

PUBLISHED

According to Order No V-350 of 20 November 2020 of the Director of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences

APPROVED

According to Resolution ATN-7 of the meeting of the Academic Council of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences of 18 November 2020

Translation from Lithuanian

VILNIUS UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

CODE OF ACADEMIC ETHICS

SECTION I GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Code of Academic Ethics (the Code) of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences (the University) defines the basic provisions of ethical academic behaviour of the members of the University's academic community that are not directly regulated by the normative legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania, the University's working procedures, internal documents of studies, and agreements.

2. The Code was prepared in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the laws of the Republic of Lithuania, the Recommendations for the Adoption, Implementation and Supervision of Codes of Academic Ethics of Scientific and Educational Institutions, the Code of Ethics for Scientists of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the provisions of the Great Charter of Universities, the Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of the European Science Foundation, the Recommendation of the European Commission on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, the Statute of the University, and other internal legal acts of the University.

3. Concepts used in the Code:

3.1. **Academic ethics** is a set of universally accepted values ensuring transparency, fairness, and justice of the process of science and education, equality, non-discrimination, responsibility of persons participating in this process, sustainable use of resources, academic freedom, impartiality in the evaluation of science and education, trust, respect, and protection of intellectual property.

3.2. **Academic community** is the administrative, teaching and scientific staff of the University, as well as students and listeners.

3.3. **Academic misconduct** is any act that violates the norms of general ethics, teaching practice, applied science and artistic practice, and the academic activities of students and listeners.

4. Objectives of the Code of Academic Ethics:

4.1. Preventing unethical behaviour, with a focus on prevention;

4.2. Defining the limits of responsibility: the Code regulates the responsibilities of members of the academic community;

4.3. Creating a democratic working environment that fosters trust and creativity and encourages socially responsible behaviour;

4.4. Mobilising the University's academic community to recognise, uphold and promote the fundamental principles of academic ethics (Section II);

- 4.5. Identifying the limits of tolerance: highlighting behaviours that should be avoided in terms of academic ethics;
 - 4.6. Assisting the University's academic community in assessing and dealing with specific situations in life where issues related to academic activities arise;
 - 4.7. Supervising and controlling the quality of the University's academic activities from an ethical perspective;
 - 4.8. Building public trust: the values and standards set out in the Code should ensure that members of the academic community are trustworthy because they act in accordance with the respective qualification requirements and principles of academic ethics.
5. Functions of the Code of Academic Ethics:
- 5.1. Serving as the main instrument of academic ethics at the University;
 - 5.2. Helping the University to understand its mission in society, combining philosophical statements and high ideals with optimal practice;
 - 5.3. Demonstrating to the public that the University cares about responsible, professional behaviour; and shaping (and protecting) the image of the University;
 - 5.4. Defining the norms of ethical subject (academic) conduct of the members of the University's academic community;
 - 5.5. Encouraging the academic community to perform its functions with integrity and efficiency;
 - 5.6. Serving as the University's tool for regulating labour relations;
 - 5.7. Protecting individual consciousness and encouraging the academic community to rely on its own understanding of values;
 - 5.8. Specifying the disciplinary measures (positive and negative sanctions);
 - 5.9. Serving as a tool for education and moral competence, becoming a basis for professional meetings and discussions;
 - 5.10. Helping achieve a high level of awareness and responsibility;
 - 5.11. Performing regulatory functions, protecting the needs and interests of those it serves and aligning organisational behaviour with society's values;
 - 5.12. Helping navigate complex, high-stakes, dynamic, stressful situations that are full of conflict and providing a solution to dealing with them.

SECTION II PRINCIPLES OF ACADEMIC ETHICS

- 6. Key principles of academic ethics:
 - 6.1. Integrity. Members of the academic community, in the pursuit of truth, knowledge, education and equality, have a duty to insist on complete integrity in their learning, teaching, research and performing other functions in other academic activities (e.g., administrative functions).
 - 6.2. Trust. Members of the academic community, in the exercise of their rights and duties, foster a culture of trust that encourages free exchange of ideas and enables everyone to fulfil their potential.
 - 6.3. Justice. The members of the academic community must develop objective and uniform institutional requirements, practices and procedures as well as ensure their proper implementation in order to achieve justice and to build relationships among members of the academic community.
 - 6.4. Respect. Members of the academic community must recognise and respect human rights, ideas, suggestions, justified criticism, copyright, etc., by promoting respect in their relationships for themselves and for others, for scientific activities, study, study-related activities and other activities (e.g., administrative activities).
 - 6.5. Responsibilities. Members of the academic community, while encouraging each other to be responsible for their actions, must not only observe the requirements of ethical behaviour in research, study, teaching and other academic activities (e.g., administrative activities) themselves, but they must also hold other members of the academic community both personally and collectively accountable.
 - 6.6. Equality. Members of the academic community are equal before national legislation, the legislation adopted by the University, and the heads of the University, i.e. it is prohibited to treat substantially the same facts differently on an arbitrary basis. This does not imply a prohibition of the

application of different conditions or the differentiation of identical relationships, but it is only possible for objective and justifiable reasons.

7. The list of principles of academic ethics and forms of behaviour that violate them contained in the Code should not and cannot be considered exhaustive.

8. The principles of academic ethics set out in paragraph 6 of the Code apply to members of the academic community in all their academic relationships in relation to research, study, study-related activities and other academic activities (e.g., administrative activities), both with other members of the academic community and with other persons with whom they have a relationship related to their studies and/or research (e.g., commissioned research, outsourced training, internships, etc.).

SECTION III GENERAL ETHICAL STANDARDS

9. The Ethical Standards of the University's Academic Community set out the basic principles of ethical subject (academic) conduct, which reflect the University's academic ethics policy.

10. Academic freedom refers to the right of members of the University's academic community to express openly their views on the organisation and administration of studies and research, to express constructive criticism uncensored, to develop freely their scientific activities in the choice of methods, and to be free from constraints. The responsible exercise of this right requires that members of the academic community recognise the same right in other members of the community.

11. The responsible exercise of academic freedom is opposed by:

- 11.1. Intolerance of dissent and reasoned criticism from members of the academic community;
- 11.2. Ignoring or deliberately restricting the right to express and defend your views;
- 11.3. Ignoring or deliberately restricting the right to respond to criticism or accusations;
- 11.4. Participating in research or experiments that result in harm to humans, nature, society or culture.

12. Belonging to the University community imposes an obligation to respect the interests of the University, to be loyal to the University and to contribute to the achievement of its objectives in the field of studies and applied science and arts. It is compulsory:

12.1. To actively uphold standards of academic integrity and the principle of open access in the study process and in applied science and arts activities;

12.2. When initiating and/or carrying out projects on behalf of the University, to ensure that the results of such projects serve the general interests of the University and are made publicly available;

12.3. To report to the Ethics Committee any cases that may involve corruption, fraud or an attempt to exert undue influence on a member of the University's community;

12.4. Not to exercise their right to vote when a question of funding, sanction or promotion is being considered by the University's self-governance bodies that may give rise to a conflict of interest;

12.5. To obtain the written consent of the University in order to use the University's facilities and name for activities not related to the University's operational purposes (paragraph 10 of the University's Statute);

12.6. To share available information with the Committee and/or the Ombudsperson for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania upon request.

13. Relations between members of the University's academic community are based on the principles of respect, goodwill, impartiality, and non-discrimination. Violations of academic ethics:

13.1. Discrimination against members of the academic community by words, actions or academic assessment, and tolerance of such discrimination;

13.2. Humiliation of a member of the academic community by exercising one's superiority;

13.3. Discrimination against members of the academic community on the grounds of participation in political, social, cultural or sporting activities;

13.4. Harassment of members of the academic community where the dignity of a person is violated on the grounds of age, gender or sexual orientation, disability, appearance, race or nationality, religion or beliefs, and where the purpose is to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, or where such an environment is created, and where conduct that violates human rights and degrades human dignity is tolerated;

14. Relations between members of the academic community are based on the principles of collegiality and academic solidarity, aimed at ensuring the quality of studies and research and a creative atmosphere. Academic ethics is violated:

14.1. When professional competition between colleagues takes unfair forms, illegal and dishonest dealings take place, information is withheld, petty conflicts and intrigues are escalated;

14.2. When a member of the academic community, in the presence of other members, disparages the teaching and/or applied scientific or artistic skills, theoretical views and personal qualities of an absent colleague;

14.3. When the awarding of a degree, teaching title, prize or other forms of recognition of a colleague's performance is obstructed on the basis of personal, business or political considerations;

14.4. When psychological pressure is put on a member of the academic community to obtain an undeserved grade or to conceal academic dishonesty;

14.5. When confidential information about members of the academic community (e.g., academic achievements, salary, career intentions, health, personal affairs, etc.) is disclosed or discussed in public, except where, in accordance with the University's established procedures, a person is applying for a post and discussion of their academic, career achievements, experience, professional and personal qualities is necessary for the purpose of assessing their suitability for the post);

15. The material and financial resources of the University are used in a sustainable and responsible manner to fulfil the University's obligations. This provision is violated by:

15.1. The use of the material and financial resources of the University for political activities, private business or personal needs;

15.2. Wilfully damaging or destroying University property or neglecting it.

SECTION IV ETHICS IN TEACHING PRACTICE

16. The relationship between the lecturer and students is based on the principles of academic cooperation and transparency. Commitment to non-academic obligations may lead to conflicts of interest, so ambiguous relations with students should be avoided. Academic ethics is contradicted by:

16.1. The pursuit of a non-academic relationship by a student or lecturer with a lecturer or student, respectively, in the context of teaching a course, supervising a research project, or other direct academic relationship, with a view to benefiting from the academic relationship;

16.2. Taking on the role of a lecturer in relation to a family member, close friend (with an immediate, close relationship), business partner (examination, supervising papers, etc.) where there is a possibility of avoiding this role;

16.3. Requesting and/or accepting, directly and indirectly (through other persons), gifts, favours of a non-academic or academic nature not directly related to the courses being studied, from members of the academic community.

16.4. Academic bribery, i.e. offering, giving or receiving remuneration for academic services (whether personal or group).

17. The assessment of a student's knowledge and skills must be fair, honest and consistent with the objectives of the course:

17.1. The lecturer must react in a principled manner and report to the Dean of the Faculty and the Academic Ethics Committee cases of student dishonesty, such as plagiarism, copying other people's work, falsification of data, counterfeiting of examination or test results, use of unauthorised means during an examination or test, submitting someone else's written work as one's own, writing other students' written assignments for remuneration, purchasing a written assignment and submitting it for assessment by a member of the academic community, submitting the same assessed assignment for the purposes of a different course, unless the assessed assignment is part of (a) continuous assignment(s) in (an)other subject(s);

17.2. The lecturer is obliged to store the student's personal data in accordance with the procedures set out in Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation), the Law of the

Republic of Lithuania on the Legal Protection of Personal Data, and the Description of the Procedure for the Processing of Personal Data in Vilnius University of Applied Sciences;

17.3. The lecturer must avoid linking the student's grades to the student's participation/non-participation in political or social activities acceptable/unacceptable to the lecturer;

17.4. The lecturer must, during the assessment, provide reasonable accommodation for students with special needs (e.g., visual, hearing, mobility and other disabilities) to perform the tasks, unless it is reasonably impossible to perform such tasks.

18. The atmosphere of trust is undermined by the disclosure of confidential information about a student. The principle of confidentiality of information requires:

18.1. Disclosing information to third parties about a student's academic grades or penalties only with the student's written consent or on the legal grounds of foreseeable harm to others;

18.2. Avoiding discussing a student's various achievements, except in the case of student appeals, discussion of examination or test results, and other academic matters whose objective resolution clearly warrants discussion;

18.3. Using private information for teaching or research purposes only with the student's written consent;

18.4. Ensuring that comments on a student's written work not submitted for public defence are not made available to third parties.

SECTION V ETHICS IN APPLIED SCIENTIFIC AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES

19. The members of the University's academic community base their applied scientific and artistic activities on freedom of thought, dissemination of ideas, integrity, and the pursuit of truth. Recognising truth and cognition as the highest aspiration of applied scientific and artistic activities, and expecting trust and fair recognition of their achievements, members of the academic community engaged in applied scientific and artistic activities commit themselves to the principle of academic integrity. The principle of academic integrity in applied scientific and artistic activities is violated by:

19.1. Falsification, counterfeiting or manipulation (e.g., creating non-existent data, adjusting existing data to improve or worsen results). Typical cases of falsification, counterfeiting or manipulation:

19.1.1. Forged signatures, certificates, report data or results and other documents (e.g., data or results of academic assignments (laboratory research papers, course papers and other papers));

19.1.2. A non-existent source, an incorrect source page, the date of access to the website, or other inaccurate information in the source description;

19.1.3. Withholding findings that contradict the hypothesis and/or questions of the study and/or the conclusions of the study;

19.1.4. Provision of deliberately misleading information about the methodology of an empirical study;

19.1.5. Unjustified (unwarranted) imposition of co-authorship on students, colleagues, subordinates or supervisors;

19.1.6. Unjustified denial or concealment of the intellectual and/or financial contributions of those who have contributed to applied scientific and artistic activities.

19.2. Theft or deliberate destruction of empirical research data, computer software, samples of empirical material, manuscripts.

19.3. Plagiarism, i.e. the appropriation of ideas and texts without attribution, i.e. the passing off of someone else's ideas as your own. Typical cases of plagiarism include:

19.3.1. Text by a different author is presented without quotation marks, such as inverted commas, or any other form of distinction from the rest of the text (e.g., as a separate paragraph, in italics);

19.3.2. Retelling or quoting someone else's idea, illustrations or data without indicating the source of the information.

19.4. Unfair, biased criticism of a colleague's work and deliberate belittling of a colleague's work on the grounds of personal dislike, competition, political or other motives unrelated to the professionalism of the applied scientific and artistic activity being assessed.

19.5. Assisting another person in committing an academic act that violates the principle of academic honesty.

19.6. Academic bribery, i.e. offering, giving or receiving remuneration for academic services (whether personal or group).

SECTION VI ETHICS IN THE ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES OF STUDENTS AND LISTENERS

20. Students and listeners are guided by the principle of academic integrity in their studies. The principle of academic integrity in the study process is violated by:

- 20.1. Copying other people's work or allowing someone else to do so;
 - 20.2. Failure to report perceived cases of academic dishonesty of members of the academic community;
 - 20.3. Provision of answers, the use of crib notes, the use of electronic or virtual communication devices or other technologies to obtain an unfair assessment result, ignoring the examiner's instructions on the assessment procedure;
 - 20.4. Plagiarism, i.e. presenting someone else's written work as your own;
 - 20.5. Using another person's work or the results of their work for assessment;
 - 20.6. The submission of the same piece of work for multiple courses, unless the assessed assignment is part of (a) continuous assignment(s) in (an)other subject(s);
 - 20.7. Fraudulent assessment, where a person other than the student being assessed is present at the time of assessment.
 - 20.8. Academic bribery, i.e. offering, giving or receiving remuneration for academic services (whether personal or group).
21. Students and listeners undertake to use the University's infrastructure (scientific and computer equipment, the library, and other resources) in a responsible, sustainable and appropriate manner.

SECTION VII MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF ACADEMIC ETHICS

22. Every member of the University's academic community undertakes to abide by the provisions of this Code and not to tolerate its violation.

23. The Code shall be monitored by the Academic Ethics Committee (the Committee) in accordance with the provisions of the Code and the Committee's rules of procedure approved by the Director of the University.

24. The Committee is composed of nine members:

24.1. Seven members are appointed by the Academic Council of the University in accordance with the procedure laid down by it;

24.2. Two members are appointed by the Student Representative Body of the University.

25. The composition of the Committee is approved by an order of the Director of the University.

26. The term of office of a member of the Committee is three years.

27. Only a person of good repute may be appointed a member of the Committee. The same person may not serve more than two consecutive terms as a member of the Committee.

28. In the event of the resignation/completion of studies or other incapacity of a member of the Committee, a new member of the Committee is appointed in accordance with paragraphs 24.1 and 24.2 of this Code.

29. The Committee initiates additions or amendments to the Code and submits them to the Academic Council of the University for consideration and approval.

30. The Committee receives and considers requests about possible violations of ethics in the academic community of the University.

31. Meetings of the Committee are convened following a written request concerning a possible violation of ethics or for the purpose of initiating additions or amendments to the Code.

32. Requests concerning possible violations of the Code are submitted in writing to the Chairperson of the Committee. Only clearly reasoned and signed requests are accepted for consideration. Requests are registered by the Chairperson of the Committee. Anonymous requests are not considered.

33. The Committee may receive requests from members of the University's academic community regarding possible violations of ethics by a member of the University's academic

community. The Committee does not consider a request for possible violations of ethics if more than one calendar year has elapsed between the date of the commission or discovery of the possible violation of ethics and the date of receipt of the request. The Committee notifies the person in writing of its decision not to examine the request no later than five working days of receipt of the request.

34. Meetings of the Committee are convened and chaired by the Chairperson of the Committee. In the case of a request concerning the Chairperson of the Committee, the meeting is convened and chaired by the oldest of the remaining members of the Committee. The Committee has the right to invite experts to its meetings.

35. The Committee examines the request, takes a decision and replies in writing to the applicant within 30 calendar days of receipt of the request. The examination period may be extended by a reasoned decision of the Committee.

36. The member of the University's academic community who is the subject of the request is informed of the content of the request and provides a written explanation within five working days from the date of notification. The Committee has the right to take a decision if the member of the academic community in respect of whom the request has been received refuses or fails to provide an explanation within the time limit.

37. The member of the academic community in respect of whom the request has been received is entitled to attend the meeting of the Committee at which the request is being considered.

38. Members of the Committee are required to maintain confidentiality and not to disclose the material under investigation and/or information about the material under investigation while the investigation is ongoing. The work material of the Committee is confidential. Only the decisions of the Committee are made public.

39. Decisions of the Committee are valid if at least five members of the Committee are present during a meeting. Decisions of the Committee are taken by a simple majority. In the event of equal numbers of votes, the Chairperson of the Committee has a casting vote.

40. The Committee takes a decision after examining the request and finding a violation of ethics, taking into account the gravity of the violation. The Committee's decision on the violation of ethics is communicated to the applicant, the offender, the Academic Council of the University, and the Director of the University.

41. The Director of the University, after receiving the decision of the Committee and taking into account the recommendations of the Committee on the application of sanctions, may impose one of the sanctions on the infringer of the Code.

42. Possible sanctions:

42.1. A personal warning (without disclosing the violation of ethics to the public);

42.2. A public warning (public disclosure of anonymised information about the violation of ethics);

42.3. A disciplinary sanction provided for in the laws of the Republic of Lithuania or in the documents regulating the study procedure at the University.

43. The decision of the Committee may be appealed to the Ombudsperson for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania.

44. The Code cannot provide for all cases of unethical behaviour; therefore, the Committee, when considering specific allegations of ethically inappropriate behaviour in cases not covered by the Code, may decide whether a particular act is compatible with the fundamental values of academic ethics as recognised by the academic community of the University, and whether it can be tolerated.

SECTION VIII FINAL PROVISIONS

45. The Code and any amendments or additions thereto are approved by the Academic Council of the University.

46. The Code is made publicly available on the University's website.

47. Every member of the University's academic community is obliged to act in accordance with this Code.

48. A member of the academic community must sign a declaration of integrity (as an attachment to the contract of employment or contract of study) upon taking up their position or beginning to study at the University.



**VILNIUS UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
FACULTY OF ...**

DECLARATION OF INTEGRITY OF A STUDENT/LISTENER

_____ 20____
(date)

Acknowledging that:

- Truth, knowledge, and understanding are the highest values of science and education;
- An advantage over other members of the academic community is gained only by fair means.

Recognising that academic integrity:

- Contributes to the openness and integration of the science and education system into the international research and higher education area, to the development of a sustainable science and education system, and to the development of ethically responsible individuals;
- Promotes academic ethics, the responsible exercise of academic freedom and the principle of fair competition;
- Builds confidence in the value of higher education and research and has a direct positive impact on the quality of studies and the reputation of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences;
- Limits the tolerance and flourishing of societal vices (especially corruption).

And understanding that:

- Each member of the academic community must take the initiative and responsibility for finding and applying solutions to academic dishonesty in every academic activity;
- The determination to adhere unconditionally to the principle and rules of academic integrity helps to reduce the prevalence of this problem.

By signing this declaration, I freely and knowingly undertake:

- To comply with the provisions of the Code of Academic Ethics of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences and other documents regulating ethical behaviour throughout the entire period of study;
- To take my responsibilities as a student seriously and carry them out in good faith;
- As a student, to set an example to other members of the academic community, not to tolerate cases of academic dishonesty and to fulfil my duty to report and disclose such cases;
- To contribute actively to the creation and fostering of a fair academic environment at Vilnius University of Applied Sciences.

I confirm that I am familiar with the provisions of the Code of Academic Ethics of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences and that I may be subject to the sanctions set out in the Code for violations of academic ethics during tests, examinations and other interim assessments, while preparing and reporting on (an) independent or final thesis (theses), conducting research, publishing the results of research (e.g., in publications, at events).

(Name and surname, group)

(Signature)



**VILNIUS UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
FACULTY OF ...**

DECLARATION OF INTEGRITY OF A MEMBER OF ACADEMIC STAFF

_____ 20____
(date)

Acknowledging that:

- Truth, knowledge, and understanding are the highest values of science and education;
- An advantage over other members of the academic community is gained only by fair means.

Considering that academic integrity:

- Contributes to the openness and integration of the science and education system into the international research and higher education area, to the development of a sustainable science and education system, and to the development of ethically responsible individuals;
- Promotes academic ethics, the responsible exercise of academic freedom and the principle of fair competition;
- Builds confidence in the value of higher education and research and has a direct positive impact on the quality of studies and the reputation of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences;
- Limits the tolerance and flourishing of societal vices.

And understanding that:

- Every member of the academic community has a duty to apply measures to prevent academic dishonesty;
- Adherence to the principles and rules of academic integrity helps to create and develop a culture of academic integrity.

By signing this declaration, I freely and knowingly undertake:

- To comply with the provisions of the Code of Academic Ethics and other documents regulating ethical behaviour throughout the period of employment at Vilnius University of Applied Sciences;
- To carry out my duties as a member of academic staff in a responsible and conscientious manner;
- To set an example to other members of the academic community, not to tolerate academic dishonesty and help to expose it;
- To contribute actively to the creation and fostering of a fair academic environment at Vilnius University of Applied Sciences.

I confirm that I am familiar with the provisions of the Code of Academic Ethics of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences and with the sanctions provided for in the Code for violation of the norms of academic ethics established by the University in the course of performing the duties of a member of academic staff, while conducting scientific research, performing artistic activities, and publishing the results of scientific research.

(Name and surname)

(Signature)