



**DECISION  
OF THE CENTRAL ACADEMIC ETHICS COMMISSION  
OF VILNIUS UNIVERSITY**

**On the appeal of Vilnius University graduate I. V. of 17 March 2025**

The Central Academic Ethics Commission (hereinafter the ‘Commission’) received an appeal registered on 17 March 2025 from I. V. (hereinafter the ‘Applicant’), graduate of the /Unit/, requesting to investigate whether the Applicant’s Bachelor thesis ‘/.../’ (hereinafter the ‘Final Thesis’) was used without permission when student V. J. delivered the poster presentation ‘/.../’ (hereinafter the ‘Presentation’) during the conference ‘/.../’ held at the /Unit/ on 14 March of this year. The Applicant states that the abstracts, diagrams, schemes, and research conclusions included in the Presentation are taken from the Applicant’s Final Thesis, indicating the authorship as that of student V. J., and the Applicant substantiates her claims by attaching a copy of her Final Thesis and a link to the Presentation.

In accordance with Item 29 of the Commission Regulations, the Commission contacted the Rector of Vilnius University regarding the formation of an expert group to investigate the situation in question. The conclusion submitted by the expert group indicates that in accordance with Item 7 of the Intellectual Property Management Regulations of Vilnius University, ‘property rights and related rights to objects of copyright and related rights (*including final theses*) created while performing the student's duties in the study process at the University as defined in the applicable law and by using the financial support, equipment, materials, premises or other property of the University, shall belong to the student and the University’; therefore, no separate agreement of the Applicant was required to present and use the contents of the Applicant’s Final Thesis in a scientific conference held at the University. In addition, as evidenced by the material attached by the Applicant, she was indicated as the co-author of the Presentation in question, thus not denying her authorship. Having taken this context into consideration, the expert group made the conclusion that the provisions of the Code of Academic Ethics were not violated in the situation in question.

The Commission also requested clarifications regarding the situation in question from Dr T. K., the academic supervisor of student V. J., who explained that she, the Applicant, and student

V. J. were all three indicated as the co-authors of the Presentation since the aim of it was to present research the experimental part of which was performed in 2023 by the Applicant and student V. J. repeated the research ‘to check the reproducibility of data.’ In addition, student V. J. developed part of the Presentation, and helped to edit it and systematise the material for its delivery. The Presentation abstracts were redrafted specifically for delivering them at the conference. Dr T. K. noted that the Applicant was included as the co-author, therefore, her contribution was not denied and accordingly indicated. However, she admitted her fault as supervisor in not discussing these matters clearly with the Applicant and not obtaining her permission to present the results of the Applicant’s Final Thesis in a broader context.

Upon familiarising itself with the Applicant’s appeal, the conclusion of the expert group formed by the Rector, and other available information, the Commission hereby points out that:

1. In its activities, the Commission is guided by the Code of Academic Ethics of Vilnius University approved by the Senate of Vilnius University (current version approved by Resolution of the Senate of Vilnius University No. SPN-54 of 21 October 2020) (hereinafter the ‘Code of Academic Ethics’) and the Regulations of the Central Academic Ethics Commission of Vilnius University (current version approved by Resolution of the Senate of Vilnius University No. SPN-55 of 21 October 2020) (hereinafter the ‘Commission Regulations’). The Commission Regulations define the Commission's competence, the decisions that it can possibly make, and describe the Commission's operating procedures. In its decisions, the Commission only comments on matters that fall under its competency.

2. Items 29–31 of the Commission Regulations set out that when subject-specific or other expert opinion is required, the Commission shall contact the Rector regarding the formation of an impartial expert group and shall make its decision following the conclusion provided by the expert group. Having familiarised itself with the conclusion provided by the experts and having determined no substantial shortcomings therein, the Commission hereby concludes that in the situation in question, the Code of Academic Ethics norms were not violated and there were no violations of academic ethics.

3. The Commission hereby notes that in accordance with the quoted legal regulation, when preparing research papers or in other ways, the members of the University community may (if not forbidden or limited in the specific situation) use the content of the results accumulated by former students during their studies without permission from their author (then-student). In any case, copyright must be respected and the Commission not only states that in such cases the fact of authorship must be disclosed clearly and unambiguously, but also, if in any way possible, that the

author should be informed about the intention to use the content of the work they produced during their studies.

4. The Commission hereby notes that, in accordance with Item 39 of the Commission Regulations, the depersonalised Commission's decisions (or summaries thereof) are published on the University's website. The Commission explains that it is done with the aim to more clearly define the ethical standards applied at the University, to make the University community aware of the examples of inappropriate and intolerable behaviour as well as the examples of good practice in the activities of commissions, and to promote following the principles of academic ethics introduced and fostered by the University in their activities at the University and beyond.

In the light of the foregoing, and in accordance with Items 14, 31, and 35(2) of the Commission Regulations, the Central Academic Ethics Commission hereby decides:

1. To conclude that there were no violations of academic ethics.
2. To make the depersonalised decision of the Commission publicly available.

The Commission's decision was adopted unanimously, with six members of the Commission voting for it. Member of the Commission Dr Tatjana Kochanè withdrew herself from the consideration and voting.

Chairperson

Assoc. Prof. Dr Vigita Vèbraitè