

Free Academy of Tbilisi



Code of Ethics and
Disciplinary Liability Norms



Article 1. General Provisions

1.1. Code of Ethics and Disciplinary Liability Norms of the Free Academy of Tbilisi (therefore the Academy) is a formulation of the ethical principles, values, and behaviors of staff and students. Code's aim is to support the academy staff and students to solve or determine the ethical issues arising during work or educational processes.

1.2. All employees are obliged to obey the Georgian legislation, previous code of ethics and the academy provision.

1.3. Staff of the academy should respect intellectual property of each other and recognize the right of all the students to get education in the environment free from violence, discrimination and terror. Staff and students are free to choose their religion but they are obliged to obey different opinions. It is unacceptable to provoke ethnic or religious conflicts in to the academy.

Article 2. Behaviour Rules and Ethic Standards Relationship of Personal at the Academy

2.1. The academy staff who serves implementations of mission statement of the institution should lead its activity with conscience, honesty and high standards of ethic. Staff is obliged to follow ethical behavior principles according their professional and position duties.

2.2. Academic and invited staff should strive to rise their level of pedagogical and professional levels. In addition academic and invited staff is obliged to be actively involved in social, educational or research activities of the academy.

2.3. The academy staff is obliged to avoid or appropriately meet the situations that can damage the image of the academy in any way. Such kind of situations may be considered conflict or other kind of unhealthy situations with students, colleagues or other employers of the academy, such as disrespect and cynical attitudes, creating the tense, negative emotional background, etc.

2.4. The academy staff should not request / receive gifts or money and should not encourage anybody about this, if this is connected with the abuse of official authority.

2.5. To increase knowledge and develop skills is duty of all the staff of the academy. They should constantly trying to increase qualification.

2.6. The academy staff should take care of the academy material- technical base, use them as intended and follow safety measures.

Article 3. Behaviour Rules and Relationship Ethic Standards of the Academy Administrative and Supporting staff



3.1. Administrative and supporting staff is obliged to create the moral, finance, economic and household environment at the academy for education and research activities and professional development. They are obliged to:

- Obey the academy rules, procedures and legislation;
- Effectively use the academy's property, working hours, intellectual possibilities and other resources;
- Do not disclose confidential information obtained in the course of professional activity except for legitimate reasons.

Article 4. Behaviour Rules and Relationship Ethic Standards of the academy students

4.1. It is the student's duty to respect the academy where he or she gets knowledge. Learn, participate in research, adhere to the Code of Ethics and other applicable legal acts at the academy, and promote the ged toauthority of the the academy. In view of the above, a student is oblidle to:

- Respect the academy personnel and other students, don't offended or commit other violent acts against them;
- It's prohibited to take weapons, alcohol, and drugs in the building of the academy and their use. Gambling is prohibited, as well as unlawful action provided for by the legislation of Georgia;
- Do not offer or claim any benefits to staff members for personal gain;

4.2. Prohibition of plagiarism, namely:

- To copy from another student's work, or to use other supporting material not previously permitted by the lecturer;
- Pass the exam instead of another student or ask another person to take the exam instead of him;
- Present another person's work as his/her own;
- Cite someone else's work or statement without reference to the appropriate source;
- Obtain and use confidential information about exam;
- Illegally master, destroy, or alter another student's work;
- Interfere with other students in learning and research by concealing, misappropriating or destroying necessary resources;
- Assist another student in academic deception;
- Illegally use or falsify factual information of research work;
- Attend all the courses of his/her choice, which are compulsory according to the program established by the academy;
- Comply with the academy Provision and other regulations governing its activities (including those provided by this Code).

4.3. If plagiarism is discovered during working on the bachelor/master thesis, the supervisor is entitled to return the thesis to the author once and give recommendations;



4.4. If plagiarism is confirmed in the final version of the bachelor/master thesis, the thesis is not graded and the student does not have the right to revise and submit the same thesis. Accordingly, the student will not be admitted to the defense and a negative semester grade will be formed. The student has the right to complete a new bachelor's thesis within the next two years. The student is obliged to finance the re-preparation of the bachelor's thesis.

4.5. Students' compliance with the discipline norms on the territory of the academy is controlled by the Safety and Health Assurance Service, the Dean of a School, or the Rector in exceptional cases. At the same time, discipline control is delegated to staff and students' self-governing bodies.

4.6. In case of violation of the academy Provision, Code of Ethics or Law of Georgia, the academy staff is entitled to raise the issue of liability of the abusive student. The Rector of the academy is authorized to terminate the status of a student who violates the provision.

4.7. The course instructor is responsible for conducting the student in the auditorium. If the student violates a law or order and thus impedes the course of the lecture, the lecturer is entitled to request the student to leave the room. Only the rector or a dean of a school may prohibit a student to attend lectures for a relatively long period.

Article 5. Disciplinary Proceedings and Disciplinary Liability Norms

5.1. Disciplinary Proceedings and Disciplinary Liability Norms set out the grounds for disciplinary liability, types of disciplinary punishment, issues of initiating disciplinary prosecution, conducting disciplinary proceedings and imposing responsibility of staff and students.

5.2. Basics of Disciplinary Liability

- Violation of current legislation;
- Failure to perform or improperly perform the obligations provided by the Provision and other normative and individual administrative legal acts of the academy;
- Violation of the Code of Ethics and Disciplinary Liability;
- Any conduct that may not formally comprise the actions provided for in this article but is contrary to ethical and moral standards and other established requirements.

5.3. Terms of disciplinary proceedings

- A person is not subject to disciplinary liability if 2 (two) years have elapsed since the committal or discovery of the disciplinary violation, or 3 (three) months from the date of decision on initiation of disciplinary prosecution.



- The deadline for the disciplinary board to decide whether a complaint is admissible is one 1 (one) month after the application/complaint has been received and one (1) month from the initiation of disciplinary proceedings.
- The period during which the proceedings are suspended or postponed shall not be counted as the total period of proceedings prescribed by the provision.

5.4. Types of disciplinary punishment

The following types of disciplinary punishment are imposed on the academic/invited and administrative/support staff members:

- Admonition;
- Reprimand;
- Severe reprimand;
- Dismissal;

The following types of disciplinary punishment are imposed on the students:

- Admonition;
- Reprimand;
- Severe reprimand;
- Termination of student status.

Article 6. Bodies Carrying out Disciplinary Proceedings and their Powers

6.1. Implementation of the Code of Ethics at the academy and monitoring of discipline as well as disciplinary proceedings are carried out by the disciplinary proceeding authority body (hereinafter the Disciplinary Board) and other competent services of the academy.

6.2. The Disciplinary Board is a group of representatives of major structural units of the academy - schools, as well as administration, libraries, and other structural units set by the Rector's order the Chairman/ Chairman of which shall be elected at the first meeting of the Board, by a simple majority of members, by open ballot.

6.3. The Disciplinary Board has the following powers:

- Receive and examine incoming information (application/complaint);
- Examine the time limits set forth in this statute for initiating disciplinary proceedings;
- Determine whether disciplinary prosecution should be brought to action. To do this, the Disciplinary Board should receive explanations from the author of the statement/complaint and the person against whom the complaint is filed. The Disciplinary Board may speak to the party and request

clarification of information, submission of documents and relevant materials. It should take into consideration the submitted petitions and additional explanations. If the information is verified, it will serve as the basis for the disciplinary prosecution;

- In the event of non-compliance with the disciplinary liability (the disciplinary prosecution), give the applicant a well-reasoned decision refusing to pursue disciplinary action;
- Conduct disciplinary proceedings, make appropriate decisions, and submit this to the Rector of the academy.

Article 7. Grounds for Initiating Disciplinary Proceedings

7.1. Disciplinary proceedings can be initiated on the basis of a motivated statement/complaint from the Rector, Vice Rector, Senate, Quality Assurance Service, Dean of a School, School Board, Student Self Governance, Disciplinary Board, other services of appropriate authority, staff, and student of the of the academy, who believe that the actions of the staff or student violate his / her rights and interests.

Article 8. Examination of the Application/Complaint and Acceptance in Proceedings

8.1. The Disciplinary Board shall, within one month of receiving a complaint or application, examine the case file to determine whether there is sufficient cause for a disciplinary prosecution and make a decision to bring to action disciplinary proceedings or discontinue disciplinary proceedings.

8.2. Disciplinary proceedings should not be carried, or disciplinary proceedings should be stopped if:

- Complaint/application or notification does not meet the eligibility requirements;
- Complaint/statement or notification does not give rise to a disciplinary prosecution even if the information is correct;
- Time limits for disciplinary prosecution or disciplinary action have expired;
- Examined materials do not provide grounds for disciplinary prosecution;
- Examined materials indicate that the person has committed a criminal offense;
- The application/complaint is about a person who is no longer a the academy staff member or student;
- If the author of the complaint / application rejects the complaint, the Disciplinary Board may terminate or continue disciplinary proceedings on motivated grounds;
- In the event of discontinuation of disciplinary proceedings, the Board shall issue to the applicant a decision on termination of disciplinary prosecution.

Article 9. Suspension and adjournment of disciplinary proceedings



9.1. Disciplinary proceedings may be suspended if evidence obtained in the course of a case reveals that a person may have committed a criminal offense. In such case, the matter should be referred to the competent authority.

9.2. Disciplinary proceedings may be postponed if objective difficulties or obstacles have arisen during the examination of the application/complaint (A person's illness or other cases), which makes it impossible to continue the proceedings.

9.3. Once the disciplinary prosecution is suspended or postponed, the case will be resumed.

Article 10. Procedure for Consideration of Application / Complaint

10.1. The Disciplinary Board should consider applications / complaints fairly and impartially, and in compliance with the principles of equality before the law.

10.2. The sessions of the disciplinary body are closed, and the information obtained during the disciplinary proceedings is confidential. The person has the right to request that the issue of disciplinary proceedings against him/her be discussed at a public hearing.

10.3. The sessions of the Disciplinary Board shall be chaired by its Chairperson or any of its members, elected by a majority of the members present, by open ballot.

10.4. If necessary, the Disciplinary Board shall invite witnesses and other persons, who shall be notified of the date, time, and place of the session.

10.5. The Disciplinary Board is obliged to hear an explanation of the disciplinary offender who has the right to participate in the disciplinary proceedings, both directly and through a representative. The parties have the right to present their position fully, to question witnesses, to submit written and other evidences, arise a motion for the submission of additional materials, documents and information, also request the appearance of other persons for the purpose of depriving the testimony, and take actions not provided for in this article.

10.6. The Disciplinary Board has the right to interrogate the parties and persons invited to attend the hearing, to request additional documents, materials and information, to call witnesses and, take other action.

10.7. At the Disciplinary Board meeting, the secretary of the meeting (elected by the majority of those present at the first meeting) shall draw up a protocol, which shall be signed by the chairman and the secretary.

10.8. The Disciplinary Board shall make a decision on instituting disciplinary proceedings against a person or imposing disciplinary sanctions by an open majority vote of the majority of its members. A dissent is formed in writing and attached to the decision.

Article 11. Participation of a Disciplinary Offender in the Hearing of a Case

11.1. The disciplinary Board may require that a disciplinary offender attend a hearing.



11.2. If the person does not appear at the hearing, the hearing shall be postponed for 10 days. If the person fails to appear for the second time for an unsuccessful reason, the Disciplinary Board shall be entitled to hear the case without the presence of the disciplinary offender; Also, if appropriate, make a decision and impose disciplinary action.

11.3. If a person fails to appear at the Disciplinary Board hearing due to serious illness or for any other respectful reason, the Disciplinary Board shall suspend the hearing.

11.4. After the reason for the suspension has expired the Disciplinary Board will resume the hearing. The non-appearance of the offender after the resumption of the hearing does not impede making the decision on the case.

Article 12. Imposition of Disciplinary Sanctions

12.1. When imposing a disciplinary sanction, the Disciplinary Board shall take into account the severity and extent of the violation (s), the damage caused (or possible), as well as the repetitive nature of the breach. A person's responsibility increases in proportion to the severity and degree of disciplinary misconduct or repeated violations of norms; If a person has been found to have committed a disciplinary offense and has previously been subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the requirements of this Code, the disciplinary authority may decide to apply a more severe disciplinary punishment.

12.2. It is inadmissible to impose a sanction for a violation on which decision has already been made.

12.3. The decision to impose a disciplinary punishment must be substantiated and based on the evidence obtained in the appropriate manner.

Article 13. Disciplinary Board Decision

13.1. The decision should include:

- Name of the body implementing the disciplinary proceedings;
- The composition of the Disciplinary Board;
- Case date;
- The name, surname and status of the disciplinary offender;
- Date of commencement of disciplinary prosecution and imposition of disciplinary sanctions;
- The circumstances surrounding the disciplinary case;
- The nature of the disciplinary violation and the response to the disciplinary offender;
- The factual and legal basis for decision making;
- The type of disciplinary violation and the type of disciplinary sanction imposed;
- Grounds for discontinuing disciplinary proceedings, denying a complaint / application, or imposing a disciplinary sanction.

Article 14. Notification about the Disciplinary Body's Decision

14.1. A duly certified copy of the Disciplinary Board's decision shall be sent to the disciplinary Offender within five (5) business days of the decision being made.

14.2. A copy of the decision shall be attached to the personal file of the disciplinary offender.

Article 15. Appealing the decision of the Disciplinary Board.

15.1. The disciplinary violator has the right to appeal the decision of the Disciplinary Board within one month after the decision is delivered.

Article 16. Execution of Disciplinary Board Decisions

16.1. The decisions of the Disciplinary Board shall enter into force upon expiry of the period of appeal or if appealed, upon entry into force of of the Board's decision imposing a disciplinary sanction.

16.2. The Rector of the academy or the head of the relevant structural unit shall execute the decision within one month of its entry into force. The decisions of the Disciplinary Board regarding academic/invited, administrative and support staff are executed by the Rector's order.

16.3. The decisions of the Disciplinary Board regarding a student is executed by the Dean of the school and on the termination of student status by the latter's submission and by the order of the rector.

Article 17. Validity Periods of Sanctions

17.1. Sanctions: admonition, reprimand, severe reprimand are valid only for a certain period of time before the expiry of which the disciplinary offender is considered a disciplinary sanctioned.

17.2. If a person does not commit a disciplinary offense within the relevant period, the admonition shall cease to be effective three months after the date on which the judgment has entered into force, reprimand after six months and severe reprimand in a year.

Article 18. Types of Incentives

18.1. The academy employees are encouraged when they perform their duties in good faith and exemplary, For long and exemplary work, and considering the results of staff evaluation.

18.2. Types of incentives are:

1. Premium;
2. Material and intangible rewards;



3. Proclaiming thanks;
4. Awarded with a gift;
5. Other types of incentives.

18.3. Several forms of incentives can be used simultaneously.

18.4. The incentive is announced by the rector's order and publicity will be provided in the case provided for by the legislation.

Article 19. Mechanisms for the Prevention and Detection of Plagiarism

19.1. The Academy is based on the principles of academic integrity, taking responsibility for protecting the intellectual work and copyrights of others. Accordingly, a policy of avoiding plagiarism has been developed.

19.2. The academy considers plagiarism to be the case where authors, knowingly or unknowingly, submit their views, ideas, videos, audio, or other types of visual material, etc., without proper verification.

19.3. To prevent plagiarism, its prevention, detection and awareness of students and academic staff, the academy has developed the following mechanisms:

- a. In the syllabuses of the curriculum there is a relevant point, which implies raising the awareness of the students during the teaching process - respect for the intellectual work of others and the need to adequately verify their thinking or other creative and research product in their own research;
- b. At the undergraduate level, an appropriate compulsory course (academic writing) is taught, in which students learn how to avoid plagiarism, rules for referencing bibliographic data and sources in appropriate style (citation, abstract and paraphrasing);
- c. The academy has developed a unified rule for the completion of academic bachelor/master theses; This rule is posted on the web site and is available to anyone;
- d. In order to detect plagiarism, the works created in the academy are checked in the plagiarism detection program;
- e. Each full version of a paper is checked in the plagiarism program;
- f. Checked papers along with the corresponding conclusion are returned to the academy;
- g. The first page of the conclusion shows the percentage of plagiarism detected in the paper, and the following pages describe in detail which specific sentences have been copied;
- h. The final decision on the presence or absence of plagiarism is made by the author/supervisor of the paper;
- i. If more than 20% plagiarism is detected in the bachelor's thesis, the student is released from the defense of the bachelor's thesis.

Article 20. Mechanisms to Avoid and Detect Plagiarism



20.1. The academy urges its academic staff to conduct research on behalf of the the academy in accordance with the principles of good faith. It is inadmissible to use others' own research, theory, ideas, audio and visual materials without the rules of reference and citation permitted.

20.2. To prevent this, the academy uses a collegiate assessment system:

- a.** In the case of a student, announcing a reprimand and canceling the received assessment;
- b.** In the case of academic staff - announcement of reprimand, if this is the first case of plagiarism, and in case of repetition - termination of the employment contract.

Article 21. Final Provisions

21.1. This Code of Ethics comes into force upon approval by the the academy Senate and has no retroactive effect;

21.2. Any amendment to the Code of Ethics must be in accordance with the legislation in force in Georgia and must be approved or amended by the Senate of the academy.