



**RIGA
GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF
LAW**

APPROVED
by the Riga Graduate School of Law
Senate meeting of 25 September
2025

Decision No. 2025/7, Point 1.2 of the Minutes

Riga Graduate School of Law Academic Honesty Policy

1. General Provisions

1.1. The aim of the Academic Honesty Policy is to uphold academic honesty and research integrity at Riga Graduate School of Law (hereinafter - RGSL).

1.2. The Academic Honesty Policy explains the basic principles of academic honesty, their observance and the main procedures for examining violations of academic honesty, thereby strengthening the academic culture, implementing a unified approach and promoting the quality improvement process at RGSL.

1.3. RGSL students, academic and administrative staff have a duty to uphold academic honesty, prevent violations of academic honesty and inform about violations of academic honesty.

2. Terms used in the document

2.1. **Academic honesty** – a set of core values binding on every RGSL staff member, including students, which includes honesty, ethics, trust and fairness and are the basis for decision-making and the performance of activities in education, research and the academic environment.

2.2. **Assignments** – works developed by students and completed tasks during the study process, such as final theses, essays, reports, presentations, protocols, studies, projects and other assignments.

2.3. **Research integrity** – constant and active adherence to ethical principles and professional standards is essential for responsible research practice.

2.4. **Plagiarism** – presenting ideas borrowed from other sources without appropriate reference to these sources, further expressing in one's own name the thoughts expressed or written by another person without indicating an accurate and correctly formatted reference to the relevant author and source, or re-expressing one's previously published thoughts without indicating the original source (including self-plagiarism).

3. Respect and promotion of academic honesty

3.1. Respect for academic honesty and ethics, as well as verification of the originality of the content of assignments throughout the study process, is essential for promoting a high academic culture and ensuring equal conditions in the assessment and recognition of study results.

3.2. RGSL academic and administrative staff have a duty to promote the understanding of students and other learners about the observance of academic honesty and ethics, to strengthen academic honesty and to cooperate in reducing the spread of violations.

3.3. The implementers of the study programme, in cooperation with the RGSL Library, must ensure sufficient access to information resources necessary for the full acquisition of the research and academic writing knowledge, skills and attitudes included in the RGSL study programmes.

3.4. The Programme Directors annually summarise information on identified violations of academic honesty and take this information into account when reviewing the content and implementation of the study programme.

4. Types of academic honesty violations

4.1. Plagiarism in academic and research works, dishonest conduct of students, academic and administrative staff in the process of study, education and research is considered a violation of academic honesty.

4.2. RGSL has a zero-tolerance policy regarding plagiarism. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, cases where a student:

4.2.1. uses any source in any way without proper citation;

4.2.2. makes extensive use of a source or several sources (e.g., copies long paragraphs) and provides only one citation at the end (e.g., at the end of a page or at the end of a chapter);

4.2.3. uses any type of visual material (e.g., images, graphs, charts) without proper citation to the original source;

4.2.4. partially or completely uses their previous work without indicating a reference to the original work (self-plagiarism).

4.3. Inappropriate academic writing includes, but is not limited to, cases where the student has not used the appropriate punctuation marks (for example, quotation marks) or has copied text from other sources, if the amount of copied text is disproportionately large in relation to the assignment. Inappropriate academic writing is not treated as plagiarism, but it should be taken into account when determining the grade.

4.4. Examples of academically dishonest and unethical behaviour by students (also applicable to other learners and graduates):

- 4.4.1. use of unauthorised aids, which also includes the use of unauthorised artificial intelligence tools;
- 4.4.2. copying from other students during the assignments;
- 4.4.3. unequally low performance of independent work in the form of group work assignments, without indicating the amount of personal contribution;
- 4.4.4. incorrect analysis of research data or presentation of results;
- 4.4.5. transferring one's academic work or parts thereof to others, agreeing to their use without indicating the origin of the content;
- 4.4.6. incorrect generation, presentation of research data and falsification of results;
- 4.4.7. use of ghost-writers (relatives, friends, acquaintances, professionals, companies, etc.) services (purchased, donated, stolen, etc.) for the development of academic works and presenting them as one's own;
- 4.4.8. unauthorised acquisition or publication of assignment questions, tasks or answers;
- 4.4.9. offering any material value, property or other benefit for performing or not performing any action in the academic interests of the student or another person;
- 4.4.10. using one's position or personal circumstances to influence colleagues and lecturers with the aim of obtaining favourable treatment and unequal conditions;
- 4.4.11. participation in another person's violation of academic honesty, withholding or concealing information;
- 4.4.12. other similar unfair practices.

4.5. Examples of academically dishonest and unethical behaviour by academic and administrative staff:

- 4.5.1. unjustified punishment or ignoring of RGSU lecturers, researchers and students in cases where information about violations of academic honesty is received;
- 4.5.2. obstruction of the flow of information about violations of academic honesty;
- 4.5.3. concealment or falsification of information about violations of academic honesty;
- 4.5.4. obstruction of the flow of information about violations of academic honesty; concealment or falsification of information about violations of academic honesty; failure to observe confidentiality in compiling assessments of expert examinations and other academic works, premature publication of the content of examinations;
- 4.5.6. allowing a conflict of interest;

- 4.5.7. use of academic works, study course materials of students or colleagues without the author's permission or correct reference;
- 4.5.8. failure to observe ethical principles in the development and presentation of study course materials;
- 4.5.9. failure to observe ethical principles in the design and implementation of research;
- 4.5.10. conduct that allows violations of academic honesty;
- 4.5.11. failure to observe ethical principles in the design and implementation of research; conduct that allows violations of academic honesty; incorrect generation, analysis and presentation of research data;
- 4.5.12. use of ghost-writers (relatives, friends, acquaintances, professionals, companies, etc.) services (purchased, donated, stolen, etc.) for the development of study materials and research and passing them off as one's own;
- 4.5.13. failure to recognise or incorrect assignment of intellectual property rights.

5. Review of violations

5.1. Methods of determining violations of academic honesty:

5.1.1. Signs of a possible violation of academic honesty may be detected by the lecturer of the study course, the supervisor of the final thesis, a member of the defence committee, a reviewer, a representative of the administrative staff, other students, as well as other persons who have information about a possible violation.

5.1.2. The verification of the originality and copyright of academic works, including the final thesis, can be carried out using the automated systems used by RGSL.

5.2. Violations of academic honesty are classified as follows, depending on the severity of the violation:

5.2.1. undesirable practice (level 1) – a minor violation committed due to ignorance or without malicious intent and does not cause significant consequences for academic activities or does not cause damage to RGSL;

5.2.2. substantial violation (level 2) – an action that is unacceptable in an academic environment, which, regardless of its scope and purpose, has negative consequences for academic activities or causes damage to RGSL;

5.2.3. serious violation (level 3) – an action that is unacceptable in an academic environment, committed with malicious intent and has significant negative consequences for academic activities or causes significant damage to RGSL.

5.3. When deciding on the most appropriate penalty or other actions to be taken in the event of a violation, the following shall be taken into account:

5.3.1. the intention and attitudes of the perpetrator of the violation;

5.3.2. repeated commission of the violation;

5.3.3. in the case of mitigating circumstances, a lesser penalty may be imposed for the violation committed, while in the case of aggravating circumstances, a more severe penalty may be imposed.

5.4. Possible penalty and types of action in the event of a violation of academic honesty:

5.4.1. reduction of the grade;

5.4.2. failure of assessment;

5.4.3. retaking the examination or retaking the study course (for the retaking of the examination, if one is provided, the lecturer may set special rules, for example, writing an academic work on a different topic, changing the form of the examination, etc.);

5.4.4. review of the grade (if the violation is detected after the assessment is assigned);

5.4.5. forced interruption of studies for a certain period;

5.4.6. exmatriculation;

5.4.5. cancellation of the academic certificate (if the violation is detected after the academic certificate is issued);

5.4.6. cancellation of the diploma (if the violation is detected after the diploma is issued);

5.4.7. other action according to the circumstances.

6. Decision-making procedure

6.1. Regardless of the person who determines a possible violation of academic integrity, the Head of Study Department and the Programme Director are informed about it, who assess the severity of the violation in accordance with clause 5.2, as well as the circumstances of the case in accordance with clause 5.3. In the case of a repeated violation, a more severe penalty or action is applied than in the case of a first-time violation.

6.2 In cases of violations of academic honesty by students:

6.2.1. the decision on the consequences of undesirable practice (level 1) is made by the academic staff, in case of doubt, in consultation with the Programme Director;

6.2.2. in case of a substantial violation (level 2), the decision on the consequences is made by the Programme Director, in consultation with the responsible academic staff;

6.2.3. if the Programme Director establishes a serious violation (level 3), the Programme Director may recommend to the Rector to exmatriculate the student, to take a break from studies for a certain period, to cancel the academic certificate (if the violation was established after the issuance of the academic certificate) or the diploma (if the violation was established after the issuance of the academic diploma); in this case, the decision is made by the Rector after clarifying the circumstances of the case.

6.3. During the clarification of the circumstances of the case, the decision-makers are given the opportunity to provide the student with an explanation, as well as request the necessary documents and information from the RGSL employees and visiting lecturers in order to make a reasoned, objective and appropriate decision. The decision is made within one (1) month from the detection of the violation.

6.4. The Study Department shall keep records of student violations of academic honesty in the student files.

6.5. The student has the right to appeal the decision within one (1) month. Student appeal options:

6.5.1. In the case of undesirable practice (level 1), the decision of the faculty member may be appealed to the Programme Director (in the case of undesirable results, the student may appeal the decision of the Programme Director to the RGSL Academic Arbitration Panel).

6.5.2. In the case of a substantial violation (level 2), the student may appeal the decision of the Programme Director to the RGSL Academic Arbitration Panel.

6.5.3. In the case of a serious violation (level 3), the student may appeal the decision of the Rector to the RGSL Academic Arbitration Panel.

6.6. Possible dishonest conduct and violations of academic integrity by academic and administrative staff are examined by the RGSL Academic Arbitration Panel.

7. Annex

Annex 1: “Procedure for reviewing and making decisions on violations of academic honesty by students”

Procedure for reviewing and making decisions on violations of academic honesty by students

Severity of the violation	Types of punishment	Faculty member	Programme Director	Rector	Academic Arbitration Court
Undesirable practice (level 1)	1) Reduction of the grade; 2) failure of assessment; 3) retaking the examination or study course; 4) other action according to the circumstances.	Makes a decision	Consults faculty members; makes a decision in the event of an appeal	If the Programme Director, while performing his/her duties as a faculty member, determines a violation, the rector shall make a decision in the event of an appeal.	Makes a decision in case of repeated appeal
Substantial violation (level 2)	1) Reduction of the grade; 2) failure of assessment; 3) retaking the examination or study course; 4) review of the grade (if the violation is detected after the grade has been assigned); 5) other action according to the circumstances.	Provides necessary information to the Programme Director	Makes a decision		Makes a decision in case of appeal
Serious violation (level 3)	1) Forced interruption of studies for a certain period of time; 2) exmatriculation; 3) cancellation of the academic certificate (if the violation is detected after the issuance of the academic certificate);	Provides necessary information to the Programme Director	Recommends a specific penalty to the Rector	Makes a decision based on the recommendations of the Programme Director	Makes a decision in case of appeal

	4) cancellation of the diploma (if the violation is detected after the issuance of the diploma); 5) other action according to the circumstances.				
--	---	--	--	--	--