



Technische
Universität
Braunschweig



Guidelines for Family-Friendly Management

Preamble

Our self-perception

TU Braunschweig is a consistently family-friendly university at every level. It sends a socio-political signal through its management culture that welcomes and supports a balance between family life and working or studying.

These Guidelines were developed consensually by an Academic Roundtable including representatives from all status groups and all parties concerned.

Our definition of family

TU Braunschweig has defined family to include married and unmarried, hetero- and homosexual partnerships with and without children, single parents and dependant relatives.



Target groups

These Guidelines were prepared for professors and managers in the scientific, technical and administrative divisions at TU Braunschweig. The terms “professors” and “managers” should be understood as encompassing all of their relationships with other staff and students. The term “staff” encompasses TU Braunschweig’s faculty, research associates, technical and administrative employees, and trainees.

TU Braunschweig offers support to all staff members and students to facilitate a good work-life or study-life balance. Even professors and managers are able to balance family life and working.

The personal interactions between members of TU Braunschweig are characterised by consideration and respect, regardless of a person’s family status.

Objective

These Guidelines are designed to help professors and managers to make sure that their staff and students at every level are able to achieve a good family-work or family-study balance. They illustrate management practices that promote the family-friendliness of TU Braunschweig’s working and studying conditions.

These Guidelines provide orientation and inspiration for developing additional, area-specific guidelines. True to TU Braunschweig’s gender-oriented family policy, these Guidelines heed in equal measure the needs of men, women and gender non-conforming individuals.

The professors and managers are sensitive to this issue and will support TU Braunschweig’s members in balancing their family lives and work or study at every career level. They themselves live by this philosophy and serve as role models, regardless of their own personal situations.

Cooperation

Professors and managers shape a work and study culture that fosters sensitivity and mutual understanding at every level.

They have a responsibility to consider the full variety of family situations, recognise expectations and, in view of work and study requirements and other relevant rules, balance the individual interests within their teams and among their students.

In implementing individual arrangements, managers will take into account the consequences for the entire team. Decisions as to the possibilities and limitations of individual arrangements are communicated transparently.

The interpersonal cooperation between TU Braunschweig's members is characterised by their approachability, openness and appreciation of difficulties when it comes to needs-based individual solutions to balancing family life and working or studying.



Family-friendly career and study paths

Personal security and returning after a hiatus

Professors and managers are open to alternative career and study paths and life plans for their employees and students with family responsibilities. They help to design reliable career paths and study conditions and offer them individual support. These career paths also make a good work-life or study-life balance achievable for managers.

To increase personal security, professors and managers work to avoid employment that is unnecessarily short-termed. Supervisors facilitate the return to work or to studies after a family-related hiatus.





Attracting employees and students

Family-friendliness is an important criterion for potential employees and students making their choice of university. To attract excellent staff and students, TU Braunschweig showcases its family-friendliness. When assessing candidates, family duties that they have performed are also taken into consideration as past work experience.

Family-friendly organisation of work and study

Presence at the workplace

Professors and managers are role models for a work-life balance. They each determine how much time they need to be present on-campus with a view to alternative workplaces and set an example of family-friendly employment by making use of flexible and/or reduced working time.

Professors and managers encourage their employees and students to work and study autonomously, providing they are present when necessary. To facilitate the flow of information and reliable communication, binding agreements are made.



Decentralised work models

To facilitate a good work-life or study-life balance, professors and managers enable various forms of decentralised work, such as periodic telecommuting and mobile working, and allow their staff to manage their working hours autonomously¹. In this, they take full

Part-time work and job sharing

Professors and managers enable part-time and job sharing arrangements to ensure a balance between family life and work or studies. Granting parental leave to mothers and fathers is a matter of course. Whenever working hours are reduced, the employee and

Family-friendly working hours

To facilitate a balance of family life with working or studying, employees may ask to plan their own working hours. Where possible, professors and managers allow their staff to make such individual arrangements within a pre-established time range. Wherever

advantage of digital and online communication options. When identifying needs-based solutions, the employee in question and any colleagues who may be affected are involved in the process. Supervisors react quickly and flexibly to immediate needs.

¹ For example, TU Braunschweig's Work Agreements (Dienstvereinbarungen) Numbers 31, 36 and 37.

supervisor will work together to determine how best to adjust the individual's tasks. Where requested and possible, professors and managers will support extending employment contracts proportionally to reductions in working time.

possible, committee and other meetings are held during childcare centre opening hours. Supervisors encourage their employees to take all of their annual leave and allow them to plan extended holidays.

Family-friendly studies

Professors and managers encourage all faculty in their subject areas to create family-friendly study conditions and individual study plans as needed and to the extent possible.

Where possible, compulsory courses and exams are held during childcare centre opening hours. A certain number of places in compulsory courses are reserved for students with family responsibilities, if possible. Compulsory attendance is adapted if necessary where students with family responsibilities are concerned.

Bringing your child to university

In exceptional cases (like sudden, unexpected gaps in childcare), professors and managers allow studying and working parents to bring their children to university, and have rules for such instances.

In those instances, rules regarding their attendance and allowable exceptions are developed. In the case of family-related absences, students are given the opportunity to make up for what they have missed². Faculty can use digital teaching methods for this purpose.

In justified cases, students with family responsibilities are offered alternatives to delivering their coursework and sitting for examinations, deviating if necessary from the official sequences and deadlines³. In this, equal opportunities must always be upheld.

² The relevant rules are detailed in the *General and Special Examination Regulations (Allgemeine und Besondere Prüfungsordnungen)*.

³ Within the applicable rules of Sect. 9 (13) of the *General Examination Regulations and of applicable Special Examination Regulations*.



Information and communication

Imparting information

Our professors and managers are informed about the legal foundations and TU Braunschweig's offers as concerns balancing family life and studying or working. They regularly inform their employees about these options and about central and decentralised contact points such as the Equal Opportunities Officer, the Family Office, Student Services and the department's student representatives. Each department's Heads of Academic Affairs keep the students in their discipline apprised in this area.

Interlinking information

Professors and managers are in regular contact with the Family Office, exchanging critique, suggestions and ideas to promote a work-life or study-life balance. The Family Office compiles and evaluates this feedback, presenting it to the relevant committees as needed.



Contributors

These Guidelines were formulated by an Academic Roundtable by order of the Executive Board, with the involvement of all status groups (see the Executive Board's Resolution of 27/01/2016). The Academic Roundtable was moderated by Dr. Steffen Stübing. The following individuals contributed to these Guidelines (Status 2016):

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