

The **Code of Conduct** intends to be a proposal on how to positively influence workflows and staff interactions. It addresses 10 main points the Gender Task Force considers particularly important, based on the observations and experiences of the last several years. The Code is intended to complement the further efforts the Cluster of Excellence made to achieve and maintain equal conditions and opportunities, the reconciliation of family and career, and best possible career development that includes a positive work-life balance.

All changes start out small, and how we interact on a daily basis is a key factor for ensuring employee satisfaction and motivation. Thank you for your valued support!



## 1 INTERCULTURALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

The CliSAP working environment is markedly intercultural and international. Keeping this in mind, raising awareness and paying increased attention to the specific considerations are essential to successful collaboration. Types of conduct taken for granted in a given cultural setting might be problematic in another. Leaving the office door open during a one-on-one talk can – depending on the cultural context – be construed as an attempt to make the meeting less private so as to avoid potentially giving the impression of sexual discrimination / sexual assault, whereas in another environment it might be viewed as signifying a lack of trust and an insult to the employee's personal integrity. By clearly communicating the reasons behind your actions, these misunderstandings can be avoided, thus helping collaboration to run more smoothly.

## 2 PLURALISTIC SETTING AND DISCRIMINATION

Cultural diversity and an international setting are fundamental aspects of the CliSAP working environment, and call upon each of us to be open to and curious about our counterparts. This doesn't always work, which can lead to misunderstandings and/or discrimination. Discrimination of any kind is not only unacceptable in an open and pluralistic society; it also does considerable harm to the working atmosphere. It is important to be sensitive and vigilant in this regard, and to react when discrimination arises in your own immediate surroundings. In order to avoid discrimination, it can be helpful to occasionally reconsider those views and convictions we assume to be self-evident, and to bear in mind that simply because we consider something to be right, true or acceptable, not everyone will automatically agree.

## 3 WORKING STRUCTURE AND ACCOMPANYING EXPECTATIONS

A good work-life balance is a priority at CliSAP. That balance can be jeopardized when the lines between working hours and non-working hours become blurred. Truly taking a break from work allows employees to replenish their energy. Preparing and answering emails outside their normal working hours represents a considerable courtesy on the part of individual employees; it is by no means self-evident that they do so. Bearing in mind such aspects helps to ensure a better working atmosphere.

## 4 TRANSPARENCY CONCERNING WORKING CONDITIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

To do good work, people have to know exactly what their work entails. Accordingly, transparency with regard to working conditions and expectations is both sensible and important. Conflicts can often be avoided by clarifying in advance what is expected of someone – and what they can realistically deliver. This is particularly important when people from different university or research systems are expected to work together.

## 5 OVERTIME

Overworked employees are less motivated. It is the responsibility of those in managerial positions to not only motivate their employees to do their work professionally and conscientiously, but also to keep an eye on their wellbeing and to avoid their having to regularly work beyond their normal working hours.

## 6 BURNOUT

A good work-life balance promotes emotionally and physically well-balanced employees with a positive attitude towards their work, while also avoiding the buildup of stress, which can result in burnout. Sensitivity to the aspects touched on in points 3 through 6 above can help avoid burnout and, in the long term, yields more motivated and productive employees.



## 7 SELF-MANAGEMENT

Regularly reassessing your own methods and habits is a sign of courage and readiness to learn new things. The goal here is not for supervisors to do their employees' work for them, but to achieve a better work-life balance for everyone. In this regard, supervisors bear a unique responsibility and serve as role models. Good "self-management" can – by helping you to better understand yourself and your working methods – enable you to help yourself and your employees to work in a truly productive and well-balanced manner.



## 8 FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Time for the family is an aspect that should be kept in mind in the working atmosphere. Universität Hamburg has positioned itself as a family-friendly employer and has been certified by "audit familien-gerechte hochschule", an auditing service that gauges universities' family-friendliness. To promote a family-friendly atmosphere and healthy work-life balance, it can be helpful if no meetings are scheduled after 5 p.m., and if all meetings have fixed start and end times.



## 9 UTILIZING THE EMPLOYEE-SUPERVISOR TALK (EST)

In order to promote a better working environment, it is important for supervisors to know what their employees want and need, and where there are potential problems and room for improvement. In this regard, EST ("Mitarbeiterinnen-/ Mitarbeiter- und Vorgesetztengespräch", MAVG) can be helpful. It is not an appraisal talk in the classic sense, but instead offers a sensible instrument for sounding out how talents can be optimally developed. The Gender Task Force recommends using it once a year to help maintain a healthy working environment.



## 10 ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SUPERVISORS

Supervisors are faced with a dual challenge: bearing in mind the need for measures to ensure a positive work-life balance, without losing focus on their actual project goals. Training seminars are available and can help you learn to integrate these new structures. CliSAP promotes these measures, and supports continuing training opportunities concerning management and self-management



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The Cluster of Excellence CliSAP wishes to offer its employees an appealing working environment. CliSAP is committed to treating its employees considerately and responsibly, and firmly believes that excellent research can only be produced in such a setting.

Your feedback is welcome! Please come and discuss with us: Nicolli Povijač and Beate Ratter, Gender Task Force CliSAP

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Code of Conduct

WORK-LIFE  
BALANCE

