



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

REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE OF COMMUNICATION DURING THE CRISIS IN KAUNAS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

8 August 2016, No. SP-17
Vilnius

The Ombudsman for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter - the Ombudsman), in accordance with Part 1 of Paragraph 18 of the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania and with Subparagraph 13.1 of the provisions of the Office of the Ombudsman for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania, approved by the Resolution No. XI-1583 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania of 15 September 2011 “Regarding the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsman for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania and the approval of the provisions of the Office of the Ombudsman for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter - the Provisions), by Subparagraph 13.1 and after the investigation (hereinafter - the investigation) based on the notification received on 26 February 2016 received in the Office of the Ombudsman for Academic Ethics and Procedures from the Committee on Education, Science and Culture of Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania regarding the conclusions and recommendations of the Lithuanian Human Rights Coordination Centre (24-02-2016, No. S-2016-1139) (hereinafter - the notification) and after the examination of the material provided by Kaunas University of Technology,

determined that:

Taking into account the conclusions and recommendations of the Lithuanian Human Rights Coordination Centre of 03-02-2016 “Regarding possible human rights violations in Kaunas University of Technology”, the investigation was aimed to find out the problems of application of the provisions of the description of the procedure of communication during the crisis in Kaunas University of Technology; the description of the procedure was approved by the order No. A-416 of 1 October 2015 of the rector of Kaunas University of Technology.

By the letter No. S-189, the Ombudsman addressed to the rector of Kaunas University of Technology by requesting to provide the detailed summary of the cases in which there were applied the provisions of the description of the procedure of communication during the crisis in Kaunas University of Technology (approved by the order No. A-416 of 01-10-2015 of the rector of Kaunas University of Technology) and specify and justify the decisions that were adopted regarding the mentioned cases.

Kaunas University of Technology, by the letter No. DV10-435 of 10-05-2016 “Regarding the submission of the information“, informed that “the summary of cases in which there were applied the provisions of the Description is not being kept“ and provided the descriptions of several cases.

By the letter No. S-264 of 23-06-2016, the Ombudsman addressed to Kaunas University of Technology by requesting to provide the list of the cases of plagiarism in which there were applied the provisions of the description of the procedure of communication during the crisis in Kaunas University of Technology (approved by the order No. A-416 of 01-10-2015 of the rector of Kaunas University of Technology) and specify and justify the decisions that were adopted regarding the mentioned cases.

Kaunas University of Technology, by the letter No. DV10-566 of 29-06-2016 informed that “in Kaunas University of Technology there were no cases of plagiarism in which there would be applied the provisions of the description of the procedure of communication during the crisis in Kaunas University of Technology“.

Attention is drawn to the fact that in the description of the procedure of communication during the crisis in Kaunas University of Technology (approved by the order No. A-416 of 01-10-2015 of the rector of Kaunas University of Technology), the attribution of the cases of the academic works plagiarism to the potential crisis situation (Subparagraph 4.5 of the Description) and the following limitation of the information provision (Section IV of the Description) contradict to the principles of academic freedom and responsibility, academic integrity, that are established in the Code of Academic Ethics of Kaunas University of Technology.

It should be noted that at the meeting of the representatives of the Office and Kaunas University of Technology on 14-06-2016, the representatives of Kaunas University of Technology informed that the description of the procedure of communication during the crisis in Kaunas University of Technology was being improved with regard to the conclusions and recommendations of the Lithuanian Human Rights Coordination Centre “Regarding possible human rights violations in Kaunas University of Technology”, but the modified valid version of the Description is not publicly published.

After the evaluation of the circumstances of the notification, the information provided by Kaunas University of Technology, and in accordance with Paragraph 9 of Part 12 of Article 18 of the Law on Higher Education and Research, the Ombudsman:

decided:

To recognize the investigation as unjustified.

The Ombudsman’s decision may be appealed in the order set by the Law on Administrative Proceedings of the Republic of Lithuania.
