

East European University

Code of Academic Integrity

Preamble

East European University LLC recognizes that academic integrity constitutes the fundamental basis for teaching-learning, assessment, research activities, and academic freedom, and defines university community operations based on honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and academic courage.

The University shares internationally recognized principles of academic integrity and responsible research activity, promotes respect for intellectual property, adherence to ethical standards of academic writing and research, transparency in academic and scientific activities, as well as the responsibility of each member of the academic community in shaping and maintaining an academic integrity and ethical academic environment.

The University supports the development of a culture of academic integrity, preventive and educational measures, and the popularization of academic writing, citation, and responsible academic practice.

The purpose of this Code is to establish high standards of academic integrity at the University, prevent and detect violations of academic integrity, define fair response mechanisms, and ensure the quality and credibility of teaching-learning, research, and academic activities.

The Code is based on the legislation of Georgia, internal legal acts of the University, international standards of academic integrity, principles of research ethics, and consideration of challenges arising from the development of modern academic, digital technologies, and artificial intelligence.

Chapter I. General Provisions

Article 1. General Provisions

1. The Code of Academic Integrity (hereinafter – "the Code") of East European University LLC (hereinafter – "the University") is developed on the basis of the legislation of Georgia, including the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education", the University Regulations, and other relevant normative and internal legal acts.
2. The University pays special attention to the awareness, establishment, and development of the principles of academic integrity in university life.
3. Academic activity, as well as the teaching, learning, and research process at the University, is carried out in accordance with the principles of academic integrity, applicable legislation, and internal legal acts of the University.
4. To ensure academic integrity, all persons involved in the teaching, learning, and research process are obliged—when preparing academic and scientific works, including cases involving the use of digital technologies and artificial intelligence tools—to comply with the rules of academic writing, citation, and referencing established at the University, ensure proper referencing of used sources and technological tools, and use relevant academic practice responsibly. Based on the specifics of the relevant academic field or international scientific standard, the use of another recognized academic style is permissible if it complies with the requirements established by the University..

Article 2. Objective of the Code

1. The objective of the Code is to reinforce the culture of academic integrity at the University, ensure the objectivity, fairness, and transparency of teaching, assessment, and research processes, promote the quality of scientific and academic activity, and develop an environment based on the principles of academic freedom, responsibility, and accountability.
2. The Code defines the concept of academic integrity, the forms and types of its violation, mechanisms for prevention, education, and awareness-raising, transparent, consistent, impartial, and fair procedures for detecting, reviewing, and appropriately responding to violations, as well as the grounds and proportional measures for imposing disciplinary liability.

Article 3. Scope of the Code

1. The scope of this Code applies to:

- a) Personnel employed at the University (hereinafter – "the Personnel") who, within the scope of their official or academic duties, participate in the creation, assessment, disclosure, and/or publication of a work, academic product, or other academic result produced as a outcome of educational, scientific-research, or creative activity;
 - b) All students of the University who carry out learning, research, or creative activities within the framework of an educational program, including the creation, submission, disclosure, and/or publication of a relevant work, project, or other academic product.
2. For the purposes of this Code, a student is a person enrolled and studying at the University in accordance with the rules established by applicable legislation within the framework of a Bachelor's, Master's, Teacher Training, Doctoral, or One-cycle educational program.
 3. The University respects and protects intellectual property rights and, through this Code and relevant internal legal acts of the University, ensures the prevention and detection of cases of unfair misappropriation, use, or presentation of the results of another person's intellectual labor in any form.
 4. Personnel employed at the University and all students of the University are obliged to respect the intellectual property of others, adhere to the norms of academic integrity, responsibly use digital and artificial intelligence tools, safeguard the reputation of the University, and refrain from committing or facilitating any form of academic integrity violation.
 5. The requirements of this Code apply to traditional, electronic, distance, and digital learning, scientific, and academic activities alike.

Chapter II. Academic Integrity, Its Prevention, and Types of Violations

Article 4. Academic Integrity

1. Academic integrity constitutes the principle of conducting academic and scientific activities based on the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and academic courage, and implies adherence to ethical, professional, and legal standards in the processes of teaching, learning, assessment, and research.
2. The University ensures the development of mechanisms for the prevention, detection, and fair response to violations of academic integrity.
3. Adherence to academic integrity constitutes the shared responsibility of each member of the University's academic community.

Article 5. Prevention of Academic Integrity Violations

1. The University, through the legal, organizational, educational, and technological means at its disposal, promotes the development of a culture of academic integrity and carries out the prevention of academic integrity violations through awareness-raising, teaching, support, and fair response mechanisms for individual cases.
2. For the purpose of preventing violations of academic integrity, the University ensures that personnel and students are informed about the academic integrity standards, protection mechanisms, and relevant legal acts in force at the University.
3. The University promotes the effective use of electronic systems for text similarity detection in learning, scientific-research, and creative activities. The electronic text similarity detection system constitutes a supporting technological tool that compares texts for the purpose of identifying similarities and ensures the generation of information regarding the text coincidence rate and relevant sources.
4. For the purpose of text similarity analysis, the University utilizes Turnitin or another appropriate electronic software through which text similarity analysis is conducted. A similarity detected by a software report does not in itself constitute automatic confirmation of an academic integrity violation and shall be assessed by an authorized person, taking into account the content of the work, citation rules, disciplinary specifics, the objective of the work, and academic writing standards.
5. For the purpose of preventing academic integrity violations within the student community and developing a culture of academic integrity, the University:
 - a) Within the framework of educational programs, provides or promotes the implementation of such training courses and educational activities that cover matters of academic writing, academic integrity, and research ethics;
 - b) For the purpose of raising student awareness, systematically conducts informational and preventive events on academic integrity matters, and introduces them to the procedures and mechanisms for the prevention, detection, and response to individual cases;
 - c) Ensures the accessibility of information on academic integrity standards, violation prevention, and response mechanisms on the official website of the University;
 - d) Introduces students to the possibilities of utilizing electronic text similarity detection systems and, if necessary, provides relevant informational meetings regarding the possibility of independent preliminary checking of works performed within the framework of a learning or scientific-research component;
 - e) Promotes the responsible, transparent, and compliant use of digital technologies and artificial intelligence tools in line with the principles of academic integrity, and, if necessary, provides relevant informational, educational, and consultative events
6. The University promotes the professional development of academic and administrative personnel on matters of academic integrity, academic writing, research ethics, and the responsible use of modern digital technologies.

Article 6. Types of Academic Integrity Violations

1. For the purposes of this Code, the forms of academic integrity violation are:
 - a) **Plagiarism** – the presentation, use, or misappropriation of the result of another person's intellectual labor—including a published or unpublished work, a part thereof, an idea, theory, concept, methodology, data, research material, graph, diagram, image, table, conclusion, or other academic product—as one's own without proper indication of the relevant source and acknowledgement of authorship;
 - b) **Compilation** – the use, grouping, or combining of other people's works, research results, or other copyrighted material in a manner that does not contain independent analysis, critical processing, interpretation, or an original contribution by the performer of the work, and creates a risk of presenting a non-original academic product;
 - c) **Fabrication** – the invention, creation, or intentional presentation of non-existent data, results, sources, citations, facts, or other information during the research process as if they were real;
 - d) **Falsification** – the alteration, manipulation, selective use, or distortion of existing data, results, sources, methodology, graphs, images, documentation, or other information during the research process, which leads to an incorrect interpretation of the research results or conclusions;
 - e) **Destruction of research data or scientific results** – the intentional destruction, concealment, or damaging of one's own or another person's research data, records, documentation, or results for the purpose of violating academic integrity or avoiding professional or disciplinary liability;
 - f) **Unfair use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools**
2. For the purposes of this Code, the types of plagiarism are:
 - a) **Direct plagiarism** – the total or partial misappropriation of another person's work, text, idea, formula, graph, diagram, or other intellectual product without indicating the relevant source;
 - b) **Self-plagiarism** – the presentation by a person of their own previously created, submitted, published, or evaluated work, or a part thereof, as a new and original work without appropriate reference or permission, if such a requirement is established;
 - c) **Mosaic plagiarism** – a form of plagiarism where a person combines texts, phrases, ideas, or formulations from different authors without proper citation and clear indication of the source, in such a way that makes it impossible to distinguish the author's original contribution from the used sources;
 - d) **Paraphrased plagiarism** – a form of plagiarism where a person changes the words, formulations, or sentence structure used in an author's text in such a way that retains the core meaning, logic, and content of the original text, without indicating the relevant source;
 - e) **Plagiarism committed through negligence** – a form of plagiarism caused by incorrect or incomplete citation, a technical error in source referencing, the omission of author or bibliographic information, or non-compliance with academic writing rules, without an intentional purpose of misappropriation;
 - f) **Academic fraud** – the total or partial execution, acquisition, ordering, transfer, or presentation as one's own work of a work, assignment, project, research, case study, essay, code, translation, or other academic product to be performed for learning, research, or assessment purposes by another person;

- g) Unfair collaboration** – such collaboration, exchange of information, or joint work with another person during the process of academic or assessment activity that is prohibited by the relevant training course, assessment rule, or University regulations
3. For the purposes of this Code, the unfair use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools implies such use of generative artificial intelligence or other digital tools that violates the principles of academic integrity, including:
 - a) The presentation of text, analysis, data, code, translation, idea, or other academic product generated by artificial intelligence as one's own independent work without appropriate transparency, referencing, or declaration;
 - b) The use of artificial intelligence when performing a learning, assessment, or research assignment in cases where it is prohibited by the training course, assessment rule, program, or University regulations;
 - c) The use of artificial intelligence for the purpose of distorting the authenticity, credibility, and independence of an academic assessment, research process, or data.
 4. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools is permissible only in compliance with academic integrity, transparency, responsibility of authorship, and the relevant regulations of the University. The author of the work is fully responsible for the content, argumentation, and the accuracy and authenticity of the information used in the presented work.
 5. Common general knowledge is not considered plagiarism and does not require the indication of a source.

Chapter III. Rule of Response to Forms of Academic Integrity Violations by Personnel

Article 7. Principles of Responding to Forms of Academic Integrity Violations

1. Responding to a possible violation of academic integrity by personnel employed at the University and reviewing the matter of relevant liability is carried out in accordance with the rules established by this Code, based on the principles of legality, fairness, proportionality, impartiality, objectivity, confidentiality, the presumption of a person's good faith, full investigation of the circumstances of the case, and the right to a hearing.
2. The issue of the existence of a possible violation of academic integrity by personnel may become a subject of review if the alleged action is related to academic, scientific-research, or university-related professional activities conducted within or outside the University, or by its nature is substantially linked to the academic reputation of the University, research integrity, or the credibility of academic activities.
3. When reviewing a fact of academic integrity violation, the right of the personnel to receive information regarding the proceedings initiated against them, present explanations and evidence,

utilize the assistance of a representative, and use the protection and appeal mechanisms provided by the internal legal acts of the University shall be ensured.

4. Matters concerning conflicts of interest are regulated by Article 12 of this Code

Article 8. Grounds for Initiating Disciplinary Proceedings Due to a Possible Violation of Academic Integrity by Personnel

1. The grounds for initiating disciplinary proceedings due to a possible violation of academic integrity by personnel are:
 - a) An application, notification, or information submitted by an interested person, a structural unit of the University, or an authorized person, which contains sufficient prima facie grounds regarding a possible violation of academic integrity
 - b) The detection of a fact of a possible violation of academic integrity by an authorized body, structural unit, or official of the University, including on the basis of an academic or scientific work check, expert evaluation, or an electronic system report
2. An anonymous notification may become the ground for a preliminary study of the matter if the information specified therein contains sufficient factual circumstances or evidence regarding a possible violation of academic integrity.

Article 9. Application Regarding a Possible Violation of Academic Integrity by Personnel

1. Academic, invited, scientific, and administrative personnel of the University, as well as any interested person who possesses information regarding an alleged violation, have the right to file an application regarding a possible violation of academic integrity by University personnel.
2. The application may relate both to circumstances detected within the framework of formal processes of academic integrity assessment (including as a result of peer review, expert conclusion, the use of an electronic text similarity detection system, or another assessment mechanism) and to alleged violations detected outside the framework of formal processes.
3. An application regarding a possible violation of academic integrity shall be submitted to the Standing Committee for the Protection of Academic Integrity (hereinafter – "the Committee") in written form and, in addition to the requirements established by legislation, must contain:
 - a) A description of the factual circumstances of the alleged violation and, to the extent possible, an indication of the possible type of violation provided for by this Code;
 - b) Materials or information confirming the circumstances indicated in the application, including relevant works, a text similarity report, publications, research materials, or other relevant evidence, if any.

4. The content of the application, the identity of the applicant, and information related to the review of the case are confidential, except in cases provided for by legislation or circumstances where the disclosure of information is necessary to ensure the right to a fair hearing.
5. If the application does not meet the requirements established by paragraph 3 of this Article, the Committee shall define a reasonable term for the applicant to remedy the defect, which, as a rule, shall not exceed 10 calendar days.
6. In case of failure to remedy the defect within the established term, the Committee is authorized to leave the application without review, about which it shall notify the applicant in written form.
7. The Committee reviews the application in compliance with the principles of fairness, impartiality, objectivity, confidentiality, and the right to a hearing, and notifies the interested parties of the decision made.
8. The Committee studies the application and the attached materials no later than 10 calendar days from its registration or the elimination of a defect and, if it considers that there are signs of a possible violation of academic integrity, determines the composition of the Commission for Establishing Academic Integrity Violations (hereinafter – "the Commission") and submits it to the Rector of the University for approval.
9. On the basis of the Committee's submission, the Rector of the University issues an order on the creation of the Commission within 5 calendar days.
10. The initiation of disciplinary proceedings against personnel does not in itself restrict their right to participate in the academic, scientific, or professional activities of the University, except in cases where the continuation of their activities poses a substantial and immediate threat to the rights of other persons, the security or property of the University, its academic or professional reputation, or the credibility of an ongoing research, assessment, or academic process.
11. A member of the Committee and the Commission is obliged to recuse themselves if there is a circumstance that may raise doubts regarding their impartiality. In such a case, the relevant person shall not participate in the review of the case and decision-making

Article 10. Standing Committee for the Protection of Academic Integrity

1. The Standing Committee for the Protection of Academic Integrity (hereinafter – "the Committee") is a permanent collegial body of the University, which carries out its activities on the basis of the legislation of Georgia, the University Regulations, this Code, and other internal legal acts in force at the University.
2. The Committee carries out its activities in compliance with the principles of legality, objectivity, collegiality, equality, impartiality, confidentiality, integrity, independence, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest.
3. The purpose of the Committee is to support the adherence to, prevention of, and development of academic integrity principles at the University.
4. Within its competence, the Committee:

- a) Reviews applications and information regarding possible violations of academic integrity by University personnel;
 - b) Conducts the evaluation of the initial admissibility and well-foundedness of the application;
 - c) If sufficient grounds exist, determines the composition of the Commission for Establishing Academic Integrity Violations and submits it to the Rector of the University for approval;
 - d) Exercises other powers defined by this Code.
5. The Committee consists of 5 (five) permanent members. The composition of the Committee includes representatives of the academic personnel of the University and relevant administrative units. The personal composition of the Committee is determined by the Rector of the University on the basis of a submission from the relevant academic units.
 6. The term of office of a Committee member is 3 (three) years. The same person may be reappointed as a member of the Committee.
 7. The powers of a Committee member may be terminated prematurely in case of a personal application, the impossibility of exercising powers, termination of employment relations with the University, or the existence of other grounds provided for by the internal legal acts of the University.
 8. A Committee member is obliged to recuse themselves if there is a conflict of interest or such a circumstance that may call into question their objectivity or impartiality.
 9. The Committee is accountable to the Rector of the University regarding the organizational support and reporting part of its activities, while it makes decisions independently within its own competence.
 10. The Chairman of the Committee signs the decisions of the Committee and, if necessary, submits relevant proposals to the Rector of the University, including on the matter of creating the Commission for Establishing Academic Integrity Violations.
 11. The organizational-technical support of the Committee's activities is carried out by the Secretary of the Committee, who ensures the organization of meetings, maintenance of documentation, recording of case materials, and other organizational matters related to the Committee's activities.

Article 11. Commission for Establishing Academic Integrity Violations

1. The Commission for Establishing Academic Integrity Violations (hereinafter – "the Commission") is created for the purpose of reviewing a specific case and consists of persons holding a Doctor's or an equivalent academic degree in the relevant field (branch/specialty), and in exceptional cases — experts with high professional qualifications in the relevant field.
2. At least one member of the Commission must be a representative of the relevant field (branch/specialty) from Georgia or abroad who does not hold an academic or administrative position at the University.

3. Members of the Commission must have experience in research activities in the relevant field, high professional qualifications, and a recognized professional reputation within the academic community.
4. The Commission consists of 7 (seven) members.
5. A member of the Commission is obliged to recuse themselves if a conflict of interest exists, including if it is related to the applicant, the alleged violator, the relevant work, joint research activity, or if there is another circumstance that affects their impartiality.
6. The activities of the Commission and information related to the review of the case are confidential. Members of the Commission are obliged to protect the rights and confidentiality of both the applicant and the alleged violator in order to avoid unjustified damage to the person's reputation before a decision is made.
7. The meeting of the Commission is closed. The Commission is authorized if at least two-thirds of its members attend the meeting.
8. By decision of the Commission, a meeting may be conducted using an electronic platform. In such a case, the identification of the Commission members, the security of the meeting, the full involvement of the participants, and the protection of confidentiality must be ensured. The video recording is attached to the minutes of the meeting and processed in accordance with the legislation of Georgia "On Personal Data Protection".
9. The Commission makes decisions on procedural matters by a majority vote of the attending members, while it adopts the final conclusion with the support of at least two-thirds of the Commission members.
10. A member of the Commission is obliged to participate in voting and does not enjoy the right to abstain from voting.
11. Those procedures of the Commission's activities that are not directly defined by this Code may be established by a written decision of the Commission, provided that this does not contradict the legislation of Georgia and the internal legal acts of the University.
12. The first meeting of the Commission is scheduled no later than 7 calendar days from its approval. At the first meeting, the Commission elects a Chairman, a Deputy Chairman, and a Secretary by open vote.
13. The Commission carries out the review of the case and the preparation of the conclusion, as a rule, no later than 30 calendar days from holding the first meeting, unless there is a need to extend the term due to the complexity of the case.

Article 12. Impartial Resolution of the Case by the Commission

1. The Commission is obliged to exercise its authority independently, objectively, and impartially, solely on the basis of the factual circumstances of the case, the presented evidence, and the principles defined by this Code.

2. The composition of the Commission must ensure the avoidance of conflicts of interest. No person who has a personal, professional, financial, or other type of interest, or under circumstances that may affect the perception of their impartiality and objectivity, may participate in the activities of the Commission.
3. A person may not participate in the activities of the Commission if they:
 - a) Participated in the creation, evaluation, review, or publication of the disputed or allegedly original work;
 - b) Represent a close relative, as defined by this Code, of the person suspected of violating academic integrity, their representative, the applicant, or the author of the original work;
 - c) Maintain a professional, research, financial, or other such relationship with the person suspected of violating academic integrity, the applicant, or the author of the original work that may affect their objectivity and impartiality;
 - d) Are subject to any other circumstance that gives rise to reasonable doubt regarding their objectivity or impartiality.
4. For the purposes of this Code, a "close relative" is deemed to be a family member, a relative in the direct ascending and descending line, a brother, a sister, a stepchild, as well as the spouse of a parent or a child.
5. Upon the detection of grounds for recusal, a member of the Commission is obliged to declare a self-recusal.
6. If a member of the Commission, despite the existence of grounds for recusal, fails to declare a self-recusal, a member of the Commission, the applicant, or the person suspected of violating academic integrity has the right to request their recusal by a reasoned written application at any stage of the Commission's activities.
7. The issue of recusal of a Commission member shall be decided by the Commission without the participation of the member in question, while ensuring the opportunity to hear their explanation prior to making the decision.
8. In the event of the absence of a quorum as a result of the recusal or self-recusal of a Commission member, the Rector of the University, upon the submission of the Committee, shall designate a new member of the Commission

Article 13. Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Commission

1. The Chairperson of the Commission ensures the efficient organization of the case review, compliance with deadlines, and coordination of the Commission's activities.
2. The Chairperson of the Commission:
 - a) Convenes and chairs the meetings of the Commission;
 - b) Ensures the determination of the meeting agenda;
 - c) Coordinates the activities of the Commission;

- d) Signs the minutes and decisions of the Commission meetings..
- 3. In the event of the absence, self-recusal, or other objective circumstances of the Chairperson of the Commission, their powers shall be exercised by the Deputy Chairperson of the Commission.
- 4. The Chairperson represents the Commission in relations with university bodies and, on behalf of the Commission, submits the decision of the Commission to the Rector of the University.

Article 14. Secretary of the Commission

- 1. The organizational and administrative activities of the Commission shall be ensured by the Secretary of the Commission.
- 2. The Secretary of the Commission:
 - a) Prepares and maintains the minutes of the Commission meetings;
 - b) Ensures the organization and protection of documentation related to the meeting;
 - c) Assists the Chairperson of the Commission and the Deputy Chairperson in resolving organizational matters;
 - d) Ensures that Commission members are informed about the time, place, and agenda of the meeting;
 - e) Ensures the timely delivery of case materials and access to relevant documentation for the Commission members.
- 3. The Secretary of the Commission is obliged to notify the members of the Commission of the time, place, format (if any), and draft agenda of the meeting at least 3 calendar days prior to holding the meeting, except in cases of urgent necessity.
- 4. The Secretary of the Commission is obliged to maintain the confidentiality of information related to the review of the case and shall not disclose information known to them, except in cases provided for by legislation.

Article 15. Powers of the Commission and Rights of Case Participants

- 1. The Commission is authorized, in case of necessity, to request additional information, explanations, or documentation from the applicant, which is essential for a comprehensive study of the circumstances indicated in the application.
- 2. The applicant is obliged, upon the request of the Commission, to submit additional information or evidence in their possession within a reasonable timeframe. Failure to submit information shall

not in itself constitute grounds for termination of the proceedings, if the Commission considers that the review of the case is possible based on other existing materials.

3. The Commission has the right, for the purpose of an objective resolution of a specific issue, to invite a specialist in the relevant field or an independent expert and request a written or oral explanation.
4. The Commission has the right, at any stage of the ongoing proceedings, to invite the applicant, the person suspected of violating academic integrity, as well as other persons who may possess information of significance to the case, to the meeting of the Commission.
5. The applicant is authorized to submit information and explanations to the Commission only regarding the circumstances indicated in the application, the nature of the violation, and the relevant evidence, and may not predeterminedly define or request the application of a specific disciplinary sanction.
6. The person suspected of violating academic integrity has the right to:
 - a) Participate in the meeting of the Commission, unless they waive this right or fail to appear at the meeting despite proper notification;
 - b) Provide the Commission with information, evidence, and explanations in their possession to defend their position;
 - c) Submit written opinions;
 - d) Utilize the assistance of a representative;
 - e) Review case materials, except for information the disclosure of which contradicts legislation or violates the rights of other persons.
7. The Commission is obliged to ensure the equality of the parties, an impartial review of the case, the right of a person to be heard, and a comprehensive evaluation of the presented evidence. An invited specialist or independent expert is obliged to maintain confidentiality and declare the existence of any conflict of interest

Article 16. Conclusion of the Commission

1. Upon completion of the review of the case, the Commission adopts a conclusion reflecting the reasoned position of the Commission regarding the existence or absence of a suspected violation of academic integrity.
2. The conclusion of the Commission must include:
 - a) Identification data of the case;
 - b) Information about the applicant, the suspected violator, and the subject matter of the case;
 - c) A brief description of the circumstances and demands specified in the application;
 - d) A description of the procedures carried out and materials studied by the Commission during the case review process;
 - e) Factual circumstances established by the Commission and an evaluation of the evidence;
 - f) A legal assessment of the relevant violation defined by this Code;

- g) A reasoned conclusion regarding the existence or absence of a violation of academic integrity;
 - h) Where necessary, a recommendation regarding the appropriate response or disciplinary measure.
3. The conclusion of the Commission shall be adopted by at least 2/3 of the votes of the Commission members and shall be signed by the Commission members participating in making the decision.
 4. A member of the Commission who disagrees with the conclusion of the Commission in whole or in part has the right to submit a written dissenting opinion within 2 calendar days from the signing of the conclusion, which shall be attached to the conclusion of the Commission and constitutes an integral part thereof.
 5. The conclusion of the Commission shall be sent to the Standing Committee for the Protection of Academic Integrity for the purpose of further response and decision-making provided for by this Code.
 6. The conclusion of the Commission must be reasoned, clear, and based solely on the evidence examined and the factual circumstances established during the case review process..

Article 17. Decision-Making Procedure by the Committee

1. Based on the results of the proceedings conducted regarding the application on academic integrity, the decision shall be made by the Standing Committee for the Protection of Academic Integrity by a majority of the full composition of its members.
2. In making a decision, the Committee shall adhere to the principles of legality, fairness, and impartiality.
3. The decision of the Committee must be reasoned and based on:
 - a) The conclusion of the Commission;
 - b) Documents contained within the case materials;
 - c) The factual circumstances of the case;
 - d) The examined evidence.
4. The Committee is authorized to disagree with the conclusion of the Commission only by a reasoned decision, which must be based on the case materials, a legal assessment, and a critical analysis of the circumstances specified in the conclusion of the Commission.
5. The Committee is obliged to properly evaluate the case materials, the conclusion of the Commission, and all evidence that may be of essential importance for the resolution of the case.
6. A member of the Committee who disagrees with the adopted decision in whole or in part has the right to submit a written dissenting opinion, which shall be attached to the decision and the minutes of the meeting and constitutes an integral part thereof.

7. In the event of an equal division of votes, the vote of the Chairperson of the Committee shall be decisive.
8. The decision of the Committee and the minutes of the meeting shall be drawn up in writing, signed by the Chairperson of the Committee (in their absence – the Deputy Chairperson) and the Secretary, and stored in accordance with the rules established at the University.
9. All significant documents related to the review of the case, including the conclusion of the Commission, presented written materials, evidence, and, where necessary, a dissenting opinion, shall be attached to the minutes.

Article 18. Decision Adopted by the Committee

1. Based on the results of the proceedings conducted regarding the application on academic integrity, the Committee is authorized to make one of the following decisions:
 - a) In the absence of a fact of violation of academic integrity – to take note of the conclusion of the Commission;
 - b) In the event that a fact of violation of academic integrity is established – to apply an appropriate measure of disciplinary liability, taking into account the severity, nature, form of intent, consequences, recurrence of the violation, and other circumstances.
2. In the case of a severe or repeated violation, including substantial plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, intentional destruction of research data, or other severe violations, the Committee is authorized, in accordance with the internal legal acts and labor legislation in force at the university, to apply the strictest measure of disciplinary liability, including the issue of dismissing the employee from their position.
3. When determining the measure of disciplinary liability, the Committee shall take into account:
 - a) The nature and severity of the violation;
 - b) The form of intent;
 - c) The consequences caused by the violation;
 - d) The prior disciplinary history of the person;
 - e) The recurrence of the violation;
 - f) Other essential circumstances.
4. When applying a measure of disciplinary liability, the Committee is obliged to adhere to the principles of fairness, objectivity, and proportionality.
5. In the event that a violation of academic integrity is established, if the violation is related to a dissertation thesis defended at the University or a conferred academic degree, the Committee is authorized to apply to the dissertation council of the relevant faculty with a request to verify the validity of the conferral of the academic degree.
6. The University ensures the protection of personnel from groundless, clearly unsubstantiated, or defamatory allegations. In the event that a violation of academic integrity is unconfirmed, the

University shall, as necessary, take reasonable measures to facilitate the restoration of the person's professional and academic reputation.

7. The decision of the Committee shall be sent to the Rector of the University and to the person against whom the disciplinary proceedings were conducted within no later than 3 calendar days after the expiration of the appeal period established by this Code.

Article 19. Appeal of the Decision Adopted by the Committee

1. The applicant and the person against whom the disciplinary proceedings were conducted have the right to appeal the decision adopted by the Standing Committee for the Protection of Academic Integrity in accordance with the rules established by this Code.
2. If a person disagrees with the decision of the Committee, they have the right to appeal with a written complaint to the Representative Council of the University within 10 calendar days from the delivery of the decision.
3. The submission of a complaint stays the enforcement of the Committee's decision, except in cases where immediate execution of the decision is necessary to protect the rights and lawful interests of the University or other persons.
4. The complaint must be reasoned and include:
 - a) An indication of the appealed decision;
 - b) The grounds and arguments for the appeal;
 - c) The demand;
 - d) Relevant evidence (if any).
5. The Representative Council shall review the complaint in compliance with the principles of legality, objectivity, impartiality, fairness, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest.
6. A member of the Representative Council who participated in any stage of the initial review of the case, including in the Standing Committee for the Protection of Academic Integrity or the Commission, may not participate in the review of the matter.
7. During the review of the complaint, the person has the right to:
 - a) Attend the meeting;
 - b) Present explanations, evidence, and additional opinions;
 - c) Utilize the assistance of a representative.
8. Based on the results of the review of the complaint, the Representative Council is authorized to make one of the following decisions:
 - a) To uphold the decision of the Committee;
 - b) To modify the decision of the Committee in part or in full;
 - c) To annul the decision of the Committee and return the case for a new review;
 - d) To annul the decision of the Committee and refuse to apply a measure of disciplinary liability.

9. The decision of the Representative Council shall be sent to the Rector of the University and to the person against whom the disciplinary proceedings were conducted within no later than 3 calendar days from its adoption

Article 20. Enforcement of the Decision Concluded by the Committee or the Representative Council

1. In the event that a violation of academic integrity is confirmed, based on the decision of the Committee, or in the case of an appeal – based on the decision of the Representative Council, the Rector of the University shall issue an individual administrative act regarding the application of the appropriate measure of disciplinary liability within no later than 5 calendar days from the adoption of the respective decision.
2. The decision of the Rector is final within the framework of the University and may be appealed in court in accordance with the rules established by the legislation of Georgia.
3. The decision of the Rector regarding disciplinary liability shall be notified to the respective person in writing within no later than 3 calendar days from its issuance.

Article 21. Measures of Disciplinary Liability

1. In the event that a fact of violation of academic integrity is established, one of the following measures of disciplinary liability may be applied against the University personnel by the Rector of the University, taking into account the nature, severity, consequences, form of intent, recurrence of the committed violation, and other essential circumstances:
 - a) Warning;
 - b) Reprimand;
 - c) Temporary restriction or suspension of participation within the framework of internal university funding, grants, or research projects, if the violation is related to the respective activity;
 - d) Application of other disciplinary measures provided for by legislation and the internal legal acts of the University;
 - e) Temporary removal from the performance of academic, scientific, or administrative duties, provided that the appropriate legal basis exists;
 - f) Dismissal from employment / termination of the labor contract.
2. When applying a measure of disciplinary liability, the principles of fairness, proportionality, and compatibility of the measure of liability with the committed violation must be observed.
3. In the case of a severe or repeated violation of academic integrity, the University is authorized to restrict a person's participation in scientific, research, or academic activities on behalf of the University for a specified term, if this is necessary for the purpose of protecting the academic integrity and reputation of the University.

4. If the violation of academic integrity is related to a dissertation thesis defended at the University or an academic degree conferred on its basis, the dissertation council of the relevant faculty is authorized, within the framework of an independent procedure, in accordance with legislation and the internal legal acts of the University, to review the issue of upholding or annulling the academic degree.
5. The application of more than one measure of disciplinary liability for one and the same violation is permissible only if it arises from the nature and severity of the violation and the principle of proportionality established by this Code

Chapter IV. Rule of Response to Forms of Academic Integrity Violations by Students

Article 22. Student Obligations and Prohibitions

1. The requirements provided for by this chapter apply to all students of the University who carry out learning, scientific-research, or creative activities within the framework of an educational program, including the creation, submission, making public, and/or publication of an academic work, project, or other academic product.
2. In the case of a violation of academic integrity, the University is authorized to apply the measures of disciplinary liability provided for by this Code against the student, in compliance with the procedures established by this same Code.
3. Within the university space, a student is obliged to:
 - a) Be guided by this Code and other internal legal acts of the University during the process of teaching, learning, and research;
 - b) Refrain from any form of violation of academic integrity and not facilitate such a violation by direct or indirect means;
 - c) Observe the rules of academic writing, citation, and source referencing established by the University;
 - d) Respect another person's intellectual property, copyrights, and academic contribution;
 - e) Properly indicate used sources when preparing their own work, including in the case of using their own previously created work;
 - f) Use credible, verified, and un-falsified data, information, and sources;
 - g) Obtain information lawfully and in compliance with ethical standards;
 - h) Respect the academic contribution and copyrights of co-author(s);
 - i) When using generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) or other digital tools, observe the rules established within the University and the training course, and not present a product fully or substantially generated by generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) as an independently performed work without appropriate referencing and academic transparency.

4. Within the university space, it is impermissible for a student to commit any form of academic integrity violation provided for by Article 6 of this Code, including:
 - a) Misappropriation or presentation as one's own work of the result of another person's intellectual labor, including text, an idea, concept, visual, audio, or other academic material, data, or other intellectual property;
 - b) The use of the result of another person's intellectual labor without proper citation, source referencing, or acknowledgement of authorship;
 - c) The full or partial importation of text, an idea, data, a research result, diagram, table, or other material obtained from any source without proper referencing, including with minor changes (paraphrasing);
 - d) The full or partial reuse of one's own previously performed work without appropriate referencing and compliance with academic rules;
 - e) The use of information, ideas, text, data, or conclusions obtained from various sources without proper indication of the source;
 - f) The fabrication, forging, or falsification of data, information, citations, sources, or research results;
 - g) Disregarding or unlawfully misappropriating the academic contribution of a person participating in research or a co-author;
 - h) Conducting research using falsified, forged, or deliberately unverified data, surveys, interviews, or other research materials;
 - i) The use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) or other technological tools during the learning or assessment process in cases where it is prohibited by the training course, assessment rule, or University regulations;
 - j) Knowingly assisting, facilitating, or participating in the commission of an academic integrity violation by another person.
5. The student is fully responsible for the content of the academic work, research, assignment, or other academic product presented by them, the accuracy of the used sources, the credibility of the data, and compliance with the requirements of academic integrity, including in the case of utilizing digital technologies and artificial intelligence tools.

Article 23. Mechanism for the Detection and Preliminary Evaluation of Academic Integrity Violations

1. A learning, research, or scientific product created by a student within the framework of an educational program—including a bachelor's thesis, research project, analytical abstract, research article, master's thesis, doctoral seminar, dissertation thesis, publication, and other academic products in which source referencing is mandatory—is subject to text similarity checking through the electronic system implemented at the University.

2. The University ensures the opportunity for the student to preliminarily verify their own work using the electronic text similarity detection system in force at the University prior to the official submission of the academic product.
3. A coincidence detected by the electronic text similarity system does not in itself constitute automatic confirmation of an academic integrity violation and is subject to content evaluation, taking into account academic writing rules, citation standards, and the specifics of the work.
4. The evaluation of the academic integrity of a student's written assignment, project, or other academic component within the framework of a learning component is carried out by the head of the learning component or the academic/invited personnel implementing the training course, who shall use the electronic text similarity detection system in case of necessity.
5. If there are grounds for a possible violation of academic integrity within the framework of a learning component, the head of the learning component or the academic/invited personnel implementing the training course shall apply to the administration of the respective faculty in writing within 3 calendar days from the possible detection of the violation. The application must be accompanied by relevant evidence, including a text similarity report (if any) and a reasoned written position.
6. The student shall submit the electronic version of a scientific-research product (master's thesis, dissertation thesis, research project, publication, etc.) to the administration of the respective faculty.
7. The scientific-research product must be accompanied by a written confirmation from the student stating that:
 - a) The work is performed in compliance with the norms of academic integrity;
 - b) The used sources are indicated in accordance with the established rule;
 - c) The work does not contain elements of plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, or other academic violations;
 - d) In the case of using generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), the respective requirements of the University and the training course are observed.
8. The student is responsible for the correctness and completeness of the submitted statement.
9. The faculty administration ensures the text similarity checking of the work within no later than 5 calendar days from the submission of the work and transfers the received report along with the respective materials to the student's scientific supervisor.
10. The student's scientific supervisor evaluates the work and issues a written conclusion regarding: a) Admission or non-admission to public defense/review; b) The possibility of submitting, making public, or publishing the publication.
11. The written conclusion shall be issued within 15 calendar days from the receipt of the work, except for a master's thesis, regarding which the written conclusion shall be issued within 5 calendar days from its receipt.
12. In the event of discovering a possible violation of academic integrity, the scientific supervisor shall submit a reasoned written conclusion to the faculty administration and the student.

13. If sufficient grounds exist, the Dean of the faculty, based on the written conclusion, determines the composition of the commission reviewing the matter of the student's academic integrity and the date of the case review.
14. An electronic text similarity system report, the conclusion of a scientific supervisor, or other evidence does not in itself constitute final confirmation of an academic integrity violation and serves only as the ground for initiating the review of the case.

Article 24. Commission for Establishing Violations of Academic Integrity

1. For the purpose of reviewing a possible violation of academic integrity by a student, the Commission for Establishing Violations of Academic Integrity (hereinafter – "the Commission") shall be established, consisting of no fewer than 5 (five) and no more than 7 (seven) members from among the academic or invited personnel of the faculty holding a Doctor's degree or an equivalent academic degree in the relevant field (direction, specialty).
2. The composition of the Commission must ensure independence, objectivity, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest. No person who has a personal, professional, academic, or other interest that may affect the impartial review of the case may participate in the work of the Commission.
3. A member of the Commission is obliged to declare a self-recusal in the event of a conflict of interest. The student has the right, prior to the adoption of a decision by the Commission, to request the recusal of a Commission member by a reasoned written application if there is a circumstance that calls their impartiality into question.
4. The Commission shall elect the Chairperson and the Secretary of the Commission from among its composition by an open vote. The Chairperson of the Commission shall conduct the meeting, and the Secretary of the Commission shall ensure the production of the minutes of the Commission meeting. The Chairperson of the Commission signs the minutes and the decision of the Commission meeting.
5. The meeting of the Commission is closed. The Commission is authorized to act if no fewer than two-thirds of its members are present at the meeting.
6. By decision of the Commission, a meeting may be conducted using an electronic platform. In such a case, the visual and audio identification of the participants, secure communication, and full participation in the meeting must be ensured. The video recording shall be attached to the minutes of the meeting and processed in accordance with the legislation of Georgia on "Personal Data Protection."
7. The student shall be sent a notification regarding the date, time, and format of the review of the academic integrity issue at least 3 calendar days prior to the meeting.
8. The student has the right to:
 - a) Attend the review of the issue and exercise the right to speak;
 - b) Present written or oral explanations;

- c) Present information, evidence, and other materials in their possession to the Commission to defend their position;
 - d) Utilize the assistance of a representative or an advisor;
 - e) Review the case materials, except for information the disclosure of which contradicts legislation or violates the rights of other persons.
9. The failure of the student to appear without a valid reason, provided they were informed in the proper manner, shall not impede the review of the issue, except in cases where the Commission considers it appropriate to postpone the review.
 10. The Commission ensures the realization of the student's rights, the equality of the parties, and an impartial review of the case

Article 25. Conclusion of the Commission

1. The Commission is obliged to study the issue independently, objectively, and impartially, and to make a decision solely on the basis of the factual circumstances of the case and the presented evidence.
2. The Commission adopts a reasoned decision regarding the existence or absence of a violation of academic integrity and, if a violation is established, determines a recommendation on the application of an appropriate measure of disciplinary liability.
3. A member of the Commission is obliged to participate in the voting and does not enjoy the right to abstain from voting.
4. The decision of the Commission must be in writing, reasoned, and include:
 - a) A description of the factual circumstances of the case;
 - b) An evaluation of the examined evidence;
 - c) An evaluation of the student's explanations and presented evidence;
 - d) A reasoned conclusion regarding the existence or absence of a violation of academic integrity;
 - e) In the event that a violation is established – a recommendation on the application of an appropriate measure of disciplinary liability.
5. A member of the Commission who disagrees with the decision in whole or in part has the right to submit a written dissenting opinion, which shall be attached to the decision of the Commission and constitutes an integral part thereof.
6. The Commission sends the reasoned decision in written form to the faculty administration and the student within no later than 3 calendar days from the adoption of the decision.
7. The decision of the Commission does not constitute a final measure of disciplinary liability and serves as the basis for making the corresponding decision.
8. The minutes of the Commission meeting, signed by the Chairperson and the Secretary of the Commission, shall be accompanied by all documents related to the review of the case, including:

- a) The conclusion of the head of the learning component, the academic/invited personnel implementing the training course, or the student's scientific supervisor;
 - b) A text similarity report (if any);
 - c) Explanations and evidence presented by the student;
 - d) A dissenting opinion of a Commission member (if any).
9. The Commission is obliged to review the issue and make a decision, as a rule, within no later than 15 calendar days from its creation, unless there is a necessity to extend the deadline due to the complexity of the case

Article 26. Decision Adopted by the Commission

1. In the event that a violation of academic integrity is established in the student's learning and/or scientific-research product, taking into account the nature, severity, form of intent, consequences, and recurrence of the violation, the Commission makes a decision containing a recommendation on the application of an appropriate measure of disciplinary liability against the student.
2. When determining the measure of disciplinary liability, the Commission shall be guided by the principles of fairness, objectivity, and proportionality.
3. The decision of the Commission, or in the case of an appeal – the decision of the Faculty Board, shall be presented through the Dean of the relevant faculty to the Rector of the University for a final decision within no later than 3 calendar days from the adoption of the decision..

Article 27. Procedure for Appealing the Decision of the Commission

1. The student has the right to appeal the decision adopted by the Commission regarding the establishment of a violation of academic integrity and the recommendation on the application of an appropriate measure of disciplinary liability in accordance with the rules established by this Code.
2. If the student disagrees with the decision of the Commission, they have the right to apply with a written complaint to the Dean of the relevant faculty within 10 calendar days from the delivery of the decision.
3. The complaint must be reasoned and include:
 - a) An indication of the appealed decision;
 - b) The grounds and arguments for the appeal;
 - c) The student's demand;
 - d) Relevant evidence (if any).

4. The student has the right to attach to the complaint a written opinion or conclusion of a specialist in the relevant field, including an internal or external independent expert, concerning the existence or absence of a violation of academic integrity in the presented work.
5. The Dean of the faculty shall present the complaint to the relevant Faculty Board for review within no later than 5 calendar days from its receipt.
6. The Faculty Board shall review the complaint in compliance with the principles of impartiality, fairness, objectivity, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest. A member of the Faculty Board who participated in any stage of the initial review of the case may not participate in the review of the matter.
7. During the review of the complaint, the student has the right to:
 - a) Attend the meeting;
 - b) Present their own explanations, opinions, and evidence;
 - c) Utilize the assistance of a representative or an advisor.
8. Based on the results of the review of the complaint, the relevant Faculty Board is authorized to make one of the following decisions:
 - a) To uphold the decision of the Commission;
 - b) To modify the decision of the Commission in part or in full;
 - c) To modify the measure of disciplinary liability recommended by the Commission;
 - d) To refuse to apply a measure of disciplinary liability;
 - e) To return the case to the Commission for a new review.
9. The decision adopted by the Faculty Board shall be sent to the Rector of the University and to the student against whom the disciplinary proceedings were conducted within no later than 3 calendar days from its adoption.

Article 28. Enforcement of the Decision Concluded by the Commission or the Faculty Board

1. In the event that a violation of academic integrity is established in the student's learning or scientific-research product, based on the decision of the Commission, or in the case of an appeal – based on the decision of the relevant Faculty Board, the Rector of the University shall issue an individual administrative act regarding the application of the appropriate measure of disciplinary liability against the student within no later than 5 calendar days from the adoption of the decision.
2. When applying a measure of disciplinary liability, the Rector of the University acts within the framework of the principles established by this Code and the corresponding decision.
3. The decision of the Rector of the University is final within the framework of the University and may be appealed in court in accordance with the rules established by the legislation of Georgia.
4. The decision of the Rector shall be notified to the student in writing within no later than 3 calendar days from its issuance.

Article 29. Disciplinary Sanctions

1. A disciplinary sanction constitutes a measure of liability applied against a student in the event that a violation of academic integrity is established in the learning and/or scientific-research product presented by them.
2. In the event that a fact of violation of academic integrity by a student is established, one of the following disciplinary sanctions may be applied by the Rector of the University, based on the decision of the Academic Integrity Verification Commission, or in the case of an appeal – based on the decision of the Faculty Board, taking into account the nature, severity, form of intent, consequences, recurrence of the violation, and other essential circumstances:
 - a) Warning;
 - b) Correction of the learning and/or scientific-research product;
 - c) Re-working of the learning and/or scientific-research product;
 - d) Deprivation of the right to present the specific learning and/or scientific-research product and the obligation to re-submit it;
 - e) Suspension of student status for no more than one academic semester;
 - f) Termination of student status.
3. When applying a disciplinary sanction, the principles of fairness, objectivity, and proportionality must be observed.
4. In the application of paragraph 2 of this Article:
 - a) In the case of applying the sanction provided for by subparagraph "b", the student is obliged to present the corrected learning and/or scientific-research product to the relevant academic/invited personnel or structural unit of the University before the end of the ongoing academic semester;
 - b) In the case of applying the sanction provided for by subparagraph "c", the student is obliged to present the re-worked learning and/or scientific-research product during the following academic semester;
 - c) In the case of applying the sanction provided for by subparagraph "d", the student is obliged to re-submit the academic/scientific-research product in accordance with the rule established by the University, including, where necessary, on the basis of a new or substantially re-worked topic.
5. The suspension or termination of student status constitutes an extreme disciplinary sanction and is applied only in the case of a severe, intentional, or repeated violation of academic integrity.
6. In the event that a violation of academic integrity is established, the University is authorized to restrict the presentation, publication, or making public on behalf of the University of the learning or scientific-research product in which the violation was detected.
7. Where necessary, for the purpose of preventing a repeated violation, the University is authorized to establish additional academic supervision, academic consultation, or other support mechanisms for the student's academic activity for a specified term

Chapter V. Closing Provisions

Article 30. Approval, Entry into Force, and Amendment of the Code

1. This Academic Integrity Code shall be approved by the Representative Council of the University based on the submission of the Department of Scientific Research and Development of the University.
2. This Code shall enter into force from the day of its approval by the Representative Council of the University, unless another term is defined by the relevant legal act.
3. The introduction of amendments and additions to the Code, as well as its annulment, shall be carried out in the same manner by which its approval takes place.
4. The University shall carry out the review and update of the Academic Integrity Code at least once every three years or in case of necessity, taking into account the trends of contemporary academic, research, digital, and technological development.