your grade.
- c. Teachers will return your work to you as soon as possible; but please remember you are not their only student. Note also that late assignments may take longer to return to you and you may not get as much feedback as other students.
- d. If there is a special reason why you cannot hand in your work on time, you should contact the teacher and ask for an extension. This should be done at least 3 days before the deadline. Based on your reason and your previous work, the teacher will decide whether to grant an extension or not.

7. Assessment and examinations

- a. In the English Department the grading scale consists of *Väl godkänd* (pass with distinction), *Godkänd* (pass) and *Underkänd* (fail). Every course has a set of grading criteria available in the Fronter room. Your grade will be based on how you meet these criteria.
- b. As well as written examinations, many other forms of assessment are used at Dalarna University. In some courses, every seminar you attend and every piece of work you produce will count towards your final grade. Information about the forms of assessment in your course can be found in the Fronter room and in the course syllabus.

- c. If you have a formal campus examination or a supervised distance examination, you will need to register for it online. You will find the instructions for how and when to register in the Fronter room.
- d. Remember to bring an ID with a photo and, if you are a campus student, your student ID to all formal (supervised) exams.
- e. Corrected exams will usually be returned to you within three weeks of the exam. Your teacher will tell you where to find your marked exam.
- f. You can check that your final grade has been registered through the student portal at du.se (My Pages/Mina Sidor). Students should not email teachers for their results².
- g. As a rule, there will be a re-sit exam before the end of term for anyone who did not pass the first exam. If you do not pass the re-sit exam, you will have an opportunity to try again in the following January/August.
- h. Just as for the first exam, you must sign up online for any re-sit exam you want to take.

8. Contact with your teachers

- a. If you need to talk with a teacher outside of class, you should send an email to make an appointment. Some teachers might have regular office hours in their office, on Skype or on Connect; this information will be available on Fronter or from the teacher.
- b. You should not expect your teacher to be available at weekends, during holidays or in the evening. In particular, this means that a mail sent on Friday afternoon may not be answered for several days.
- c. You must always use your du.se email account for any correspondence with Dalarna University. There are several reasons for this. One is identification: your username is unique and we know right away who you are. Another is that attachments may often be lost when coming from Hotmail, Gmail etc. Finally, there is a risk that an email from other email services will be filtered out as junk mail by the university server.

² Please note that 'incomplete course' might be shown on *My Pages* if your course is made up of modules. The grades for each module will be entered first, and then there will be a delay until the grade for the entire course can be entered. It is during this delay that 'incomplete course' will appear but it is nothing to worry about; it will disappear once the course grade is entered.

9. Email etiquette

Whenever you need to send an email message to a teacher or any other member of the university staff, please follow these rules (see also the example email below):

- a. Your message must have a relevant subject line, e.g. ‘My absence from next week’s class’, ‘Request for permission to submit my last assignment 12 hours late’, ‘Unclear information on Fronter’ etc.
- b. Begin your message with a greeting including the first name of the person you are writing to, e.g. ‘Dear Elin’, ‘Hello Jonathan’, ‘Hi Kostia’.
- c. Identify yourself clearly, specifying the course that your message concerns, your seminar group, and whether you are studying on campus or by distance.
- d. Remember that you are not writing to a close friend. Write your emails as correctly and concisely as possible. Read through them before sending to make sure they make sense. Use capital letters and full stops. Well written emails save time and will result in a quicker and more useful response.
- e. If your message is more than a few sentences long, divide it into paragraphs.
- f. If you are sending an attachment, make sure you did not forget to attach it.
- g. You must always use your du.se email account for any correspondence with Dalarna University.

Example email:

Appropriate greeting	Hi Sarah,
Identify yourself	I am in the English for International Business Communication and Culture course (EN1043).
Clearly state purpose	I have some questions about when to hand in the assignments. Should the assignments be submitted any particular time? I know we have to hand them in on/before Wednesdays but I mean a special hour? For example Wednesdays before 17.00?
Polite close	Thanks in advance, Best regards

PART 2

Written work

1. Referencing

All students³ should use MLA (for literature courses) or APA (for linguistic courses) referencing guidelines as presented in the latest printed edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (ask for it at the library) or on the following web pages:

- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> for **MLA**;
- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1/> for **APA**.

2. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas without acknowledging the sources. At the beginning of each term students in Falun have to attend an obligatory lecture on plagiarism. The exact date, time and room are announced at level introductions as well as on Fronter. This lecture will provide you with the knowledge necessary to avoid plagiarism. There will also be information about plagiarism in the Fronter rooms of your courses.

You can also find out more about avoiding plagiarism at <http://plagiarism.org>.

What happens if you commit plagiarism?

As a rule, if it is a first-time case, the Head of Department will notify the student that plagiarism has been identified in his or her work.

If it is not the first time, the Head of Department will report the student to the Disciplinary Board and notify the student of this. From this point on, the Disciplinary Board will communicate with the student about the case.

In cases of deliberate first-time plagiarism – when it is obvious that the student has consciously presented a significant portion of someone else's work as their own – the Head of Department will report the student directly to the Disciplinary Board and notify the student of this. From this point on, the Disciplinary Board will communicate with the student about the case.

³ Students who major in subjects other than English may use the referencing system for their discipline.

If the Disciplinary Board finds you guilty of plagiarism, you will be suspended from your studies for a prolonged period of time. During this time, you will not be able to hand in any course work, attend classes, communicate with the teachers or use any of the university facilities, including the library and the computer rooms. This normally means that you will not be able to complete the current term.

3. Suspected deception

If we suspect a student of having someone else write their essays (e.g. if there is a significant difference between the level of their seminar work and their written assignments), the student may be invited for an interview or asked to write an assignment under supervision.

4. Assumed knowledge of grammar and punctuation

The following is a list of grammatical issues that you, as a university student, are expected to be able to deal with on your own when writing essays or reports. This means that you cannot expect detailed feedback on these aspects of grammar from your teachers or supervisors.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Spelling | 8. Comparative and superlative adjectives |
| 2. Plural forms | 9. General principles of article use |
| 3. Countable and uncountable nouns | 10. Verb tenses: form and use |
| 4. Subject-verb agreement | 11. Active and passive voice |
| 5. Pronoun-noun agreement | 12. Conditional sentences |
| 6. Basic word order in statements and questions | 13. Relative clauses and relative pronouns |
| 7. <i>There is/There are</i> -construction | |

You are also expected to be able to use basic punctuation such as capital letters, full stops, question marks and commas.

Students taking the EAP (English for Academic Purposes) courses or the Grammar module of the English Language Structure course can expect feedback on the aspects of grammar listed above as this is the focus of the courses.

Those students who have major problems with these aspects of grammar are strongly advised to take the EAP courses first.

5. Rewrites

For written assignments that are part of continuous assessment, you will normally be allowed one rewrite, to be submitted before the official end date of the course. A failed rewrite equals a failed assignment.

For essays and theses, the relevant policy on rewrites will be stated in the course materials or communicated to you by your teacher.

6. Checklist for written assignments

Based on Griffith, Kelley. *Writing Essays about Literature*. 7th ed. Boston: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006.

Before you hand in any written work, make sure you have done ALL of the following:

	Use double line spacing throughout your essay.
	Use Times New Roman in a 12 point font size. Handwritten essays are not acceptable at any level.
	Give your essay a title.
	Write your name, du.se email address and personal identification number.
	Number all pages (except the title page) consecutively.
	Use quotations and references effectively to support your arguments. Remember, however, that your essay should be based on your own thoughts and analysis. Introduce and integrate your quotations smoothly into your essay.

	Use quotation marks for all direct quotes.
	Even if you do not use the exact wording of your source (i.e. if you paraphrase it), you must acknowledge it. See the referencing guidelines (page 9) for the correct way to do this.
	Include a Bibliography or Works Cited. Use the correct form for bibliographical entries. See the referencing guidelines (page 9) for the correct way to do this.
	Make sure your essay has the required number of words (remembering that this includes quotations and footnotes).
	Do not use contractions (aren't, can't, doesn't) in academic papers unless it is part of a quotation.
	Avoid overuse of "I," "you," and "me." When in doubt, consult your supervisor/teacher.
	Proofread your paper for spelling and grammar errors. Most computers (including those on campus) have spelling and/or grammar correction devices, which you should use.

Useful contacts

Technical support – questions concerning your email account, Fronter access, *My Pages* and Connect.

support@du.se

Course Administrator – takes care of questions concerning admission and registration.

Malin Bird Bear mbb@du.se

Director of Studies

Loretta Qwarnström lqw@du.se

Program heads

Master's programme in Literature:

Billy Gray bgr@du.se

Master's programmes in Irish literature and African literature and postcolonial studies:

Irene Gilsenan Nordin ign@du.se

Level heads

English for Specific Purposes (Borlänge): Sarah Berglind sbr@du.se

G1 Entry: Marcia Markus mmk@du.se & Kostia Andreev kan@du.se

G1 Non-Entry: Fredrik Land fln@du.se

G2 and Advanced: Jonathan White jwh@du.se

Student Union

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