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Contents:

Regulations to Ensure Good Research Practice at the University of Siegen

Dated 22 May 2023

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Regulations to Ensure Good Research Practice

at the University of Siegen

issued 22 May 2023

In accordance with § 2(4) and 4(4) of the Higher Education Act for the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (*Hochschulgesetz, HG*) dated 16 September 2014 (GV. NRW. p. 547), last amended by legislation dated 30 June 2022 (GV. NRW. p. 780b), the University of Siegen has issued the following regulations:

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Preamble

In accordance with its legal mandate, the University of Siegen sees itself as bearing special obligations in the areas of research, instruction, and support for early-career researchers. In each of these three areas, the university seeks to safeguard scientific quality standards, and in particular scientific integrity and honesty in thought and action, as central considerations and guiding principles for its members and associations. In accordance with Section 4 Para. 4 HG, all persons involved in research and all students are obligated to academic integrity. To ensure compliance with these institutional obligations, the University of Siegen has formulated a set of regulations for good research practice as well as a protocol for handling allegations of research misconduct. The University of Siegen explicitly acknowledges the “Guidelines for Safeguarding

Good Research Practice" from the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgesellschaft*, DFG) from 2019 (last updated: November 2021) as legally binding and through these regulations is putting these into practice.

Freedom of research is protected by Article 5 of the German Basic Law. Each researcher bears responsibility for their own actions and for a scientifically appropriate and sufficient level of self-control.

Chapter 1: Standards of Good Research Practice

Section 1
Principles of Good Research Practice

(1) All persons engaged in research at the University of Siegen are obligated to

1. work in a professional manner (lege artis),
2. maintain strict honesty in attributing one's own contributions and those of others,
3. document their results such that the results can be reviewed by independent authorities,
4. rigorously question all findings,
5. permit and promote critical discourse within the research community,
6. avoid and prevent scientific misconduct, and
7. to be familiar with the principles and rules described in these regulations.

(2) The university administration, its various faculties and organizations, and the directors of its working groups bear responsibility for establishing appropriate organizational structures to ensure that the tasks of leadership, supervision, quality assurance and conflict management are clearly allocated and suitably communicated.

(3) Researchers are responsible for putting the fundamental values and norms of research into practice and advocating for them. Education in the principles of good research begins at the earliest possible stage in academic teaching and research training. Researchers at all career levels regularly refresh their knowledge about the standards of good research practice and the current state of the art.

Section 2
Organizational Responsibility for Directors of Research Institutions

(1) The Rector's Office at the University of Siegen creates the basic framework for research. It is responsible for ensuring adherence to and the promotion of good practice, and for appropriate career support for all researchers. The university administration guarantees the necessary conditions to enable researchers to comply with legal and ethical standards. The basic framework includes clear written policies and procedures for staff selection and development as well as for early career support and equal opportunity. Within the context of staff selection and development, gender equality and diversity are taken into account.

(2) The head of a research work unit is responsible for the entire unit. Collaboration within the unit is designed such that the group as a whole can perform its tasks, the necessary cooperation and coordination can be achieved, and all members understand their roles, rights, and duties. The leadership role includes ensuring adequate individual supervision of early career researchers, integrated in the overall institutional policy, as well as career development for researchers and research support staff. Suitable organizational measures are in place at the level of the individual unit and of the leadership of the institution to prevent the abuse of power and exploitation of dependent relationships.

§ 3

Mentoring of Early Career Researchers

(1) Training and support of early career researchers must be given special attention. Early career support in academia is one of the central responsibilities for members of the university faculty. Post-docs, doctoral candidates, and advanced-level students are offered appropriate research support. To this end, the university also develops offerings for the development of cross-disciplinary competencies, advising on potential career and doctoral candidacy options, mentoring, and coaching.

(2) Leaders of individual units bear responsibility for ensuring that post-docs, doctoral candidates, and advanced students are provided with appropriate support. Within the working group, each of them is to be provided with at least one primary adviser to convey to them the fundamental rules for ensuring good research practice at the University of Siegen.

(3) The responsible advisor or advisors are to foster the completion of their qualifying papers within an appropriate period of time.

(4) A support agreement is to be signed with doctoral students establishing the fundamental requirements surrounding the advisory relationship for both the advisor and the doctoral candidate. The support agreement should encompass measures to support with ongoing career planning.

(5) The ombudspersons (see Section 18) also serve as contacts in the event of problems and conflicts related to the support relationship.

(6) During the orientation events for their studies, students are informed about the fundamentals of academic work and good research practice, with reference to the rules in these regulations. The faculties and research institutions are called upon to provide appropriate, recurrent attention to the fundamentals of academic work and good research practice, and to the threats and consequences of research misconduct.

(7) An employment contract for early career researchers should be framed in accordance with the Guidelines for Design of the Qualification Phase for Early-Career Researchers at the University of Siegen (*Leitlinien für die Ausgestaltung der Qualifizierungsphase von Nachwuchswissenschaftlerinnen und Nachwuchswissenschaftlern an der Universität Siegen*).

Section 4

Dimensions of Performance and Assessment Criteria

To assess the performance of researchers, a multidimensional approach is called for. Depending on the assessment criteria and where legally permissible, aspects beyond research performance, such as teaching, academic self-governance, public relations, and knowledge and technology transfer may also be recognized. Performance is assessed primarily on the basis of qualitative measures, while quantitative indicators may be incorporated into the overall assessment only with appropriate differentiation and reflection. Where provided voluntarily, individual circumstances stated in curricula vitae—as well as the categories specified in the German General Equal Treatment Act (*Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz*)—are taken into account when forming a judgment.

Chapter 2: Research Process

Section 5

Cross-phase Quality Assurance

(1) Researchers at the University of Siegen carry out each step of the research process *lege artis*. Continuous quality assurance during the research process includes, in particular,

1. compliance with subject-specific standards and established methods, processes such as equipment calibration, the collection, processing and analysis of research data, the selection and use of research software, software development and programming, and the keeping of laboratory notebooks.
2. depending on the particular subject area, that results or findings can be replicated and confirmed or proved false by other researchers (for example with the aid of a detailed description of materials and methods).
3. honest and open handling of errors: If researchers have made their findings publicly available and subsequently become aware of inconsistencies or errors in them, they make the necessary corrections.

(2) When research findings are made publicly available (in the narrower sense of publication, but also in a broader sense through other communication channels), the quality assurance mechanisms used are always explained. This applies especially when new methods are developed. This means:

1. the origin of the data, organisms, materials, and software used in the research process is disclosed and the reuse of data is clearly indicated,
2. original sources are cited,
3. the nature and the scope of research data generated during the research process are described, research data is handled in accordance with the requirements of the relevant subject area.
4. the source code of publicly available software must be persistent, citable, and documented.

Section 6

Stakeholders, Responsibilities and Roles

The roles and responsibilities of the researchers and research support staff participating in a research project must be clear at each stage of the project. The participants in a research project engage in regular dialogue. They define their roles and responsibilities in a suitable way and adapt them where necessary. Adaptations are likely to be needed if the focus of a participant's work changes.

Section 7

Research Design

Researchers take into account and acknowledge the current state of research when planning a project. To identify relevant and suitable research questions, they familiarize themselves with existing research in the public domain.

This means specifically, although not exclusively, that

1. Methods to avoid (unconscious) distortions in the interpretation of findings, e.g. the use of blinding in experiments, are used where possible,
2. Researchers examine whether and to what extent gender and diversity dimensions may be of significance to the research project (with regard to methods, work program, objectives, etc.),
3. The context in which the research was conducted is taken into consideration when interpreting findings.

Section 8

Legal and Ethical Frameworks, Usage Rights

Researchers adopt a responsible approach to the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of research. They comply with rights and obligations, particularly those arising from legal requirements and contracts with third parties, and where necessary seek approvals and ethics statements and present these when required. With regard to research projects, the potential consequences of the research should be evaluated in detail and the ethical aspects should be assessed. The legal framework of a research project includes documented agreements on usage rights relating to data and results generated by the project.

This means specifically, although not exclusively, that

1. where possible and practicable, researchers conclude documented agreements on usage rights at the earliest possible point in a research project. Such documented agreements are especially useful when multiple academic and/or non-academic institutions are involved in a research project or when it is likely that a researcher will move to a different institution and continue using the data he or she generated for his or her own research purposes.
2. in particular, the researcher who collected the data is entitled to use them.
3. during a research project, those entitled to use the data decide whether third parties should have access to them (subject to data protection regulations).

Section 9

Methods and Standards

To answer research questions, researchers use scientifically sound and appropriate methods. When developing and applying new methods, they attach particular importance to quality assurance and the establishment of standards.

Section 10

Documentation

Researchers document all information relevant to the production of a research result as clearly as is required by and is appropriate for the relevant subject area to allow the result to be reviewed and assessed. In general, this also includes documenting individual results that do not support the research hypothesis. The selection of results must be avoided. Where subject-specific recommendations exist for review and assessment, researchers create documentation in accordance with these guidelines. If the documentation does not satisfy these requirements, the constraints and the reasons for them are clearly explained. Documentation and research results must not be manipulated; they are protected as effectively as possible against manipulation. An important basis for enabling replication is to make available the information necessary to understand the research (including the research data used or generated, the methodological, evaluation, and analytical steps taken, and, if relevant, the development of the hypothesis), to ensure that citations are clear, and, as far as possible, to enable third parties to access this information. Where research software is being developed, the source code is documented.

Section 11

Providing Public Access to Research Results

As a rule, researchers make all results available as part of scientific/academic discourse. In specific cases, however, there may be reasons not to make results publicly available (in the narrower sense of publication, but also in a broader sense through other communication channels); this decision must not depend on third parties. Researchers decide autonomously—with due regard for the conventions of the relevant subject area—whether, how, and where to disseminate their results. If it has been decided to make results available in the public domain, researchers describe them clearly and in full. Where possible and reasonable, this includes making the research data, materials, and information on which the results are based, as well as the methods and software used, available and fully explaining the work processes. Software programmed by researchers themselves is made publicly available along with the source code. Researchers provide full and correct information about their own preliminary work and that of others. Splitting research into inappropriately small publications is to be avoided. Researchers limit the repetition of content from publications of which they were (co-)authors to that which is necessary to enable the reader to understand the context. They cite results previously made publicly available unless, in exceptional cases, this is deemed unnecessary by the general conventions of the discipline.

Section 12

Authorship

(1) An author is an individual who has made a genuine, identifiable contribution to the content of a research publication of text, data, or software. All authors agree on the final version of the work to be published. Refusal of consent must be justified with verifiable criticism of data, methods, or results. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, all authors share responsibility for the publication. Authors seek to ensure that, as far as possible, their contributions are identified by publishers or infrastructure providers such that they can be correctly cited by users. An identifiable, genuine contribution is deemed to exist particularly in instances in which a researcher—in a research-relevant way—takes part in

1. the development and conceptual design of the research project,
2. the gathering, collection, acquisition, or provision of data, software, or sources,
3. the analysis/evaluation or interpretation of data, sources and conclusions drawn from them, or
4. the drafting of the manuscript. This must be reviewed and verified separately on a case-by-case basis. If a contribution is not sufficient to justify authorship, the individual's support may be properly acknowledged in footnotes, a foreword, or an acknowledgment. Honorary authorship where no such contribution was made is not permissible. A leadership or supervisory function does not itself constitute co-authorship.

(2) Collaborating researchers agree on authorship of a publication. The decision as to the order in which authors are named is made in good time, normally no later than when the manuscript is drafted, and in accordance with clear criteria that reflect the practices within the relevant subject areas. If there is dispute, the ombuds committee can be consulted.

Section 13

Publication Medium

(1) Authors select the publication medium carefully, with due regard for its quality and visibility in the relevant field of discourse. Researchers who assume the role of editor carefully select where they will carry out this activity. The scientific/academic quality of a contribution does not depend on the medium in which it is published. In addition to publication in books and journals, authors may also consider academic repositories, data and software repositories, and blogs. A new or unknown

publication medium is evaluated to assess its seriousness. A key criterion to selecting a publication medium is whether it has established guidelines on good research practice

(2) The official publication guidelines for the University of Siegen also apply.

Section 14

Confidentiality and Neutrality of Review Processes and Discussions

Fair behavior is the basis for the legitimacy of any judgment-forming process. Researchers who evaluate submitted manuscripts, funding proposals, or personal qualifications are obliged to maintain strict confidentiality with regard to this process. They disclose all facts that could give rise to the appearance of a conflict of interest. The duty of confidentiality and disclosure of facts that could give rise to the appearance of a conflict of interest also applies to members of research advisory and decision-making bodies. The confidentiality of third-party material to which a reviewer or committee member gains access precludes sharing the material with third parties or making personal use of it. Researchers immediately disclose to the responsible body any potential or apparent conflicts of interest, bias, or favoritism relating to the research project being reviewed or the person or matter being discussed.

Section 15

Archiving

(1) Researchers back up research data and results made publicly available, as well as the central materials on which they are based and the research software used, by adequate means according to the standards of the relevant subject area, and retain them for an appropriate period of time. Where justifiable reasons exist for not archiving particular data, researchers explain these reasons. The University of Siegen ensures that the infrastructure necessary to enable archiving is in place.

(2) When scientific and academic findings are made publicly available, the research data (generally raw data) on which they are based are generally archived in an accessible and identifiable manner for a period of ten years at the institution where the data were produced or in cross-location repositories. This practice may differ depending on the subject area. In justified cases, shorter archiving periods may be appropriate; the reasons for this are described clearly and comprehensibly. The archiving period begins on the date when the results are made publicly available.

Chapter 3: Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct

Section 16

Scientific Misconduct

(1) Scientific misconduct in an academic sense most prominently occurs where a researcher

1. makes intentional or grossly negligent false statements,
2. engages in unauthorized plagiarism of third-party scientific achievements, or
3. disrupts the research activities of others.

In particular, the following are considered scientific misconduct in the sense of sentence 1:

4. falsifies data

a) through the fabrication of data and/or research results,

b) through the falsification of data and/or research results, in particular

aa) by suppressing and/or removing data obtained through the research process and/or or results, without publishing these,

bb) through manipulation of a graph or depiction,

c) through incongruent depiction of an image and the related statement,

d) through untrue statements in a funding application or as part of a reporting obligation (including false information to a publication organ and for publications in print), insofar these are scientific in their orientation,

e) through claiming of (co-)authorship by another person without their consent,

5. engages in unauthorized appropriation of third-party scientific achievements by:

a) uncommented adoption of content from a third-party without citing the source ("plagiarism"),

b) exploitation of research approaches and ideas ("intellectual theft"),

c) unauthorized disclosure of data, theories, and insights to third parties,

d) the assertion or unjustified adoption of authorship or co-authorship, especially where no genuine, auditable contribution was made to the scientific content of the publication,

e) the falsification of content,

f) unauthorized publication and unauthorized disclosure to third parties while the work, insights, hypothesis, instruction, or research approach has not yet been published.

6. hinders research activities of others, especially through

a) sabotage of research activities (including damage, destruction, or manipulation of experimental constructions, devices, documents, hardware, software, chemicals, or other items required for research purposes),

b) falsification or unauthorized removal of research data or research documents,

c) falsification or unauthorized removal of documentation of research data.

(2) Scientific misconduct also results—whether by malicious intent or gross negligence—from

1. co-authorship of a publication that contains false information or unauthorized adoption of third-party scientific achievements in the sense of paragraph 1,

2. neglect of oversight responsibilities when another person has objectively committed scientific misconduct in the sense of paragraph 1 and this could have been prevented or significantly hindered through the necessary and reasonable level of oversight.

(3) Scientific misconduct in the sense of paragraph 1 can also occur through premeditated participation (in the sense of incitement or abetment) in intentional misconduct.

(4) Scientific misconduct is considered to have occurred within the framework of service as an expert consultant if the consultant acts with premeditation or in a grossly negligent way

1. in allowing data, theories, or insights acquired as part of their expert consultant activity for their own scientific purposes,

2. divulges proposals or the data, theories, and insights within that were acquired as part of the consultant activity, in violation of the consultant's confidentiality obligations, to third parties,

3. failing over the course of the consultant activity to reveal a potential conflict of interests in the facts or situation.

Section 17

Violations of the Principles of Good Research Practices

(1) The university will pursue any concrete suspicion of scientific misconduct on the part of its current or former employees or community members or where they are victimized by such, insofar as the relevant work and achievements were performed at the University of Siegen and is not the responsibility of another research institution. It will respect the personal rights of all participants in the respective process. The investigation must be carried out in strict confidentiality and adhere to the presumption of innocence. If deliberate or grossly negligent violations of research standards are established in a scope considered scientific misconduct, then appropriate measures will be initiated against the responsible party.

(2) Persons who provide concrete allegations about the suspicion of scientific misconduct (commonly known as whistleblowers, hereinafter complainant) must not be allowed to suffer disadvantages to their own research or professional advancement due to the disclosure. The same protections apply to the subject of the accusations. Should research misconduct not be proven, the complainant must continue to be protected, assuming that the allegations cannot be shown to have been made against his or her better knowledge. Both the ombudspersons and all other organs and committees reviewing the suspicion of scientific misconduct must intervene in a suitable manner to ensure the protection of those persons providing information of this kind. The information must be provided in good faith. Knowingly false or malicious allegations may themselves constitute misconduct. The applicable legal regulations shall also apply.

(3) Disclosures made anonymously can only be investigated if the complainant provides the party investigating the allegations with solid and sufficiently concrete facts. If the complainant's identity is known, the investigating body will keep the individual's name confidential and will not share it with third parties without the individual's consent. Different requirements apply only if there is a legal obligation or if the respondent cannot otherwise properly defend himself or herself because, as an exception, the case concerns the identity of the complainant. The investigating body will promptly inform the complainant if his or her name is to be disclosed; the complainant can decide whether to withdraw the allegation due to the impending disclosure.

(4) The university will publish the names and contact data of the ombudspersons and the members of the investigation commission in an appropriate place on the internet

Section 18

Ombudspersons

(1) Based on the recommendation of each respective faculty, the senate will vote for one professor from each faculty to serve as an ombudsperson for a four-year term, as well a designated substitute in the particular case involving concern about conflicts of interest. The ombudspersons should have experience in training of early-career researchers and in the conduction of research projects, including in an international context. Ombudspersons may not be members of leadership committees at the University of Siegen during their tenure as ombuspersons. The term of office can be extended once. Ombudspersons receive the support, both at the content level and in appreciation of their conduction of these duties, from the leadership committees at the University of Siegen.

(2) The ombudspersons are a source of information in questions of good research practice and for questions of suspected scientific misconduct and are not subject to external direction when acting on this basis of these regulations. Together they also form the ombuds committee (§ 19). The ombudspersons are tasked with mediating between the participants in the process, insofar as this is possible and objectively justified. In specific, appointed ombudspersons serve as a confidential advisor for those disclosing information about concrete suspicions of scientific misconduct and will

act on their own initiative upon relevant concrete indications upon learning of them.

(3) Where, over the course of the mediation efforts, the allegations cannot be dispelled and a concrete suspicion of research misconduct arises, the ombudsperson will inform the ombuds committee of the situation and present the process to the ombuds committee for decision. The ombuds committee does not handle queries that are under investigation by other offices for related issues, such as when identical or related aspects of the circumstances are under court review.

(4) The faculty and members of the university community are also free to instead contact the German Research Ombudsman at the DFG; this person is a separate entity available for consultation and support on questions of good scientific practices and their violation through academic dishonesty. This person is not to be considered a superior instance to the ombudspersons.

Section 19

Inspection by the Ombuds Committee

(1) The ombudspersons as per Section 18(1) form the ombuds committee. The ombuds committee will address the allegations without delay through a pre-investigation of the potential concreteness and importance of the case, as well as potential motives and potential for dispelling the suspicions. In the event that a concrete initial suspicion arises based on the evidence, the ombuds committee is obligated to further pursue the facts of the case. It provides the person accused of misconduct the opportunity to addresses the allegations within a suitable period of time as defined by the ombuds committee, including a designation of the incrimination facts and evidence. The proceedings are to be conducted in an expeditious manner by the ombuds committee and the necessary steps are to be implemented in a suitable time frame.

(2) After completion of the preliminary investigation, the ombuds committee then reaches one of the following decisions:

1. the preliminary investigation is discontinued because the suspicion has not been significantly confirmed, or has been shown to be baseless.
2. The preliminary investigation is discontinued because the process provided an opportunity for the respondent to clarify the incident, with participation by the complainant, and an intervention related to scientific misconduct is not (or no longer) necessary.
3. The preliminary investigation is discontinued because the scientific misconduct is judged to be a petty offense; the ombuds committee can make discontinuation contingent on the fulfillment of requirements.
4. The procedure is transferred to the investigatory commission as per Section 20; in this case, the documents together with an official report is to be forwarded to the chairperson of the investigation commission.
5. The ombuds committee declines jurisdiction. This can in particular occur if the circumstances have no identifiable relationship to the University of Siegen or if the circumstance are identical or similar, in whole or part, to the basis of a pending court case.

(3) The ombuds committee documents the allegations of scientific misconduct and the results of its preliminary investigation. In the event that the preliminary investigation is discontinued, the ombuds committee will inform the complainant about its decision. The complainant can submit an appeal to this decision within two weeks of being informed of the reasons by the chairperson of the investigation commission; the complainant must provide justification for appealing the decision about discontinuation of the preliminary investigation. The investigation commission decides on the appeal.

(4) The ombuds committee does not meet publicly. Notwithstanding any measures required to clarify the facts of the case, the members are obligated to confidentiality. This obligation to confidentiality extends beyond the term of office. The ombuds committee can inform the rector's office about its activities at regular intervals in anonymous form.

(5) The disclosure of the name of the complainant—even to other participants in the process—requires the consent of the complainant, insofar as there is a justified interest on the part of the complainant to preservation of confidentiality.

Section 20

Investigation Commission

(1) To provide a formal resolution to the allegations of scientific misconduct, the Senate will appoint a commission.

(2) The commission is comprised of:

1. five professors, one of whom holds the qualification of a judgeship,

2. two members of the academic staff,

3. one graduate student,

4. and an employee from the technical and administrative staff.

All faculties should be represented in the membership group with one member as per number 1.

(3) The senate votes on the members of the commission. In the event of a conflict of interest, the commission can appoint a substitute for the member with the conflict of interest. Only persons who are members of the university community are eligible to be elected. The term of office for the members of the commission is four years, excepting the student member, who is elected for a term of two years. Re-election is possible.

(4) The members of the commission vote for a chairperson from the circle of members as per Para. 2 (1).

(5) The commission does not meet publicly. Notwithstanding any measures required to clarify the facts of the case, the members are obligated to confidentiality. This obligation to confidentiality extends beyond the term of office. The commission is authorized to take all necessary steps under consideration of the evidence to investigate the facts of the case. As such, it can acquire all information and official statements needed to do so. It is authorized where its deliberations require it to call upon the assistance of legal and academic experts (including persons external to the university) as well as the ombudspersons The experts are also obligated to confidentiality in the relevant incidents.

(6) Notwithstanding paragraph 7, the disclosure of the name of the complainant—even to other participants in the process—requires the consent of the complainant, insofar as there is a justified interest on the part of the complainant to preservation of confidentiality.

(7) The commission is obligated to inform the person accused of scientific misconduct without delay that an investigation is underway. The respondent is to be made aware of incriminating facts and evidence. The respondent and the complainant can, by request, receive an oral hearing; they are permitted to draw upon the support of a trusted person. The protection of the identity of the complainant should be preserved where possible and desired.

(8) The investigation committee does not handle circumstance that are under investigation by other offices for related issues, such as when identical or related aspects of the circumstances are pending a court ruling.

Section 21

Decision by the Investigating Commission

(1) After completion of the investigatory process, the investigating commission then reaches one of the following decisions:

1. the process is discontinued because the suspicion has not been significantly confirmed, or has been shown to be baseless.

2. The process is discontinued because the process provided an opportunity for the respondent to clarify the incident, with participation by the complainant and the respondent, and an intervention related to scientific misconduct is not (or no longer) necessary.

3. The process is discontinued because any scientific misconduct constitutes a petty offense. The commission can make the discontinuation contingent on the fulfillment of specific conditions.

4. If the commission finds that sufficient evidence of misconduct, then it declares a finding of scientific misconduct and presents the results of the investigation, together with a suggested decision including necessary measures (sanctions) to the rector. This can include consequences at the labor or public service law level, or the initiation of academic, civil, or even criminal charges. If the removal of an academic degree is under consideration, the responsible offices are to be informed as needed.

5. The investigation committee can decline jurisdiction. This can in particular occur if the circumstances have no identifiable relationship to the University of Siegen or if the circumstance are identical or similar, in whole or part, to the basis of a pending court case.

(2) Both the respondent and the complainant are to be notified immediately in writing about the essential reasons for the discontinuation of the process or for the determination of misconduct and the forwarding to the rector. No internal appeal process against the Commission's decision is provided.

Section 22

Conclusion of the Process

(1) In the event of Section 21(1)(d), the rector will review the suggestions of the investigation commission for further handling of the case and then decide on one or more measures.

(2) The respondent and the complainant will be informed about the rector's decision, including an indication of the justification for the decision. The ombuds commission and the investigation commission are also to be informed. It is to be decided on a case-by-case basis whether there is a justified reason to inform other agencies and/or the public about the decision, such as when the misconduct affects published journals or research results.

(3) The files from the formal investigation are to be preserved for 30 years.

Section 23

Entry into Effect and Publication

These regulations go into effect on the day after their publication in the *Amtliche Mitteilungen* of the University of Siegen. At the same time, the *Ordnung zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis an der Universität Siegen* dated 8 July 2022 (AM 48/2022) will become invalid.

These regulations were prepared based on the decision of the Senate of the University of Siegen on 10 April 2023.

Please note that as per § 12(5) HG NRW, infringement of the procedural or formal standards of the HG or of the regulations or other autonomous rights of the university are no longer actionable once one year have passed since this public notice, excepting situations where

1. the regulations have not been published in a proper way,

2. the Rector's Office has previously objected to decision about these regulations by the committee,

3. complaint has already been issued about the formal and procedural deficit to the university and the infringed legal stipulations and the facts of the case related to the deficit have been described, or

4. no indication of an exclusion of objections was included in the public notice.

Siegen, 22 May 2023

Rector

signed

(University Professor Dr. Holger Burckhart)