

Information on counseling centers at Witten/Herdecke University in case of problems and suspected scientific misconduct

What types of problems can I contact counseling centers about?

Members of the UWH (students, employees, researchers) can contact a) internal and external counseling centers at Witten/Herdecke University in the context of personal conflicts or discrimination in connection with teaching, research, or professional activities at the university, as well as in the event of personal difficulties and psychological stress, and b) in the event of scientific misconduct.

For which problems can I contact which counseling centers?

a) Personal conflicts in teaching, research, and professional activities, as well as personal difficulties and psychological stress

1. Personal conflicts in teaching, research, and professional activities

Members of UW/H can contact the counseling centers at Witten/Herdecke University in the following cases of personal conflict:

- Personal conflicts in the context of teaching and research
- Personal conflicts in the context of professional activities
- Bullying
- Discrimination based on origin, gender, religion or worldview, disability, age, and sexual identity

In such cases, you can contact the university's confidential advisors (Prof. Dr. Marzellus Hofmann, Faculty of Health; Prof. Dr. Heiko Kleve, Faculty of Economics and Society) and/or the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Officer (Dr. Sigrun Caspary, secure email adressgleichstellungsbeauftragte@uni-wh.de) and their deputies. All information entrusted to the confidential advisors and all contents of conversations will be treated with absolute confidentiality. In addition, in cases of conflict in a professional context, you can contact the works council, which is happy to provide prompt advice, especially on labor law issues and other questions arising from the employment relationship. You can contact the works council at the protected email address br-kontakt-mobbing@uni-wh.de , three works council members are also available as contact persons for individual consultation.

2. Personal difficulties and psychological stress

Students and doctoral candidates at UW/H also have the option of contacting the psychological counseling service for personal difficulties and psychological stress at the [psychologicalstudy counseling](https://www.uni-wh.de/studierende/psychologische-studierendenberatung/) (<https://www.uni-wh.de/studierende/psychologische-studierendenberatung/>).

b) Questions and conflicts in the area of good scientific practice and scientific integrity

Good scientific practice encompasses general principles of scientific work, for example:

- working lege artis,
- documenting results,
- consistently questioning all results yourself,
- maintaining strict honesty with regard to the contributions of partners, competitors, and predecessors

As well as:

- Collaboration and leadership responsibility in working groups
- supervising young scientists

Violations of the principles of good scientific practice are referred to as **scientific misconduct**. These include, for example:

- false information is provided intentionally or through gross negligence,
- intellectual property or other third-party scientific achievements are used without authorization,
- unauthorized claims to co-authorship are made,
- the research activities of others are impaired,
- joint responsibility for scientific misconduct or other breaches of duty is alleged, or
- a criminal offense or administrative offense is committed

The ombudspersons at UW/H (Prof. Dr. Johannes Michalak, deputy: Prof. Dr. Guido Möllering) provide confidential advice on questions and conflicts in the area of good scientific practice. In the event of conflicts, mediation between the parties involved is sought. Individuals who have questions about good scientific practice or wish to report misconduct can contact the ombudsperson. Individuals who are facing allegations of scientific misconduct can also contact the ombudsperson. The ombudsperson provides assistance through conflict mediation based on the rules of good scientific practice and focused on finding solutions. Where possible, the aim is to mediate, seek compromise, and achieve reconciliation between the parties.

All information entrusted to the ombudsperson and all conversation content will be treated as strictly confidential. The ombudsperson can provide the following support:

- Advice (e.g., whether scientific misconduct has occurred),
- You will receive information about the ombudsman procedure and possible variants.
- Investigation of allegations,
- Mediation or arbitration at the request of the person reporting the suspicion
- In the event of conflicts of interest or if the problem cannot be classified as scientific misconduct, the ombudsperson may initiate contact with another advisory service.

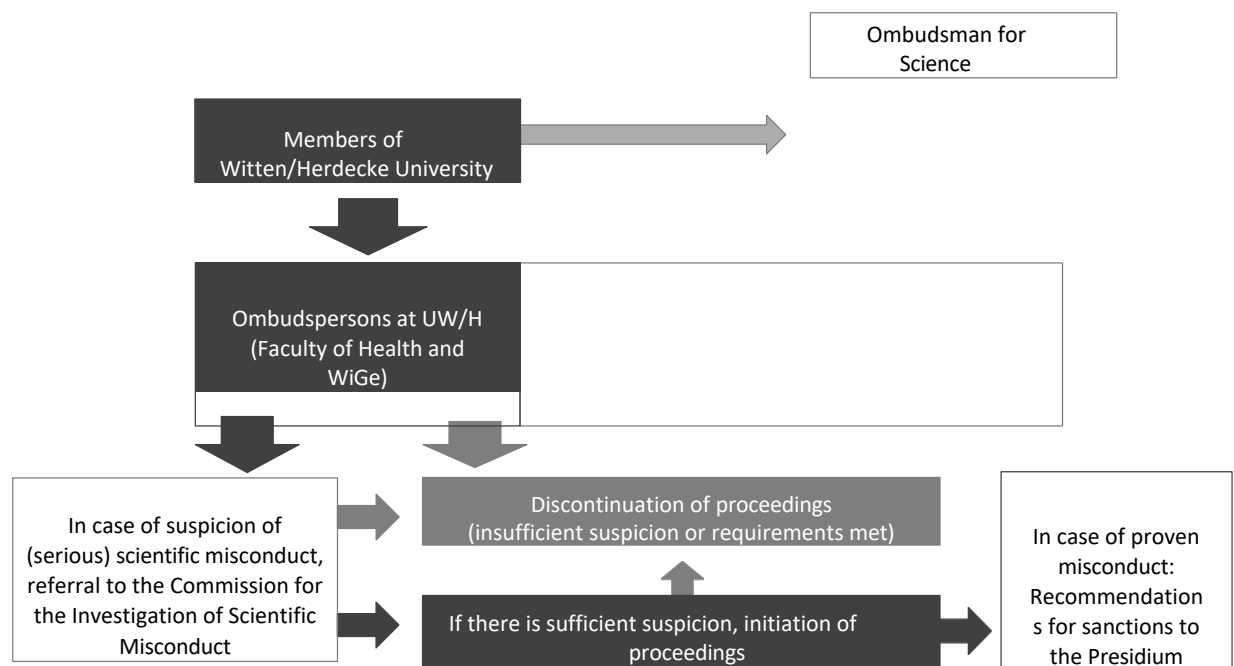
In cases of scientific misconduct, it is also possible to seek advice and support outside the UW/H from the *Ombudsman for Science* (<https://ombudsman-fuer-die-wissenschaft.de/>).

If (serious) scientific misconduct is suspected, the ombudsperson informs the Commission for the Investigation of Scientific Misconduct, which is composed of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, deans, and academic directors of WittenLab. If there is sufficient suspicion, the commission opens proceedings. If misconduct is proven, the commission can make recommendations for sanctions to the Presidium. Proceedings may be discontinued if there is insufficient suspicion or if conditions are met.

The procedure is described in detail in the Rules of Procedure for Suspected Scientific Misconduct.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the procedure for suspected scientific misconduct.

Suspicion of scientific misconduct – an overview of the ombudsman procedure



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