

Deutsche Physikalische Gesellschaft



**Regulations concerning Article 12
(Code of Conduct for Members) of the Statutes
of the German Physical Society**

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REGULATIONS CONCERNING ARTICLE 12 (CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS) OF THE STATUTES OF THE GERMAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY

Passed by the Council in its meeting of 9 and 10 November 2007 (German version). Passed by the Council in its meeting of 1 March 2009 (English translation). The Regulations concerning Article 12 of the Statutes replace the Code of Conduct of 22 March 1998 in the version of 15 November 2003.

I. Definition of minimum ethical standards

The principles anchored in the Preamble and in Article 12 of the Statutes of the DPG include the following minimum ethical standards, with which the members of the DPG are obliged to comply:

1. Community of scientists

Each member is also a member of the wider community of scientists and shares a special responsibility towards future generations. The members support the development of science. In addition, they recognise and observe the basic principle of honesty towards themselves and others, which is applicable to all of science in all countries. The DPG condemns scientific misconduct and proscribes both fraud in science and its wilful improper use.

2. Research results

Research results must be reproducible and documented in a readily understandable manner. The heads of research groups should ensure through appropriate organisational steps that their staff communicate and discuss adequately research results before publication. Certain, justifiable exceptions, for example, where patent protection plays a role, should be made possible. After the results have been published, the original data should be stored for a period of time deemed reasonable for the field concerned.

The invention of data as well as the falsification and plagiarising of data and text is scientific misconduct, or fraud.

3. Scientific publications

Scientific publications are a fundamental part of the existence of those working in science and also fulfil a duty towards our society, which finances research. The methods applied and the results obtained must be described in an appropriate form in the publications. Preliminary work, whether of the author(s) or of others, must be cited correctly. All authors of a scientific publication bear joint responsibility for its contents. Exceptions should be identified. All scientists who have made substantial contributions to the idea, planning, execution and analysis of the research work, should have the possibility of being co-authors. Persons with small contributions should be mentioned in the Acknowledgements. The director of a research institute does not have the automatic right to co-authorship. If it transpires that a publication contains an error, this should be published in an Erratum.

4. Reviewing and refereeing

The refereeing of research projects, scientific publications and examination marking as well as the participation in appointment procedures (all on an honorary basis) are essential elements for achieving high standards in science. Members should commit themselves generally to take part in such review procedures and in any case

to safeguard the confidentiality of the documents which are entrusted to their care. They must for their part be able to rely on the accuracy and authenticity of these documents. They should only take part in review procedures if they are really in a position to give a thorough and fair opinion. They should not use documents entrusted to them for their own benefit.

5. Conflict of interests

As in other areas, genuine conflicts of interests are sometimes unavoidable among scientists. These must be disclosed. The declaration of a conflict of interest may not lead to the personal disadvantage of a member.

II. Procedure for dealing with scientific misconduct

1. Members, who breach the minimum standards defined in I, harm the reputation of the DPG and of science in general. They can be expelled from the DPG. The expulsion procedure according to Article 9 (4) of the statutes can be applied.
2. Owing to the special situation in which persons find themselves when they suspect others of scientific misconduct or, alternatively, are subject to such suspicion themselves, ombudsmen or ombudswomen will be named (supplementary to Article 9 (4) of the statutes), who will be available for members and third parties as independent and confidential contacts.
3. The ombudsmen or ombudswomen advise DPG members who wish to report scientific misconduct or who are exposed to the allegation of scientific misconduct. They can also take action on their own part in the case of initial

suspicion. The ombudsmen and ombudswomen can examine possible allegations based on the information made available to them and in such cases contact third parties as representatives of the DPG.

4. With the approval of the person who has expressed the suspicion the ombudsmen and ombudswomen can contact the person subject to suspicion and work towards clarification with the approval of all concerned. The ombudsmen and ombudswomen are required to report to the Executive Board about each individual case. The report can include the recommendation that the Executive Board consider expulsion from the DPG.
5. The DPG shall appoint at least two ombudsmen or ombudswomen. They should be available to the members as individuals, but are required to discuss jointly cases of suspicion insofar as the persons concerned approve this.
6. The ombudsmen and ombudswomen shall be elected by the Council. The simple majority of the members taking part in the vote and the approval of more than one quarter of the members who are entitled to vote are necessary for the election. The period of office is three years. It can only be extended twice in successive periods of office. The ombudsmen and ombudswomen may not exercise any other function in a DPG body during their period of office, so that they are able to reach their decisions with a maximum of independence. In order to prepare the election of the ombudsmen and ombudswomen the Chief Executive shall request the members in the members' magazine of the DPG to submit proposals at least twelve weeks before the election. A deadline for the sub-

mission is to be stated (at least four weeks before the corresponding Council session). The written proposals which are to be directed to the Chief Executive must be signed by at least 15 members of the DPG. The Executive Board or the Council can also direct written proposals to the Chief Executive. The requirement of the signatures of at least 15 members of the DPG shall then not apply in this case. The proposals from the members and from the Executive Board and Council shall form the list of the candidates for the election of ombudsmen and ombudswomen. The Council can reduce the number of candidates in a list for the elections through preliminary elections. The Chief Executive shall obtain the formal consent of a proposed person for his or her candidacy. The President shall inform the candidates about the results of the election.

The German version (“Ausführungsbestimmungen zu § 12 der Satzung: Verhaltenskodex für Mitglieder”) is legally binding.