Guidelines for the Ethics Committee of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal dated 09 December 2013

The Rector’s office of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal approved the guidelines listed below for the Ethics Committee of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal on 03 December 2013:

Preamble
In research with and on human beings, the Bergische Universität Wuppertal deems it appropriate to assess and support research projects and/or studies by request of researchers by means of an ethical assessment.

§1 Ethics Committee

(1) The Bergische Universität Wuppertal has decided to set up an Ethics Committee. It will be named the "Ethics Committee of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal".

(2) The Ethics Committee of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal shall work on the basis of the applicable law and relevant professional rules, including scientific standards. It will take account of all relevant national and international agreements and recommendations. The following terms shall apply subject to any differing provisions based on any law of higher precedence.

§2 Responsibilities and principles of the Ethics Committee

(1) The Ethics Committee shall, when requested to do so, check and assess research projects in accordance with ethical criteria related to the protection of human dignity and the autonomy and self-determination of persons involved in research projects, and shall return its opinions on individual research projects.

(2) The Ethics Committee shall assist the responsible scientists with advice and assessments regarding the ethical and, if applicable, legal aspects of the research on and with human beings. Irrespective of the assessment of the Ethics Committee, the scientist in question continues to be responsible for his or her own conduct.

(3) The Ethics Committee shall not carry out the responsibilities of an ethics committee under public law pursuant to the Medical Practitioners’ Act of the Land of North Rhine Westphalia and shall not examine research projects into medical or pharmacological issues.

§3
Composition and members

(1) The Ethics Committee is made up of at least five members. At least half of these, and at least three if the minimum number of members is observed, must be members of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal. Each member shall have a deputy. Care should be taken to ensure that there is appropriate representation of academic staff in the members of the group.

(2) The members of the Ethics Committee and their deputies shall be appointed by the Rector's office for a term of three years. Reappointment for a further term is possible. The Ethics Committee should be interdisciplinary in its composition. The members of the Ethics Committee should have a relevant scientific qualification, knowledge of ethical guidelines and the application of these and experience in the acquisition and execution of research projects.

(3) The Chair of the Ethics Committee and his or her deputy shall be elected by the members of the Ethics Committee for the term of the office of the Committee from among such of its members as are also members of the University.

(4) All members may choose to resign, without giving reasons.

(5) Members may be dismissed by the Rector's office for good reason. Before this may happen, the member must be given a fair hearing.

(6) To replace a member who has resigned, a new member shall be appointed for the remaining term in office of the Committee. The Ethics Committee shall be entitled to make a recommendation.

(7) The names of the members of the Ethics Committee shall be published.

§4

Exclusion from acting as a member of the Ethics Committee

(1) Members of the Ethics Committee who are themselves involved in the research project to be assessed or who were involved in the preparatory work shall be excluded from consulting and passing resolutions on the research project to be assessed.

(2) All applicants shall be authorised, in each individual case, to present matters to substantiate any misgivings as to the impartiality of a member of the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee shall decide whether there are grounds and whether they justify exclusion. Before this may happen, the member in question must be given a fair hearing.

(3) If a member of the Committee believes himself or herself to be biased or has doubts as to whether he or she meets the conditions for bias, he or she must notify the Chair of the Committee of this. The Chair of the Committee shall notify this to his or her deputy. Section 2, Sentences 2 and 3 shall apply as appropriate to the further proceedings.

§5

Legal status of the Ethics Committee and its members

(1) The Ethics Committee and its members shall be independent in the exercise of their duties and not bound by any instructions; they shall act to the best of their knowledge and belief.

(2) The personal liability of the members during their activities on the Ethics Committee is excluded.

§6

Management

The ongoing business of the Ethics Committee shall be managed by its Chair. Appropriate human and administrative resources shall be made available to the
Chair for the administrative support of the activities of the Ethics Committee.

§7
Application procedure
(1) The Ethics Committee shall act on the basis of written applications by members and staff of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal. The Ethics Committee may determine the conditions for the submission of applications.
(2) Applications for the assessment of a research project may be submitted:
- by scientists of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal and
- by students of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal, restricted to final degree assessments or study-related research or projects under the supervision of a scientist of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal. In such cases, the application must be made jointly by the student and the supervisor.
(3) For the fulfilment of its responsibilities, the Ethics Committee may decide to bring in relevant external experts or assessors.

§8
Fees/charges and compensation
(1) Serving as a Committee member shall be deemed a work-related duty of staff of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal.
(2) The members of the Committee shall receive no compensation for this. The same shall apply to any expert and/or assessors.
(3) No fees shall be charged for examination and consultation services regarding research projects.

§9
Final provisions
(1) The Ethics Committee may decide to adopt rules of procedure to govern its activities in greater detail.
(2) The Chair shall report regularly - at least once per calendar year - to the Rector's office on the activities of the Ethics Committee.
(3) The term in office of the members of the current Ethics Committee shall end on 31 August 2014.

These guidelines shall enter into force on the day on which they are published in the Official Notices as an announcement of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal.

Drawn up on the basis of the resolution of the Rector's office dated 03 December 2013.

Wuppertal, 09 December 2013

The Rector
of the Bergische Universität Wuppertal
Universitätsprofessor Lambert T. Koch