BPharm Processes around Academic Misconduct

Misconduct amongst Pharmacy students is rare, reflecting the high calibre and professionalism of our students. However, the potential consequences of being found guilty of academic misconduct are severe and may include exclusion from the University or a fine of up to $2000. As such, it is important to understand what the University deems to be misconduct and how this is managed.

Academic misconduct has been defined to include coursework, assignments and tests as well as examinations. Specifically, this includes but is not limited to:

- plagiarism,
- copying from another student's coursework,
- making up or fabricating data,
- submitting the same or a substantially similar assignment that you have done in more than one course,
- impersonating or knowingly facilitating the impersonation of someone else,
- misrepresenting disability, temporary illness or injury or exceptional circumstances and then claiming special conditions,
- using material obtained from commercial essay or assignment services, including web-based sources.

Where there are exams, tests or assessments that are held in split sessions, e.g OSCEs, students must not communicate or share any of the content or any part thereof, of the assessment details to any incoming student or students.

In addition, care must be exercised in third-party editing or assistance and in group/team work and study; as these can become misconduct in certain circumstances. Here it is useful to discriminate between "getting help" and "cheating" — it is quite legitimate to seek help in understanding how to formulate your own answers. However, it is not acceptable to copy another student's answers or ideas; likewise it is not acceptable for someone else to write all or a part of a student's assignment.

The University has established robust systems to manage misconduct. The process of appropriate investigation and resolution is based upon the principles of natural justice. If you are suspected of academic misconduct, it is your right:
1. to be informed of the nature of the complaint and supporting details, including the right to review any evidence upon which the complaint is based;
2. to be given the opportunity to explain your position,
3. to be given sufficient notice of any hearing,
4. particularly in more serious cases, to seek legal or other advice,
5. to be able to attend any meeting or hearing that results with a representative present, and
6. to an absence of bias in the conduct of proceedings.

More minor offences are penalised as appropriate within the School, whereas more major offences are referred on to the Office of Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) to be considered by the Discipline Committee. If the student does not agree with the decision or does not accept the penalty imposed by the course coordinator in consultation with the Academic Head, the student has the right to request that the decision and/or penalty be reviewed by the Appeals Committee of Council.

Remember, in cheating, one cheats oneself, fellow students, the University, society in general and one's family, whanau and friends.