

**2 October 2018**

**HRK Senate: Prevent publishing in "predatory journals"**

In a statement issued today by the Senate of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) on so-called predatory publishers, the universities have affirmed their strong commitment to ensuring academic quality assurance.

While the number of publications in such journals may be low in Germany, as in Europe as a whole and the USA, the HRK Senate fears that the phenomenon may pose a threat to the credibility of science and scholarship. "Predatory publishers" enable researchers to publish for a fee without the necessary scientific quality control, or they conduct pseudo-scientific conferences.

The Senate emphasises that academics and researchers have the right to make an autonomous decision about the journal they choose to publish in, and therefore have primary responsibility for this choice. However, the Senate also points out ways in which universities can help defend scholarly publishing standards and improve quality assurance processes.

Young researchers, in particular, should be provided with information and advice in a systematic fashion.

The pressure to publish should be reduced, and quality should consistently be given precedence over quantity in relation to appointments, assessments and personal evaluations. In relation to appointment procedures, there should be a limit on the number of publications that can be detailed in the application.

Providing a listing of non-trustworthy journals, or even a positive list, of which various examples already exist, contributes to transparency and should be supported. Nevertheless, it can never be guaranteed that such lists are up to date and complete, as the HRK Senate emphasises. Hence, they can never replace of a thorough examination of the publication medium by authors and reviewers themselves.

**View the statement by the HRK Senate**