

MIN Faculty Code of Conduct for Fieldwork Effective July 7, 2026

Excursions, study trips, field courses, and fieldwork stays, for example as part of final theses or for research purposes, are an indispensable part of research and research-oriented teaching in the departments of our faculty. Successful, safe, and respectful work in the field requires not only professional preparation and careful planning but mindful interaction with one another and the environment as well.

The University of Hamburg (UHH) promotes respectful and appreciative collaboration at all levels. It is committed to ensuring that, within its sphere of responsibility, personal rights and individual boundaries are respected. This code of conduct serves as a guideline and framework for action for all participants in field stays of the Faculty of Mathematics, Informatics and Natural Sciences (MIN) — that is, teaching staff, students, tutors, other employees, and, where applicable, guests.

The University of Hamburg expects these fundamental principles to be practiced both individually and in groups. Individuals in leadership roles bear a special responsibility to proactively foster a discriminatory-free, respectful, and safe environment for everyone.

1. Respectful Conduct and Protection from Discrimination

All participants treat each other with respect, fairness, and courtesy, regardless of their (presumed, attributed, or actual) worldview or religion, origin, ethnicity, nationality, culture, age, gender, sexual orientation or identity, physical condition, or any disability or impairment. Any form of discrimination, including racist, sexist, queerphobic, ableist, or otherwise derogatory comments, intimidation, or actions (e.g., microaggressions, bullying, stalking, verbal, psychological, and physical violence), will not be tolerated. The [University of Hamburg's Anti-Discrimination Directive](#) contains further provisions on the scope of action. Discrimination, harassment, and violence are prohibited under the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany (Art. 1 to 3 GG) and the General Act on Equal Treatment (§ 7 AGG) and will not be tolerated. Unwanted advances, comments, touching, or similar inappropriate behavior will result in consequences in accordance with the [Directive for Protection against Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Violence at University of Hamburg](#). An inclusive and supportive environment is the shared responsibility of all participants.

2. Sensitivity to Power Relations

All participants are aware of the power asymmetries within the group. Persons with leadership and/or supervisory roles reflect on their particular responsibility. In accordance with §7 of the [University of Hamburg's Bylaws for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice](#), they are responsible for preventing the abuse of power. Power relations and authority must not be exploited to disadvantage or coerce others. Furthermore, everyone is aware that power asymmetries can also exist between participants and people outside the university group, for example due to social differences or global disparities, as well as historically and culturally influenced prejudices or racist attributions. Participants interact in a way that promotes fairness, respectful cooperation, and the inclusion of diverse perspectives.

3. Open Communication and Confidentiality

Before the start of multi-day field stays or excursions, the group of participants designates trusted contact persons whom participants may approach. These persons may utilize the [University of Hamburg's counselling services](#) in advance.

Participants communicate openly and respectfully, express their concerns, such as suggestions, feedback, but also criticism, and seek support when needed, e.g., from the trusted persons named above.

Contributions, questions, and feedback are to be valued, taken seriously, and reflected upon collectively.

All participants who observe inappropriate behavior are responsible for taking action, for example, by speaking with the person affected, offering support, and pointing out options for counseling and filing complaints. However, the person affected by this misconduct must not be excluded from the process.

Further steps should generally be taken in consultation with the person affected. Only if there is an immediate risk, or if protecting others requires immediate intervention, should the designated contact persons or the fieldwork leaders be informed without the affected person's consent.

Information shared confidentially regarding discrimination, bullying, harassment, or violence will, of course, be treated and processed sensitively in accordance with university guidelines.

4. Dealing with Cultural Diversity

Cultural differences are handled with care and self-criticism. On-site, participants respect and take into account local customs, country-specific characteristics, and sensitive issues (e.g., clothing, behavior in public spaces, use of alcohol or drugs) – even if these contradict their own beliefs. Participants reflect on their role as well as potential cultural differences at each field site.

5. Alcohol and Drugs

The consumption of alcohol, drugs, other intoxicants, or dangerous substances is strictly prohibited during the official program. The University of Hamburg also expects participants to refrain from excessive consumption of alcohol and other legal mind-altering substances during their free time. Responsible behavior is expected. In particular, individuals in leadership positions should be mindful of their responsibility as role models. The possession and use of drugs during free time are permitted only if this complies with the legal regulations of the respective location.

During fieldwork abroad in areas with limited medical care or emergency response infrastructure, special consideration must be given to the unique circumstances, as emergencies can arise at any time.

Accordingly, participants must ensure that, at all times — even outside the official program — at least one person is available and ready to serve as a first aider and another person as the driver of the (excursion) vehicle.

In general, a 0.0 ‰ blood alcohol limit applies to both drivers and first aid providers.

6. Safety and Well-Being

In addition to the aspects outlined in the risk assessment and safety briefing, the following points must also be taken into account. Consideration will be given to restrictions due to physical and mental stress, illness, or impairments, as well as pregnancy. For activities that require particular physical fitness, protective clothing, or caution (e.g., hiking, fieldwork), all instructions given by the excursion leaders as well as local hazard warnings must be strictly observed. In dangerous terrain, no members of the excursion group will be left behind without an excursion leader. Working alone in the field is only permitted after consultation and with notification of the supervisor ("check-in/out"). A minimum group size of three people is generally recommended. During hikes, the group adjusts its pace so that everyone arrives at the destination together and no one is overwhelmed.

7. Dealing with Rule Violations

Measures and sanctions for violations of the policies in effect at University of Hamburg are stipulated, among other places, in the [University of Hamburg's Anti-Discrimination Directive](#) and the [Directive for Protection against Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Violence at University of Hamburg](#). Violations of these policies, grossly negligent behavior, or other breaches of duty will result in consequences. In consultation with a higher-level supervisory authority, these may include — in addition to the (immediate) exclusion from individual activities or from the entire field trip—further university measures such as a meeting with supervisors or the dean's office, reprimands, criminal charges, disciplinary measures, as well as termination of employment or students being withdrawn from the university.

Acknowledgment of Receipt

By signing below, I confirm that I have carefully read and acknowledged the MIN Faculty Code of Conduct for Fieldwork, dated July 7, 2026.

Name: _____ Student ID number (if applicable): _____

Type of Fieldwork:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ Excursion | ☐ Fieldwork as part of a thesis |
| ☐ Study Trip | ☐ Fieldwork for research purposes |
| ☐ Field Course | ☐ Other, _____ |

Course Title and Course Number (if applicable): _____

Fieldwork Location(s): _____

Time Frame: _____

Date, Location: _____ Signature: _____