

Ilia State University Academic Integrity Rule for Students

1. General Provisions

1.1. Academic integrity is a core principle of Ilia State University, in line with its mission and values. The university places a high priority on establishing standards for academic integrity in both teaching and research activities, which serve as the guiding principle for all academic endeavors at the institution. Moreover, the university is committed to preventing plagiarism as the most effective means of upholding these standards.

1.2. This Academic Integrity Rule serves to determine and regulate issues about the academic integrity of students and participants at Ilia State University as well as to apply relevant penalties for breaching/infringing academic integrity. The Academic Integrity Rule applies to students and participants at the university.

1.3 For the purposes of this rule, the following individuals are regarded as students: those who are enrolled in the university's Educational Training Program in the Georgian Language, Teacher Preparation Educational Program, Integrated Undergraduate-Graduate Program in Primary Teacher Education, Vocational Education Program, Bachelor's and Master's Programs, Medical Doctor and/or Doctoral Programs as well as anyone else who has signed a study contract with the university.

1.4. The legal foundation for this rule is the Law of Georgia on Higher Education, the Statute of LEPL Ilia State University, the Student Code of Ethics, and other relevant sub-legal acts.

2. Principles of Academic Integrity and Protection Mechanisms

2.1. The principles of Academic Integrity are founded on impartiality, respect, professional responsibility, and confidence in academic endeavors.

2.2 To establish and effectively uphold the principles of academic integrity in educational and research processes, there are a variety of platforms and resources available for disseminating information on academic integrity. These include informative sessions for first-year bachelor's students, seminars, and consultations for students and other interested parties organized by the Centre for Academic Writing at Ilia State University. Additionally, an academic writing curriculum is designed for all educational levels emphasizing academic integrity principles. The university mandates the use and adherence to the "Academic Style Manual" at all levels of study and research. Training sessions are provided for those involved in the teaching process, and the Turnitin program, which is employed to identify text similarities and detect plagiarism, is accessible to educational stakeholders. Moreover, active participation by academic staff in the educational process, in written and verbal communication, in promoting awareness and the implementation and protection of academic integrity principles is essential.

3. Types of Academic Misconduct

3.1. Academic misconduct is a severe violation of Academic Integrity principles, encompassing various types, including:

- a) Plagiarism:** The misappropriation, translation, acquisition and/or dissemination of someone else's intellectual work, text, ideas, concepts, visual and/or audio materials as well as any other form of data, without attribution.
- b) Self-plagiarism:** The reuse of one's own work in another work without citing the original source.
- c) Falsification:** The fabrication or distortion of data, information, or references in academic work.
- d) Fraud:** The utilization of various fraudulent methods to acquire, misappropriate, and disseminate someone else's intellectual work, whether with or without the author's prior consent, while presenting as one's own intellectual creation.
- e)** Any other actions recognized as academic misconduct in the international academic community.

4. Categorization of Academic Misconduct in Terms of Severity

a) Minor Misconduct

- Inappropriate and incomplete references, including incomplete or incorrect bibliographic entries, footnotes, and/or citations
- Frequent over-referencing
- Directly copying several sentences without source attribution
- Multiple instances of paraphrasing without source attribution
- Any other actions recognized as academic misconduct in the international academic community

b) Moderate Misconduct

- Using several paragraphs or sections without source attribution
- Frequently paraphrasing in a work without source attribution
- Submitting the same work for assessment purposes in multiple courses or components, except full or partial use of one's own work(s) in a compilation thesis
- Repeated instances of minor misconduct after appropriate measures have been taken in a prior case
- Self-plagiarism
- Falsification
- Any other actions recognized as academic misconduct in the international academic community.

c) Gross Misconduct

- Presenting someone else's work as one's own, whether purchased, fraudulently obtained, stolen, retrieved from internet sources, or acquired through other means
- Using sources of significant quantity and/or value without attribution
- Paraphrasing another author's opinions, ideas, and texts of significant quantity and/or value without attribution
- Repeated instances of moderate misconduct after appropriate measures have been taken in a prior case
- Self-plagiarism
- Falsification
- Any other actions recognized as academic misconduct in the international academic community

5. Considering Additional Circumstances in Case of Academic Misconduct

a) Circumstances to be Considered for Minor Misconduct Penalties:

- The individual is a first-year bachelor's student who has not yet gained sufficient awareness of academic integrity matters at the start of their studies and is not fully informed about relevant regulations, academic support mechanisms and university services.
- It is the first instance of minor academic misconduct.
- Any other circumstances that the course or component instructor (academic or visiting staff), either independently or in collaboration with the supervisor of the program/direction/module, deem to be mitigating.

b) Circumstances to be Considered for Moderate Misconduct Penalties:

- The student has been informed about important rules of academic style, attended a relevant course/component, and has been educated about academic integrity principles and the consequences of breaching them.
- The significance and value of the student's misconduct are not gross.
- If any moderate misconduct has been committed previously.
- Any other circumstances that, in the case of moderate misconduct, the course or component instructor (academic or visiting staff), in agreement with the coordinator of the program/direction/module and the Head of the Quality Assurance Office of the school/faculty, shall deem to be extenuating.

c) Circumstances to be Considered for Gross Misconduct Penalties:

- The student has been informed about important rules of academic style, attended a relevant course/component, and has been educated about academic integrity principles and the consequences of breaching them.

- The significance and value of the student's misconduct are gross.
- More than two cases of moderate and/or gross misconduct have been committed.
- The student has breached academic integrity principles through actions such as abusing someone else's trust, theft, fraud, deceit, violence, intimidation, or any other types of coercion.

6. Institutional Response and Penalties in Case of Misconduct

6.1 In case of minor misconduct, the course/component instructor, independently or in agreement with the program/area/module supervisor shall:

- provide feedback on identified mistakes;
- clarify academic integrity principles to the student and if necessary, assign them to the Centre for Academic Writing for consultation or attendance at a relevant seminar, which shall be registered in the Centre's registry;
- annul the student's assessment.

6.2. In case of minor misconduct, an instructor is allowed to apply only one penalty or a combination of multiple penalties.

6.3. In case of moderate misconduct, the course/component instructor, in agreement with the program/area/module supervisor and the Head of the Quality Assurance Office shall:

- provide feedback to the student regarding mistakes in their work. In addition, the instructor is obliged to report the incident and penalty applied to the dean of the faculty/school. The dean is authorized to consider the issue independently or establish a faculty/school commission to further investigate the misconduct. If necessary, the dean and/or commission may address the Centre for Academic Writing, which shall provide a conclusion within its competence. If moderate misconduct is detected, the dean issues a decree for the final decision, giving the student a written warning, which shall be placed in their personal file and registered in the respective registry.
- clarify academic integrity principles to the student and, if necessary, assign them to the Centre for Academic Writing for consultation or attendance at a relevant seminar, which shall be registered in the Centre's registry. In addition, the instructor is obliged to report the incident and penalty applied to the dean of the faculty/school. The dean is authorized to consider the issue independently or establish a faculty/school commission to further investigate the misconduct. If necessary, the dean and/or commission may address the Centre for Academic Writing, which shall provide a conclusion within its competence. If moderate misconduct is detected, the dean issues a decree for the final decision, giving the student a written warning, which shall be placed in their personal file and registered in the respective registry.

c) annul the student's assessment and report the incident and penalty applied to the dean of the faculty/school. The dean is authorized to consider the issue independently or establish a faculty/school commission to further investigate the misconduct. If necessary, the dean and/or commission may address the Centre for Academic Writing, which shall provide a conclusion within its competence. If moderate misconduct is detected, the dean issues a decree for the final decision, giving the student a written warning, which shall be placed in their personal file and registered in the respective registry.

6.4. In case of moderate misconduct, the instructor is authorized to apply one penalty or combination of multiple penalties as outlined in Paragraph 6.3, in agreement with a program supervisor.

6.5. In case of gross misconduct, a course or component instructor or any other individual with knowledge of this matter refers to the dean of a faculty/school and the head of the faculty/school Quality Assurance Office. In the event of valid suspicion, the dean, in agreement with the Quality Assurance office, refers to the Rector to establish a commission to probe into academic misconduct. The commission is established under the Rector's decree in each separate case.

6.6. The Commission, based on questioning the parties, makes a respective decision about the application of the penalty and informs the Rector about the decision. The following penalties are applied based on the Rector's decree:

- a) Annulment of assessment received in the aforementioned course/program and a written warning to be placed in the offender's personal file
- b) Annulment of the course/program component overall assessment
- c) Termination of student status
- d) Other types of penalties recommended by the commission's decision

6.7. The decision to apply a misconduct penalty as per this rule shall be registered in conformity with the respective procedure.

7. Rules of Functioning of the Commission

7.1. The Commission is established by the Rector based on the dean's reference to each separate case of gross misconduct.

7.2. The Commission makes individual judgments to apply penalties for each separate case of misconduct based on the severity, outcomes, previous precedents, repeated misconducts and additional circumstances. However, in the case of evidence-based circumstances, a milder penalty may be applied.

7.3. The Commission consists of:

- The Dean of a respective faculty/school
- The Head of the respective faculty/school Quality Assurance Office
- The Head of the Legal Office

- The Head of the university's Quality Assurance Office
- The Director of the Centre for Academic Writing
- The Supervisor of the respective program/area/module
- The Specialist(s) of the respective field(s)

7.4. The Commission makes the respective decision regarding the application of penalties. The Commission's decision is referred to the Rector to issue a decree regarding the penalty.

7.5. The student is officially notified of the initiation of proceedings related to gross misconduct and the establishment of a commission through the university email. Upon receiving this information and prior to the commission meeting, the student has the right to present a written explanation regarding the misconduct. The commission considers the student's explanation before making a relevant decision. The student is formally informed of the decree issued by the Rector based on the Commission's decision. Within one month of receiving notice of the decree, the student has the right to appeal the decision to the university.

7.6. Based on a student's appeal outlined in paragraph 7.5 of the rule and as per the Rector's decision, an Appeals Commission shall be established, which will either uphold the decision of the Academic Misconduct Investigate Commission or apply a milder/harsher form of penalty. The Rector shall be informed about the decision to issue a respective decree.

7.7 This regulation takes effect immediately upon approval, and is subject to amendment and addition, as needed, based on a reasoned conclusion, by the applicable rule. The regulation shall be examined and revised every five years.

