

The principles of academic working at the HFBK Hamburg

19.04.2012

1.

The opportunity to engage in academic work is a privilege. It is guided by the understanding that knowledge is produced by others and in making use of that knowledge we incur a debt which should be acknowledged. The work and experience of others constantly results in the development of new understanding and can be recited, but must also be acknowledged. Scientific truths are presented to the wider community for testing and confirmation. All academic work results from a double obligation. The academic must be prepared to disclose the preconditions and processes from which and through which it developed in order to give others the opportunity for critical discussion and appraisal. An academic proves their integrity at the confluence of these twin obligations, and in so doing, establishes their name and reputation.

2.

Academic qualities are tested at the point at which work is placed in the epistemic field. These qualities prove themselves in the respect shown in work to the preconditions on which it rests (complete statement of all sources and resources) and the complete disclosure of methods and insights (the entry into unguarded discussion). The name of the “author” of academic work develops at this intersection. This name is translated into the legal concepts of “authorship” and “intellectual property”. Although academics are conscious of the provisional character of such concepts, they view them as indispensable to positive regulation of an open community of knowledge. Infringing these norms results in the issue of sanctions ranging from loss of reputation to exclusion from this community of knowledge to legal consequences.

3.

Academic work takes place in a range of forms of unguarded collaboration in the production and circulation of new ideas, concepts and theses. The supervision of early-stage researchers therefore assumes great significance, as they must be in-

roduced to the ethos and regulation of this collaboration. This is the primary task of a university education. Teaching at university obliges students to respect the achievements of others, which must be treated as inviolable; every appropriation of the work of others must be acknowledged through footnotes, references or other forms of thanks. Each and every violation of the premises of academic work, every restriction of the freedom of movement and the interruption of technical conditions of others represents an assault on academic freedom. Any such actions will be subject to strict penalties, which can also take on legal form.

4.

Wherever the suspicion exists that this ethos has been infringed, the President's Office can propose to the University Senate that it appoint a person of trust or a committee to investigate the matter and check the substance of any claims.

Should such suspicions be corroborated or even proven, the President's Office will appoint a formal committee of investigation led by the Vice President for Research to investigate the matter and establish the circumstances and extent of academic misconduct. The committee will include two external professors.

- a. The course and outcome of the investigation will be subject to written documentation. In addition to an official hearing, those affected are to be accorded two weeks to make a written statement.
- b. Working on the basis of the final recommendation of the investigation, the President's Office will take all decisions relating the consequences and penalties which are to result from any misconduct. This includes legal consequences and a public statement.

Additive

This translation may only be used for reference purposes. This English version is not an official translation of the original German version. In cases where any differences occur between the English and the German version, the German version shall prevail.

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The Hochschule für bildende Künste Hamburg