

RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE

Meeting of the RTU Senate of 29 February 2016 (Minutes No. 597)

On Approval of the RTU Code of Academic Integrity

RTU Senate has resolved to approve the RTU Code of Academic Integrity.

Riga Technical University Code of Academic Integrity

*Accepted in accordance with the Law "On Institutions of Higher Education", Section
15 Clause One*

PREAMBLE

The goal of the Code of Academic Integrity of Riga Technical University (hereinafter – RTU) is to strengthen the academic culture and honesty in the RTU academic environment, clarify the concept of academic integrity and the related activities, define main procedures in consideration of the breaches of academic integrity.

The Code of Academic Integrity is supported by the principles expressed in the Code of Ethics of RTU students, academic staff and employees and RTU values.

Dishonest academic behavior causes discredit to the name and reputation of RTU, undermines its values and reduces competitiveness. When explaining the concept of academic integrity and the related activities, most frequent violations of the principles of academic integrity in the academic environment and the duties of RTU staff for elimination of academic dishonesty are listed.

USED TERMS

Course – study course;

Unauthorized supplementary aid – a source of information or method for obtaining information the usage of which is not authorized during examination by the academic staff;

Unauthorized usage of a supplementary aid – unauthorized usage or an attempt of usage of a supplementary aid;

Collusion – copying a work or a part of work of another student and taking credit for it;

Self-plagiarism – a form of plagiarism, repeated usage of one's work or a fragment of one's work, presenting it as an original work;

Plagiarism – usage of a published or unpublished work (including words, expressions, etc.) of another author, not providing the precise reference to the corresponding author and/or work;

Fabrication – making up the data for the purpose of publishing them as an original research.

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 1.1. Academic integrity stimulates honest and responsible attitude to the study process, research activity, valorization and all persons involved in it. Academic integrity encompasses objectivity, responsibility, mutual respect and trust and excludes deception and fraud. The principles of academic integrity are approved and observed by research and academic staff of RTU, students, administration and general staff of the university.
- 1.2. To promote academic integrity and not to breach its principles, it is necessary to observe both formal requirements (laws and regulations, internal procedures, etc.) and act ethically, honestly and objectively.
- 1.3. Dishonest and improper behavior is considered to be deception and counteraction to the RTU staff work (including intentional forgery of results of a test or experiment, damage of experimental equipment, damage of library books, unauthorized use of academic and other resources (including software and e-resources), their damage, restriction of access to them or deception, restricting access to information or intentionally providing false information).
- 1.4. RTU staff has to cooperate in information provision with the head of a structural unit, RTU Rector, Vice-Rector and other members of RTU staff, when a breach of academic integrity is acknowledged.
- 1.5. Structural units may develop guidelines for a specific field to promote good academic integrity practice, including elimination of plagiarism, the accepted citation style and methods of development of academic and research works.

2. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH WORK

- 2.1. A scientist acts in conformity with the Scientist's Code of Ethics approved by the Latvian Academy of Sciences.
- 2.2. Breaches of the principles of academic integrity in scientific activities are considered to be the following:
 - 2.2.1. Forgery or fabrication of results and data of an experiment or research;
 - 2.2.2. Reference to non-existing works, data and research;
 - 2.2.3. Selective interpretation of research results in such a way that they confirm the hypothesis put forward in the research or provide only such information which promotes trust to the performed research and its recognition in the academic environment;
 - 2.2.4. Non-observation of the anonymity and confidentiality requirements;
 - 2.2.5. Usage of information, databases, published or unpublished research of other persons, for example colleagues or students, without relevant reference;
 - 2.2.6. Submission of plagiarism or self-plagiarism;
 - 2.2.7. Submission of a patent application for another's invention or alienation of inventions performed in the framework of the labor relations with RTU;
 - 2.2.8. Other forms of dishonest, non-ethical or non-professional behavior.

3. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN BEHAVIOR OF STUDENTS

- 3.1. Students observe the principles of academic integrity.
- 3.2. Breaches of the principles of academic integrity are considered to be the following:
 - 3.2.1. Collusion and unauthorized usage of supplementary aids in the study process;

- 3.2.2. Submitting of a work which contains plagiarism or self-plagiarism, including submitting of results of a collective work on one's behalf, etc.;
 - 3.2.3. Offer of any material value, material or other benefit for any activity or inactivity in academic interests of a student or another person;
 - 3.2.4. Providing incorrect data about oneself or one's work, including falsification of documents;
 - 3.2.5. Unpermitted obtaining of examination questions or examination tasks;
 - 3.2.6. Formal participation in a group's work by not contributing to a task fulfillment;
 - 3.2.7. Co-participation in a breach of academic integrity, including submission of results of one's individual work to other persons, impersonating another student at the examination, signing instead of another student in an attendance list or other documents, etc.;
 - 3.2.8. Hindering or delaying academic work of the academic staff or students;
 - 3.2.9. Untrue completion of the study process evaluation questionnaire;
 - 3.2.10. Demonstration of disrespect or distribution of untrue information about the members of academic staff, peers, RTU administration or general personnel;
 - 3.2.11. Using one's position beyond RTU or personal circumstances to impress peers and academic staff with the goal of obtaining favorable attitude and unequal conditions in the study process;
 - 3.2.12. Other deliberate actions that delay or hinder the study process and academic work at RTU.
- 3.3. A member of academic staff of RTU can make an oral reprimand to a student for a breach of academic integrity or notify in writing in accordance with the Procedures on the Breaches of Academic Integrity and Breach Consideration Procedures (see Clause 5).

4. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AT RTU, BEHAVIOR OF ACADEMIC AND GENERAL STAFF

- 4.1. RTU academic staff:
 - 4.1.1. At the start of a study course define assessment criteria, attendance requirements and publish them in the RTU e-study environment;
 - 4.1.2. When supervising works of students (especially graduation papers and theses), provides tutorials and timely feedback;
 - 4.1.3. Evaluate work of students objectively in accordance with the RTU established criteria pursuant basically to the work content, and not just its volume and execution;
 - 4.1.4. Treat students and colleagues with respect, not evaluating them according to personal preferences;
 - 4.1.5. Do not allow unauthorized usage of supplementary aids and other unpermitted behavior during examinations, notifying the Faculty Dean or a head of an affiliation about academic integrity breaches in accordance with the Procedures on the Breaches of Academic Integrity and Breach Consideration Procedures;
 - 4.1.6. Do not require and accept gifts, services or additional remuneration for performance of one's duties (including tutorials);
 - 4.1.7. Do not use RTU resources for an activity which is not related to the RTU work;

- 4.1.8. Uses results of students work and unpublished data only by making the corresponding reference;
- 4.1.9. Do not allow plagiarism or self-plagiarism;
- 4.1.10. Strictly observe copyright in the academic activities;
- 4.1.11. Use comprehensive literature and sources in the study course, references to other specialists of the relevant industry and not only the study literature developed by a concrete member of academic staff, acknowledge scientific work of other scientists;
- 4.1.12. Do not involve students in solution of disagreements between RTU academic staff, researchers and general staff;
- 4.1.13. Prepare original examination tasks and regularly update them;
- 4.1.14. Take into account opinions expressed in the study course evaluation questionnaires.
- 4.2. RTU staff notifies the head of the respective structural unit, the Vice-Rector or the Rector on the breaches of academic integrity.
- 4.3. When members of RTU staff in their study or academic activities notice plagiarism features or other breaches of academic integrity in academic or research works of RTU academic staff, they notify the RTU Rector (in the form of an application) about their suspicions, attaching confirmative facts. A breach of academic integrity is evaluated by the RTU Ethics Commission, following the resolution of which the final decision is taken by the RTU Rector or a person authorized by Rector.
- 4.4. RTU general staff and administration promote observation of the principles of academic integrity in their work.
- 4.5. RTU general staff and administration violate the principles of academic integrity, when:
 - 4.5.1. They punish with no reason or ignore RTU academic staff, researchers or students who notify about the breaches of academic integrity;
 - 4.5.2. Make notification about such breaches complicated, encumbering or even impossible by ignoring or concealing facts of breaches and admit discrimination in evaluation of the breaches;
 - 4.5.3. Conceal or falsify data on achievements and other performance indicators to obtain a higher rating or avoid negative publicity;
 - 4.5.4. Do not observe confidentiality in summarizing expert opinions and other assessments of academic works;
 - 4.5.5. Admit a conflict of interests.
- 4.6. The RTU Rector or a person authorized by Rector apply a disciplinary penalty to the member of academic or general staff, who violates the principles of academic integrity, in conformity with laws and regulations of RTU and the Republic of Latvia.

5. CONSIDERATION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY BREACHES OF STUDENTS

- 5.1. RTU members of academic staff make an oral reprimand to a student for a breach of academic integrity or notify in writing the Faculty Dean or the head of an affiliation about it by completing a statement on the breach of academic integrity. The form of that statement is determined by the respective RTU order.
- 5.2. In the statement on the breach of academic integrity, a student is authorized to provide explanation on their behavior.

- 5.3. Having established the breach of academic integrity and having evaluated the degree of its severity, a member of academic staff can apply the following measures to the respective student:
 - 5.3.1. Reduce the grade for the examination;
 - 5.3.2. Assign to perform the examination task repeatedly (on another topic or perform another task);
 - 5.3.3. To suspend the student from the examination, making the corresponding entry about it in the examination record sheet;
 - 5.3.4. To suspend the student from passing the final examination – to require the student to repeatedly undertake a course/module or a unit;
 - 5.3.5. To annul a course grade, if the breach is acknowledged until the beginning of the next semester;
 - 5.3.6. To submit a recommendation to the Faculty Dean or head of an affiliation to warn the student on possible exmatriculation or to recommend to exmatriculate the student.
- 5.4. In the event it is established that a student uses or has used unauthorized supplementary aids, the student is suspended from the examination and a decision is taken on applying a disciplinary penalty to them. If unauthorized supplementary aids are used during an examination, students are suspended from the examination, their examination results are assessed as 1 (very-very poor) and the missed academic assignments are settled in accordance with the Study Results Assessment Regulations.
- 5.5. If, when evaluating written works of students (home works, essays, study works, presentations, graduation papers, etc.), features of plagiarism are established, the statement specifies which parts of a written work match with the work of another author by providing a source (and/or internet source) with which the student's written work matches and the volume of such matching.
- 5.6. When evaluating a breach of academic integrity and deciding about the applicable penalty, the following must be taken into account:
 - 5.6.1. The severity of the breach of academic integrity;
 - 5.6.2. The form of examination;
 - 5.6.3. The amount, volume and significance of plagiarism fragments in the work, when plagiarism is established in the student's work;
 - 5.6.4. Former cases of plagiarism admitted by the student and other types of breaches.
- 5.7. Having received a statement on the breach of academic integrity, the Dean of the faculty or the head of an affiliation evaluates such statement within three working days and makes a decision. The Dean of the faculty or the head of the affiliation may retain the decision made by the lecturer in force, amend or supplement it, including:
 - 5.7.1. Establish a commission for more profound consideration of the breach;
 - 5.7.2. To annul the course grade, if the breach is established by the end of the next semester;
 - 5.7.3. To recommend RTU administration to issue a warning on exmatriculation of the student or to exmatriculate them.
- 5.8. All breaches academic integrity are electronically registered in the student's file.
- 5.9. The student may contest the taken decisions:
 - 5.9.1. Submitting an application to the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs in the event of annulment of the study course results;

- 5.9.2. Submitting an application to the Rector in the event of a warning on exmatriculation or exmatriculation.
- 5.10. If the suspicions about plagiarism have occurred by using a computerized plagiarism control system, further checking of the student's work is organized in accordance with the work evaluation procedure, which is approved by councils of the faculties participating in the plagiarism control system.

RTU Code of Academic Integrity has been developed pursuant to:

- Centre for Academic Integrity, Concept of Academic Integrity, Riga 2007. www.agc.edu.lv. As of 20.02.2015.
- Regulations on Academic Integrity at the University of Latvia. Available at: <http://www.lu.lv/par/dokumenti/noteikumiunkartibas/godigums/>, as of 20.02.2015.
- Plagiarism prevention webpage Plagiarism.org. Available at: www.plagiarism.org, as of 20.02.2015.
- Cambridge University Best Academic Practice and Plagiarism Policy. Available at: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/examiners/>, as of 20.02.2015.
- Vilnis Tomsons, Plagiarism Control in Study Works, LLU Academic Conference 30.01.2015.

Chair of the Senate

E.Gaile-Sarkane

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