

## **Code of Conduct of the Faculty of Business Administration and Economics at the University of Duisburg-Essen**

### **Preamble**

We, the members of the Faculty of Business Administration and Economics at the University of Duisburg-Essen—professors, researchers, staff, and students—commit ourselves to fostering and continually strengthening a culture of mutual respect, transparency, and academic integrity. Our shared aim is to create a respectful, non-discriminatory, and collaborative environment that enables and promotes excellence in teaching, research, and knowledge transfer. This Code of Conduct is intended as a voluntary framework of self-commitment. Applicable statutory provisions, as well as university and civil-service regulations, remain fully in force and unaffected by this Code. It reaffirms our commitment to ethical principles, diversity, and equal opportunity. This commitment applies not only to interactions within the faculty, but also to our respectful and professional conduct toward persons outside the faculty.

In this context, we acknowledge that the disciplines of business administration and economics—including our own faculty—continue to be affected by a lack of diversity. In particular, women, individuals from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, persons of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, persons with disabilities, individuals from non-academic family backgrounds, persons of diverse sexual identities, and other underrepresented groups remain unevenly represented at all levels. The following principles and measures are intended to make a concrete contribution to reducing existing inequalities and to sustainably strengthening a diverse, inclusive, and high-performing environment for research, work, and teaching within our faculty.

### **1. Fundamental Values**

The faculty is committed to a culture grounded in respect, fairness, and transparency. We expressly affirm our commitment to:

- mutual respect and appreciation in our interactions,
- open communication and constructive feedback,
- the active promotion of diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity,
- respect for and protection of academic freedom in scholarship, research, and teaching,
- academic integrity and ethically responsible conduct,
- the unequivocal rejection of any form of discrimination, sexual harassment, and other boundary-violating behavior,
- respect for the free and democratic constitutional order established by the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany (*Grundgesetz*), and for the fundamental and human rights on which it is based.

### **2. Interaction with One Another**

We place the highest value on respectful and supportive interactions that foster an atmosphere of psychological safety. Open exchange, trust, and constructive criticism are essential to our collaboration. In particular, those in leadership positions undertake to hold regular development meetings with their staff in order to strengthen the quality of collaboration and support

professional development. In teaching, we likewise seek to cultivate a respectful, participatory, and learning-conducive environment in which students are recognized as active members of the faculty and supported in both their personal and academic development.

### **3. Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity**

We regard diversity as an asset and actively promote an environment free from discrimination. Discrimination of any kind—particularly on the grounds of age, gender, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, or religious or ideological belief—is firmly rejected and will not be tolerated. At the same time, we recognize that family caregiving responsibilities, including childcare and the care of relatives, may affect participation in academic life. We therefore advocate conditions that enable equal participation for those with such responsibilities. In addition, we actively support measures designed to assist and advance disadvantaged groups, thereby contributing to the university's social responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

### **4. Good Scientific Practice**

All members of the faculty expressly commit themselves to complying with the "[Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice](#)" issued by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Academic freedom in scholarship, research, and teaching provides the framework within which we pursue our scholarly work responsibly. Integrity, diligence, and transparency in research and teaching are indispensable principles of our academic work. Violations of these principles will be addressed in accordance with the university's established procedures.

### **5. Transparency and Conflicts of Interest**

We make decisions in the best interests of the faculty and in compliance with applicable rules and regulations. Conflicts of interest, particularly those arising from third-party funding or from the intertwining of official and private interests, must be disclosed transparently and addressed consistently. We actively avoid situations that may give rise to bias or the appearance of bias.

### **6. Scope, Responsibilities, and Implementation**

This Code constitutes a shared commitment for all members of the faculty throughout the duration of their affiliation and, beyond that, for the duration of any joint projects and collaborations. Upon joining the faculty, all members declare their willingness to actively support these principles and to align their conduct with them. Responsibility for implementation is shared by all members; particular responsibility, however, rests with those in leadership positions, who are expected to exemplify these values and promote adherence to them. Violations of this Code will be reviewed in accordance with the university's procedures. For this purpose, confidential points of contact and a transparent procedure are available.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Specific measures are set out in the [Faculty's Equal Opportunity Plan](#).

<sup>2</sup> Confidential points of contact include, among others, the [Dean](#), the [University's central equal opportunity officers](#), the [faculty's equal opportunity officers](#), the [Ombuds Office for Students](#), the [Ombuds Office for Good Research Practice](#), the [designated social contact persons](#), and the [University's staff councils](#).