Rules of the University of Göttingen
Governing the Safeguarding of Good Research Practice

On 5 November 2025 and 18 March 2026, the Senate of the Georg-August University of Göttingen adopted the first amendment to the Rules of the Georg-August University of Göttingen Governing the Safeguarding of Good Research Practice (section 15, sentence 2, and section 41 subsection (1), sentence 1, of the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (Niedersächsisches Hochschulgesetz, NHG), and section 20 subsection (3) of the Bylaws of the University of Göttingen). The authentic text was published in *Amtliche Mitteilungen* I no. 9. of 2 April 2026.[1]

[1] **Please note** that this is an unofficial translation of the original German text provided for information purposes only. Exclusively the German text is authentic and legally binding as published in *Amtliche Mitteilungen I* no. 9 (2 April 2026).

Preamble

[1]The present rules serve to ensure good research practice in the long term. [2]The University of Göttingen (including its faculties and institutes as well as the University Medical Center Göttingen (UMG), hereinafter referred to collectively as the University, unless otherwise stated) bears responsibility for the organization of research, teaching and the advancement of early career researchers within the framework of its statutory mandate. [3]Research is inseparably linked to the teaching and advancement of early career researchers. [4]It is of particular importance for the University to maintain and promote an atmosphere of openness, creativity and commitment. [5]Academic integrity is an essential aspect of all research activity. [6]This includes respectful treatment of people and the environment, as a form of academic commitment. [7]In the fulfilment of its responsibility, the University makes provisions with these Rules for the communication of the fundamental principles and rules of good research practice, for the assurance of academic integrity, for the structured organization of the ombudsman system, for the appropriate sanctioning of research misconduct as well as its prevention. [8]The Rules respect academic freedom (§ 5(3) of the Basic Law) and take into account the Code of Conduct "Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice" of the German Research Foundation (DFG) in the version of July 3, 2019, the recommendation "Good Scientific Practice at German Universities" of the German Rectors' Conference in the version of May 14, 2013 and the position paper "Recommendations on Scientific Integrity" of the German Council of Science and Humanities in the version of April 24, 2015.

Chapter I General principles

Section I: Good research practice

§ 1 Fundamental principles and rules

(1) [1]People engaged in research at the University shall maintain the fundamental principles of academic integrity. [2]They shall be responsible for implementing or observing the fundamental values and standards of research work, in particular the rules of good research practice set out in these Rules and appendices - taking into account the specifics of the relevant subject area - in their actions and for standing up for them. [3]For the purposes of these Rules, people engaged in research are all members and affiliates of the University who are or have been engaged in academic activity, in particular professors, junior professors, research assistants, associate professors, honorary professors, visiting academics, scholarship holders, doctoral students and undergraduates, insofar as they themselves are pursuing or have pursued research projects or are or have been involved in such projects or are or have been involved in

research processes in any other way, for example within the context of reviews, as members of research advisory or decision-making bodies or as publishers. [4]People who are engaged in research also include people who are carrying out a doctoral or postdoctoral project supervised at the University, even if they do not work full-time at the University of Göttingen, as well as employees of the non-academic staff, provided they are active in supporting research. [5]Fundamental principles of academic integrity and the rules of good research practice include

1. the general principles and standards of research work *lege artis* (that is, performed in the correct manner), in particular

   a) compliance with the recognised rules of authorship in accordance with § 10 and Appendix II,

   b) maintenance of strict integrity and transparency with regard to the contributions of other persons, in particular academic cooperation partners, doctoral candidates, researchers from other facilities in the respective field of research, and former researchers, as well as with regard to the use of AI-based programmes to generate text, code and images when preparing a publication,

   (c) respect for the intellectual property of others, in compliance with the rules of citation,

   d) complete and correct evidence of one's own and other's preliminary work,

   e) consistent and self-critical assessment of one's own results and, if necessary, regular discussion of it in the respective working unit (§ 3(2)) including those engaged in research in infrastructural facilities (e.g., laboratories),

   (f) comprehensible and complete documentation of the research process and results, including compliance with the provisions for securing and storing primary data,

   (g) allowing and encouraging critical discourse within the research community,

   h) disclosure of conflicts of interest in connection with research projects and peer reviews,

2. the consideration of ethical aspects and legal requirements, including the assessment of risks and consequences of research projects and, where necessary, the obtaining of approvals and ethics votes,

3. the exercise of responsibility

   (a) for the adequate supervision of early career researchers,

   (b) for the management of the respective area of responsibility,

4. cooperation in the investigation of suspected research misconduct, unless there is a valid reason for an exemption from this obligation,

and

5. the observance of special regulations for individual disciplines.

(2) [1]The fundamental principles and regulations laid down in these Rules shall be binding for those engaged in research. [2]The current standards of the DFG may be consulted in the interpretation of these fundamental principles and regulations.

(3) [1]The present Rules shall be published in the course catalogue as well as on the website of the University, and shall be handed to all persons engaged in research on taking up their employment. [2]Examination and study regulations, doctoral regulations and habilitation regulations are to refer to these Rules.

§ 2 Prevention

(1) In order to ensure good research practice, appropriate measures shall be taken to prevent misconduct in research as far as possible.

(2) [1]In this context, the University shall exercise its responsibility at all levels, in particular by establishing the framework conditions for research and compliance with respect to ethical and legal standards. [2]It shall create and maintain appropriate structures to teach students, doctoral candidates and postdocs working toward their habilitation the principles of academic work and good research practice with respect to these Rules, and in this respect in particular encourage them to be honest and responsible in research, and to point out the risks and consequences of research misconduct. [3]This is to be already appropriately addressed in the introductory events of the course of study or degree programme, as well as in regular classes. [4]The faculties and institutes shall embed the principles of good research practice and its communication in courses or modules in their curricula, examination regulations and study regulations in a clear and transparent manner.

(3) [1]Researchers at all career levels shall regularly update their knowledge of the standards of good research practice and the current state of the art. [2]Experienced and early career researchers shall support each other in a process of continuous mutual learning and ongoing training and maintain a regular dialogue. [3]Supervisors shall offer doctoral researchers regular opportunities for discussion to clarify questions about the standards of good research practice.

(4) The University shall assume its responsibility towards employed academic staff by informing them once a year through the institutes about the principles of research work and good

research practice, with respect to these Rules.

(5) The further training of teachers, as well as the exchange between them, shall be supported by the "Ombuds Office for Good Research Practice of the University” (not including the UMG) (§ 17; hereinafter: Ombuds Office).

§ 3 Managerial responsibility and cooperation in research

(1) [1]The University shall promote the conformity of the actions of its members and staff with the Rules by means of suitable organisational structures. [2]It shall provide, as far as possible, the necessary infrastructure for the search of research results already in the public domain and shall lay down binding principles of research ethics and procedures for the appropriate assessment of research projects.

(2) Without prejudice to the responsibility of other bodies, each faculty and institute shall be responsible in its own area for an appropriate organisation of research which ensures that the tasks of management, supervision, quality assurance and conflict settlement are

a) clearly assigned,

b) communicated to their members and affiliates in an appropriate manner, and

c) actually carried out.

(3) [1]Working units within the meaning of these regulations are persons who are closely connected academically and functionally, in particular the members and affiliates assigned to a professorship or subdivisions of an academic facility that are headed by a professor or another working group leader. [2]The size and the organisation of the working unit shall be designed in such a way that all those who assume supervisory tasks within the working unit can adequately fulfil their responsibilities, in particular with regard to the transfer of skills, the academic supervision, as well as the supervisory and mentoring duties.

(4)[1]Compliance with the regulations and standards of good research practice is primarily the responsibility of individual researchers and teachers. [2]The academic staff involved in a research project shall engage in regular exchange. [3]In research working units, this means that the results achieved in the division of labour are communicated to each other, subjected to critical discourse and compiled in a joint state of knowledge. [4]The academic staff involved in a research project shall define their roles and responsibilities in an appropriate manner and, where necessary, adapt them to new requirements. [5]It must be ensured that these roles and responsibilities are clear to all staff at each stage of the research project.

(5) [1]Insofar as researchers perform management tasks, this shall include, without prejudice to the responsibility of other bodies, in particular the duties to provide information in accordance with § 7(5), the organisation of the operation of the facility in such a way as to ensure good research practice, and the verification of compliance with good research practice by staff who is bound by technical instructions, as well as by postdocs working toward their habilitation, doctoral candidates and students, insofar as they are involved in research projects or pursue such projects themselves.

§ 4 Supervision of early career researchers; career development

(1) [1]Researchers shall enjoy a balance of support and personal responsibility appropriate to their career level and shall be given adequate status with corresponding rights of participation. [2]Through gradually increasing autonomy, they shall be empowered to shape their careers. [3]Their publication activities and the submission of their own research proposals shall be encouraged. [4]Appropriate measures are to be taken to prevent the abuse of power and the exploitation of dependent relationships.

(2) [1]The faculties and each institute within their areas of responsibility shall bear responsibility for the organisation of appropriate individual supervision of researchers at different career stages in accordance with the respective level of education. [2]The faculties shall develop transparent, subject-specific supervision plans, which shall be adopted by the Faculty Council, and otherwise by the respective governing body of the institute, and implemented by the latter.

(3) [1]The acceptance of doctoral candidates obligates them to provide academic supervision. [2]Doctoral researchers shall be offered an academic environment that supports their research within the scope of the available resources. [3]The concrete supervision of doctoral researchers is primarily the responsibility of the respective supervisors and mentors. [4]The duty of supervision shall include, in particular, offering doctoral candidates regular academic guidance on their doctoral projects, promoting the drafting of final and qualification works within an appropriate time frame and assessing such work within an appropriate time frame. [5]Anyone who performs supervisory tasks shall furthermore bear responsibility in their own field for the implementation of supervision, including quality assurance. [6]Supervisory agreements are to be signed for doctoral projects; the details shall be regulated in the doctoral regulations of the faculties.

(4) [1]The faculties and each institute within their area of responsibility shall promote equal opportunities and career advancement - embedded in the overall concept of the respective institute - for researchers and research support staff. [2]Researchers shall be informed about the

opportunities offered by University graduate schools and academic human resources development.

(5) Students shall be included in the duties of supervision and information set out in paragraphs (2) to (4) if and to the extent that they are involved in researchers' research projects or are pursuing a research project themselves.

§ 5 Performance evaluation and quality assurance in assessments

(1)[1]Originality and quality shall always take precedence over quantity as performance and evaluation criteria; this shall apply in particular to examinations, the awarding of academic degrees and titles, personnel measures as well as the allocation of funds. [2]In addition to academic and research performance, other performance dimensions such as commitment to teaching, academic administration, public relations work or knowledge and technology transfer as well as contributions to the general good of society shall also be included in the performance evaluation, where this is reasonably applicable. [3]An individual's approach to research with regard to openness to new findings and a willingness to take risks shall also be included.

(2) [1]With regard to personnel measures, the assessment of performance, which shall be based on the principle of merit (§ 33(2) of the Basic Law), shall refer to qualitative parameters and shall be made transparent; this shall apply in particular to appeal procedures and other appointment and promotion procedures. [2]Gender equality and diversity shall be taken into account and (unconscious) bias shall be avoided wherever possible. [3]In addition to the categories of the General Equal Treatment Act (*Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz*), individual characteristics in *curriculae vitae* (e.g., extended periods of training and qualification, alternative career paths, personal, family or health-related absences or comparable circumstances) shall also be taken into account appropriately when forming judgements, insofar as this is voluntarily stated. [4]Personnel measures must be implemented using binding criteria and procedures.

(3) [1]In assessment procedures, the independence and impartiality of the assessors shall be guaranteed for quality assurance purposes. [2]Researchers involved in the evaluation of manuscripts, funding applications and the suitability of persons shall be obliged to maintain confidentiality. [3]The confidentiality of third-party content to which the reviewers gain access precludes disclosure to third parties and the reviewers' own use. [4]If circumstances exist which could give rise to concern about bias or a conflict of interest, assessors must disclose these to the competent body without delay. [5]These obligations also apply to members of research advisory and decision-making bodies.

(4) Researchers who assume the function of editor or reviewer shall carefully check that the publication organs for which they perform this task comply with academic standards.

§ 6 Cross-phase quality assurance

(1) [1]Researchers shall carry out each step of the research process *lege artis*. [2]This includes identifying relevant and appropriate research questions through careful study of research already made publicly available, taking comprehensive account of the current state of the art when planning a research project, and applying scientifically sound and appropriate methods. [3]When developing and applying new methods, researchers attach particular importance to quality assurance and the establishment of standards. [4]The application of a method usually requires specific expertise, which may have to be covered by suitable cooperative arrangements.

(2) [1]Researchers shall ensure continuous quality assurance. [2]This refers, in particular, to compliance with subject-specific standards and established methods, to processes such as equipment calibration, the collection, processing and analysis of research data, the selection and use of research software, its development and programming, and the keeping of laboratory notebooks. [3]Researchers use methods to avoid unconscious bias in the interpretation of findings whenever possible. [4]This also includes examining whether, and if so, to what extent gender and diversity may be of significance to the research project (with regard to the methods, the work programme, the objectives, etc.).

(3) [1]When researchers make their findings public (in the form of publications or also via other communication channels), they shall describe the quality assurance mechanisms applied. [2]This applies in particular when new methods are developed.

(4) Researchers should, depending on the subject area concerned, ensure that their research results or findings can be replicated or confirmed by other researchers by describing their methods and materials accordingly.

§ 7 Dealing with research data and materials, as well as archiving and rights of use

(1) Researchers must ensure that research data are handled in accordance with the requirements of the respective discipline.

(2) [1]Research data or research results as well as the central materials on which they are based and, if applicable, the research software used, which serve as the basis for publications or qualification work or have been produced in connection with a published research project, are - depending on the subject area - generally accessible and traceable for at least ten years and, if possible due to their nature, stored in the information infrastructure of the University of Göttingen including the *Gesellschaft für wissenschaftliche Datenverarbeitung mbH* (GWDG) (i.e. in central facilities such as the eResearch Alliance of SUB, GWDG and UMG as well as in

subdivisions) or in a subject-relevant external information infrastructure, taking into account current technical and organisational standards as well as § 9(5). [2]Research data and research objects which, due to their nature, cannot be retained for the period specified in sentence 1 may be subject to shorter retention periods; the reasons for this must be clearly explained. [3]The retention period shall commence on the date on which the research data are referenced in a publication or qualification work. [4]In the case of external storage, it must be ensured that archiving requirements and periods comply with these regulations. [5]If there are factual reasons for not retaining certain data, those who collected the data or in whose area of responsibility the data were collected shall state this; responsibility for this decision lies with the heads of the research project in which the data were collected.

(3) The determination of separate retention periods pursuant to paragraph (2), sentence 2 for a subject (including its subdivisions) shall be made in a separate annex by resolution of the Senate on the proposal of the technically responsible Faculty Council, or in the case of inter-disciplinary matters on the consensual proposal of the technically responsible Faculty Councils.

(4) [1]Research data as defined in paragraph (2) are data generated in the course of research projects, e.g., through digitalisation, research into source material, experiments, measurements, surveys or questionnaires. [2]Research materials serving as objects of investigation (e.g., specimens, cell cultures, material samples and archaeological finds, biological material) with which research data were obtained must be conserved and retained for the same period. [3]The objective pursued with biological material collection may solely be the promotion of academic research. [4]The research material (in particular tissue samples and liquid material, but excluding samples, materials, etc., generated in clinical trials or within the framework of research services for third parties) must, as far as possible, be obtained from the patient by means of a procedure for the collection of biological materials. [5]The passing on or the taking of the research material with the departure of researchers is only permitted with the consent of the University, in matters of University Medicine only with the consent of the UMG. [6]Research data, research materials, animal models and research equipment may only be taken along if there are no regulations of the University or the respective faculty or requirements of any third-party funding bodies to the contrary.

(5) [1]The head of a working unit shall be responsible for ensuring that the provisions of the handling of research data and research materials are brought to the attention of all academic staff, in particular doctoral candidates, when they commence their academic activities and thereafter at regular intervals, and at least once a year. [2]The management may delegate these informational duties to other employees in writing.

(6) Researchers who generate research data or materials shall be responsible for the proper storage of their own research data and materials, in particular within the framework of the facilities created for this purpose.

(7) [1]Documented agreements on the rights to use research data and results should be made at the earliest possible time. [2]This applies in particular if multiple facilities are involved in a research project or if it is foreseeable that researchers will move to a different research facility and wish to continue using the data generated by them for (their own) research purposes. [3]The use of research data shall be open in particular to those researchers who collect it themselves or have it collected by staff or study assistants. [4]Researchers who are no longer employed by the University shall be given access to research data and research materials in which they were involved in the preparation of for research and documentation purposes, insofar as the University maintains such data and materials, and insofar as this is legally and factually possible. [5]Within the framework of ongoing or completed research projects, the authorised users shall decide whether third parties should be given access to the data or be able to make subsequent use of them.

(8) These provisions do not release researchers from the obligation to comply with the legal requirements for the protection of personal data as they result in particular from the EU's General Data Protection Regulation and the data protection laws of the federal and state governments.

§ 8 Documentation

(1) [1]Researchers shall document all information relevant to the generation of a research result as clearly as is required by and is appropriate for the relevant subject area to enable third parties to verify and replicate the result. [2]Documentation shall also include individual results that do not support the research hypothesis; selection of results or manipulation of research data shall not be permitted.

(2) [1]The origin of data, organisms, materials and software used in the research process must be identified, original sources cited and subsequent use documented. [2]The source code of publicly accessible software must be persistent, citable and documented. [3]The type and scope of the data generated in the research process must be described. [4]So far as concrete professional recommendations exist, researchers shall carry out the documentation according to the respective guidelines. [5]If the documentation does not meet these requirements, the limitations and reasons for this must be explained in a clear manner.

§ 9 Publication of research results, provision of public access and correction or withdrawal of research publications

(1) [1]Researchers shall take into account the principle that originality and quality take precedence over quantity. [2]A repeated publication of the same results must contain an explicit reference to the first publication. [3]This shall also apply to translations of research publications.

(2) [1]If researchers make their research results public, they shall describe them clearly and in full. [2]Results that have already been made public must be reproduced completely and correctly, unless the recognised subject-specific standards allow this to be dispensed with. [3]Authors shall, as far as possible, ensure that their research contributions are labelled by publishers and information infrastructure providers in such a way that they can be correctly cited.

(3) [1]Researchers shall carefully select the publication medium in which they publish their research results on the basis of, among other things, its quality and visibility in the respective subject area. [2]An essential criterion for the selection shall be whether the respective publication medium has established its own guidelines for good research practice. [3]In addition to books and specialist journals, academic repositories, data repositories, software repositories and blogs can also be considered as publication medium. [4]The scientific/academic quality of a contribution does not depend on the medium in which it is made publicly accessible. [5]This shall also apply to the assessment of cumulative qualification works.

(4) [1]If researchers have made findings publicly available and subsequently become aware of significant inconsistencies or errors or if they are made aware of them by third parties, they shall correct them. [2]Those involved in a research project, including cooperation partners, shall be informed as necessary. [3]If the discrepancies or errors are the reason for the retraction of a publication, authors shall immediately request the publisher or infrastructure provider to correct or retract the publication and mark this accordingly. [4]If the responsible authors and editors involved do not take action, the University shall initiate the measures it is able to take.

(5) [1] As a general rule, researchers contribute all their findings to the scientific discourse. [2]In doing so, they decide on their own responsibility - with due regard for the conventions of the relevant subject area - whether, how and where they make their findings publicly available. [3]If, in individual cases, there are grounds for not making findings public, this decision must not depend on third parties; [4]Paragraph (6) remains unaffected.

(6) [1]The research data underlying the results should be made publicly available as promptly as possible, provided this does not conflict with the rights of third parties (in particular data protection, copyright, *know-how*); the University's Research Data Policy, which promotes and supports free access to research data, must be observed in their currently valid version. [2]In the interest of traceability, continuity of research and re-usability, researchers should, as far as

possible and reasonable, deposit the research data, materials and information on which the results are based, the methods applied and the software used in recognised archives and repositories. [3]In depositing, the FAIR principles ("**F**indable, **A**ccessible, **I**nteroperable, **R**e-Usable") should be followed. [4]Software programmed by researchers themselves shall be made publicly available with indication of the source code or, in the case of provision specifically for third parties, shall be provided with an appropriate license, unless this does not conflict with the rights of third parties.

§ 10 Authorship

(1) [1]All persons named as authors of a publication must be entitled to authorship and all persons entitled to authorship must be named as authors. [2]Persons shall be entitled to authorship if they have made a genuine, identifiable contribution to the scholarly content of a publication. [3]Subject-specific standards are to be observed when checking whether a contribution is genuine and identifiable.

(2) Only those people may be designated as authors of an original research publication who, measured against the standards of the respective discipline, have contributed in a research-relevant way to the conception of the studies or experiments, to the development, analysis and interpretation of the data or to the drafting of the manuscript itself and have agreed to its publication, i.e. who are responsible for it. [2]Whoever does not contribute to a publication in a research-relevant way, in particular merely makes individual corrections to a manuscript, gives mere suggestions or provides certain methods, as is usual, for example, in the supervision of research work or in the editing of publications, does not thereby become a (co-)author. [3]Neither the status of a former or current management of a facility nor the status of a superior can establish a co-authorship; the so-called 'honorary authorship' is inadmissible. [4]Further details are set out in Appendix II.

(3) [1]Authors bear joint responsibility for the research content of the publication, unless this is explicitly stated otherwise. [2]In the case of a collective of authors, especially the prominent members (e.g., first, corresponding and senior authors) must assume responsibility for the adherence to good research practice in relation to the entirety of the work, from its commencement up to publication. [3]The agreement to be named as co-author establishes the co-responsibility for ensuring that the publication meets academic requirements. [4]Co-authors are responsible for the correctness of their own contribution as well as for ensuring that it is incorporated into the publication in an academically justifiable manner.

(4) [1]Insofar as research work has been drawn up jointly by several research units, the authorship shall be shared by all the participating researchers of these research units, provided that

they meet the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) and of Appendix II. [2]The share of the individual researchers or research units' contribution shall be documented.

(5) [1]The sequence of authors must be a joint decision on the part of all co-authors. [2]The decision as to the order in which authors are named is made in a timely manner, normally no later than when the manuscript is drafted, on the basis of comprehensible criteria that reflect the practices in the relevant subject areas.

(6) [1]All co-authors must grant the approval of a manuscript for publication in writing or in text form. [2]Without sufficient reason, consent to the publication of research results may not be withheld. [3]The refusal of consent must be justified with verifiable criticism of data, methods or results.

(7) If unpublished research results of other persons are cited or findings of other facilities are used in a manuscript intended for publication, their written consent must be obtained.

(8) If individual researchers are named as co-authors in a publication without their consent, and if they find themselves unable to give their consent subsequently, they are expected to expressly object to their being named as co-authors vis-à-vis the person primarily responsible and/or the editorial office of the publication medium in question or the publishing house.

§ 11 Legal and ethical frameworks

(1) [1]Researchers shall handle the constitutionally granted freedom of research responsibly by being aware of the risk of misuse of research results and by using their knowledge, experience and skills in such a way that risks can be identified, assessed and evaluated. [2]With regard to research projects, a thorough assessment of the potential consequences of the research shall be made, taking ethical aspects into account.

(2) Researchers shall respect the rights and obligations, in particular those arising from legal requirements or contracts, and seek approvals and ethics statements where necessary.

Section II: General rules of procedure and organisation

§ 12 Duty to inform, bodies and offices

(1) The Presidential Board shall have the superordinate responsibility for the notification of the fundamental principles and rules of good research practice.

(2) The following bodies and units shall serve to support the performance of the tasks in accordance with the present Rules:

a) the ombudspersons and the Ombuds Committee of the University (excluding the UMG) (§ 13 and 14) and of the University Medical Center (§ 28 and 29) respectively, and the Joint Ombuds Committee (§ 30(2)), and

b) the Joint Investigation Commission for the University in accordance with § 14, as well as

c) the Ombuds Office (§ 17) or the contact persons for ombuds matters the University Medical Center (§ 31).

(3) [1]The Presidential Board shall ensure, as far as possible, that the ombudspersons and the members of the Investigation Commission are familiarised with their work, provided with administrative support and otherwise relieved of their workload. [2]The Presidential Board shall ensure that the ombudspersons and the members of the Investigation Commission are supported in terms of content, in particular by providing them with the information they deem necessary and with expert advice. [3]The Presidential Board shall ensure that the Ombuds Office, the names of the ombudspersons and the members of the Investigation Commission are made known to the members and staff of the University and, moreover, are freely accessible in an easily accessible place.

§ 13 Ombudspersons (not including the UMG)

(1) On the proposal of the president, the Senate shall appoint three members and their respective personal deputies from the University lecturers' group to serve as ombudspersons from the fields of

a) Humanities (Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Theology),

b) Law, Social Sciences and Economics (Faculty of Law, Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Economics) and

c) Life Sciences, Mathematics and Natural Sciences (Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Faculty of Biology and Psychology, Faculty of Chemistry, Faculty of Forest Sciences and Forest Ecology, Faculty of Geoscience and Geography, Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science, Faculty of Physics).

(2) [1]Suitable academics with management experience shall be selected as ombudspersons. [2]They should have experience in teaching and in the training of early career researchers as well as be familiar with the implementation of research projects - also in an international context.

(3) [1]The term of office shall be four years. [2]A maximum of two terms of office are possible.

[3]After retirement, a professor may continue to serve as ombudsperson until the end of the term for which they were appointed. [4]If, at the end of their term of office, an ombudsperson is involved in a procedure that could not be concluded by that time, they shall remain responsible for this procedure in place of their successor even beyond the end of their term of office until its conclusion, provided they are a member or affiliate of the University.

(4) [1]The ombudspersons shall advise as neutral contact persons in questions of good research practice and in suspected cases of research misconduct. [2]Their work shall be guided by the goal of mediating between the parties involved in the proceedings, insofar as this is possible and objectively justified. [3]In addition, they shall in particular have the task of advising on and checking the plausibility of the suspected cases submitted to them.

§ 14 Ombuds Committee (not including the UMG)

(1) The ombudspersons in accordance with § 13(1), sentence 1, shall together constitute the Ombuds Committee.

(2) The Ombuds Committee is responsible in particular for carrying out the ombuds procedure, as well as for advising the Presidential Board on fundamental questions of good research practice, including the issuing of recommendations.

(3) The Ombuds Committee shall elect from its midst a chairperson, as well as a deputy.

§ 15 Joint Investigation Commission of the University

(1) [1]The Investigation Commission shall consist of five suitable people, one of whom must be qualified to hold judicial office, and at least two of whom shall come from outside the University. [2]They shall be appointed as follows:

- four members shall be appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of the President, and

- one member from the Faculty of Medicine shall be appointed by the Executive Board on the recommendation of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Medicine.

(2) The Investigation Commission shall be responsible in particular for the formal investigation of allegations of misconduct in research.

(3) [1]The Investigation Commission shall select from its midst a chairperson. [2]The chair may only be occupied by a member qualified to hold judicial office. [3]If the chairperson is unable to attend, the deputy appointed by the Senate shall act as chairperson; sentence 2 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

(4) [1]The term of office of the members of the Investigation Commission shall be four years. [2]A maximum of two terms of office are possible. [3]After retirement, a professor may continue to serve as a member of the Investigation Commission until the end of the term for which they were appointed. [4]If, at the end of their term of office, a member of the Investigation Commission is involved in an investigation procedure which could not be concluded by that time, they shall remain responsible for this procedure in place of their successor beyond the end of their term of office until its conclusion.

§ 16 Joint regulations for the ombudspersons, the ombuds committees, the Joint Ombuds Committee and the Joint Investigation Commission

(1) [1]The ombudspersons and the members of the Investigation Commission shall work independently, and shall not be bound by instructions. [2]If grounds for disqualification or concerns about bias under § 20 and 21 of the Administrative Procedure Act (*Verwaltungsverfahrensgesetz*) exist with respect to a member, the deputy appointed by the Senate shall take their place. [3]The body shall determine whether a case in accordance with sentence 2 exists; the person affected by the reason for exclusion or the concern of partiality shall not participate in this decision.

(2) [1]A member of the Presidential Board, the Executive Board, the University Foundation Committee of the University of Göttingen Foundation, the Foundation Committee of the Göttingen University Foundation of the University Medical Center, or of a Dean's Office may not be appointed as a member or deputy of a body under these Rules. [2]The office as ombudsperson or member of the Investigation Commission ends with the beginning of the term of office as a member of the Presidential Board, the Executive Board, the Foundation Committee of the University of Göttingen, the Foundation Committee of the University Medical Center, or of a Dean's Office.

(3) [1]The chairperson shall carry out the ongoing business of the body. [2]In urgent matters, the chairperson shall take decisions and measures in place of the body if its decision cannot be acquired in good time; the body shall be informed thereof without delay.

(4) The chairperson may determine that one member or several members of the respective body prepare or carry out, in particular, the clarification of the facts in whole or in part.

(5) [1]The meetings of the bodies shall be convened and chaired by the chairperson. [2]A body shall be deemed to be a quorate when the meeting has been duly convened, and in the case of the Ombuds Committee at least two members, and in the case of the Investigation Commission at least four members, including the chairperson or his/her deputy, are present. [3]A meet-

ing is duly convened if the members receive the invitation by the chairperson or the body appointed by them in writing with a notice period of at least one week. [4]In urgent cases or with the consent of all members and the other parties to the proceedings invited to the respective meeting, the period of notice may be reduced to up to one working day. [5]The meetings of the bodies shall not be public.

(6) A decision in accordance with § 21(3), sentences 3 and 4, § 22(2) and (4), § 23(2), § 24(3) and § 25(4) shall be in writing, reasoned and signed by the ombudsperson or the chairperson of the body; written format shall also suffice for the communication of the decision.

(7) The files of the ombuds proceedings, special proceedings and investigation proceedings shall be retained for 30 years after the conclusion of the proceedings; retention shall be effected by the Ombuds Office for all proceedings of the bodies in accordance with these Rules.

§ 17 Ombuds Office for Good Research Practice at the University

(1) [1]The Ombuds Office shall be responsible for providing administrative support to the persons and bodies referred to in § 13 to 15; in particular, guidance of the respective ombuds proceedings and the administration of files shall be incumbent on the Ombuds Office. [2]With the exception of the Joint Investigation Commission, the Ombuds Office is not responsible for the UMG (see § 31).

(2) The Ombuds Office shall furthermore be responsible for the following tasks:

a) It shall advise people who suspect research misconduct at their request and, in particular, shall inform them about their options and the procedural steps to be taken in the event of initial suspicion of research misconduct (§ 21(1) and (3), § 22(1)). It shall only inform the Ombuds Committee of a specifically stated suspicion with the consent of the person providing the information. The right of a person to directly turn to an ombudsperson or the Ombuds Committee remains unaffected.

b) It shall be responsible for contact with other advisory bodies of the University. Matters which do not fall within the competence of a person or body in accordance with § 13 to 15 shall be forwarded by it to the responsible University office on request.

(c) It shall advise people implicated in events of research misconduct.

d) It shall be responsible for coordinating and supporting measures to ensure good research practice and for coordinating the exchange of experience on the topic of good research practice in the University.

e) It shall support the development and implementation of courses for the teaching of

good research practice, the further training of teachers as well as their exchange with each other.

§ 18 General procedural provisions

(1) [1]In order to protect in particular the people providing information and the people affected by suspicion and to ensure successful handling, the activities of the bodies and offices in accordance with § 12(2) shall be confidential. [2]Confidentiality shall also be maintained beyond the conclusion of the proceedings, unless provided otherwise. [3]The parties to the proceedings shall be informed separately of this obligation.

(2) [1]A person under suspicion shall be presumed innocent. [2]The person affected by the suspicion shall in principle not incur any disadvantages to their own research or professional advancement resulting from the investigation of the suspicion until such time as research misconduct has been formally established.

(3) The person doing the informing shall not incur any disadvantages to their own research and professional advancement as a result of expressing suspicion of research misconduct, even in the case of research misconduct that has not been proven, provided that the report of the suspicion was made in good faith.

(4) [1]If the name of the informing person is known, it shall be treated confidentially and shall also be communicated to other parties to the proceedings only with the consent of the informing person. [2]The situation shall be different if and insofar as there is a statutory obligation to disclose the name of the person informing or if the person affected by the suspicion cannot otherwise defend themselves properly.

(5) [1]The person informing and the person affected by allegations of research misconduct shall have the right to comment at every stage of the proceedings, but the person informing shall generally only have the right to comment until the final decision of the Investigation Commission. [2]The informing person and the person affected by suspicion may consult a person enjoying their confidence as counsel. [3]Witnesses may only be assisted by a lawyer. [4]People affected by suspicion of research misconduct may not be consulted as counsel. [5]The person affected by the suspicion of research misconduct or their counsel may, upon request, be granted access to the files by the chairperson of the respective body; access to the files shall not be granted insofar as this conflicts with the interests of other parties to the proceedings worthy of protection and the proper defence is not thereby impaired.

(6) Proceedings in accordance with these Rules shall be expedited.

(7) [1]If the suspicion relates to misconduct in research dating back more than ten years, proceedings shall not be opened. [2]As a departure from sentence 1, the Ombuds Committee shall open proceedings if concrete circumstances have subsequently emerged that give rise to the urgent suspicion of particularly serious research misconduct with lasting repercussions. [3]Under the same conditions, the Ombuds Committee may reopen an ombuds procedure that had been discontinued because there was no initial suspicion or because it could not be confirmed. [4]The failure to open the proceedings shall not affect other provisions for the sanctioning of such conduct, in particular those of labour, civil and criminal law as well as provisions of the law on universities.

(8) [1]The provisions of § 20 and 21 of the Administrative Procedure Act (*Verwaltungsverfahrensgesetz*) on exclusion due to personal involvement and due to apprehension of partiality, as amended, shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to experts and administrative employees of a body consulted for support. [2]The respective body shall decide whether a case in accordance with sentence 1 exists.

§ 19 Procedure in the case of responsibility or partial responsibility of other bodies of the University of Göttingen

(1) [1]Where the matter involves an examination procedure for an undergraduate or postgraduate degree programme (with the exception of doctoral work or postdoctoral work toward a habilitation, unless otherwise specified in paragraph (3)), the investigation shall be carried out by the relevant faculty. [2]Sentence 1 shall not apply if there is suspicion of research misconduct on the part of a person providing guidance or instruction in connection with the preparation of the Bachelor's or Master's thesis.

(2) [1]In doctoral and habilitation procedures, the Ombuds Committee shall first examine whether the initial suspicion of research misconduct is likely to exist. [2]The Ombuds Committee shall communicate the result of this examination to the faculty; from this point onwards, the ombuds proceedings shall be suspended. [3]The faculty shall first conduct the doctoral or habilitation procedure (including procedures for the withdrawal of a degree) on the basis of the relevant regulations. [4]On completion of this doctoral or habilitation procedure, the faculty shall inform the Ombuds Committee of the final result, including the reasons, in the event of court proceedings including the final court rulings. [5]The Ombuds Committee shall resume the proceedings and, taking into account the outcome of the doctoral or habilitation proceedings, shall make the decision in accordance with § 22(2) to (4). [6]The Ombuds Committee may also discontinue the proceedings if it considers the measure pronounced by the faculty to be sufficient. [7]If the dean of a faculty is confronted with the suspicion of research misconduct before the body

responsible under these Rules, she or he shall refer the informing person to the competent body without further examination.

(3) [1]If a different body has partial responsibility for the matter, e.g., another Ombuds Committee, the Data Protection Commissioner, an animal protection commission and the Animal Protection Officer, this part shall be submitted to the other body in advance for a binding determination of this part of the matter. [2]Confidentiality must also be maintained in this case; the provisions of § 18(1) to (5) shall apply *mutatis mutandis* in this respect.

Chapter II: Research misconduct

Section I: The facts of the case

§ 20 Research misconduct

(1) [1]Misconduct in research shall be deemed to have been committed if the rules of good research practice set out in Appendix I are violated with gross negligence or wilful intent. [2]Misconduct in research also applies in cases of abuse of power and exploitation of dependency relationships, as set out in Annex I, No. 5. [3]Misconduct in research may be assessed as minor (*minderschwer*), medium (*mitte*l), grievous (*schwer*) or particularly grievous (*besonders schwer*) misconduct. [4]The assessment shall be based in particular on the degree of culpability (intent, gross negligence), the manner in which the misconduct was committed and the severity of the consequences for the people and/or institutes affected by the misconduct and for research as a whole. [5]In assessing whether and how violations within the definition of sentence 1 or sentence 2 are to be sanctioned as research misconduct, account shall also be taken of whether and to what extent the person affected by the suspicion has herself/himself taken measures to reconstruct, clarify and rectify any violations of his/her own or has contributed to such measures. [6]This also applies in particular if such measures have been taken immediately and in an appropriate manner in response to information from third parties.

(2) [1]If several persons are involved in research misconduct, each person shall be individually responsible for it. [2]Co-responsibility for another person's research misconduct may arise from active participation in the misconduct of others, from co-authorship of publications containing fabrications, from grossly negligent or wilful neglect of a supervisory obligation as well as, subject to the conditions of paragraph (3), from knowledge of another person's research misconduct.

(3) Research misconduct may also consist of an omission in breach of duty.

Section II: Implementation of the ombuds procedure

§ 21 Initiation, mediation

(1) [1]As a rule, suspicion of research misconduct shall be reported to the Ombuds Office, which shall forward it to one of the ombudspersons. [2]The option of contacting an ombudsperson directly or the supra-regional Ombuds Committee for Research Integrity in Germany (OWID) instead shall remain unaffected. [3]The information shall be provided in writing; in the case of oral information, a written note of the suspicion shall be made and signed.

(2) [1]The work of the ombudspersons shall be guided by the goal of mediating between the informing person and the parties to the proceedings, insofar as this is possible and justified in terms of the grievousness of the alleged misconduct. [2]The ombudsperson shall advise on the rights of the parties involved and the procedural steps to be taken in the event of suspected research misconduct, insofar as this information has not already been provided by the Ombuds Office.

(3) [1]The ombudsperson shall examine the suspicion of research misconduct from the point of view of plausibility with regard to its concreteness and grievousness, as well as with regard to the possibility of mediating or clearing up the allegations. [2]If the suspicion is not plausibly presented, the ombudsperson may give the informing person the opportunity to substantiate the suspicion within a reasonable period of time, including any supporting documents. [3]If no agreement is reached in the course of the mediation efforts, the ombudsperson shall refer the case to the Ombuds Committee. [4]The referral must include a recommendation as to whether concrete suspicion exists, and whether the proceedings should be discontinued or the examination continued accordingly.

(4) As a rule, an ombudsperson does not investigate anonymously submitted reports on allegations of research misconduct. An exception is possible, in particular, if there is a suspicion of serious research misconduct and sufficiently concrete and reliable facts are presented.

§ 22 Preliminary examination proceedings, verification of facts, decision

(1) [1]The Ombuds Committee shall carry out preliminary examination proceedings; this shall also include a plausibility check, unless this has already been carried out by an ombudsperson. [2]The Ombuds Committee shall examine whether initial suspicion exists; § 21(3) sentences 1 and 2, shall apply *mutatis mutandis*. [3]In doctoral and habilitation procedures, § 19(2) shall

apply.

(2) If there is no initial suspicion, the Ombuds Committee shall discontinue the preliminary examination proceedings, and shall inform the informing person and the person affected by the suspicion (hereinafter: affected person) of this in writing.

(3) [1]If there is an initial suspicion, the Ombuds Committee shall investigate the facts further. [2]Insofar as this is possible and factually justified, the Ombuds Committee shall endeavour to mediate between the informing and affected persons; the result of the mediation shall be recorded in the settlement decision (paragraph (4), sentence 1, no. 2) of the Ombuds Committee. [3]The Ombuds Committee shall give the affected person the opportunity to comment within a reasonable period, specifying the incriminating facts and evidence. [4]The Ombuds Committee may give the informing person the opportunity to make a supplementary statement. [5]The Ombuds Committee may obtain statements from further persons or experts.

(4) [1]Once the hearing procedure in accordance with paragraph (3) has been completed, the Ombuds Committee shall make a decision as follows and communicate it in writing to the affected person:

1. The preliminary examination proceedings are discontinued because the suspicion has not been sufficiently confirmed.

2. The preliminary examination proceedings are discontinued by means of a settlement because the possibility of clearing up the allegations has arisen in the course of the proceedings with the consent of the informing and affected persons and intervention due to research misconduct is not (or no longer) necessary; the decision is to contain a deadline by when the conditions are to be met.

3. The preliminary examination proceedings are discontinued due to the determination that the research misconduct is found not to be of a grievous nature; the Ombuds Committee can make the discontinuation conditional on the satisfaction of conditions.

4. The proceedings are handed over to the Investigation Commission; in this case, the decision and the documents are forwarded to the chairperson of the Investigation Commission via the Ombuds Office.

[2]Communication of the decision to an informing person and their counsel shall take place only if they declare in writing in advance that they will treat the decision as confidential and will not make it available to third parties.

(5) The reasoning for the decision must include, in particular, the nature and grievousness (§ 20(1)) of the research misconduct.

(6) If there is a suspicion of particularly grievous research misconduct, the Ombuds Committee

may decide to hand over the proceedings to the Investigation Commission without conducting the preliminary examination proceedings, in derogation from paragraphs (3) and (4).

Section III: Interim proceedings

§ 23 Opposition proceedings

(1) If an informing person makes a plausible case that they themselves suffer direct disadvantages as a result of the research misconduct alleged by then, they may lodge an objection with the Ombuds Comittee within two weeks of receipt of the decision, in writing and stating the reasons, if they do not agree with the discontinuation of the ombuds proceedings in accordance with § 22(2) or (4), sentence 1, nos. 1 or 3.

(2) [1]If the Ombuds Comittee considers the objection to be admissible or well-founded, it shall resume the ombuds proceedings and take a new decision of its own. [2]If it considers the appeal to be inadmissible or unfounded, it shall communicate its opinion in writing to the Investigation Commission.

(3) [1]The Investigation Commission shall reject the objection if it is inadmissible or unfounded. [2]If the Investigation Commission considers the objection to a discontinuation under § 22(2) to be admissible and well-founded, it shall return the matter to the Ombuds Comittee for the conduct of the ombuds proceedings. [3]If the Investigation Commission considers the objection to a discontinuation under § 22(4) sentence 1 nos. 1 or 3 to be admissible and well-founded, it shall open the formal investigation proceedings (§ 25). § 22(3) to (5) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

§ 24 Preliminary proceedings

(1) Following the referral of the case by the Ombuds Committee (§ 22(4), sentence 1, no. 4), the Investigation Commission shall examine whether sufficient grounds for suspicion exist for the opening of formal investigation proceedings (§ 25).

(2) In order to prepare the decision, the Investigation Commission may continue to clarify the facts of the case and, in particular, request the affected person and the informing person to provide additional information.

(3) The Investigation Commission shall decide whether the proceedings in the written procedure shall be discontinued without a formal investigation, or whether the formal investigation procedure (§ 25) shall be opened.

Section IV: Implementation of the formal investigation proceedings

§ 25 Formal investigation proceedings by the Joint Investigation Commission

(1) The provisions of the German Code of Criminal Procedure (*Strafprozessordnung*) and of the German Courts Constitution Act (*Gerichtsverfassungsgesetz*) in the currently valid version shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the formal investigation proceedings, unless provided otherwise by regulations below.

(2) [1]The Investigation Commission shall be entitled to obtain all information and opinions necessary to clarify the facts of the case, while safeguarding the legitimate interests of the persons concerned. [2]It shall freely examine the evidence as to whether research misconduct has taken place.

(3) [1]The affected person shall be given the opportunity by the Investigation Commission, stating the incriminating facts and evidence, to make a statement within a reasonable period of time to be set by the Investigation Commission. [2]The informing person may be given the opportunity by the Investigation Commission to make an additional statement. [3]The Investigation Commission may consult members of the Ombuds Committee in an advisory capacity. [4]It may obtain statements from further persons as witnesses or experts. [5]In the case of oral statements, a written note shall be taken.

(4) [1]Once the hearings in accordance with paragraphs (1) to (3) have been concluded, the Investigation Commission shall make a decision as follows:

1. The proceedings are discontinued because the suspicion has not been sufficiently confirmed;

2. The proceedings are discontinued because the possibility of eliminating the allegations has arisen in the course of the proceedings with the participation of the person providing the information and the person affected by the suspicion, and intervention on account of research misconduct is not (no longer) necessary;

3. The proceedings are discontinued on the grounds of research misconduct is not a grievous case; the Investigation Commission may make the discontinuation subject to the satisfaction of conditions;

4. The proceedings for proven research misconduct, with a recommendation containing the necessary measures (sanctions), will be submitted to the responsible authority (President or full-time member of the Presidential Board for personnel).

[2]In the case of sentence 1 nos. 3 and 4, the decision must in particular cover the nature and grievousness (§ 20(1)) of the research misconduct. [3]The person affected by the suspicion of

misconduct shall be informed of the decision in accordance with sentence 1 in writing without delay. [4]In the case of a decision in accordance with sentence 1 no. 4, the management of the facility where the person affected by the suspicion of research misconduct works and the responsible Dean shall be informed thereof, in writing. [5]§ 22(4), sentence 2, shall apply accordingly.

(5) An internal University appeal procedure against a decision of the Investigation Commission will not be permitted.

(6) In order to protect the personal and academic integrity of a person for whom no research misconduct has been established, the person may in particular be offered:

1. A consultation with the Ombuds Office or an ombudsperson;
2. A written statement by the chairperson of the Investigation Commission that no research misconduct has been established for this person.

§ 26 Sanctioning of research misconduct

(1) [1]If research misconduct has been established by the Investigation Commission, the responsible authority (the President or a full-time member of the Presidential Board for personnel) shall decide, taking into account the recommendations of the Investigation Commission, which measures are to be taken in order to sanction the research misconduct and shall inform the office responsible for the respective measure, as well as the chairperson of the Investigation Commission, thereof. [2]The responsible authority shall take the circumstances of the individual case and the degree of grievousness of the misconduct into account when making the decision. [3]Before the decision is made, the person whose misconduct has been established by the Investigation Commission shall be given the opportunity to comment. [4]Possible measures are listed in Appendix III.

(2) The responsible authority shall decide whether and which other persons and organisations within and outside the University (third parties), e.g., research organisations, cooperation partners, publishers, authorities, professional bodies and the public, shall be informed of the conclusion of the formal investigation proceedings, provided they have a legitimate interest. [2]At this, particular consideration shall be given to the need to protect the interests of third parties, to maintain confidence in academic integrity, to restore the academic reputation of the University and to avoid collateral damage. [3]Insofar as the rehabilitation interest or the legitimate interests of the third parties concerned do not conflict with this, the information shall be provided anonymously.

(3) [1]Insofar as an examination process is concerned, the responsibility of the body responsible for sanctioning according to the applicable regulations (e.g., doctoral or habilitation regulations) remains unaffected. [2]In this case, the President is responsible for the information according to paragraph (2).

Chapter III: Special regulations for the University Medical Center Göttingen

§ 27 Procedure, responsibilities for the UMG

(1) In the event of suspected research misconduct related to the UMG, the proceedings shall be in accordance with the following regulations.

(2) [1]In matters relating to the UMG, the Board of the UMG (hereinafter: Board) shall take the place of the Presidential Board and the Speaker of the Board shall take the place of the President. [2]In relation to a case falling under § 63(6) nos. 1 to 3 of the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (*Niedersächsisches Hochschulgesetz*, NHG), the President shall take the place of the Board. [3]The President, the Presidential Board and the Board shall coordinate in a spirit of trust on matters related to them jointly.

(3) In matters relating to the UMG, in derogation of § 7(3), a body appointed by the Board shall decide instead of the Senate on the basis of utilisation guidelines for the establishment of special retention periods in accordance with § 7(2), sentence 2, as well as in place of the Presidential Board on the transfer or taking away of biological material.

(4) The SUB and the GWDG offer the services for research data management that are institutionally entrenched via the jointly operated eResearch Alliance, in the case of the UMG in cooperation with the institutions there.

§ 28 Ombudspersons for the UMG

[1]For ombuds matters at the UMG, the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Medicine shall appoint three persons from the lecturers' group of the Faculty of Medicine as ombudspersons and three deputies for a period of four years. [2]§ 13(2) to (4) apply *mutatis mutandis*.

§ 29 Examination by the Ombuds Committee of the UMG

[1]The ombudspersons in accordance with § 28 shall form the Ombuds Committee of the UMG (UMG Ombuds Committee). [2]In matters relating to the UMG, the UMG Ombuds Commitee shall perform the tasks of the Ombuds Committee.

§ 30 Competences of the ombuds committees; Joint Ombuds Committee

(1) If the Ombuds Committee of the University (§ 14) or the Ombuds Committee of the UMG (§ 29) is predominantly responsible for a matter, the proceedings shall be transferred to this body. [2]If the Ombuds Committee of the University and the Ombuds Committee of the UMG are unable to agree on the jurisdiction, the President and the spokesperson of the Board shall establish the area of responsibility by mutual agreement.

(2) [1]If no primary responsibility can be established, the Ombuds Committee of the University and the Ombuds Committee of the UMG shall form the non-permanent Joint Ombuds Committee for this proceeding, which shall take the place of the other two Ombuds Committees. [2]The Joint Ombuds Committee shall select from its midst a chairperson and their deputy.

§ 31 Contact persons for Ombuds Matters of the University Medical Center

In matters relating to the UMG, the first points of contact are the UMG ombudspersons; the provision in § 16 (7) remains unaffected.

Chapter IV: Implementation of joint proceedings with other universities or institutions

§ 31a Implementation of joint proceedings

(1) If, in the context of a joint national project involving researchers from the University of Göttingen within the meaning of § 1(1) and persons employed at another higher education institution or organisation (hereinafter: third-party institution), there is a suspicion of research misconduct on the part of one or more of the persons involved, a joint procedure may be conducted.

(2) The details of the procedure shall be set out in an agreement between the University of Göttingen and the third-party institution. The agreement may, in particular, specify

1. whether the joint procedure is conducted jointly by the competent bodies of the University of Göttingen or the University Medical Center Göttingen, as specified in these Rules, by the competent bodies of the third-party institution, or by the bodies of the contracting parties;

2. whether the assessment of whether research misconduct has occurred should be based uniformly on these Rules Governing the Safeguarding of Good Research Practice or uniformly on the relevant regulations of the third-party institution;

3. whether, to what extent and in what manner the data required for the processing of the case may be exchanged between the contracting parties and personal data processed, whilst complying with data protection requirements and respecting individual rights.

(3) If research misconduct is established, the legal consequences to be drawn from this (§ 26) shall be determined in each case by the responsible authority, the office responsible for the respective measure or the head of the institution to which the person concerned belongs.

(4) By contract between the University of Göttingen and a third-party institution, it may also be agreed that proceedings to investigate allegations of research misconduct shall be conducted by the competent bodies of the University of Göttingen or the University Medical Center Göttingen in accordance with these Rules, provided that the allegations relate to a project which is not a joint project between the University of Göttingen and the third-party institution. Paragraph (2), nos. 2 to 4, and paragraph (3) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Chapter V: Reporting

§ 32 Reporting

(1) The Ombuds Office of the University shall report to the President on the work of the Ombuds Committee and of the Joint Ombuds Committee and the Investigation Commission as well as of the activities of the Ombuds Office in a report drawn up on an annual basis and anonymised to the necessary degree. [2]The President shall inform the Senate once a year of the content of the report. [3]Insofar as the matter is also related to the UMG, the Ombuds Office shall also report to the Board of the UMG.

(2) [1]The Ombuds Committee of the UMG shall report to the Board on the work of the Ombuds Committee of the UMG in a report drawn up on an annual basis and anonymised to the necessary degree. [2]The chairperson of the Ombuds Committee of the UMG shall inform the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Medicine and the Senate once a year about the work of the Ombuds Committee of the UMG.

(3) The President and the Board shall exchange the reports in accordance with paragraphs (1) and (2).

Chapter VI: Final provisions

§ 33 Coming into force; transitional provisions

(1) [1]These Rules shall come into force on the day after publication in the Official Announcements I (*Amtliche Mitteilungen I*) of the University of Göttingen. [2]At the same time, the Rules Governing the Safeguarding of Good Research Practice in the version of the announcement of November 5, 2021 (Official Announcements no. 49) shall expire.

(2) The ombudspersons and members of the Investigation Commission in office at the time of the entry into force of these Rules and their deputies shall continue to hold office until the end of the term for which they were elected before the entry into force of these Rules.

Appendices

Appendix I – List of types of conduct to be regarded as research misconduct

Research misconduct shall include, but not be limited to:

1. False information

a. inventing data and/or research results;

b. falsifying data, sources and/or research results, e.g.,

(1) by selecting desirable results and rejecting undesirable ones without disclosing this;

(2) by manipulating data, and/or research results, sources, representations of the illustrations;

(3) by distorting presentations of data, research results and/or statistical and other analyses, e.g., by a lack of separation of data and their interpretation;

(4) by suppressing and/or eliminating relevant sources, data, evidence or text, and knowingly failing to take steps to investigate dishonesty in the handling of data and text;

c. incorrect information in a letter of application or an application for funding, including false declaration on the publication medium and the status of a publication project;

d. incorrect information as a member of a selection or review committee on the academic achievement of an applicant, as well as the concealment of facts or circumstances that clearly justify a conflict of interest or concern of bias;

e. deception of third-party funding bodies regarding points relevant to the decision (including disregarding an existing ban on double funding);

f. as well as the use of the (co-)authorship of another person without his or her consent.

2. Violation of intellectual property

with respect to copyrighted works created by others or research findings, hypotheses, doctrines, or research methods originating from third parties by means of:

a. the unmarked adoption of third-party content without the required citation (plagiarism);

b. the unauthorised use of research methods and ideas, in particular as a reviewer or expert witness (theft of ideas);

c. the unauthorised utilisation of patents, prototypes or software;

d. the assumption of academic authorship or co-authorship without having made a genuine, identifiable contribution to the research content of the publication, or the denial of a claim to co-authorship acquired by others through genuine contributions;

e. the falsification of content, e.g., by arbitrarily omitting or adding results and/or information relevant to the subject matter,

f. the unauthorised disclosure or unauthorised making available to third parties of research results, data, hypotheses, theories and findings that have not yet been published,

g. knowingly concealing significant relevant preliminary work by others as well as relevant preliminary work of one's own (e.g. previous publications).

3. Impairing the research activities of others,

in particular by:

a. sabotaging research work (including damaging, destroying, removing or manipulating experimental setups, equipment, records, hardware, software, chemicals, materials or anything else that others need for research purposes),

b. the disposal of research documents, research data or biological materials, insofar as this violates statutory or in-house regulations or discipline-related recognized principles of academic work,

c. deliberate misappropriation or theft of research materials, e.g., books, archival records, manuscripts, data sets,

d. deliberately rendering academically relevant information media unusable;

e. unauthorised destruction or unauthorised disclosure of research material (the loss of original data from a laboratory constitutes a breach of fundamental rules of careful research practice, and *prima facie* justifies the suspicion of grossly negligent dishonest conduct);

f. prevention of the publication of research results, including refusing to consent to the publication of research results as a co-author in breach of good faith;

g. arbitrarily delaying the publication of a research work, in particular as an editor, reviewer or co-author;

h. the unreasonable delay of the assessment of an academic qualification thesis or other grossly negligent violations of the duties as a supervisor of a qualification thesis.

4. Violation of the accepted rules of authorship

See the rules and obligations referred to in § 10 and in Appendix II.

5. Abuse of power and the exploitation of dependency relationships

The abuse of power and the exploitation of dependency relationships constitute research misconduct if individuals, in particular superiors or supervisors, attempt, through the abuse of the powers and influence associated with their position, to induce others to commit, tolerate or cover up research misconduct, or to participate in such misconduct, in order to gain unlawful advantages, or to facilitate or conceal other research misconduct under these Rules. Abusive behaviour may consist of the threat of harm of any kind over which the person making the threat claims to have influence, or the infliction of harm, such as a negative assessment of a thesis, the withholding or withdrawal of resources necessary for a research project (data, workspace, materials, equipment and funds) or the termination or non-renewal of an employment or supervisory relationship. An abuse of power is to be classified as research misconduct in particular if

a. employees or individuals under academic supervision are asked by a superior to attribute authorship to themselves or to another person without having made a corresponding contribution in accordance with Annex II of these Rules;
b. someone is to be induced to write publications in the name of their superior, supervisor or another person;
c. someone is to be induced to make false statements, e.g. to manipulate or falsify data;
d. someone is to be induced not to report research misconduct or to cover it up;
e. someone is barred from academic exchange or publication without any plausible justification, or
f. employees or individuals under academic supervision are to be discredited within the scientific community.

6. Other violations of the rules, violation of the duty of supervision

a. Breach of confidentiality in an ombuds or investigation proceeding;

b. negligent dealing with accusations of research misconduct, in particular making deliberately incorrect, unverified allegations or allegations made without sufficient knowledge of the facts.

c. failure to cooperate in the investigation of suspected research misconduct, unless there are objective grounds for an exemption from this obligation; objective grounds for an exemption exist, in particular, where:

ca. cooperation in the investigation gives rise to the risk that the cooperating person themselves or a relative within the meaning of Section 20 of the Administrative Procedure Act (*Verwaltungsverfahrensgesetz)* may be prosecuted on suspicion of scientific misconduct,

cb. the person subject to the suspicion is a relative within the meaning of Section 20 of the Administrative Procedure Act,

cc. participation in the investigation would breach a statutory duty of confidentiality on the part of the person involved.

Appendix II - Recognised rules of authorship

1. The principles of authorship as well as the rights and obligations associated with them are laid down in § 9 and 10 and are specified by the following explanations.

The following contributions usually meet the criteria for authorship or co-authorship, each on its own merits and taking into account subject-specific practice:

a. significant contribution to the conceptual design of the research project, including the development of methods for its implementation;

b. a significant involvement in the drafting of the text version of the publication,

c. development, collection, analysis or interpretation of data, software or sources to a significant extent, or modelling for this research project;

d. significant contribution of experimental or investigational materials, including a significant technical and academic contribution,

including approval of the text to be published.

(2) Particularly, in view of the joint responsibility for the entire publication, the following contributions, each by themselves, shall not be sufficient as a matter of principle, to establish authorship or co-authorship:

a. organizational responsibility for the acquisition of funding for research projects;

b. management of a facility, organisational unit or work unit in which the research work intended for publication was carried out;

c. support of a merely technical nature, e.g., merely providing equipment or experimental material;

d. provision of standard investigation materials;

e. transfer of data sets or important research materials;

f. instruction of employees in standard methods,

g. involvement in the collection, collation or compilation of data;

h. technical assistance in data collection, e.g., by purely technical drawing up of graphs or tables from existing data;

i. reading the manuscript without substantially contributing to its content.

Deviation from individual standards may be made on a case-by-case basis, subject to the approval of the Ombuds Committee, for reasons of international cooperation. If a contribution is not sufficient to justify authorship, this support may be appropriately acknowledged in footnotes, in the preface or in the acknowledgement.

Appendix III - Catalogue of possible consequences of research misconduct

The following catalogue contains possible sanctions and consequences of the decision of a body that is responsible in accordance with these Rules, as well as other legal consequences in the case of research misconduct. If research misconduct is formally established by the Investigation Commission, the supervisor may consider decisions of varying types and scope. Since each case may be different, and also the grievousness of the research misconduct found is relevant to the respective decision, there can be no uniform rules for the appropriate consequences that are suitable in each individual case. These shall, rather, be dependent on the circumstances of the individual case. Without claiming to be exhaustive, the following consequences in particular can be considered, depending on the circumstances of the case:

1. Consequences under service law and labour law

In the case of an existing civil servant or employment relationship with the University, possible consequences under service law or labour law must be examined.

a. consequences under civil service law for tenured civil servants:

- implementation of disciplinary proceedings with the imposition of disciplinary measures. In this context, the following may be considered:
  - reprimand,
  - fine,
  - reduction in remuneration,
  - demotion,
  - removal from civil service employment.

- With retired tenured civil servants:
  - reduction in pension,
  - demotion,
  - revocation of pension.

b. consequences under labour law in the case of non-tenured employees:

- warning,
- ordinary and extraordinary termination,
- dissolution of contract.

2. Academic consequences:

In particular, it shall be possible to consider the withdrawal of the corresponding academic degree or non-admission to the doctoral procedure by the faculties. If the academic degree was awarded by another facility, the latter shall be informed of the research misconduct.

3. Civil or administrative law consequences,

such as

a. the issuing of a ban from the premises;

b. claims for restitution against the person concerned, for example for the return of misappropriated academic material or the like;

c. claims for removal and injunctions, in particular under copyright law, personal rights, patent law and competition law;

d. claims for damages by the University;

e. claims for restitution (e.g., related to scholarships, third-party funds, grants under budgetary law).

4. Consequences under criminal or regulatory offence law,

in the form of criminal charges or criminal complaints, if there is suspicion that research misconduct simultaneously fulfils an offence under the Criminal Code (*Strafgesetzbuch*, StGB) or other criminal provisions or regulatory offences, in particular with regard to

a. violation of personal life and secrecy (e.g., § 202a StGB: spying on data, § 204 StGB: exploitation of the secrets of others);

b. property offences (e.g., § 242 StGB: theft; § 246 StGB: unlawful approriation; § 263 StGB fraud; § 264 StGB: subsidy fraud; § 266 StGB: embezzlement. This also includes the misappropriation of or fraudulent obtaining of funding);

c. forgery (e.g., §267 StGB: forgery of documents; § 268 StGB: falsification of technical records);

d. damage to property including data alteration (e.g., § 303 StGB: damage to property; § 303a StGB: data alteration);

e. copyright infringements (e.g., § 106 of the Copyright Act (*Urheberrechtsgesetz*): unauthorised exploitation of copyrighted works);

f. life or bodily injury (e.g., § 211 StGB: murder, § 212 StGB: manslaughter, § 223 StGB: bodily injury).

5. Informing the public and the media,

a. In particular, in the event of particularly grievous research misconduct, the University shall inform other research facilities or academic organisations concerned. If there is good cause, it may be appropriate to inform professional organisations or specialist academic societies.

b. The University may be obliged to inform affected third parties and the public, in particular for the protection of third parties, in order to maintain confidence in academic integrity or to restore its academic reputation (including the reputation of one of its researchers), to prevent consequential damage, as well as in the general public interest.

c. Reference is made to § 26(2) of the Rules.