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

Based on the Senate of the University of Tartu Regulation no. 5 of 26 April 2013 “Study Regulations”, IX.10. Academic fraud and improper behaviour.

1. Cases outlined in clause 203 of the Study Regulations (hereinafter referred to as SR) will be deemed academic fraud (hereinafter referred to as fraud).

2. In order to proceed suspected fraud cases, a standing committee of at least five members is formed in each school, institute and college with the directive of the head of the respective unit. The committee can consist of academic employees and programme directors of the respective unit.

3. The person who discovers the suspected fraud case is obliged to inform the committee of the case in a format which can be reproduced in writing within two working days from the discovery of the suspected fraud. The outlined information should include the names of the students suspected of committing fraud (hereinafter referred to as student), the description of the case, evidence referring to fraud and the names of other people involved with a description of their involvement.

4. When a 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. The head of the unit sets up a committee of at least three members, which consists of the employees of the respective unit who have a doctoral degree or corresponding qualifications.

5. The committee informs the student of the proceeding, provides an overview of the circumstances known to them and asks the student for their explanation to the case within two working days from receiving the notification of the suspected fraud case. If additional important evidence comes to light during the proceeding, the committee allows the student to provide additional explanations.

6. During the proceeding, the committee may consult the members of the academic affairs committee of the Faculty of Social Sciences, employees of the university competent in the subject field of the case and/or other experts.

7. The committee is obliged to examine all the circumstances related to the case fully and objectively. If a member of the committee is directly related to the case or other circumstances raise doubt concerning their impartiality, the member of the committee shall not participate in processing the case. To ensure quorum, the head of the respective unit may appoint another member to the committee for processing the respective case.

8. The committee has a quorum if at least three members participate in the decision-making.

9. If the committee establishes that academic fraud has been committed, the committee makes a proposal to the vice dean for academic affairs to reprimand the student or a motion to make a proposal to the vice rector for academic affairs for the deletion of the student from the matriculation register. The proposal or motion is made if more than half of the members of the committee who participated in the decision-making voted for the decision. The proposal or motion shall state the reasons, which circumstances and evidence the establishment of the fraud was based on and on what grounds it was decided to make a proposal or a motion. The proposal or motion is submitted to the vice dean for academic affairs within eight working days from the day the student was informed of the proceeding. The committee may extend this deadline if there is good reason for it by informing the student of the reasons for the extension as well as the new deadline. If the committee did not establish academic fraud, the committee shall inform the students of the
end of the proceeding within the same deadline. The committee shall inform the head of the respective unit and the person who discovered the suspected fraud case of their decision.

10. The vice dean for academic affairs presents the proposal or motion of the committee to the student who committed fraud for their opinion or objections within two working days from receiving the proposal or motion before making the decision outlined in clause 205 of the SR. After receiving the student’s opinion or objections, the vice dean for academic affairs may return the same case to the committee with their justifications for additional processing.

11. The vice dean for academic affairs makes the decision stated in clause 205 of the SR within seven working days from receiving the proposal or motion. The vice dean for academic affairs may extend the named deadline if there is good reason for it by informing the student of the reasons for the extension as well as the new deadline. The decision should state circumstances and evidence based on which fraud has been established and which deliberations the decision is based on.

12. The student has the right to dispute the decision of the vice dean for academic affairs according to the procedure established in the SR.

13. The interaction between the committee, the vice dean for academic affairs, the student and other concerned persons is done in a format which can be reproduced in writing. The committee or the vice dean for academic affairs gives the student two working days from the day the inquiry was presented to reply to the inquiry.

14. This procedure is effective as of 1 March 2016.