

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS

As of June 24, 2024

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	3
II.	Range of Discriminatory Actions	4
	Forms of Discrimination	4
	Ageism	4
	Discrimination Based on Ethnic And/or National Origin	4
	Discrimination Based on Racist Attribution(s)	5
	Gender Discrimination	5
	Discrimination against Members of the LGBTQIA+ Community	5
	Discrimination Based on Religious Affiliation.....	6
	Ableism (Devaluation, Discrimination, Marginalization of People with Disabilities or Chronically Ill People Because of Their Abilities)	6
	Classism (Discrimination based on Social Background)	6
	Sexualized Harassment	6
	Bullying, Verbal Attacks, and Defamation	7
	Accessibility and Safety in the Faculty Premises	8
	Language Usage.....	8
	Anti-discrimination in Recruitment and Selection Procedures	8
III.	Structures for Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI).....	9
IV.	Support and Measures against Discrimination	9
	Appendix I: Formal complaint of discrimination (formal procedure)	11

I. Introduction

Working together in a respectful, trusting, and discrimination-free environment is a matter of course at the University of Bonn.¹ As part of the University, the Faculty of Arts is committed to creating and maintaining a working, learning, and research environment in which all members feel safe, valued, and heard and are protected from conscious or unconscious sexual harassment, discrimination, or bullying (hereinafter referred to as "discriminatory acts"). **To achieve this, the Faculty strives to sensitize its members to discriminatory acts and to impart knowledge and skills related to diversity and equality.** In addition, the Faculty will implement the protective measures set out in this anti-discrimination policy to punish violations (see Chapters III and IV).

The Faculty of Arts welcomes students and researchers from all over the world. Our greatest strengths include internationality and advocacy of diversity in terms of language usage, gender, religion, age, health, social and cultural backgrounds, and sexual orientation. These aspects, among others, are what make us the bearers of excellent academic practice. Of course, the Faculty is committed to promoting the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), which build on the commitments of the Diversity Charter² that the University of Bonn ratified in 2017.

The objectives of this anti-discrimination policy include defining the responsibilities of faculty members when dealing with complaints about discriminatory behavior, developing procedures for dealing with various forms of sexual harassment, bullying, and discrimination, and clarifying the legal options available to the University of Bonn and the Faculty to punish violations and take appropriate measures to prevent them. In addition, various forms of support and procedural measures are specified that are available to those affected by discrimination. These measures include informal (e.g. counseling, psychosocial counseling, or mediation) as well as formal procedures such as filing a complaint with the University of Bonn, a confidential investigation of the incidents, and - depending on the severity of the misconduct - disciplinary measures if necessary.³

All faculty members are obligated to comply with the policy and adhere to its behavioral guidelines. This anti-discrimination policy applies to all employees (in academia and administration), apprentices, and students as well as professorial representatives and lecturers of the Faculty. It also applies to external persons, such as guests, and scholarship holders as well as to persons in application and appointment procedures, provided that they work in the Faculty's area of responsibility.

The policy is published in German and English on the Faculty website DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion).

¹ Official Announcements, Volume 53, No. 6: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11811/10662>

² <https://www.charta-der-vielfalt.de/en/>

³ The possible steps are explained in the chart on page 10.

II. Range of Discriminatory Actions

Forms of Discrimination

The Faculty of Arts defines discrimination as unequal treatment, conscious or unconscious degradation, contempt, violent acts, bullying, and the explicit or implicit exclusion from work, education, decision-making, and feedback processes based on one or more (*multiple discrimination*) actual or attributed group-specific and individual distinguishing features listed in the Diversity Charter. The Faculty respects both freedom of thought and the protection of privacy and is firmly in favor of guaranteeing every person the right to freedom of choice in life.

The full inclusion of everyone is based on the acceptance of their diverse characteristics, experiences, and needs and on their consideration in the Faculty's working, learning, and research environments. Inclusion and equal treatment require particular efforts to support groups of people who face additional challenges or a higher statistical risk of exclusion. This can be achieved by, on one hand, recording participation and, on the other hand, identifying and removing obstacles as well as taking measures to actively promote participation, advancement, and performance⁴.

The Diversity Charter lists the following dimensions of diversity, which can be considered as possible causes of discrimination, violence and exclusion:

- Age
- Ethnic or national origin
- Sex and gender, including pregnancy, parenthood, and/or family responsibilities
- Religious affiliation and worldview
- Physical and mental abilities
- Sexual orientation
- Social background

4

Additionally, the Faculty has added the category “racist attribution(s)” to these dimensions. The discrimination associated with the respective dimensions is defined as follows:

Ageism

Ageism consists of stereotyping or discrimination against people based on their age. This includes conflicts in communication, values, and behavior when people of different age groups interact, but also the systematic exclusion of people at an organizational level based on their age.

Discrimination Based on Ethnic And/or National Origin

This involves prejudice or discriminatory behavior towards people based on their belonging to a certain ethnic group and/or nationality. This can take various forms, such as:

- Spreading stereotypes
- Using derogatory terms for members of a certain ethnic group or nationality in research, teaching, or daily interactions at the Faculty
- Devaluing the achievements or abilities of members of a certain ethnic group or nationality based on preconceived assumptions that arise from the perception of this ethnic or national identity
- Excluding members of a certain ethnic group or nationality from social interactions

⁴ Examples of measures for active promotion: [A Guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education - UNESCO Digital Library](#)

- Acts of violence or assault

At the institutional level, discrimination can consist of the conscious or unconscious privileging of certain ethnic and national groups at the expense of other, less privileged groups through institutional policies and practices. We are aware of the fact that addressing these forms of ethnic and national discrimination goes beyond avoiding discriminatory language in the workplace and in research. Rather, it is about identifying structural and systematic forms of discriminatory practices and actively countering them.

Discrimination Based on Racist Attribution(s)

This involves prejudice or discriminatory behavior towards people based on the assumption that racialized characteristics such as skin color (biological characteristics) or abilities and characteristics (social/cultural characteristics) are associated with an innate superiority or inferiority.

At the institutional level, discrimination can consist of the - conscious or unconscious - consistent privileging of certain groups to the detriment of underprivileged groups based on racist attributions (“systematic racism”⁵). Here, too, the Faculty strives to identify structural and systematic forms of discriminatory practices and actively correct them.

Gender Discrimination

Gender and gender roles are social and cultural constructs. Every person should be free to choose how to live and express their gender identity, regardless of their assigned sex at birth. Sexism, i.e., prejudice or discriminatory behavior towards people based on their gender identity, is rooted in social structures and assumed superiority, among other things, and is prohibited at the Faculty. No one should feel disrespected, endangered, or excluded because of their gender or gender identity.

The Faculty encourages all members to raise awareness of their own implicit or unconscious bias or repressive normative expectations about gender-conforming behavior.

The university offers, among other things, psychosocial advice⁶ and ensures additional support through individual mentoring and training, including for confidants of the Faculty's institutes⁷, to promote members in academic and non-academic careers and to strengthen gender diversity at all levels of academic life at the Faculty and the University of Bonn.

Discrimination against Members of the LGBTQIA+ Community

The Faculty is aware of the additional challenges faced by individuals belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community (those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, queer, intersex and/or asexual, agender, aromantic, and /or deviate from cis-normativity).

To ensure the promotion of diversity and equality, the Faculty needs to counteract discrimination, prejudice, and violence based on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.

At the institutional level, discrimination can occur when institutional policies and practices are designed to (consciously or unconsciously) privilege certain groups at the expense of individuals

⁵ In contrast to institutional racism, structural racism cannot be traced back to individual institutions. It is about historically and socially developed power relations that are deeply embedded in the structures, discourses, or images of a society. [Further information.](#)

⁶ https://www.uni-bonn.de/en/studying/consultation-and-service/psychological-and-social-counseling/psychological-and-social-counseling?set_language=en

⁷ https://www.philfak.uni-bonn.de/en/faculty/diversity/overview?set_language=en

belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community. We recognize that combating these forms of discrimination goes beyond avoiding discriminatory language in the workplace and in research. It is about examining and identifying various structural and systematic forms of discriminatory practices and actively correcting them.

Discrimination Based on Religious Affiliation

This involves prejudice or discriminatory behavior, including the propagation of stereotypes, social or institutional exclusion, or violence against individuals based on actual or ascribed religious beliefs or worldviews.⁸

The Faculty respects the individual right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, and belief as a fundamental human right that must be respected by all members in their interactions with one another. Respecting freedom of thought also includes respecting privacy and the right of the individual to have religious identity or beliefs count as part of their privacy.

Ableism (Devaluation, Discrimination, Marginalization of People with Disabilities or Chronically Ill People Because of Their Abilities)

Ableism refers to both conscious and unconscious socially influenced ideas that assume that not being disabled is "normal" and discriminate in favor of non-disabled people. This can lead to the exclusion of people with disabilities or chronic illnesses, which leads to the devaluation of their achievements and the restriction of their opportunities for advancement and development. Ableism leads to offers and opportunities as well as to spaces that are only accessible to people without disabilities.

The Faculty is committed to developing a better and more extensive understanding of the needs of people with mental and physical disabilities. We strive to break down barriers and disadvantages and thus enable full access and participation in the Faculty's research, work, and study offerings. Access does not only refer to spatial barriers (e.g. wheelchair-accessible ramps or elevators), but also barriers (such as a lack of retreat and relaxation spaces, etc.) due to emotional and mental factors (e.g. anxiety).

Classism (Discrimination based on Social Background)

Social background has a strong influence on educational and employment opportunities as well as access to resources. Classism in academia is a disadvantageous factor that can be expressed in discriminatory or exclusionary behavior against people from non-academic or low-income households. To break down barriers and create a greater diversity of academic perspectives, the faculty strives to provide better access opportunities for people from disadvantaged social groups through financial support or employment opportunities.⁹

Sexualized Harassment

Combating sexualized harassment or violence and providing timely and appropriate protection or support for those affected are key factors in enforcing gender equality. For a definition of **sexualized harassment** and related behavior within the meaning of this guideline, please refer to Section 2 (definitions) of the "Policy for protection against sexual discrimination and violence" of the University

⁸ Under German law.

⁹ To counteract classism, the university works with associations such as Arbeiterkind.de. The organization relies on a Germany-wide network of volunteers, most of whom are the first in their family to study or have studied. They pass on their experiences with choosing a course of study, place of study, and financing options to others and support schoolchildren and students.

of Bonn dated February 15, 2023:¹⁰

(1) Sexualized discrimination and violence within the meaning of this policy include acts that result in sexualized harassment, degradation, or disadvantage based on gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity. This includes criminal acts as well as low-level acts that those affected perceive as degrading. Sexual harassment within the meaning of the General Equal Treatment Act occurs when sexually specific verbal or non-verbal behavior has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of the person concerned, which is particularly the case when an environment characterized by intimidation, hostility, degradation, humiliation, or insults is created.

(2) The forms of sexual discrimination and violence include in particular:

- sexually derogatory language and verbal sexualized harassment through aggressive, sexually charged comments (for example in the form of lewd jokes and comments, remarks about appearance, or the use of unwanted nicknames),
- inappropriate questions about private or intimate spheres,
- harassing staring or whistling,
- inappropriate physical proximity and unwanted touching, even if this appears to happen by chance,
- solicitation of sexual acts,
- stalking, including cyberstalking,
- copying or using sexually derogatory content on work devices and corresponding applications,
- distribution of sexist texts and images (e.g. posters, calendars, screen savers, email attachments, graffiti, stickers),
- sexualized initiation rituals at the university (e.g. so-called clothing chains with exposure),
- advertising for events using sexist content,
- unauthorized photography or filming of intimate areas such as upskirting (unauthorized image recording under a person's skirt) or downblousing (unauthorized image recording of a person's cleavage) or deepfakes as well as the unauthorized distribution of corresponding recordings,
- sexualized harassment in the form of unwanted, sexually determined physical contact, for example, forced kisses or touching of the physical intimate sphere,
- distribution of pornographic content that is relevant to criminal law,
- sexual assault, sexual coercion, and rape.

7

The sexualized nature of an act can also arise from the circumstances of the individual case.

(3) At universities too – whether inside or outside the university campus – sexual discrimination and violence are often linked to the exercise of power and hierarchies. Sexual discrimination and violence are considered particularly serious when care and dependency relationships at work, at university, or in training are exploited, personal or professional disadvantages are threatened or advantages are promised.

Bullying, Verbal Attacks, and Defamation

Bullying is repeated, aggressive, intimidating, or destructive behavior by one or more people over a long period of time. Hurtful behavior such as physical or verbal attacks, insults, the systematic spreading of defamatory rumors, and any form of degrading treatment can also be part of bullying contexts.

Cyberbullying is the use of communication channels and online media (emails, social media, forums, websites, chats, or audio/video conferences) to harass, threaten, defame, coerce, or harm one or more people.

¹⁰ Full version: [Official Announcements, Volume 53, No. 6 \(uni-bonn.de\)](https://www.uni-bonn.de/official-announcements/volume-53-no-6) / (English Version): [richtlinie zum schutz vor sexualisierter diskriminierung final en.pdf \(uni-bonn.de\)](https://www.uni-bonn.de/richtlinie-zum-schutz-vor-sexualisierter-diskriminierung-final-en.pdf)

The Faculty explicitly opposes bullying and cyberbullying, verbal attacks, and defamation. Those affected can report discriminatory acts immediately via the contact points described in Section III of this policy.

Accessibility and Safety in the Faculty Premises

When designing or creating future spatial and technical conditions, the Faculty will take into account its commitment to promoting the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion and the safety of members, to ensure accessibility and assistance for all persons who require it and to eliminate areas of fear and danger on its premises.

Language Usage

The Faculty is aware of the important role that language usage plays in promoting diversity, equality, and inclusion in research publications, teaching, and everyday communication. Our efforts to create awareness of epistemic dependencies that arise from linguistic dependencies are rooted in the close connection we see between language usage and power structures. Avoiding discriminatory behavior therefore also includes careful reflection on language usage and terminology that are used in different situations and environments. The departments and the Dean's Office of the Faculty are committed to diversity-sensitive language usage. Corresponding policies, which list suggestions for formulations, can be found on the websites of the respective institutes, the Central Gender Equality Commissioner, or the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit.

Anti-discrimination in Recruitment and Selection Procedures

The diversity of our Faculty members is a key factor for continued success and productivity at all organizational levels. We are therefore committed to implementing bias-free recruitment and application processes for staff and students alike. Our primary concern is to create a diverse and inclusive learning and working environment that eliminates all forms of discrimination. This applies to:

- Selection process for students and employees for recruitment, promotion, training and other development opportunities
- Remuneration and benefits
- Conditions of employment
- Termination/Dismissal
- Applications for parental leave
- Applications for flexible working hours

In practice, this means:

- Diversity orientation in recruitment and student application procedures, for example in creating job advertisements, job descriptions or advertising, and the evaluation and selection of applications. To promote diversity
- Job and student profiles should be adapted to the skills required and advertisements and job advertisements should be published on accessible platforms.
- Consideration of diversity in the composition of selection, recruitment, or appointment committees
- Regular training on unconscious bias and appropriate interview questions for participants in selection, recruitment, or appointment committees

III. Structures for Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI)

The fight against discrimination is the common task of all members of the Faculty. The following DEI structures and representatives play a leading role in the coordination and implementation of this task:

The Diversity, Equal Opportunities, and Inclusion Officer (DEI Coordinator) is responsible for the development and implementation of DEI concepts, strategies, and measures. The main tasks and responsibilities of the Diversity Officer include:

- Development and optimization of anti-discrimination strategies and procedures
- Evaluating diversity, equal opportunities, and inclusion
- Communication on the topic of DEI and the planning and implementation of DEI events

The Diversity, Equal Opportunities, and Inclusion (DEI) concept group consists of all status groups of the Faculty and is open to all members. The Diversity Officer coordinates the group's meetings.

The Confidants of the Faculty. The confidants were elected and specially trained by the departments of the Faculty. They have agreed to act as the first point of contact for those affected by any of the forms of discrimination described in this document. Their work is voluntary. The main tasks of confidants include:

- Confidential advice and initial guidance on how to proceed with complaints
- Participation in training courses on discrimination and dealing with complaints of discrimination
- Referral to appropriate counseling centers at the university

9

The Equal Opportunities Officer of the Faculty of Arts is a member of the DEI concept group in addition to her official main duties.

IV. Support and Measures against Discrimination

All Faculty members are encouraged to recognize and combat all forms of discrimination or violence as such, and to use the internal complaint and counseling mechanisms available at the Faculty or the University of Bonn.¹¹ In acute cases of emergency or threat, those affected can contact Campus Security directly by phone.¹²

Confidentiality is assured to all individuals seeking support and advice, raising concerns, and/or making or considering making a complaint of discrimination or harassment.

When seeking initial support, those affected or seeking advice can turn to any trusted person, the DEI coordinator, or any member of the DEI concept group. Initial support can take the form of a consultation, for instance, in which a team member provides information on possible measures depending on the situation. If the anonymity of the person concerned is to be preserved in the event of a complaint of discrimination against one or more persons, this can only be done informally through mediation. If all parties involved agree, the mediation process involves a confidential discussion with the person(s) accused of discriminatory behavior with the support of a mutually agreed third party (the mediator). If desired, the person(s) concerned can also take part in the mediation meeting.

Those affected by discrimination, sexualized harassment, or bullying can also file a **formal complaint**.

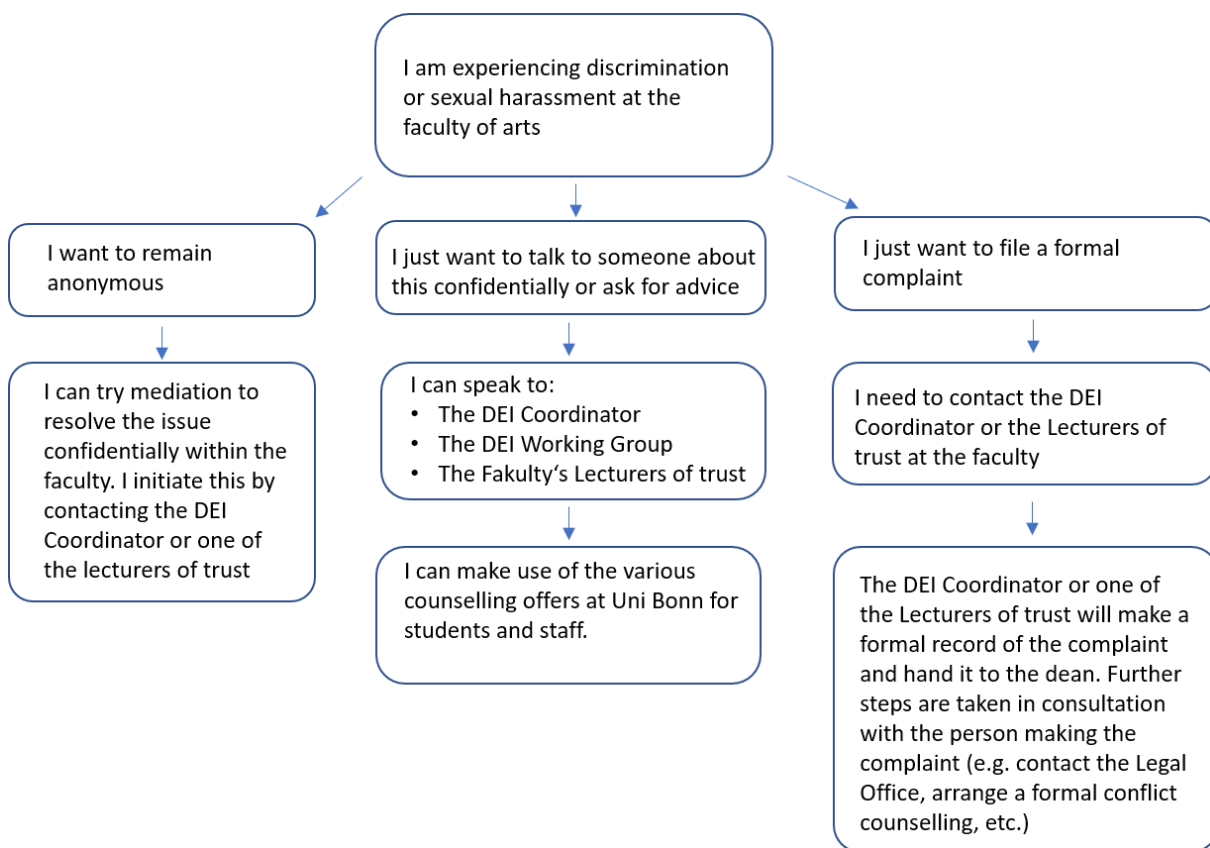
¹¹ Emergency contacts: Website for anti-discrimination counseling and support contacts at the University of Bonn.

¹² [Emergency numbers - University of Bonn \(uni-bonn.de\)](https://www.uni-bonn.de/emergency-numbers)

Depending on the severity of the offense, this may result in action being taken against the discriminating person. A formal complaint procedure is initiated by informing the DEI coordinator. The representative draws up a complaint protocol, which the complainant reviews and signs. The representative then informs the Dean of the Faculty so that Section 1 of the University of Bonn, the Legal Department, can be notified. The Legal Department investigates the complaint and takes the necessary measures according to the results of the investigation and the severity of the violations. Any person is free to contact the Legal Department directly and file a formal complaint.

If the persons concerned agree, in the event of suspected sexualized discrimination and violence, all persons at the Faculty with teaching, supervisory, training, and/or management tasks are obliged to immediately inform the University's Diversity, Equal Opportunities, and Integration Officer or one of the departments and contact persons named in § 5 paragraph (4) or § 6 paragraph (3) of the University of Bonn's Directive on Protection against Sexualized Discrimination and Violence (15 February 2023¹³). If sexualized discrimination as defined in this policy is identified, the University of Bonn is obliged to take measures (see § 8).

The following diagram provides an overview of informal and formal support options for people affected by discrimination:



Contact information for the DEI coordinator, the DEI concept group, and the representatives can be found on the [website of the Dean's Office](#) of the Faculty.

¹³ For all types of discriminatory complaints (sexual harassment, discrimination, and bullying), the formal procedures for investigating complaints set out in Section 6 (Complaints and Responsible Office) of the "Guidelines for Protection against Sexualized Discrimination and Violence" of the University of Bonn dated 15 February 2023 apply. Section 6 is also available in Appendix I of this document.

Appendix I: Formal complaint of discrimination (formal procedure)

§ Section 6 (Complaints and Responsible Office) of the Directive on Protection against Sexualized Discrimination and Violence of the University of Bonn dated 15 February 2023

(1) The complaint (formal procedure) can be initiated by all persons affected by sexualized discrimination and violence, even without a prior informal procedure in accordance with § 5, to take action against the relevant incidents.

If the allegations are directed against students enrolled at the University of Bonn, the procedure for imposing a disciplinary measure shall be governed by the regulations issued in accordance with § 51a HG NRW. In this case, the Office referred to in paragraph 3 shall inform the office responsible for initiating proceedings in accordance with these regulations.

(2) The complaint serves to inform the University of Bonn with the aim of clarifying the facts of the case.

(3) The complaint is opened by presenting the facts of the case to the Administrative Office for Protection against Discrimination (AGG Complaints Office). The complaint shall be made in writing or recorded in a meeting. If a record is made, it must be signed by the person concerned. It must contain a precise description of the incidents perceived as harassing or discriminatory. Witnesses and any available evidence, such as emails or messages via messenger services, should also be documented.

(4) After receipt of the complaint, the person concerned shall be informed about the further procedure in a counseling interview by the body mentioned in paragraph 3 sentence 1 and personally questioned about the incidents. The main content of the interview shall be recorded in writing.

(5) The accused shall be informed by the body referred to in paragraph 3 of the allegations made against them. They shall be given the opportunity to respond in writing. In addition, they may be questioned about the allegations in a personal interview with the Office named in paragraph 3. The accused person has the option of contacting their representative body and seeking external support and will be informed of this in advance.

(6) After assessing the incidents and all statements and comments, the Office referred to in paragraph 3 shall inform the accused person's line manager or the office responsible for human resources of the corresponding assessment together with a recommendation for any measures to be taken. The latter shall then decide whether and, if so, which measures (§ 8) are to be taken against the accused person to prevent repetition and to protect the persons concerned, with the involvement of the necessary administrative areas and the responsible manager from the respective work and study areas. The persons concerned cannot demand any measures on the part of the University of Bonn or prevent such measures. In individual cases, the supervisor may take immediate measures after being informed by the Office mentioned in paragraph 3, even before the accused person's statement is known.

(7) Once the investigation of the facts is complete, both the person concerned and the accused shall be informed promptly of the outcome of the investigation and any measures taken.