

On the procedure for handling cases of plagiarism in graduation theses of students at RTU Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology

Based on Clause 6 of the RTU Internal Regulations for Students, the RTU Code of Academic Integrity and the guidelines “Breach of Academic Integrity and Breach Consideration Procedures” developed by the RTU Study Department, the following procedure for handling plagiarism cases in students’ graduation theses submitted for preliminary defence or final defence (after this referred to as “thesis”) is established:

1. Students upload an electronic version of their thesis by the deadline set by the faculty:
 - in case of final defence, into the Register of Graduate Papers of RTU internal portal ORTUS according to the Order of the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs No 02000-01/115 “On the procedure for the submission and storage of electronic versions of graduation theses” (06.12.2011);
 - in case of preliminary defence, into the e-study course “Bachelor thesis” of the relevant study program.
2. Plagiarism control of submitted theses is carried out using text-matching software (after this referred to as “TMS”) available at RTU and the faculty and following the procedures established by RTU.
3. The plagiarism control technician designated by the faculty shall do the following within seven working days after the deadline for uploading the theses:
 - 3.1. review the reports produced by the TMS and select the theses whose similarity measure is equal to or more than 15%;
 - 3.2. make an in-depth analysis of the selected theses, evaluating the volume, type and significance of plagiarized passages in the context of each thesis;
 - 3.3. send the theses to the vice-dean for academic affairs of the faculty, directors of the relevant study programs and supervisors of the selected theses, together with a description of each selected thesis, including the name and surname of the author of the thesis, the title of the thesis, the date of the examination of the thesis, the name of the TMS and the reported value of the similarity measure, the potentially plagiarized passages of the thesis, the sources of information with which the match was found and the extent to which they match, as well as the report prepared by the TMS showing the matching parts of the thesis.
4. The director of the study program, upon receiving the reports sent by the plagiarism control technician designated by the faculty, shall review the theses within two working days, evaluating bad academic practices and/or plagiarism in each thesis following the RTU guidelines “Breach of Academic Integrity and Breach Consideration Procedures”, and inform the vice-dean for academic affairs of the faculty about the results of the final thesis evaluation.
5. In case of bad academic practice or plagiarism being identified in the thesis, the director of the relevant study program is responsible for the following:
 - 5.1. convening a meeting within two working days to decide on sanctions to be imposed on the author of the selected thesis, inviting to the meeting the vice-dean for academic affairs of the faculty, heads of the relevant departments and the supervisor of the selected thesis;
 - 5.2. complying with the RTU guidelines on “Breach of Academic Integrity and Breach Consideration Procedures” in the decision to impose sanctions on the author of the selected thesis;
 - 5.3. informing the author of the thesis, the reviewer (in the case of the final defence only) and the relevant chairperson of the final defence commission at which the thesis is to be defended (in the case of preliminary defence – pre-defence commission) of sanctions to be applied no later than one working day after the meeting, and preparing the signed statement of the breach of academic integrity by a student following the form adopted by RTU, reflecting the decision on sanctions to be applied to the author of the thesis;
 - 5.4. inviting the author of the thesis to explain the situation in the statement of the breach of academic integrity by a student within three working days of receiving the invitation;
 - 5.5. if the student fails to provide an explanation within three working days of being invited, documenting this in the statement of the breach of academic integrity by a student;
 - 5.6. submitting the original statement of the breach of academic integrity by a student to the dean of the faculty.

6. The dean shall make a further decision following the procedure defined in the RTU Code of Academic Integrity.
7. Following the decision of the dean, the secretary of the relevant study program is obliged to register the academic integrity breach in the student's academic profile.
8. The director of the study program referred to in paragraph 5 of this procedure may, if necessary, refer to the Curriculum Design and Testing Committee of the faculty for advice and/or recommendations on a particular plagiarism case. The student who is the subject of the sanction decision may also contact the Curriculum Design and Testing Committee of the faculty for clarification of the decision.
9. The student can appeal against the decision within ten working days after the dean's decision by applying to the RTU Study Department.

The Regulations shall enter into force on 2 September of the academic year 2019/2020.