

Code of Conduct: collaborative working and values at the University of Basel

9 December 2020

Preamble

At the University of Basel, our goal is to continue to position ourselves as an outstanding teaching and research institution with strong regional and international ties. We are a distinguished university and seek to provide our staff with optimum research conditions and offer our students challenging, diverse study programs. As a public educational establishment, we are aware of our role model status, and our mission statement enshrines our duty to uphold a culture of dialog, integrity, respect, openness, equal opportunities and inclusivity. This Code of Conduct is a public commitment that combines existing policies, regulations and guidelines into a framework for our daily interactions at the university and our dealings with external parties. We all have a personal responsibility to uphold the Code of Conduct, and compliance requires each of us to be guided by these values at all times.

Our work is based on responsibility, professionalism and compliance with regulations.

We work in a diligent and responsible manner. We familiarize ourselves with the statutory provisions and university requirements that are relevant to our work, and ensure that we comply with these. Corruption and bribery are not tolerated, and conflicts of interest are disclosed and settled. We handle any information entrusted to us with care and we respect the privacy of all members of the university. Particular attention is given to the handling of digital and analog information. Here, we ensure compliance with data protection and information security practices.

We are guided by the standards of academic integrity and good academic practice.

We are committed to professionalism, honesty and fairness, and strive to integrate these values into our teaching, research and services. The standards of good academic practice must be strictly observed. We document the principles of our work, our research results and our academic findings faithfully, transparently and verifiably. Critical discourse must be permitted and actively encouraged in the academic community. In our work, we are accountable to the university, the research funding bodies, the general public and ourselves. We ensure academic integrity, clearly distinguish between our own work and that of others, and use the intellectual property of third parties in accordance with the relevant legislation. In research involving humans or animals, we follow high ethical standards and strictly observe statutory and university requirements.

We ensure respectful collaboration and encourage young talent.

In research, teaching and administration, we collaborate on a constructive and honest basis and treat one another with respect and openness. Our lecturers and those in positions of leadership encourage autonomy and responsibility. At every level, we are committed to providing comprehensive support to junior researchers and actively pass on our knowledge and experience. We encourage a culture of open feedback, where people have the freedom to make mistakes. We ensure the best possible staff-student ratio and create the ideal conditions for junior researchers. We encourage a diversity-friendly approach to recruiting and supporting talent in science, research and administration.

We assess students and employees according to objective criteria.

We apply objective measures and standards when assessing individuals and performance. Assessment criteria are communicated transparently and applied uniformly. We offer students the opportunity to provide feedback or query their assessment.

We promote diversity and inclusivity.

We appreciate the diverse potential of our students and colleagues. This diversity offers significant potential for innovation within a completely open, creative and productive working culture. We do not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, gender identity, background, language, sexual orientation, religion, political opinion, mental or physical disability or personal lifestyle and circumstances.

We respect the personal integrity of others.

We are committed to ensuring a culture in which the personal integrity of our employees and students is respected and protected. We take a resolute stand against discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying and the abuse of power. We do not tolerate violations of this kind, even if they are observed in our environment. This enables us to create a positive climate for study, research and work.

We communicate respectfully and express criticism constructively.

We appreciate the importance of gender-neutral and non-discriminatory language. We communicate respectfully, non-violently and in a solution-oriented manner – even in conflict situations. Our dealings with one another are based on honesty and constructive criticism.

We ensure that our relationships remain professional and are open in addressing conflicts of interest.

We value our relationships with one another and recognize that they play a role in the success of our institution. We disclose in advance any bias that could result from a personal relationship and work out a solution that is fair to all involved. In the case of a sexual, intimate and/or romantic relationship, we behave professionally and do not abuse positions of power. We acknowledge bias, abstain or take other necessary measures to avoid conflicts of interest and protect those involved.

We care about the environment and future generations.

We are committed to the principles of sustainability and act as a model. We appreciate the importance of treating ecological, economic and social resources with respect, and guarantee a safe and healthy environment in which to study, work and research.

We are committed to dealing constructively with mistakes.

We are committed to ensuring an environment where mistakes can be dealt with constructively. As a learning and teaching organization, we reflect on our errors and omissions and, if necessary, ask for support.

We have the courage to stand up for our beliefs.

We do not tolerate a culture of turning a blind eye. Where the Code of Conduct has been violated, we step up, encourage others to do the same and contact the appropriate advice point.

We take responsibility and play our part.

Employees and students at the University of Basel familiarize themselves with the Code of Conduct and are aware of their personal responsibility. Our managers are role models for their staff and abide by these guidelines. If you have any questions or need advice, the following contacts are available to all members of the university:

Contact and information

- Personal Integrity Coordination Office: University of Basel, Diversity Office, Steinengraben 5, 4001 Basel, <https://www.unibas.ch/en/University/Administration-Services/General-Secretariat/Diversity/Personal-Integrity.html>
- Faculty contacts for academic integrity: <https://www.unibas.ch/en/Research/Research-in-Basel/Values-and-Principles.html>
- University Integrity Ombudsman: Dr. Heiner Wohlfahrt, former president of the appeals court of the Canton of Basel-Stadt, heiner.wohlfahrt@unibas.ch