



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
BUCKINGHAM

MEDICAL SCHOOL

**MB ChB**

# **MB ChB Guidance on Academic Misconduct and Neglect of Academic Obligations**

**The Medical School Regulations are in alignment with the University's Regulations regarding student discipline.** The definitions of misconduct and general expectations of students in relation to their personal conduct, academic honesty and obligations, and their professional conduct are defined in the University Regulations for First Degrees, MB ChB Regulations and the Code of Practice for Assessment. Academic misconduct of any description is specifically addressed in the University policy on Academic Misconduct, Plagiarism and Cheating.

This document highlights to medical students, areas to which they should pay particular attention with regard to academic misconduct, because of their relevance to the GMC's Fitness to Practise procedures.

**Definitions of cheating, plagiarism, neglect of academic obligations including failure of academic engagement are highlighted below.**

'Any action knowingly taken by a student which involves misrepresentation of the truth may be considered academic dishonesty and as such is an offence which the Medical School and University believes should merit the application of *very severe penalties*'.

Offences in this category include, but are not exclusively confined to:

- a. cheating in written examinations
- b. copying work from or using work written by another person
- c. soliciting or commissioning work
- d. making work available to another person for copying
- e. copying from published authorities, including on-line sources, without acknowledgement
- f. pretending ownership of another's ideas
- g. falsifying results

**Cheating** involves actual or attempted deception and/or a dishonest action in relation to any academic work. Taking unauthorised material into an examination, including revision notes or unauthorised equipment, shall be regarded as attempted deception. Talking to another candidate during an examination will also be considered unauthorised behaviour.

A medical student who cheats in any examination, OSCE or assessment will be referred to the Concerns Group and Medical School Examinations Officer who will normally refer to the Academic Misconduct Group who will follow the University's policy on Academic Misconduct. It is highly likely that a student who cheats in examinations or assessments will exceed the threshold for referral from the Concerns Group to Fitness to Practise proceedings.

**Plagiarism** is a general term to describe taking and using another's thoughts and writings as one's own. This can include fabrication, mis-representation or failure to obtain relevant ethical approval. Plagiarism can occur not only in essays and dissertations, but also in scientific experimentation, diagrams, maps, fieldwork, computer programmes, and all other forms of study where students are

expected to work independently and produce original material, for example in the Narrative Medicine Unit and Student Selected Components.

**Collusion** is the active cooperation of two or more students to deceive as defined in the University Regulations. A student is guilty of collusion who knowingly allows any of his or her academic work to be acquired by another person for presentation as if it were that person's own work. A student who offers to provide work to another to be passed off as the others' own is guilty of collusion.

Plagiarism and/or collusion will be dealt with exactly as defined in the University policy on Academic Misconduct. Students found guilty of plagiarism will be referred to the Academic Misconduct Group by the Concerns Group and a student who is found guilty of plagiarism is highly likely to exceed the threshold for referral to Fitness to Practise proceedings.

**Neglect of Academic Obligations** is a form of misconduct relevant to students on a taught programme of study. The nature of students' academic obligations, for example, attendance at lectures and group work, performance in practical and written work and OSCE is defined by the Medical School. Any student who is doubt about their obligations must consult Student Support or their Personal Tutor.

**Failure of Attendance and Neglect of Academic Engagement** is a form of neglect of academic obligations resulting from a failure of students to engage with the course academically. The Medical School, University and the GMC require students to be committed to their course and to fully engage with their teachers. Failure of academic engagement could occur for many reasons. Students who fail to engage academically will be referred to the Concerns Group.

Medical students are expected to attend all components of the course. The Medical School is empowered to authorise short absences and the student concerned must take full responsibility for the completion of academic work. This procedure applies if the absence is for religious reasons. The Medical School has a policy on attendance, exceptional absence and leave entitlements which can be found on Moodle. Students who do not attend prescribed teaching without the prior agreement of the Medical School will be deemed to have neglected their academic obligations. A medical student who is in neglect of academic engagement will be referred to the Concerns Group and may be referred to Fitness to Practise proceedings with a recommendation that the student's registration be terminated.

#### **Late submission of course work**

The University and Medical School regulations state that when a student misses, or expects to miss, a published deadline for a piece of coursework or other assessed work, there is no provision for extensions to the deadline to be granted.

Where a student experiences a sudden illness or other serious and unforeseen event or set of circumstances, she/he should normally be advised to submit the coursework as soon as possible and that the regulations concerning mitigating circumstances be applied to ensure there is no penalty for the late submission. Students should refer to the guidance on Mitigating Circumstances which is

available from Student Support and through Moodle. Any mitigating circumstances will be considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Mitigating Circumstances Group.

All written assessed coursework submitted in respect of a Student Selected Component (SSC) or of Narrative Medicine will be subject to screening by the plagiarism detection system used by the University (Turnitin) with an acceptable originality report of 20% or below. The date and time of electronic submission to Turnitin will be deemed to be the time and date of submission with respect to the deadline for receipt of that piece of work.

In cases where there are no accepted mitigating circumstances, late submission of coursework shall lead automatically to the imposition of a penalty and referral to the Concerns Group.

*Document Version Information*

Document Title: MB ChB Guidance on Academic Misconduct and Neglect of Academic Obligations

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Date: 27<sup>th</sup> May 2015

Replacing Document: Original

Approved:

Date: