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# Loophole Lets Military Draft Students

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The Defense Ministry has dealt academia a new blow by starting to enlist full-time postgraduate students who were previously exempt from mandatory military service, Gazeta.ru reported Thursday.

The odd situation was enabled by recent changes to educational legislation that now require colleges to get accredited to teach postgraduates but do not spell out procedures for obtaining the accreditation, the report said.

The bureaucratic confusion, which Gazeta.ru said was the fault of the Education and Science Ministry, allows the military to legally enlist all eligible postgraduate students, and some draft commissions have wasted no time in doing so.

The total number of students called up to serve in the army remains unclear, but they include students of Moscow State University, the country's leading higher education establishment, the report said.

Rights activists have started a petition to President Dmitry Medvedev, who has not commented on the issue, and advised students to challenge draft orders in court as

an infringement of their right to education.

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