



# THE OMBUDSMAN FOR ACADEMIC ETHICS AND PROCEDURES OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

## DECISION

### REGARDING ACTIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ISM UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS AND ITS QUALIFICATION COMMISSION ON DEFENCE OF GRADUATION WORKS

08 October 2014 No. SP-12

Vilnius

The **Ombudsman for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania** (hereinafter – Ombudsman), <...> examined the complaint of Evaldas Norkevičius (hereinafter – applicant) received in the Office of Ombudsman for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania on 08 July 2014 and the submitted material, and **determined that:**

The applicant addresses the Ombudsman about the dispute between the applicant and Qualification Commission of Graduation Works (hereinafter – Commission) of ISM University of Management and Economics (hereinafter – University) regarding negative evaluation of the applicant's Master Theses and the actions/omission to act of the University's Administration when it did not allow to get familiar with the commission's decisions regarding defence of the Master Theses, their evaluation, and when it did not allow to appeal against the commission's decision (negative evaluation of the aforementioned theses).

The applicant indicated that he was defending his Master Theses at University on 04 June 2014. After the defence he was informed that his theses were evaluated negatively (four). On 06 June 2014 the applicant consulted the supervisor of his Master Theses Mike Huettinger and representatives of the University's administration L. Ramoniene, N. Ivanauskiene, in order to learn, why he had received negative evaluation; however according to the applicant, he received no clear answer.

On 06 June 2014 the applicant addressed the University's administration regarding negative evaluation. According to the applicant, the administration suggested him to follow the Procedure of Submission and Consideration of Appeals approved by the Rector's Order No. 10-07-68 on 26 November 2013.

On 11 June 2014 the applicant brought an appeal <...>

On 30 June 2014 the applicant received a letter from the University "Regarding appeal brought on 11 June 2014", where it was stated that his application could not be satisfied because "the decision of the Qualification Commission for Defence of Graduation Works of the University is final and indisputable".

The applicant states in the complaint that the University's administration did not provide any arguments regarding evaluation of his Master Theses, did not give minutes of the commission's meeting and evaluations of the parts of defence.

The applicant asks the Ombudsman:

"1. To recommend to the University to revoke the decision not to accept the appeal for the commission's decision;

2. To recommend to the University to revoke the decision to give negative evaluation for my Master Theses;

<...>”

When the Commission was assessing the work, it had to follow the Procedure of Evaluation of Defence of Graduation Works and requirements for Master Theses, according to which the evaluation carried out by the Commission is a process, during which the student's Master Theses are evaluated in three aspects: the content of the graduation work, its presentation and answers to the questions of the Commission's members are evaluated. These evaluations make the total score that is entered into the calculation formula of average of evaluations of the supervisor, reviewer and commission used to calculate the final evaluation. The entire course and results of this process have to be recorded in the documents, on the basis of which the evaluation of the graduation work of the commission could be justified.

<...>

According to the clause 3.4 of the Regulations of Studies of ISM University of Management and Economics, “The evaluation of knowledge, skills and competence of the members of ISM community has to be correct, honest and in compliance with the goals of evaluation.” Therefore the conclusion should be made that the Commission's decisions have to be clear, transparent and cause no doubt about the ground and impartiality of the evaluation.

*Following the aforementioned, the Ombudsman states that the evaluation of the applicant's Master Theses carried out by the Qualification Commission of Graduation Works of ISM University of Management and Economics and the decision passed regarding the evaluation are unjustified and thus contradict to the Procedure of Defence of Graduation Works and the part of the Requirements for Master Theses “Assessment of the Theses”.*

<...>

**The Ombudsman decided:**

To recommend to ISM University of Management and Economics to revoke the of the Qualification Commission of Graduation Works of 04 June 2014 to evaluate the Master Theses of the applicant E. Norkevicius by the grade “four”.

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