Methodological guideline on Adherence to Ethical Principles in Preparation of Graduation Theses

Code:	ČVUT_MP_2024_02_V01
Type:	Methodological guideline
Ref. No.:	CVUT00001673/2024
Regulated area:	ST studies
Organizational application:	CTU
Guarantor of standard:	51921 Vice-Rector for Bachelor and Master Studies
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Issuer:	Doc. Dr. Ing. Gabriela Achtenová
	Vice-Rector for Bachelor and Master Studies
No. of pages:	6
No. of annexes:	0
Distribution list:	Radka Slabá
Affected persons:	Students in bachelor and master study programmes
	Teachers in bachelor and master study programmes
Form of publication:	Inforek, https://www.cvut.cz/legislativa-tykajici-se-studia
Replaces:	MP 1/2009
Issued on:	29.01.2024
Force:	19.02.2024
Effect:	29.01.2024
Other information:	Approved at the meeting of vice-deans for education on 25. 1. 2024
Signature of issuer:	

Vice-Rector for Bachelor and Master Studies

List of annexes

This Methodological Guideline does not include any annexes.

List of related documents

- Act No. 121/2000 Coll. (the Copyright Act), on Copyright and Related Rights and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended

- Code of Ethics of CTU

- Framework Rules for the Use of Artificial Intelligence at CTU for Study and Teaching Purposes in Bachelor and Follow-up Master Studies

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Art. 1 Introductory provisions

1.1 This Methodological Guideline (hereinafter referred to as MG) stipulates the rules for using information sources in preparation of graduation theses by students at CTU in accordance with Act No. 121/2000 Coll. (the Copyright Act), on Copyright and Related Rights and on Amendments to Certain Acts, as amended.

1.2 For the purposes of this Methodological Guideline, the term "graduation theses" (hereinafter referred to as GT) refers to bachelor's, master's and other theses prepared in the framework of accredited study programmes implemented at the Czech Technical University in Prague (CTU) and its constituent parts.

1.3 This MG fully complies with the CTU Code of Ethics, which it is based on and which it complements and specifies for the purposes of GT together with the Framework Rules for the Use of Artificial Intelligence at CTU for Study and Teaching Purposes in Bachelor and Follow-up Master Studies.

Art. 2 Ethics for authors

Ethics for authors is a set of moral principles that the authors should respect when writing scientific texts:

2.1 do not alter or fabricate presented results,

2.2 do not appropriate thoughts and ideas or research results of others without stating the original source (do not commit plagiarism),

2.3 do not falsify (modify, change) the original data and consequently do not publish misrepresented or made up information (do not commit falsification),

2.4 respect co-authorship – if a work has been created by joint creative activity of several authors, do not present their ideas as your own,

2.5 rigorously cite authors whose ideas or texts were used in your own work (when using extensive sections from someone else's work, you should ask the author's permission),

2.6 acknowledge the use of results of artificial intelligence (AI) tools,

2.7 do not have your GT or other projects/papers done by others (so-called ghost writing or contract cheating); using AI tools is also considered contract cheating.

Art. 3 Permitted ways of working with information sources

3.1 **Compilation** is a text created by putting together ideas and conclusions collected from several original texts, but not by copying whole verbatim excerpts from other texts. A compilation does not include any new creative findings on the topic, is not a result of the author's research activity, it is only a collection of known and published facts and provides a comprehensive outline of the given field. The used sources are properly cited and referenced, the resulting work is presented as a compilation, not as an original work. Graduation theses are an original authorial work, i.e. a result of the author's creative activity. As a whole, they should not be compilations, unless assigned as such.

3.2 **Paraphrasing** refers to expressing the content of an original work in another form (in case of text, using other words). Only original basic ideas of an author are adapted, formulated in an own manner and style, in own words and properly cited. Any borrowed expressions (with the exception of specialized terminology) must be put in inverted commas, possibly also in italics, and cited. As a whole, graduation theses should not be only paraphrases.

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3.3 **Generally known facts** do not have to be cited. This is information that is universally known, unchallenged, or easily verifiable in general publications (encyclopaedias or basic textbooks). In specialized professional environment, this refers to data and expressions that are commonly used by the given community and that make up the basic terminological and knowledge corpus of the given field. Examples include geographical and historical data, equations, formulas, but not verbatim definitions, theorems or laws of physics. Such text must be marked as adopted text.

3.4 **Proofreading and linguistic corrections of text**, unless it substantially changes the original ideas contained in the text. Also AI tools can be used for these purposes; the resulting text must always be critically assessed and verified.

Art. 4 Prohibited ways of working with information sources

4.1 **Plagiarism:**
   a) a word-for-word copying or copy-pasting of someone else's text and presenting it as one's own, without proper citing,
   b) taking and publishing someone else's work, including work that has not yet been completed and submitted,
   c) presenting a compilation (or its part) as own original text,
   d) copying elements of the graphic design without citing and referencing the original source,
   e) copying the title,
   f) copying the complete structure (e.g., the table of contents, outline, etc.) of someone else's text without citing the source,
   g) deliberate omission to cite some sources that have been used,
   h) commissioned works:
      • having the GT written by someone else and presenting it as one's own,
      • buying or downloading someone else's freely available work and presenting it as one's own,
   i) not acknowledging and documenting the use of text or other outcomes of AI tools in the thesis and presenting them as one's own,
   j) presenting someone else's architectural and urban designs as one's own without referencing the source of inspiration.

4.2 **Not adhering to citation ethics:**
   a) not including a cited source, insufficient or incorrect citing,
   b) unmarked word-for-word quotation, or insufficient in-text references.

4.3 **Incorrect compilation:**
   a) using one or two main sources instead of making a synthesis of more texts (this results in a biased view of the topic),
   b) composing a text from word-for-word excerpts from various sources; in this case this is not a compilation,
   c) failure to cite all used sources.

4.4 **Incorrect paraphrasing:**
   a) not citing the source of an adopted idea, even if it is written down in own words,
   b) a mere change in the word order or using different expressions than those used in the original text without using a word-for-word quotation.

4.5 **Incorrect detection of generally known facts** – not citing a source because the text is considered a generally known fact.

4.6 **Self-plagiarism** – not citing one's own works used in a new work.

4.7 **Cryptomnesia** (a forgotten memory) – using an idea whose source the author does not remember or they do not have a record of the source they are using, consequently presenting it as one's own.

Art. 5 Rules for citing in graduation theses

5.1 The original source of all adopted ideas, data, results, conclusions, summaries and texts from all types of used sources is referenced.

5.2 If possible, the original source, not someone else's reference to it, is cited.

5.3 It is necessary to know all cited sources.

5.4 In-text citations reference the sources in the list of references at the end of the thesis.

5.5 Copying the list of references from other sources when the author is not really using the sources is unacceptable.

5.6 Also sources that are difficult to cite must be included: internal and unpublished sources, key consultations and email messages are cited – an expert can be consulted on how to cite them properly.

5.7 Also reproduced images, tables, graphs, diagrams and graphic presentations from the original source, including data on their exact placement, are cited.

5.8 Passages translated from sources in other languages must also be cited.

5.9 A uniform format and style of citations in the list of references and in-text citations is used throughout the whole thesis.

5.10 The CSN ISO 690 standard citation style is recommended to use for citations in GT (examples of citations in accordance with the latest standard are available on the website of the CTU Central Library https://knihovna.cvut.cz), unless the thesis supervisor stipulates otherwise.

Art. 6 Other provisions

6.1 If a graduation thesis, according to the evaluation committee (i.e., the examination committee at the state final examination, the examination committee at the state doctoral examination, etc.), is partly plagiarised or falsified, it is recommended to award it with a grade F, conditioned on the committee's discretion and gravity of the case. The case can be passed on for further processing in accordance with the Disciplinary Code for Students of CTU.

6.2 A detailed manual on how to write scientific texts, including GT, is available on the website of the CTU Central Library – tab Academic Writing (https://knihovna.cvut.cz).

6.3 From the point of view of this methodological guideline, the outcomes of AI tools (texts, codes, graphs, images, diagrams, drawings, sounds, videos, etc.) can be considered as sources provided by third persons, and must be handled as such (they must be checked thoroughly, cited sources must be verified, documented). Detailed instructions on the use of AI tools in teaching can be found in MG on the Framework Rules for the Use of Artificial Intelligence at CTU for Study and Teaching Purposes in Bachelor and Follow-up Master Studies.

6.4 It is recommended to include in the thesis an explicit statement on the use of AI tools, i.e. what tools were used, how and in which parts of the thesis they were used. This information will help the committee evaluate the contribution of the thesis's author. If such a statement is not included, it is understood that the student declares that they have written the thesis without the help of AI tools.