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You will find the German version here:

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Following the resolution of the Senate on 24 September 2025, the Presidial Board of the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen adopted the “Guideline on the Prevention of and Protection against Discrimination (Discrimination Protection Guideline – DiskSchutz-RL)” of the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen on 5 November 2025 (§§ 41 para. 2 sent. 2, 63h para. 2 sent. 1, 37 para. 1 sent. 3, 63b para. 2 sent. 3 NHG).

The University’s Personnel Council gave its co-determination on 17 December 2025 (§ 66 para. 1 no. 10 NPersVG).

Guideline on the Prevention of and Protection against Discrimination of the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (excluding the University Medical Centre Göttingen)

- DiskSchutz-RL -

Preamble

The Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (hereinafter: University) aims to be a place of learning, teaching, research, and working characterised by an atmosphere of acceptance, trust, and respectful, diversity-sensitive, and professional interaction. The University seeks to support all members and affiliates in developing their abilities, enabling them to study, teach, research, and work successfully, regardless of their diverse life experiences and personal circumstances.

Discrimination creates a threatening and obstructive environment for learning, teaching, research, and working, and is understood by the University as a disruption to academic operations and the academic climate.

The University is obligated to protect its members, affiliates, and third parties within the scope of its academic responsibilities as effectively as possible against discrimination, to establish a procedural approach to handling discrimination, and to enforce sanctions for violations of the provisions of this Guideline (violations). It implements preventive measures, training, and professionalisation initiatives, ensures a formal complaint procedure and support services, and promotes a culture of awareness, naming, and engagement with discrimination.

Thus, the University fulfils its societal and legal responsibility to ensure protection against discrimination through appropriate measures, addressing both structural shortcomings and individual misconduct.

The purpose of this Guideline is to make the prohibition of discrimination visible, raise awareness of discrimination, strengthen prevention, support a professional response to discrimination, and ensure transparency and legal certainty. The Guideline informs about rights and responsibilities, outlines support services and complaint mechanisms, and clarifies consequences of violations.

This Guideline aims to encourage individuals who have experienced or witnessed discrimination to freely exercise their rights and options for action.

First Section: Principles and Definitions

§ 1 Principles

(1) ¹The University does not tolerate any form of discrimination. ²It protects its members, affiliates, and third parties within its academic sphere as effectively as possible against all forms of discrimination and takes measures to raise awareness, provide training, prevent, and eliminate discrimination. ³It enforces sanctions for violations in accordance with the provisions set out below and within the scope of legal possibilities. ⁴On this basis, this Guideline determines the University's approach to discrimination and complements the Guideline on the Prevention of and Protection against Sexualised Harassment and Violence of the Georg-August-University Göttingen, including the University Medical Centre Göttingen (Official Notices I of the Georg-August-University Göttingen, 1 September 2021, No. 39, p. 848).

§ 2 Scope of Application

(1) ¹This Guideline applies to all members and affiliates of the University (excluding the University Medical Centre Göttingen). ² It also applies in cases of suspected discrimination against or involving third parties, provided at least one involved person is a member or affiliate of the University of Göttingen and the perceived discrimination occurs in connection with academic responsibilities. ³ The scope of application covers the behaviour of the persons referred to in the context of academic duties, i.e. particularly within the organisational sphere of the University, unless the behaviour falls exclusively under the scope of the "Guideline on the Prevention of and Protection against Sexualised Harassment and Violence of the Georg-August-University Göttingen, including the University Medical Centre Göttingen" (Protection Guideline – Schutz-RL). ⁴ Behaviour outside the organisational sphere of the University (e.g. in private residences) is covered by this Guideline if it is carried out using an existing membership, employment, training, civil service, official, or appointed relationship and occurs within the scope of that relationship.

(2) It applies territorially across the entire University campus, including its satellite locations and rented premises, and under the conditions set out in para. (1) in further locations.

(3) It also applies to all communication formats and events within the organisational sphere of the University, even outside the University campus, for example: telephone calls, video conferences, business trips, excursions, orientation events, children's holiday programmes,

company outings, digital events, communication spaces (e.g. chats, forums, social media) or platforms, and university-related functions.

(4) The University will strive to ensure that the principles of this Guideline are observed by its subsidiaries.

(5) ¹The rights of all parties involved to data protection, confidentiality, and personal integrity must be respected and, in particular, upheld during the procedural steps outlined in sections three and four of this Guideline. ²Otherwise, rights and obligations under applicable law, including the right to initiate independent legal proceedings, remain unaffected by this Guideline.

§ 3 Definitions

The following definitions are based on and complement §§ 1, 3 of the General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG):

(1) Protected characteristics under AGG: ¹The General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG) defines protected characteristics (§ 1 AGG). ²It prohibits discrimination or harassment based on gender (including pregnancy/motherhood), gender identity, racial grounds and attributions (including antisemitic grounds and attributions, as well as various manifestations of racial grounds and attributions such as anti-Black, anti-Muslim, anti-Asian, and anti-Slavic racism, and racism against Sinti* and Rom*nja), sexual orientation, religion or worldview, disability, and age (prohibition of disadvantage).

(2) Permissible differential treatment: A violation of the prohibition on disadvantage does not occur if there is a legitimate reason for differential treatment due to religion, disability, age, sexual orientation, or gender (§ 20 para. 1 sent. 1 AGG).

(3) Direct discrimination: ¹Direct discrimination occurs when a person is disadvantaged directly due to a characteristic mentioned in para. (1), in a way that another person in a comparable situation would not be, has not been, or would not be disadvantaged. ²Direct discrimination on the grounds of gender also includes unfavourable treatment due to pregnancy or motherhood.

(4) Indirect discrimination: Indirect discrimination occurs when apparently neutral provisions, criteria, or practices disadvantage persons in comparison to others due to a characteristic mentioned in para. (1), unless such provisions, criteria, or practices are objectively justified by a legitimate aim and are appropriate and necessary for achieving that aim.

(5) Harassment: Harassment occurs when unwanted behaviour linked to a characteristic mentioned in para. (1) is intended or results in the violation of the dignity of the affected person or the creation of an environment characterised by intimidation, hostility, humiliation, degradation, or insult.

(6) Forms of discrimination: Discrimination within the meaning of this Guideline takes many forms, including statements, actions, or omissions that demean, disadvantage, harass, threaten, or harm individuals based on one or more of the characteristics mentioned in para. (1), as well as on the structural level, when the interpretation or application of provisions, criteria, or procedures results in the disadvantage of certain groups of persons.

(7) Effect is decisive: ¹According to the AGG, the outcome or effect is decisive for discrimination within the meaning of this Guideline, regardless of intent. ²Thus, actions carried out out of ignorance or thoughtlessness, or previously considered routine actions, may result in discrimination, particularly when repeated, contributing to a harmful effect.

(8) Particularly serious discrimination: Particularly serious discrimination occurs when discrimination is carried out by exploiting care or dependency relationships at the workplace, study, or training site and/or through the commission or attempted commission of criminal offences such as bodily harm (§ 223 StGB), stalking (§ 238 StGB), attempted or completed coercion (§ 240 StGB), or sexual offences (sexual coercion; rape) (§ 177 StGB).

(9) Instruction: ¹An instruction to discriminate based on a characteristic mentioned in para. (1) is considered a disadvantage within the meaning of § 3 para. 5 AGG. ²Such an instruction exists when someone instructs a person to behave in a way referred to in paras. (3), (4), (5), (7), (8), or (10) that discriminates against or could discriminate against one of the persons mentioned in § 2 para. 1 sent. 1 and 2.

(10) Multiple discrimination: ¹Multiple discrimination occurs when individuals are discriminated against on the basis of more than one of the characteristics mentioned in para. (1) in a given situation. ²In intersectional discrimination, different forms of discrimination mutually influence and intensify each other and cannot be considered in isolation.

(11) Third parties: Third parties are persons who are not members or affiliates of the University within the meaning of §§ 5, 6 GO, § 16 NHG.

§ 3a Extended Protected Characteristics

(1) The University bases the protection against discrimination under this Guideline, in addition to § 3, on the following characteristics: nationality, citizenship, social origin, socio-economic status, marital status, caregiving responsibilities, outward appearance (e.g. appearance, weight), and language (linguistic expression such as dialect and accent).

(2) ¹Discrimination based on any of the characteristics mentioned in para. (1) contradicts a university environment and climate grounded in mutual respect. ²The procedural rights of affected persons in cases of possible discrimination based on the extended protected characteristics under para. (1) are governed by § 8 para. 2 and § 9 of this Guideline; affected persons may contact the Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service and utilise the low-threshold intervention offer in accordance with § 9.

§ 4 Prohibition of Discrimination

(1) ¹The behaviours listed in § 3 para. (3), (4), (5), (7), (8), (9), and (10) are prohibited. ²This also applies if the person committing the discrimination only assumes the presence of a characteristic mentioned in § 3 para. (1) at the time of the act (§ 7 para. 1 AGG).

(2) Differential treatment under § 5 AGG ("positive measures") through suitable and appropriate measures to prevent or remedy existing disadvantages due to protected characteristics under § 3 para. (1) of this Guideline are not considered discrimination and are permissible.

Second Section:

Responsibilities and Preventive Measures

§ 5 Principles of Prevention

(1) ¹The University of Göttingen is obliged to protect its members, affiliates, and guests as effectively as possible against any form of discrimination. ²It promotes visibility of discrimination protection, actively engages in prevention, and consistently enforces violations.

(1a) The University of Göttingen is simultaneously obliged to protect its members, affiliates, and guests against misuse of procedural rights (e.g. knowingly false allegations) under this Guideline.

(2) ¹All members and affiliates of the University, as well as third parties within the scope of this Guideline, are encouraged to contribute through their behaviour and actions to a respectful, diversity-sensitive, and professional interaction. ²Persons with training, teaching, mentoring, or leadership responsibilities have a special role in their capacity as role models. ³They must ensure, within their area of responsibility, that respectful, diversity-sensitive, and professional collaboration and a corresponding approach to differences are actively promoted, and that persons are informed about this Guideline and the associated rights and obligations.

(3) All members and affiliates of the University who are involved in or confronted with discrimination within the meaning of this Guideline are encouraged to seek advice from the counselling service referred to in § 8 para. (2) in good faith and in the exercise of their responsibility towards themselves and others.

(4) If persons with training, teaching, mentoring, or leadership responsibilities receive indications of discrimination, they should direct the person reporting the issue to the confidential counselling service for anti-discrimination (§ 8 para. (2)) or personally contact the service.

§ 6 Preventive Measures

(1) ¹The University develops preventive measures to protect its members, affiliates, and third parties, and to promote structural improvements in research, teaching, and administration. ²It uses insights from counselling and complaint cases to develop structural improvements.

(2) The University informs its members and affiliates in an appropriate manner and format about this Guideline, particularly at the time of hiring, appointments, and enrolment.

(3) The University regards competent handling of discrimination as an essential element of leadership competence and promotes corresponding responsibility among managers, for example through participation in qualification offers on the General Act on Equal Treatment and discrimination protection, and by addressing the content of this Guideline within their own subject or area of responsibility.

(4) ¹The University promotes the sensitisation, qualification, and professionalisation of its members and affiliates in recognising, addressing, and constructively dealing with

discrimination at the workplace or study site. ²It informs its members and affiliates about awareness-raising and further training opportunities and offers such events itself.

(5) The University ensures qualification measures in the first and referral counselling, support staff in the Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service (§ 8 para. (2)), and the university complaint office (§ 10) within programmes (e.g. qualification programmes, university teaching, ZESS, ZEWIL).

(6) The University provides specific support for its members and affiliates to reflect on their own bias structures or to develop self-empowering strategies.

(7) The University supports central and decentralised measures and initiatives to combat discrimination at the University.

Third Section:

Confidential Counselling, Low-Threshold Intervention, and Complaint under the General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG)

§ 7 Procedural Principles

(1) ¹If there is a suspicion of discrimination within the meaning of this Guideline, the University commits to conducting a procedure under this Guideline, as provided for in the following provisions, and to taking measures if the suspicion is confirmed. ²Procedures under this Guideline shall be conducted as swiftly as possible.

(2) Members and affiliates, as well as third parties within the scope of this Guideline, who feel discriminated against in good faith and conscience (affected persons) are explicitly encouraged not to accept discrimination and to seek advice from the counselling service referred to in § 8 para. (2) to clarify their options for action.

(3) Employees may exercise their rights under this Guideline during working hours.

(4) Possible procedures are:

- Confidential counselling under § 8,
- Low-threshold intervention under § 9 and/or
- The complaint procedure under the General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG) under § 10.

(5) Where appropriate, the University takes additional measures beyond those in the specific procedure to promote structural improvements.

§ 8 Confidential Counselling

(1) Affected persons, their trusted persons, involved parties, and persons referred to in § 5 para. (4), as well as persons who have observed possible discrimination, may use confidential counselling and information services to clarify their options for action and protection in connection with possible discrimination.

(2) ¹For personal counselling on all dimensions of discrimination under § 3 para. (1) and § 3a para. (1), the Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service is available. ²The counselling is confidential, anonymous if desired, impartial in favour of the affected person, and subject to professional quality assurance. ³Further information is available on the website of the Office for Equality and Diversity.

(3) ¹Additional counselling services at the University offer low-threshold initial support (first and referral counselling). ²They refer to the Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service for discrimination-specific counselling and information on the AGG complaint procedure. ³Further information is available on the website of the Office for Equality and Diversity. ⁴All counselling services and contact persons at the University are trained in handling persons affected by discrimination and in relation to this Guideline.

(4) ¹No follow-up measures may be initiated from confidential counselling (e.g. conversation, email) without the consent of the person seeking advice, with possible limitations (e.g. legal duty to disclose under § 138 StGB) being made transparent during the counselling session. ²All information, personal data, and counselling content under para. (1) and (2) are treated confidentially, unless the counselling staff agree to share counselling content with third parties, particularly:

- the office designated under § 10,
- law enforcement authorities, or
- an internal or external psychological counselling service.

(5) ¹The initial contact may be made by the affected person or on their behalf by a third party, even anonymously. ²Mandatory internal procedures need not be followed.

(6) Affected persons are free to seek advice from external organisations.

(7) In cases of sexual discrimination, harassment, or violence within the scope of the “Guideline on the Prevention of and Protection against Sexualised Harassment and Violence of the Georg-August-University Göttingen, including the University Medical Centre Göttingen” (Protection Guideline – Schutz-RL), the counselling services and contact persons listed in § 8 para. (5) of the Schutz-RL are also available.

(8) Possible further steps, with the consent of the affected person or their representative, may include:

- Facilitating contact (referral) to another internal or external support or counselling service,
- Offering a low-threshold intervention under § 9,
- Accompanying the person in filing a complaint under § 10.

§ 9 Low-Threshold Intervention

(1) If the underlying facts are suitable, affected persons may use the offer of a low-threshold intervention to seek understanding with the person or persons from whom the perceived discriminatory act originated.

(2) ¹Affected persons should contact the Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service (§ 8 para. (2)) for a low-threshold intervention. ²The low-threshold intervention aims to empower individuals by pursuing the following objectives:

- Supporting affected persons in naming the discrimination, thereby maintaining or regaining their ability to act and effectiveness;
- Supporting persons accused of discriminatory acts or instructions (accused persons) in handling the discrimination allegation in a respectful and professional manner;
- Jointly developing agreements for future understanding, encounters, or collaboration based on this foundation.

(3) Prerequisites for conducting a low-threshold intervention are explicit authorisation by the affected person and the willingness and consent of the involved parties (e.g. accused persons, trusted persons) to accept the offer.

(4) ¹The Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service may, at the request of the affected person, directly contact the accused person, accompany the affected person, or represent them. ²If necessary and with the consent of all involved parties, the Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service may involve a moderator (internal or external).

(5) ¹The low-threshold intervention may take place directly between the affected person and the accused person or be mediated. Formats may include conversation or written exchange. ²Possible outcomes include a consensual agreement, an apology, clarification, resolution of misunderstandings, agreements for future encounters and/or a request to the superior of the accused person to implement preventive measures. ³If the low-threshold intervention fails, the superior of the accused person may be involved to discuss possible measures.

(6) ¹All information, personal data, and conversation content are treated confidentially. ²No follow-up measures may be initiated by the counsellors without the consent of the involved parties.

(7) ¹The low-threshold intervention does not create legal claims for compensation or improved status, particularly no (employment) legal claim to (re-)employment, establishment of an employment or training relationship, professional advancement, improvement of examination performance, admission to study programmes, enrolment, allocation of places, compensation, or comparable claims. ²Any such claims, as referred to in sentence 1, are governed by the relevant legal provisions (e.g. examination regulations, etc.).

(8) ¹The low-threshold intervention does not replace a complaint under the General Act on Equal Treatment (§ 10). ²Affected persons retain the right to pursue the complaint procedure. ³Affected persons may also re-engage the confidential Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service (§ 8) after a low-threshold intervention.

§ 10 Complaint under the General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG)

(1) If affected persons feel discriminated against on the basis of a characteristic listed in the General Act on Equal Treatment (§ 1 AGG or § 3 para. 1 of this Guideline), they have the right to file a complaint with the AGG complaint office designated by the University.

(2) ¹The AGG complaint office of the University consists of at least two persons. ²These should represent different genders and must not have served as a counselling service under § 8 para. (2) or previously served in such a role. ³The AGG complaint office acts neutrally and remains open to outcomes in relation to all parties involved. ⁴Its members act independently of their institutional affiliations.

(3) ¹A complaint under the General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG) may be initiated by the affected person without prior confidential counselling or low-threshold intervention.

²Mandatory internal procedures need not be followed.

(4) ¹A complaint under the General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG) is not confidential to the extent that additional parties must be involved for the purposes of the complaint procedure.

²To safeguard the general personality rights of all parties involved, the number of persons involved should be kept as small as possible. ³The complaint office informs the affected person and the accused person of significant procedural delays. ⁴The complainant and the person(s) against whom the complaint is filed have the right to request information about the status of the procedure during the process. ⁵The complainant may at any time apply to suspend or withdraw the complaint; however, the procedure may continue against the affected person's changed will if the University is legally obliged to act (e.g. due to employment or service law requirements).

(5) ¹Before submitting or processing the complaint, the complainant is informed in an initial meeting about their rights, duties, and the further procedure, and is directed to support services provided by interest representatives and counselling services. ²The presumption of innocence in favour of the accused person must be respected. ³If the complainant decides not to file a complaint, they may seek clarification of further options for action by contacting the Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service (§ 8).

(6) The complaint office examines the facts.

(7) ¹The AGG complaint office informs the University leadership about the outcome of the factual examination. ²Along with this, it submits a recommendation that includes one of the following measures:

- Termination of the procedure because the suspicion of discrimination was not confirmed, possibly with suggestions for further action (e.g. under §§ 8, 9);
- Termination of the procedure because the discrimination was minor, possibly with suggestions for further action (e.g. under §§ 8, 9);
- Implementation of measures under § 11 because the suspicion of discrimination has been confirmed.

(8) ¹The University leadership decides, taking into account the outcome of the factual examination and the recommendation of the AGG complaint office, on appropriate, necessary, and proportionate measures under § 11, involving the relevant departments and institutions. ²In particular, it must be considered whether a special dependency relationship exists (§ 3 para. 8 of this Guideline). ³The provisions of § 15 para. 4 and 5 AGG remain unaffected.

(9) ¹The outcome of the examination and the measures under § 11 are communicated in writing to the complainant and the accused person(s) (final report). ²The complainant has no right to the implementation or suspension of measures under § 11.

(10) Within its competences, the University leadership may establish and order further measures for the prevention of and protection against discrimination.

§ 11 Measures

(1) Possible measures include:

a) Personal measures, i.e. employment/service law, university law, status law, or examination law measures, and

b) Structural and/or preventive measures, particularly:

- Measures for handling an existing conflict,
- Sensitisation and training measures, further education for reflecting on attitudes or behaviour, possibly for entire teams, departments, or areas, especially in cases of minor discrimination, and
- Measures for prevention (§ 6).

§ 12 Handling of Documents and Data within the Procedures laid down in this Guideline

(1) Appropriate measures must be taken to ensure that third parties do not have access to the collected personal data and records.

(2) ¹Personal data and records collected during procedures under this Guideline are processed and stored in written or electronic form in the Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service and the AGG Complaint Office. ²Written documents must be stored in locked, secure cabinets or other secure storage containers. ³Electronic data must be encrypted using an algorithm according to the current state of technology and must not be stored on mobile storage media or end devices. ⁴Storage on private storage media or end devices, as well as in external cloud services, is prohibited.

(3) ¹From the time the procedure is finally concluded, the collected data are retained in accordance with statutory retention periods and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, Regulation (EU) 2016/679) and subsequently destroyed or deleted. ²The provisions of sentences 2 to 4 of para. (2) apply accordingly to storage.

Fourth Section: General Provisions

§ 13 Protection and Support for Persons Affected by Discrimination

(1) The University fulfils its duty of care and protection towards affected persons.

(2) Upon reporting discrimination, appropriate protective measures for the affected person are taken.

(3) ¹The name of the affected person must not be disclosed publicly. ²If measures are taken, the name of the affected person may only be communicated to the accused person if a corresponding legal right exists or if this is otherwise indispensable for their proper consideration, evidence, and defence. ³In confidential counselling (§ 8), the affected person has an unrestricted right to anonymity; the affected person may be represented or accompanied by a trusted person of their choice, or, if this is not possible, accompanied.

(4) The University ensures, to the extent possible, that no personal, study-related, or professional disadvantages arise for affected persons and their trusted persons as a result of a low-threshold intervention under § 9 or a complaint under § 10.

(5) The right of the affected person to take further action, including filing a police report or seeking legal protection, remains unaffected.

§ 14 Additional Protection Provisions

(1) ¹To protect the parties involved, all procedures under this Guideline are confidential, except where contrary legal provisions apply, particularly for the AGG complaint procedure under § 10. ²Confidentiality must be maintained even after the conclusion of the procedures. ³The parties involved must be specifically informed of this obligation. ⁴Breach of the confidentiality obligation may be sanctioned.

(2) The provisions of § 8 and § 13 apply accordingly to persons providing information.

(3) ¹The University fulfils its duty of care and protection towards accused persons. ²It ensures that an unfairly accused person does not suffer disadvantages from the matter and may be entitled to appropriate rehabilitation if necessary.

(4) Abuse of the complaint right will be sanctioned.

§ 15 Further Development

(1) ¹The Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service under § 8 para. (2) coordinates a network of counselling services, contact persons, and, where relevant, other stakeholders at the University involved in discrimination matters under this Guideline. ²The network meets twice a year. ³It serves to consolidate insights into discrimination and preventive measures and develops recommendations for the further development of this Guideline.

(2) ¹The Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service monitors the procedures laid down in this Guideline. ²For this purpose, the AGG Complaint Office transmits anonymised data on complaints to the Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service at the beginning of each year.

(3) The University's Anti-Discrimination Counselling Service, in consultation with the network under para. (1) and the monitoring under para. (2), prepares an annual activity report, anonymised to the extent necessary.

(4) ¹The Office for Equality and Diversity reports regularly to the responsible member of the Presidium on the implementation of the Guideline. ²The report serves as the basis for quality assurance and the further development of discrimination protection.

§ 16 Entry into Force

This Guideline enters into force on the day following its publication in the Official Notices.