



Guidelines on fair behaviour at the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences

Dear Sir or Madam

We should all be interested in respectful co-operation between all university members (staff and students) and in promoting or maintaining a positive atmosphere at work.

This is why representatives from the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Staff Councils and the General Students' Committee (AStA) have joined together to form a working team that has met several times to develop these *Guidelines on fair behaviour at the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences*. I would ask you to inform the university's staff and students about these Guidelines.

1. Preamble

These *Guidelines on fair behaviour* are addressed to all university members. They are aimed at helping them to solve conflicts in a fair way or to prevent such conflicts from even arising. The Councils for Academic and Non-Academic Staff, the Disability Commissioner, the General Students' Committee (AStA) and the Equal Opportunities Commissioner have agreed to pass these Guidelines.

2. Scope

These Guidelines shall apply to all members and establishments of the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences. All forms of internet use, such as participation in social networks, email correspondence and any other expression of opinion on the web are also subject to these Guidelines.

3. Principles

These Guidelines are aimed at:

- ensuring respectful cooperation between all university members;
- promoting and maintaining a positive work and study atmosphere;
- supporting university members with their family commitments;
- identifying and solving conflicts without using violence;
- avoiding conflict escalation.

Conflicts arise inevitably where people with different needs and interests meet on a regular basis. The roles to be assumed at university include responsibilities that are, in part, contradictory. In such cases, task-related conflicts may arise as a result of the office holders' loyalties to their responsibilities; these conflicts have to be solved in the university's interest. When this happens, it is important to be fair to each other so as to prevent such conflicts from becoming personal.

To solve conflicts productively, creative change management is needed, which is also a distinctive feature of an advanced corporate culture. Fair forms of conflict resolution are required, while unfair forms of conflict settlement must be avoided and rejected.



Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University is committed to an image of humanity that is based on fairness, respect and peaceful conflict resolution. This also includes dealing responsibly with university members who have to meet family commitments alongside their work and studies. Fair forms of conflict resolution are open, serious, responsible and respectful talks that also encourage the other participants to express their concerns and opinions. Unfair forms of conflict resolution include the offences described in number 4 in particular.

4. Behaviour

All university members are committed to maintaining peace and to contributing to a positive atmosphere at work. Activities and conditions that run counter to these objectives must be avoided and, should they occur nevertheless, they must be reported. In the latter case, a graduated procedure shall be applied to avert such situations (see number 5).

Serious offences include:

4.1 Sexual harassment, such as

- undesired physical contact
- offensive gestures, remarks, comments or insults relating to a person
- presentation of sexist or pornographic illustrations
- encouraging sexual activities
- inferences that sexual favours may bring about advantages at work

4.2 Infringement of personality rights, such as

- defamation of university members and their families
- spreading of rumours about university members and their families
- intentional withholding of information needed for work or deliberate disinformation
- threats and humiliations
- slander, offensive treatment, derision and aggressiveness, including inadequate behaviour towards students
- derogatory treatment by superiors, such as assigning unsolvable or useless tasks or no tasks at all

4.3 Discrimination due to

- age
- gender
- ancestry
- origin
- nationality
- religion
- sexual identity
- physical or psychological illness or disability
- political beliefs



5. Support with conflict solution

Should university members be unable to solve conflicts without any support, they are strongly recommended to resort to professional help. The following institutions may be contacted for confidential advice:

For students:

Psychotherapy Consultation Service of the Bonn Student Union (AöR)
(Psychotherapeutische Beratungsstelle des Studentenwerks Bonn AöR)

For staff:

Corporate Social Consultation Service at Bonn University
(Betriebliche Sozialberatung an der Universität Bonn)

For all university members:

'HELP' Consultation Service
(Beratungsstelle 'HELP')

Further contact points for confidential talks in the event of conflicts at the university include:

For staff:

- The Staff Council
- The Equal Opportunities Commissioner
- The Disability Commissioner
- The Ombudspeople (confidential counsellors)

For students:

- The lecturers
- The departments
- The General Students' Committee (AStA)
- The Equal Opportunities Commissioner
- The Central Study Guidance Service
- The Disability Commissioner
- Ombudspeople (confidential counsellors) across all departments and units

For professors and lecturers:

- The Equal Opportunities Commissioner
- The Disability Commissioner
- The Ombudspeople (confidential counsellors)

These contact points meet the following duties within the scope of their powers and competences:

- Investigating all reports and complaints about harassment
- Giving advice to and supporting those concerned
- Pointing to potential steps or paths towards problem-solving
- If necessary, establishing the facts in separate and joint talks with those involved



- Upon request, accompanying, giving advice to and supporting those concerned during all talks and discussions
- If necessary, suggesting counter-measures and/or consequences within the framework of the procedures in place
- Reporting on the extent of the offence and the findings of conflict solution to the Ombuds Office in anonymous form
- If necessary, pointing to opportunities for action relating to labour and criminal law

6. Information/ measures/ training courses

The university members shall be regularly informed about the issue of fair behaviour at Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University.

In addition, the following measures shall be introduced:

- The university's senior managers shall support further-education courses on the issues of conflict solution, stress management and leadership behaviour.
- Regular seminars on the issues of bullying, self-assertion, on how those standing on the side lines should behave if they observe an offence, on how offences and their consequences for those involved can be recognised
- Managers should feel committed to participating in further-education measures on staff and conflict management.
- Including the topic in a questionnaire relating to appraisal interviews
- Taking account of and concretely addressing the topic in Corporate Integration Management/Vocational Rehabilitation Management (BEM)
- Informing students about these Guidelines when they enrol and saving the document to USB sticks for freshers
- Informing new staff members when they are employed
- Including questions on fair behaviour in teaching and teaching evaluation
- Establishing a central Ombuds Office to which all violations against these Guidelines are reported in anonymous form, taking the extent of the violation and the outcome of conflict solution into account. The Ombuds Office shall include representatives of the General Students' Committee (AStA), the Staff Councils, the Personnel Management Department, the Trainees' and Young Employees' Representatives (JAV), the Ombudspeople (confidential counsellors), a lawyer (with the exception of legal advisors), the Disability Commissioner and the Equal Opportunities Commissioner.
- Annual report to the President's Office and the Senate by the Ombuds Office

Prof. Dr Hartmut Ihne
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