

CODE OF CONDUCT

Policy of the University of Klagenfurt to ensure good academic practice¹

Preamble

Academic integrity and compliance with the principles of good academic practice are essential preconditions for scholarly work. Infringements of good academic practice are contrary to the nature of scholarship.

The University of Klagenfurt is committed to good academic practice in research and teaching. It acknowledges that the fostering of good academic practice and an appropriate approach to allegations of misconduct are institutional functions.

This Code of Conduct serves as a guideline for all members of the University of Klagenfurt: employees in teaching and research, general staff, and students.

Compliance with the principles set out below will contribute in the long term to avoiding scientific misconduct and to promoting the quality of academic work.

The following nine principles in no way replace existing (general or specific) statutory provisions and ethical standards but instead establish generally applicable principles of academic ethics at the level of the University as a whole.

Principle 1 General principles of academic practice

Teaching and research staff active at the University of Klagenfurt shall

- work in accordance with the rules of their subjects, i.e. conduct their academic activity in accordance with the legal regulations, the ethical standards and the current state of knowledge of their subject or discipline;
- document their results and critically question all results in a consistent manner;
- maintain strict honesty with respect to the (written and oral) contributions of partners, colleagues, rivals and predecessors;
- avoid and preclude misconduct in their own works and (within the limits of their possibilities) in their surroundings;
- comply with the principles described below.

Principle 2 Misconduct in science

Misconduct in science is deemed to have occurred if false statements are made deliberately or through gross negligence in a scientifically relevant context, if the intellectual property of others is infringed, or if their research activities are impaired in any other way. Misconduct in science includes:

¹ This code of conduct was prepared by the working group *AG Plagiat* at the University of Klagenfurt under the direction of the then Vice Rector Jutta Menschik-Bendele, and is based on the Code of Conduct of TU Wien (dated 23 October 2007), the guidelines of the Universities Austria (*Österreichische Rektorenkonferenz*) to ensure good academic practice and the *Recommendations of the Commission on Professional Self Regulation in Science* of the German Research Foundation DFG (Weinheim: Wiley-VCH, 1998). The document was first published in November 2008 and expanded to include Principle 7 "Responsible use of generative AI in research and education" as well as updated in April 2024.

Incorrect information through

- the invention of data;
- the falsification of data (e.g., through the selection and rejection of undesired results without disclosing such, through manipulation of a representation or illustration);
- incorrect information in a letter of application or application for funding (including incorrect information about the publishing entity and about publications in press).

Infringement of intellectual property

with respect to a work protected by copyright created by others or significant academic knowledge, hypotheses, teachings and research approaches originating from others by means of

- the unauthorised exploitation and usurpation of authorship (plagiarism);
- the exploitation of research approaches and ideas, in particular as expert reviewer (theft of ideas);
- the usurpation or the unjustified assumption of academic authorship or co-authorship;
- the falsification of the contents;
- the unauthorised publication and unauthorised making accessible to third parties as long as the work, knowledge, hypothesis, teaching or research approach has not yet been published;
- the omission of source details in teaching (unless it is general scientific knowledge).

Interference with the research activities of others by

- the sabotage of research activities (including damage to, destruction or manipulation of equipment, documents, hardware, software or other objects that others need in order to conduct their research or an experiment);
- the elimination of primary data to the extent that such infringes statutory provisions or discipline-related recognized principles of academic work or Principle 6 of this Code of Conduct.

Unjustified assumption of (co-)authorship.

Principle 3 Joint responsibility for misconduct

Joint responsibility for misconduct may arise in particular as a result of

- active participation in the academic misconduct of others;
- knowledge of falsifications by others;
- co-authorship of publications involving falsification; or
- gross negligence of the duty to supervise.

Principle 4 Management responsibility and collaboration

Every academic acts under their own responsibility within the framework of academic work. Anyone who carries out management functions in an academic field (department, research group, etc.) also bears responsibility for appropriate organisation that ensures that the management, supervision, conflict settlement, and quality assurance functions are allocated beyond doubt and are actually implemented.²

Heads of academic fields shall conduct themselves as academic models and ensure that the rules of good academic practice are complied with.

² The management function in any given academic field requires knowledge of the subject, physical presence or availability, and an overview. If management responsibility cannot be sufficiently exercised due to the size of the group or other reasons, the management functions shall be delegated. The cooperation in academic fields must be such that the results achieved through the specialised division of labour can be reciprocally communicated and criticised, and integrated in a common level of knowledge. This is also of particular importance for the training of early career researchers within the group so that they can work independently. The reciprocal review of working results must also be ensured, including by making available one's own results.

Principle 5 Supervision of early career researchers

Departments and other university research entities shall ensure that appropriate supervision is provided and that at least one primary contact person is appointed for early career researchers, in particular for diploma, masters and doctoral students, post-docs, university assistants and candidates preparing for the post-doctoral qualification (Habilitation).

Each university teacher is expected to communicate the principles of good academic practice to the next generation of academics and to raise the topic of misconduct in science in order to contribute to the development of an awareness of the problem and responsibilities.

Principle 6 Backing up and storing primary data

Primary data as the basis of academic publications must be stored on lasting and secured data carriers for at least ten years, irrespective of other statutory provisions, to the extent that this is possible and reasonable. All significant results must be documented and recorded without ambiguity and in a traceable manner since academic results can only be reproduced if all crucial stages have been made explicit.

The Privacy Policy of the University of Klagenfurt must be observed.³

Principle 7 Responsible use of generative AI in research and teaching

Over the past few years, rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI) have led to an increased use of AI tools in teaching and research, especially in the field of generative AI (e.g., large language models such as ChatGPT). The promise of opportunities and added value for academic work is accompanied by risks necessitating a considered and responsible approach to the new tools. Given the dynamic development of AI tools and the associated challenges for safeguarding good academic practice, it is essential that all academics regularly inform themselves about technical developments, opportunities and risks. Current guidelines (partly in the form of living documents) serve orientation purposes; they can be found on the University intranet with regard to teaching⁴ and on the University website with regard to research⁵.

Principle 8 Academic publication

Authors are personally responsible for the academic reliability of their publications. Publications that report new academic results should describe the results and the methods used in a full and traceable manner and provide complete and correct evidence of preparatory work by the author and third parties.⁶

Publications on the Internet and the use of Internet sources are subject to the same provisions as other publications and sources.

If a number of persons are involved in a piece of research work or the publication based on such work, only those persons who have made a major contribution to the concept of the study or experiments, to the preparation, analysis and interpretation of the data or to the wording of the manuscript themselves and have consented to publication may be identified as co-authors.⁷

All authors should confirm their release of the manuscript for publication in writing. If permitted by the manner and scope of the research work or the number of authors contributing, the individual contributions of each person should also be identified.⁸

³ See page "Data protection in research", <https://intranet.aau.at/pages/viewpage.action?pagelD=712966461>.

⁴ See page "Artificial Intelligence", <https://intranet.aau.at/pages/viewpage.action?pagelD=1144881237>.

⁵ See links on the page "Good academic practice", <https://www.aau.at/en/research/research-support/good-academic-practice/>.

⁶ Previously published results should only be repeated in a manner that is clearly identified and only to the extent necessary for understanding the context.

⁷ The management of an organisation unit, a research project or a research group is no more justification for co-authorship than mere participation in the collection of data or the financing of the research project. "Honorary authorship" is not permitted. If unpublished observations by other persons are cited in the manuscript or if findings by other institutions are used, their written consent must first be obtained, subject to other recognized discipline-specific practice.

⁸ By consenting to identification as co-author, responsibility is also assumed that the publication authorised in this manner meets academic standards. This applies above all to the field for which the co-author has provided a contribution; they are responsible both for the correctness of their own contribution and for it being included in the publication in an academically acceptable manner.

Principle 9 Supervision of students

In all degree programmes, introductory courses shall convey the principles and practice of good academic work.

Every university teacher shall be aware of their function as a role model and is expected to encourage and support students in applying good academic practice, raising the topic of scientific misconduct and thereby contributing to developing an awareness of the problem and responsibilities.

Publication

This Code of Conduct is published on the website and in the University Bulletin of the University of Klagenfurt.