

To: 5.1.2e [REDACTED] 5.1.2e [REDACTED]@umail.leidenuniv.nl]
From: LAW - Examencommissie
Sent: Tue 5.1.2e [REDACTED] 9:49:27 AM
Subject: 5.1.2e [REDACTED] decision Board of Examiners (exam fraud)
Received: Tue 5.1.2e [REDACTED] 9:49:00 AM

Dear 5.1.2e [REDACTED]

On 5.1.2e [REDACTED] you submitted your thesis for the master's programme 5.1.2e [REDACTED]. Your thesis supervisor/examiner has found irregularities in your thesis that have given rise to a suspicion of fraud (use of artificial intelligence), because several references cited in the text did not correspond to the arguments attributed to them and several sources referred to in the thesis do not exist. In accordance with the provisions contained in Article 6.2 of the [Rules and Regulations](#) (R&R), the supervisor reported her findings to the Board of Examiners. The supervisor notified you of the suspicion and of the fact that 5.1.2e [REDACTED] reported this to the Board of Examiners.

The Board of Examiners has studied your thesis and the information given by the examiner and on 5.1.2e [REDACTED] gave you an opportunity to state your views on the matter and its possible consequences. On 5.1.2e [REDACTED] you responded to this request via email. You write:

I am 5.1.2e [REDACTED] student number 5.1.2e [REDACTED]. I am writing this letter because my graduation thesis has been questioned for academic misconduct, such as using artificial intelligence, translators and false documents. I want to explain this clearly. Thank you for the opportunity given by the university to explain. I will explain my writing process, subjective intentions and relevant evidence as comprehensively as possible here, and I sincerely ask all teachers to make judgments based on this.

First of all, during the typesetting stage of the paper, I used AI tools to standardize the footnote format, mainly to unify the citation format and ensure the consistency of footnote numbers. Due to my lack of experience in typesetting, I used AI tools to deal with formatting issues and complete the paper submission more efficiently. The starting point of this behaviour is completely technical and does not involve any generation or alternative writing of the main text content, let alone plagiarism or concealment. I have never tried to cover up this behaviour, and I am willing to take the initiative to explain the use of details. I hope the university understands this is harmless behaviour based on the standard format, not academic dishonesty.

Secondly, there were doubts about the inconsistency of my language expression during the review process and that there was a particular gap between my oral expression and written writing. Then, I suspected that the paper was not original. I want to explain here that an objective basis supports my English writing ability. In the 5.1.2e [REDACTED] test before admission, the reading and writing parts met the university admission standards. In multiple courses at the graduate level, I independently completed all reports and papers, and there have never been any plagiarism or content disputes. This graduation thesis, from topic selection, data collection, and writing to revision, was completed independently by me, without anyone else writing or generating content. As for some irrelevant answers during the communication process with the investigators, I deeply regret it. Due to my weak oral English expression and inner nervousness during the interview, I failed to understand some questions promptly and accurately, which may have caused some misunderstandings. However, I sincerely hope that the university can distinguish my real writing ability from my on-the-spot performance during the interview to avoid misjudgment of my academic integrity due to language communication errors.

In addition, when I read 5.1.2e [REDACTED] materials, I used translation tools to assist in understanding the content of the literature, especially when reading some 5.1.2e [REDACTED] studies that did not have English versions. To accurately grasp the core ideas, I used machine translation for preliminary understanding. This practice was limited to assisting the reading stage. It was never used for writing or language polishing the main text, let alone "writing" the entire English content through translation software. In fact, throughout the writing process, I have always insisted on digesting the literature according to my understanding and then expressing it. Regarding this, I have actively communicated with my supervisor and clearly explained the use and scope of the translation tool. If the university needs it, I can also compare the relevant 5.1.2e [REDACTED] materials and translation records to prove that this behaviour does not constitute academic misconduct.

I also feel intensely guilty about the question of falsehood or unverification of some documents. There is indeed an inevitable confusion in my data management process, especially in the early draft version; I used some temporary notes as the basis for citation and failed to check and update them all during the later sorting, resulting in some footnotes not matching the cited literature. I have conducted comprehensive backtracking and sorting and provided the original download records, annotation screenshots, and reading notes for the most cited literature. At the same time, I also compiled a three-way comparison table of "original citation intention-footnote content-correct source" to present the technical errors in the citation process. I want to emphasize again that this footnote error is caused by management confusion and work omissions, not malicious falsification of documents or fabricated data. It can be seen from the above materials that I did consult the cited research, but there was an inaccurate omission in the footnote annotation process. I want to express my sincere apologies to the Academic Committee. I will rectify the citation format and annotations according to the university's requirements.

To prove my original writing process more effectively, I retained all intermediate versions from the 5.1.2e [REDACTED] draft to the English final draft, including early conception drafts, mixed 5.1.2e [REDACTED] and English drafts, and paragraph-by-paragraph polishing drafts. The modification records, preservation timestamps, and content evolution process of these documents show my gradual transformation from 5.1.2e [REDACTED] thinking to English expression, reflecting that the paper was completed through repeated deliberation and continuous

polishing rather than any form of alternative generation. I am willing to provide the above draft and document attribute screenshots for further review and verification by the university.

I understand that universities must conduct strict reviews of all related behaviours in the context of the rapid development of AI technology and the risk to academic integrity. However, when judging individual cases, I implore the university to consider the specific scope of technology use, the good and evil of subjective intentions, and the chain of evidence in the writing process. I have no motives or behaviours for academic misconduct, and the tools I use are limited to technical assistance, format specifications, and literature reading rather than plagiarism or plagiarism. Throughout the research and writing process, I have always maintained a serious and down-to-earth attitude, respected intellectual property rights, and maintained good communication with my supervisor. In this incident, if misunderstandings are caused by unclear expression or improper operation, I am willing to bear the corresponding responsibility for correction. Still, I sincerely request that the university not classify me as having "intentional" dishonest behaviour.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter of explanation and for allowing me to express and clarify. I sincerely hope that the university can re-evaluate my situation based on the principle of being fact-based and seeking truth from facts. I am willing to cooperate with any subsequent investigation or modification tasks, and I hope to continue to adhere to integrity, hard work and progress on the academic path. If I can continue my studies, I will complete the subsequent academic work with a more rigorous attitude and repay the university's trust and tolerance. I have been a diligent student at our university and have no record of academic misconduct. I take all my courses and exams seriously. Therefore, with the above details, I hope to clear up your misconceptions and withdraw the allegations against me (...).

On 5.1.2e the Board of Examiners invited you for an interview, which took place on Wednesday, 5.1.2e. During this interview you argued that after having been informed by your supervisor about the irregularities found in a draft version of your thesis, you did not have enough time to correct all the references in question, because you were pressed for time, since the deadline for submitting the final version was only a couple of days away.

The Board of Examiners considers as follows.

Pursuant to Article 6.1 R&R, insofar as relevant here, fraud is understood to mean "any action or omission that renders proper judgment of someone's knowledge, insight, skills, (professional) attitude or reflection entirely or partially impossible. This includes in any event the possession of unauthorised communication equipment, software such as unauthorised AI software", "making use of fictitious research data, graphs, literature and literature references". Pursuant to the same article, plagiarism is a form of fraud and includes in any event "[u]sing or copying someone else's texts, data or ideas without complete and accurate source referencing".

It follows from this definition that for there to be fraud, the intention of the student is irrelevant.

There can be no doubt that you are guilty of fraud as defined in Article 6.1, because there are several references to sources that do not exist and because in a significant number of cases, the argument in the text cannot be found at the indicated place in the source referred to. To name but a few examples, footnote 30 refers to paragraph 87, whereas the source of your statement in the text is paragraph 80; footnote 56 refers to paragraph 9.1 of the source mentioned, whereas it should be obvious that this paragraph cannot be the source of your statement in the text; and footnote 77, which mentions paragraph 23 of the document referred to, whereas this paragraph does not say what you claim it does. Also incorrect is footnote 23, in which you refer to an 5.1.2e of 5.1.2e whereas this 5.1.2e is dated 5.1.2e and footnotes 68 and 79, in which you mention 5.1.2e as the publisher of the work referred to, whereas it is 5.1.2e. Further examples are footnote 99, 5.1.2e, which seems to be a combination of a reference to the hard copy of the journal and 5.1.2e for that article; footnote 221, according to which the publisher of the work referred to is 5.1.2e whereas the publisher is 5.1.2e and footnote 260, in which you refer to pages 765 and 782 of the source mentioned as the source of what you say in the text, whereas page 765 is only a general introduction and cannot be the source of your argument, and page 782 is one of several pages with references to the sources for 5.1.2e article.

What you say in your email of 5.1.2e to the Board of Examiners and during the interview on 5.1.2e does not alter these facts and cannot excuse or justify this. In this regard, the Board also notes that you were warned against using generative AI. Your argument that you were pressed for time when correcting the references ignores the fact that the incorrect references should not have been there in the first place, and that your supervisor warned you well in advance, as early as 5.1.2e, in an email to you, in the following words: "A quick summary of our meeting, as it is not reflected in my written notes, it is very important to address the issue of sources and adequate citations. Also you need to check and verify the actual sources used to rectify the substantive differences between your piece and the sources cited. This is essential as the current issues raise two potential concerns: 1) the piece was written by AI which is unable to provide accurate sourcing at this time, or 2) there are issues of plagiarism as ideas are being used that are not your own but are not (adequately) being attributed to the correct source."

The Board of Examiners further considers that you signed the following Declaration of Authenticity when you submitted the thesis:

"I hereby certify that this is an original work, that this thesis does not contain any materials from other sources unless these sources have been clearly identified in footnotes and any and all quotations have been properly marked as such a full attribution made to the author(s) thereof.

I further certify that this work is the product of my own skills and abilities, that it does not contain any part that was produced via the aid, support or assistance of artificial intelligence, including translation systems, or other third parties, including natural persons."

There can be no doubt that you acted contrary to this declaration, because by your own admission you did use artificial intelligence for your references and to translate texts. There can also be no doubt that you did so consciously. This means that you did not take the Declaration seriously. It also means that you signed the declaration knowing that you acted contrary to what it said.

With regard to the question of whether a sanction should be imposed and, if so, which sanction is appropriate, the Board of Examiners notes that fraud is regarded by the university as a serious offence, which in principle must be dealt with strictly. In the words of the Examination Appeals Board: "The starting point of the Board, as well as of the university, is that fraud in any form or scale is not tolerated within an academic environment." "The academic 'company' exists by virtue of trust in the integrity of the scholar. A (prospective) scholar must therefore refrain from fraud at all times (...)".

The Board of Examiners endorses this point of view, also in the light of the task assigned to it by law to guarantee the quality of the exams and examinations.

The Board of Examiners is of the opinion that you are guilty of extensive fraud, by submitting a master thesis containing a number of references to sources that do not exist or that do not correspond to the arguments attributed to it and by signing a declaration of originality that you knew in your case to be contrary to the truth. You have thus demonstrated a lack of academic integrity. Therefore, the Board is of the opinion that an official warning and declaring the result of your thesis invalid would not do justice to the facts and that there is no reason to give you an opportunity to repair the defects.

Therefore, the Board, by virtue of Article 7.12b paragraph 2 of the Higher Education Act (*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek, WHW*) and Article 6.6.3 sub b. and c. *R&R*

- declares the result of your thesis invalid; and
- excludes you from the opportunity to resubmit your thesis.

This means that your thesis will not be graded and that you have to write a new thesis.

Your supervisor and the thesis coordinator have been informed of this decision.

A note of this decision will be added to your electronic file (i.e. uSis), which will not be shared with other persons.

On behalf of the Board of Examiners of Leiden Law School,

5.1.2e

An [appeal](#) against this decision lies with the Examination Appeals Board, c/o Rapenburg 70 , PO Box 9500 , 2300 RA Leiden or via email: cbe@bb.leidenuniv.nl. An appeal must be lodged within six weeks after the decision having been emailed to you.