

Riga Graduate School of Law Research Ethics Policy

I General provisions

1. Riga Graduate School of Law (hereinafter – RGSL) Research Ethics Policy (hereinafter – Policy) comprises principles of responsible behaviour by the RGSL personnel in scientific publications, which concerns people as participants of research.
2. The principles prescribed by the Policy supplements and specifies the requirements of research ethics prescribed by international documents and normative acts of the Republic of Latvia.
3. The purpose of the Policy is to protect the rights, health, security and dignity of research participants, not allowing any damage to the research participants, society and the surrounding environment as well as foster the reputation and excellence of the RGSL as a scientific institution. This purpose is implemented by respecting the scientific freedom of researchers and purposes of scientific research.
4. The observance of the principles prescribed by the Policy is binding on the RGSL personnel and individuals, who carry out research in the framework of the RGSL or in co-operation with the RGSL, as well as RGSL personnel participating in research of other institutions.
5. The observance of the principles prescribed by the Policy is personal responsibility of each researcher, by planning research, during research, as well as collecting and publishing research results.
6. The Policy refers to:
 - 6.1. research which involves people and which obtains and processes personal data;
 - 6.2. research which involves people that comprises research participant's physical participation in research, monitoring or exploring opinions;
 - 6.3. research which comprises other risks to the society.

II Principles of research ethics

7. The RGSL personnel observes the following research ethics principles in their scientific activity:

7.1. The principle of autonomy comprises a requirement to respect person's freedom of choice and right to information. Before involving a potential participant in research, a researcher obtains informed consent of the participant, as well as respects the rights of persons which cannot grant informed consent, within the limits of possibility informing these persons according to their sense of perception and by obtaining informed consent from their legal representatives. Every person, who is involved in research has the right to discontinue participation in the scientific research at any moment. It is the obligation of researcher to inform the participant in research about the ways how to discontinue participation in research in the process of informed consent.

7.2. The principles of doing-good and no-harm prescribe that before the commencement of research and during research a researcher assesses the possible risks for persons involved in research, the society and the surrounding environment. It is the task of a research within the limits of possibility to increase the gains of science and society as well as predict and prevent risks created by research. If it is not possible to avoid the risks, the gains from the research results should be substantially greater than the possible risks. It is the obligation of researchers to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the provided information by the involved persons.

7.3. The principle of justice prescribes that risks and benefits are divided by preventing discrimination of separate persons or societal groups.

7.4. The principle of authorship and publication integrity prescribes that the basis to determine authorship is a significant contribution to the development, data collection, analysis, interpretation, preparation of publication and critical review of the research. All authors shall approve the final version and shall assume responsibility for research, unless provided otherwise. One shall include a notification on the author's contribution in order to specify the role of each author and one shall point out to those, who have contributed, but do not comply with the principles of authorship, for example, co-operation partners and sponsors. Authors should reveal any financial or non-financial conflicts of interest and sources of support. In the event of mistakes one shall immediately issue amendments or revocations, by pointing out clear reasons. Negative results are equally important as positive results, and they have to be published. In all notifications authors shall observe honesty, transparency and integrity by clearly outlining assumptions of research, restrictions and lack of knowledge. These principles equally apply to all kinds of publications, including the subscribed journals and open access journals.

III Enforcement of research ethics principles

8. The head of research ensures that the RGSL personnel who is involved in research know and observe the principles prescribed by the Policy, as well as requirements prescribed by the normative acts of the Republic of Latvia, the European Union and specific requirements for the respective field.

9. The academic personnel follows the observance of principles of ethics and legal norms in research conducted by students.

10. Before commencing research prescribed by Point 6 of the Policy, the head of research receives the acknowledgement of the Senate, who fulfils the functions of the Scientific Council.

11. For research prescribed by Point 6 of the Policy and which is conducted by the RGSL personnel in co-operation with other scientific institutions of the Republic of Latvia, it is necessary to obtain only one acknowledgement of the competent institution's ethics committee or external ethics committee acknowledgement prescribed by the normative acts of the Republic of Latvia.

12. For research prescribed by Point 6 of the Policy and which is conducted by the RGSL personnel in co-operation with foreign partners, one has to obtain external ethics committee acknowledgment prescribed by the normative acts of the Republic of Latvia or the acknowledgement of the RGSL Senate concerning the part of research, which is carried out in the Republic of Latvia.