

ADOPTED by the Council of the
Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Tartu
on 29 February 2016 (effective as of 1 March 2016)

AMENDED by the Council of the
Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Tartu
on 14 January 2021 (effective as of 15 January 2021)
on 9 September 2021 (effective as of 10 September 2021)

PROCEDURE FOR PROCESSING CASES OF ACADEMIC FRAUD IN THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Based on clause 143 of “Study Regulations”, adopted by the senate of the University of Tartu regulation no. 3 of 28 May 2021.

1. Academic fraud (hereinafter ‘fraud’) is understood as a case outlined in clause 142 of the Study Regulations (hereinafter ‘SR’).
2. To proceed cases of suspected fraud, a standing committee of at least five members is formed in each school, institute and college (‘unit’) based on a directive of the head of the respective unit. The committee may comprise academic employees and programme directors of the respective unit, and must comprise one student.
3. Cases of suspected fraud are proceeded by the committee of the unit in a study course of which the suspected fraud case occurred. The consequences stipulated in clause 148 of the SR are imposed on students of the Faculty of Social Sciences by the vice dean for academic affairs of the Faculty of Social Sciences.
4. A teaching staff member who has discovered academic fraud in a course gives a warning to the student in accordance with SR clause 144, or in the case of a more serious violation, makes a proposal to the committee to process the case. When the teaching staff member has given a warning, the student has the right to submit a letter of explanation within five working days and request processing of the case by the committee. If more serious violation is discovered, the member of teaching staff submits a proposal to the committee in a format that can be reproduced in writing, within three working days from the discovery of the case. The proposal includes the name of the student suspected of committing the fraud (‘student’), a description of the case, evidence referring to fraud and the names of other people involved and a description of their involvement. If academic fraud is discovered by a person other than the staff member teaching the course, the person will submit the aforementioned proposal to the committee. Provisions of clause 144 of the SR apply to the publication of the warning and the student’s explanation, and to the deletion of the warning. A repeated violation is generally deemed to be a more serious violation.
5. If the case of suspected fraud is committed by a doctoral student, the person who discovered the case presents the information outlined in the previous clause to the head of the respective unit. To proceed the case, the head of unit sets up an at least three-member committee consisting of employees of the same unit who hold a doctoral degree or an equivalent qualification.
6. The committee informs the student of the proceeding, provides an overview of the circumstances known to the committee and asks the student to present an explanation of the case within three working days of receiving notification of the suspected fraud. If additional important evidence comes to light during the proceeding, the committee allows the student to give additional explanations within three working days.

7. During the proceeding, the committee may consult members of the academic affairs committee of the Faculty of Social Sciences, university employees competent in the subject field of the case and/or other experts.
8. The committee must investigate all the circumstances related to the case comprehensively and objectively. If a member of the committee is directly related to the case or if other circumstances raise doubts about a member's impartiality, the member of the committee will not participate in processing the case. To ensure quorum, the head of the respective unit may appoint another member to the committee to process the case.
9. The committee has a quorum if at least three members participate in the decision-making.
10. If the committee establishes that academic fraud has been committed, the committee makes a proposal to the teaching staff member to give a warning to the student, or a proposal to the vice dean for academic affairs to reprimand the student, or a motion to the vice dean to make a proposal to the vice rector for academic affairs to exmatriculate the student. The proposal or motion is made if more than half of the committee members who participated in the decision-making have voted for the decision. The proposal or motion must state the reasons, based on which circumstances and evidence the committee established the fraud and on what grounds the committee decided to make the proposal or the motion. The proposal or motion is submitted to the vice dean for academic affairs within 14 days from the day the student was informed of the proceeding. The committee may postpone this deadline, if there is good reason, by informing the student of the reasons for the extension of the proceeding as well as the new deadline. If the committee does not establish academic fraud, the committee informs the student of the end of the proceeding within the same deadline. The committee informs the head of the respective unit and the person who discovered the case of suspected fraud of the committee's decision made as a result of proceeding the case.
11. Before making the decision outlined in clause 148 of the SR, the vice dean for academic affairs presents the proposal of the committee to the student who committed fraud for opinion or objections within three working days of receiving the proposal. If the vice dean for academic affairs disagrees with the position of the committee, the vice dean may return the case to the committee for further investigation.
12. The vice dean for academic affairs makes the decision stated in clause 148 of the SR within seven working days of receiving the proposal or motion. The vice dean for academic affairs may postpone this deadline, if there is good reason, by informing the student of the reasons for the extension and of the new deadline. The decision should state the circumstances and evidence based on which fraud was established and the considerations underlying the decision.
13. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the vice dean for academic affairs according to the procedure established in the SR.
14. Any communication between the committee, the vice dean for academic affairs, the student and other concerned persons must take place in a format which can be reproduced in writing. The committee or the vice dean for academic affairs gives the student three working days to respond to the committee's or vice dean's communication, starting from the day of the notification of the communication.
15. Cases of improper behaviour (SR clause 141) are processed pursuant to this procedure. Cases of improper behaviour are processed by the committee referred to in clause 2 of this procedure.
16. This procedure is effective as of 1 March 2016.