

# **Rules and Regulations of the Joint Ethics Committee of the Gutenberg School of Management & Economics of the Faculty of Law, Management and Economics of Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Goethe University Frankfurt**

## **Preamble**

The Rules and Regulations of the Joint Ethics Committee of the Gutenberg School of Management & Economics of the Faculty of Law, Management and Economics of Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (JGU) and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Goethe University Frankfurt (GU) (EK JGU-GU) substantiate how the implementation of general ethical values by the scholars of the faculty are to be supported and ensured. It furthermore regulates procedures.

## **§ 1 Tasks**

(1) The Committee becomes active upon application by a scholar from the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of the GU or the Gutenberg School of Management & Economics of the JGU. The EK-JGU-GU, its members as well as additionally called upon experts (§ 4 para. 4) are to ensure the independent completion of their tasks and are not tied to directives. They are only accountable to their own conscience.

(2) The Ethics Committee evaluates and, if applicable, gives its position on ethical aspects of planned research activities on humans. The responsibility of the scholar responsible remains unaffected.

(3) The approach of the EK-JGU-GU follows similar Rules and Regulations of the ethics committee of the German Psychological Society (DGPs).

(4) The EK-JGU-GU especially examines whether

- all provisions have been made to minimize the risk for study participants,
- a suitable balance between benefits and risks exists for the proposal and
- the consent of the study participants or their legal representation is sufficiently documented.

(5) Applications to the Ethics Committee should include information regarding:

- the goal and procedure of the planned research, the type and number of study participants as well as the criteria for their selection and all steps involved in the process of the study. (see summary of the research proposal and inclusion and exclusion criteria on the application form)

- burdens and risks for study participants including possible effects and information regarding precautions taken to reduce negative consequences. (see burdens and risks on the application form)
- regulation of the information provided to study participants regarding the study procedure that have the goal of containing complete, true and understandable information regarding the goals and procedure (in written form). (see deception regarding participation and purpose as well as the information sheet for study participants on the application form)
- rules regarding consent of the study participants to participate in the study (in written form) (see consent form on the application form)
- possibility for study participants to refuse to participate or to quit the study for people with limited ability to decide (e.g. children, those without legal capacity): regulation of consent to participate in studies by legal guardians, data registration (especially in regard to audio and video recording and computer logs) and the saving of data in particular regarding data anonymization, if applicable intended insurance protection. (see voluntariness, legal capacity, vulnerable persons, data protection, information regarding data protection and the right to deletion of data, and insurance protection)

## **§ 2 Composition of the EK-JGU-GU**

(1) The EK-JGU-GU is composed of the chairperson and his or her deputy and four additional scientists as well as two deputy members.

(2) The position of chairperson is assumed by the Dean of the Gutenberg School of Management & Economics of the Faculty of Law, Management and Economics of JGU on a rotating basis with the Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of GU. Deputyship is assumed by the Deputy Dean of the Gutenberg School of Management & Economics of the Faculty of Law, Management and Economics of JGU on a rotating basis with the Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of GU.

(3) The further members of the EK-JGU-GU consist half of teaching staff of the Faculty of Law, Management and Economics of JGU and half of teaching staff of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of GU. They represent the various subjects at the Faculty and the Gutenberg School with regard to the personnel situation. The further members of the EK-JGU-GU are to be appointed by the Dean of the respective Faculty for a period of three years.

(4) Participation in the EK-JGU-GU is on an honorary basis.

(5) The names of the members of the EK-JGU-GU will be published.

(6) The Ethics Committee can call upon additional experts in the decision-making process when necessary.

### **§ 3 Application**

- (1) The assessment of a research project occurs upon application by the person responsible for the project.
- (2) The application is to be processed provided that the application has not yet been submitted to any other ethics committee for assessment. A corresponding declaration by the applicant is to be submitted with the application. Exceptions to this rule (e.g., multi-center studies with simultaneous applications in various organizations) must be approved by the chairperson.
- (3) The documents relevant for making a position statement (including the application form; see annex) are to be supplied to the Committee by the applicant.
- (4) The Committee will decide on the rejection of applications on an individual basis.

### **§ 4 Assessment procedure**

- (1) The chairperson decides whether a planned research project must be evaluated and the evaluation process is initiated after the application has been submitted. The EK-JGU-GU must formulate criteria that rule out the obligation to evaluate an application.
- (2) If an evaluation process has been initiated, the chairperson of the Ethics Committee will compose a position statement based on the votes of at least two assessments.
- (3) The chairperson is to name two members of the EK-JGU-GU who will author the assessments. The Committee prepares an appropriate assignment of those named with regard to content.
- (4) The chairperson can request the opinion of one or more additional experts in agreement with the Committee. Additional experts will be provided with the entire application.
- (5) The assessments will be forwarded to the chairperson of the Committee.
- (6) With two positive or conditional assessments, the chairperson forwards the application, both assessments and the draft of the position statement to all members of the EK-JGU-GU. If none of the members has objected to the position statement after one week, the position statement is to be sent to the applicant.
- (7) If the two evaluations vary significantly or a member objects to the position statement, the chairperson will involve a third member. The three evaluators then seek a common vote. If this is positive or with limited conditions, the chairperson formulates a final position statement and forwards this together with the application and the evaluations to all members of the EK-JGU-GU. If no objection has been raised by a member after one week, the final position statement will be sent to the applicant.
- (8) In case the three evaluators are not able to find a common position or in case a member objects by the deadline, an oral discussion is required of the entire committee.

(9) Members who are involved in the research project or whose interests are affected in any way are excluded from the evaluation process and the discussion of the final position, due to bias concerns.

(10) The Committee can require the applicant to give an oral explanation of the planned research project or submit additional documents, information or explanations.

(11) In case of doubt regarding an application overall or any sections thereof, the applicant can be requested to submit a revised application within a revision period.

(12) The applicant can be heard by the Ethics Committee before the position statement is issued. He or she is to be heard at his or her request.

(13) The decision of the Ethics Committee is to be communicated to the applicant in written form. Rejections, conditions and recommendations to change the proposed research project are to be clarified in writing. An application is generally to be processed within six weeks.

(14) If an application is rejected for ethical reasons, the applicant can present counterarguments and request a new position statement from the Committee.

(15) Decisions of the Ethics Committee require a simple majority of its members. If a decision is made, it is generally to be taken as a decision of the entire Ethics Committee.

(16) Multi-center studies that have already been evaluated by a different committee can be dealt with by the chairperson. The Committee is to be informed and, in case of doubt, to be involved.

(17) Ethics Committee meetings are not public. Their outcomes are to be recorded in a protocol.

## **§ 5 Confidentiality of ethics assessments**

(1) The subject of the process and the position statements of the Ethics Committee are to be treated with confidentiality. The members of the Committee are obligated to secrecy. The same goes for additionally called upon experts. Individual votes are to be handled confidentially.

(2) The members of the Ethics Committee are to be informed of their obligation to confidentiality when they begin their work as members of the Committee.

(3) Committee votes, application documents, meeting protocols, amendments, preliminary and final reports, correspondence, etc. are to be archived.

(4) Data security measures are to be taken with regard to archiving the application materials.

Adopted by decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Goethe University Frankfurt on October 12, 2016.

The English translation of the Rules and Regulations of the Joint Ethics Committee of the Gutenberg School of Management & Economics of the Faculty of Law, Management and Economics of Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Goethe University Frankfurt is an informal translation of the original German version and is not legally binding. In case of any inconsistency or conflict of interpretation to or among original and the translation, the original shall always prevail.