

Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU)

Procedures Governing the Handling of Academic Integrity Cases of Students and Past Students

1. HKBU adopts a zero-tolerance policy for academic dishonesty. An act of academic dishonesty violates academic integrity. Any student or past student¹ having committed an act of academic dishonesty concerning their studies at the University may be subject to academic disciplinary action by the University.
2. Examples of academic dishonesty can be found in the *Guidelines on Academic Integrity for Students and Graduates*.

(A) Students

Sub-degree/Undergraduate/Taught Postgraduate Studies by Coursework and Coursework in Research Postgraduate Studies

3. If academic dishonesty is suspected in respect of course-based assessment of the current studies of a student²:
 - i) The faculty member concerned shall report to the Head of Department/Programme Director.
 - ii) The Department/Programme shall investigate the case with the student concerned.
 - iii) If the charge is established, an 'F' grade may be assigned to the course³.

The Department/Programme shall report the case, in writing, to the Academic Registrar (for undergraduate programmes and taught postgraduate programmes) or Dean of Graduate School (GS) (for research postgraduate students taking coursework) via the Dean of Faculties/Schools.
Note: For sub-degree programmes⁴, the Programme Director shall report the case, in writing, to the Dean of School of Continuing Education (SCE) directly, with copy sent to the Head of Registry of SCE for necessary action.
 - iv) The Academic Registry (AR)/GS/SCE shall inform the student, in writing, of the decision of the Department/ Programme.
 - v) The Academic Registrar/ Dean of SCE shall inform the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)⁵, while the Dean of GS shall inform the QAC via Research Postgraduates Committee (RPSC) and Research Committee (RC).
 - vi) The QAC shall report the number of cases and the sanctions imposed to the Senate annually.
4. For more serious or repeated cases:
 - i) The Department/Programme should follow the procedures 3(i) – 3(iv) above.
 - ii) After the appeal against the decision made by Department/Programme has been disposed of or if no appeal has been lodged before the deadline, the AR/GS/SCE may refer the case to the Student Disciplinary Panel (SDP) as appointed by the Student Affairs Committee (SAC) for deliberation

¹ Past students include all those who took course(s) in the University in the past, such as graduates, students who ceased studies without graduation, exchange students and visiting students.

² If the suspected academic dishonesty is concerning past students' studies at the University, the procedure for Past Students stipulated in Section (B) shall be followed.

³ Any student found to have committed academic dishonesty may be excluded from participating in the end-of-semester Course Feedback Questionnaire (CFQ) for the course concerned. The Department/Programme shall inform the AR/SCE, in writing, of this request at least one week before the commencement of the CFQ exercise

⁴ For Higher Diploma in Creative Film Production, cases shall be reported to the Dean of SCE via the Dean of School of Creative Arts.

⁵ The number of academic dishonesty cases and the sanctions imposed arising from sub-degree programmes bearing HKBU awards (i.e. associate degrees and higher diplomas) shall be reported to the QAC via the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee on Sub-Degree Programmes (QASC) (QF Level 4) annually.

- of whether further disciplinary action would be taken. The student shall be notified of the decision.
- iii) The Director of Student Affairs shall notify the Academic Registrar/Dean of GS/Dean of SCE, in writing, of the final decision.
 - iv) The Academic Registrar/Dean of SCE Education shall inform the QAC[#] while the Dean of GS shall inform the QAC via RPSC and RC.
 - v) The QAC shall report the number of cases and the sanctions imposed to the Senate annually.

Appeal:

Appeal by students against the decision on academic dishonesty made by Department/Programme

5. The student may submit an appeal to the Academic Registrar/Dean of GS via the Department/Programme within seven working days from the date of notification of the decision of the Department/Programme⁶. Late appeals will not be considered. If the Academic Registrar/Dean of GS considers that there is any valid ground for the appeal, an Appeal Panel will be convened to review the case. For taught programmes, the Appeal Panel shall comprise the Chairman of the Undergraduate Regulations Committee (for sub-degree and undergraduate studies)/Taught Postgraduate Studies Committee (TPSC) (for taught postgraduate studies) as the Chairman, one senior academic nominated by the Chairman, and the Academic Registrar. For coursework in research postgraduate studies, the Appeal Panel shall comprise the Chairman of the RPSC as the Chairman and two senior academics from different faculties/schools nominated by the Chairman. The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final.

Appeal by students against the sanctions imposed by the Student Disciplinary Panel

6. The student should follow the Student Disciplinary Procedures and submit an appeal in writing to the Chairperson of the SAC, who may decide to dismiss the appeal or appoint a Student Disciplinary Appeal Panel (SDAP) to hear and decide on the appeal. The appeal shall be submitted within seven working days from the date of notification of the decision. Late appeals will not be considered. The decision of the SDAP, except for suspension and dismissal, shall be final.

Research Postgraduate Studies and Thesis Stage for Professional Doctoral Studies

7. If academic dishonesty is found in the process of qualifying examination, candidature examination, or in the submission of a research prospectus/thesis/dissertation in the current studies of a student:
- i) The Exam Panel or Board of Examiners may impose any sanction as they deem appropriate, such as failing the student concerned or terminating the candidacy of the student concerned. Depending on the circumstances, the student may be allowed to resubmit his or her work. While the Panel or Board may convey the decision to the student, the GS/AR shall formally inform the student of the decision in writing.
 - ii) The Chair of the Exam Panel or Board of Examiners shall report the case, in writing, to the Dean of GS (for research postgraduate studies) or the Academic Registrar (for professional doctoral studies) via the Dean of Faculties/Schools. More serious or repeated cases may be referred to the SDP.
 - iii) The Academic Registrar shall inform the QAC while the Dean of Graduate School shall inform the QAC via RPSC and RC.
 - iv) The QAC shall report the number of cases and the sanctions imposed to the Senate annually.

Appeal:

Appeal by students against the decision on academic dishonesty made by Exam Panel or Board of

⁶ Sub-degree students shall follow the appeal regulations and procedures governing Sub-degree programmes.

Examiners

8. The appeal should be directed to the Dean of GS (for research postgraduate studies) or the Academic Registrar (for professional doctoral studies) within seven working days from the date of notification of the decision. Late appeals will not be considered. If the Dean of GS or the Academic Registrar considers that there is any valid ground for the appeal, an Appeal Panel, will be convened to review the case. For research postgraduate studies, the Appeal Panel shall comprise the Chairman of the RPSC as the Chairman and two senior academics from different faculties/schools nominated by the Chairman. For professional doctoral studies, the Appeal Panel shall comprise the Chairman of the TPSC as the Chairman, one senior academic nominated by the Chairman, and the Academic Registrar. The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final.

Appeal by students against the sanctions imposed by the Student Disciplinary Panel

9. The student should follow the Student Disciplinary Procedures and submit an appeal in writing to the Chairperson of the SAC, who may decide to dismiss the appeal or appoint a SDAP to hear and decide on the appeal. The appeal shall be submitted within seven working days from the date of notification of the decision. Late appeals will not be considered. The decision of the SDAP, except for suspension and dismissal, shall be final.

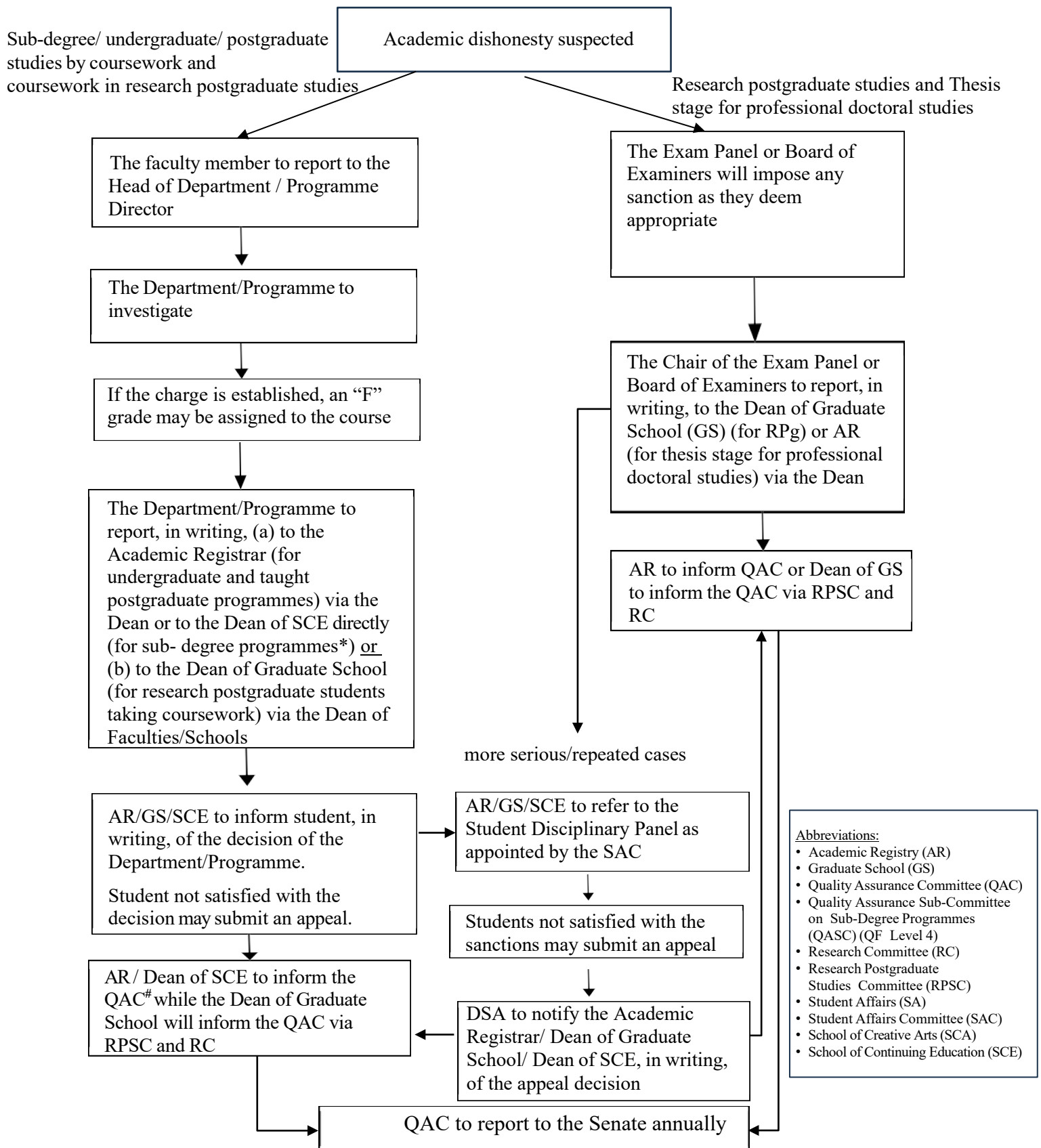
(B) Past Students

10. If a past student is suspected to have violated academic integrity concerning the student's studies at the University:
 - i) The Department/Programme concerned shall investigate the case with the past student concerned and submit a full report on the alleged misconduct to the President and Vice-Chancellor via the Faculties/Schools Dean and the Vice-President (Teaching and Learning) (for taught programmes) or Vice-President (Research and Development) (for research programmes).
 - ii) After considering the full report, if the President and Vice-Chancellor considers that no further action is required, the case is closed. If the President and Vice-Chancellor considers that further action is required, an Inquiry Panel shall be appointed by the President and Vice-Chancellor to conduct the formal inquiry. The Inquiry Panel shall comprise the Vice-President Teaching & Learning (for taught programmes) or Vice-President (Research and Development) (for research programmes) as the Chairman, the Dean of the Faculties/Schools concerned, one senior academic⁷ from the Department/Programme concerned and two senior academics from any other Faculties/Schools.
 - iii) If the Inquiry Panel considers that the charge is not proved, it shall submit a final report to the President and Vice-Chancellor and the case is closed.
 - iv) If the Inquiry Panel considers that the charge is proved, it shall decide on the sanction(s) to be imposed, or recommend the revocation of one or more of the sub-degree(s)/degree(s) previously awarded by the University, if appropriate, to the past student.
 - v) The Inquiry Panel shall inform the past student in writing of its decision/recommendation of revocation of sub-degree(s)/degree(s) previously awarded by the University to the past student within seven working days after the decision/recommendation is made. If the Inquiry Panel recommends revocation of one or more of the sub-degree(s)/degree(s) previously awarded by the University to the past student as the sanction, the recommendation shall be subject to the approval of the Senate and Council and the past student shall be informed accordingly.
 - vi) The past student may lodge an appeal in writing to the President and Vice-Chancellor against the decision/recommendation made by the Inquiry Panel within seven working days from the date of notification of the decision/recommendation. Late appeals will not be considered. If no appeal has been lodged before the deadline, the decision/recommendation of the Inquiry Panel is final subject only to the approval of the Senate and Council.

⁷ Senior staff refers to academic staff at the rank of Professor or above, or teaching staff at the rank of Senior Lecturer or above

- vii) The grounds of the appeal shall be clearly stated by the past student in the submissions to the President and Vice-Chancellor. An appeal will only be entertained if there is a *prima facie* case on any of the following grounds of appeal:
 - a. There was material irregularity in the conduct of the Inquiry Panel such that the inquiry was not conducted fairly in light of the alleged violation and evidence presented.
 - b. The sanction imposed was not appropriate for the violation and the relevant extenuating circumstances.
 - c. New and credible evidence which would have an important influence on the decision is available and there is a reasonable explanation as to why such evidence was not provided earlier.
- viii) Upon review of the grounds of the appeal, the President and Vice-Chancellor may dismiss the appeal and uphold the decision of the Inquiry Panel; or appoint an Ad Hoc Appeal Panel to hear and decide the appeal. If an Ad Hoc Appeal Panel is appointed, it shall comprise the Provost (as the Chairman), three senior academics from different Faculties/Schools who have not handled the case before, the Academic Registrar / Executive Associate Dean of GS / Associate Dean of SCE.
- ix) The Ad Hoc Appeal Panel shall inform the past student in writing within seven working days after the decision/recommendation is made. The decision is final, except that if the Ad Hoc Appeal Panel recommends revocation of one or more of the sub-degree(s)/degree(s) previously awarded by the University to the past student as the sanction, the recommendation shall be subject to the approval of the Senate and Council and the past student shall be informed accordingly.
- x) Upon the approval of the Senate and Council to revoke one or more of the sub-degree(s)/degree(s) previously awarded by the University to the past student, the AR, GS or the Registry of the SCE as appropriate shall inform the past student in writing of the decision of the Senate and Council.
- xi) The decision of the Senate and Council shall be final and shall not be subject to any further appeal.

Procedures Governing the Handling of Academic Integrity Cases of Students



* For Higher Diploma in Creative Film Production, cases should be reported to the Dean of SCE via the Dean of SCA.

The number of academic dishonesty cases and the sanctions imposed arising from sub-degree programmes bearing HKBU awards (i.e. associate degrees and higher diplomas) shall be reported to the QAC via the QASC (QF Level 4) annually.

Procedures Governing the Handling of Academic Integrity Cases of Past Students¹

Academic dishonesty suspected

Department/Programme concerned to investigate the case and submit a full report on the alleged misconduct to the P/VC via the Faculties/Schools Dean and the VPTL (for taught programmes)/VPRD (for research programmes)

P/VC considers the report and decides whether further action is required

No further action is required:
Case closed

Further action is required:
An Inquiry Panel, comprising the VPTL (for taught programmes)/VPRD (for research programmes) (as the Chairman), the Dean of the Faculties/Schools concerned, one senior academic from the Department/Programme concerned and two senior academics from a different Faculties/Schools, will be appointed to conduct the formal inquiry.

Inquiry Panel considers and decides the case

Charge not established:
➤ Submit report to the P/VC
➤ Case closed

Charge established:
➤ Decide on/Recommend the sanction(s) to be imposed
➤ Inform the past student, in writing, of the decision and/or the recommended sanction(s)

No appeal:
Case closed

Past student may lodge an appeal in writing to the P/VC against the decision/recommendation made by the Inquiry Panel to the P/VC within seven working days from the date of notification of the decision/recommendation

P/VC reviews the grounds of the appeal and decides whether the appeal should be entertained

Appeal not entertained:
➤ Recommendation of the Inquiry Panel upheld

Appeal accepted to be heard:
An Ad Hoc Appeal Panel, comprising the Provost (as the Chairman), three senior academics from different Faculties/Schools who have not handled the case before, the Academic Registrar/Executive Associate Dean of GS/Associate Dean of SCE, appointed to hear and decide on the appeal and the sanction(s) to be imposed. The Ad Hoc Appeal Panel shall inform the past student in writing within seven working days of its decision/recommendation.

Sanction not involving revocation of sub-degree(s)/degree(s) previously awarded by the University:
➤ Decision of the Ad Hoc Appeal Panel is final and shall not be subject to any further appeal

If Appeal Panel recommends revocation of sub-degree(s)/degree(s) previously awarded by the University:
Submit the recommendation to the Senate and Council for approval

Recommendation approved by the Senate and Council:
➤ Decision of the Senate and Council is final and shall not be subject to any further appeal
➤ AR/GS/Registry of the SCE informs the past student, in writing, of the decision of the Senate and Council

¹ These procedures only apply to academic integrity cases of past students concerning their studies at the University.

Procedures for Inquiry Panel and Ad Hoc Appeal Panel Hearings

1. Notice of Hearing

- 1.1 When an Inquiry Panel or Ad Hoc Appeal Panel (“Panel”) is appointed to handle an allegation of academic dishonesty concerning a past student, a Notice of Hearing containing the following information shall be sent to the accused past student:
- a. details of the specific charge being brought against the past student;
 - b. date, time, and place of the hearing provided that the date of hearing shall not fall within fourteen (14) working days of the Notice of Hearing.

2. Hearing

- 2.1 Hearings shall be conducted behind closed doors. Only the following individuals will be allowed into the hearing room:
- a. Members and Secretary of the Panel;
 - b. the accused past student;
 - c. the complainant and/or any persons who are invited by the Panel to provide information/evidence for the case.
- 2.2 The Chairperson of the Panel shall have discretion on whether the identity of any person concerned shall be kept anonymous in any agenda documents, reports, and evidence as well as during the hearings and meetings. The Chairperson shall have the discretion to prescribe the manner under which the past student, the complainant and/or any invited persons shall participate in the works of the Panel.
- 2.3 The Panel is not a court of law and a hearing of the Panel shall be conducted in an informal manner. The strict rules of procedure and evidence of a court of law shall not apply. The Panel may receive any evidence which is considered relevant and attach such weight to the evidence as the Panel considers appropriate. A hearing will follow the sequence below. However, at the sole discretion of the Chairperson, changes may be made to accommodate unusual circumstances.
- 2.4 If the complainant or the accused past student wishes to submit written evidence or have witnesses who would provide evidence during the hearing, he or she shall submit to the Secretary of the Panel such written evidence or a list of such witnesses as soon as possible after receiving the Notice of Hearing and at least three (3) working days before the hearing.
- 2.5 The accused past student may choose whether or not to attend the hearing before the Panel. If the accused past student does not attend the hearing, the hearing may proceed in his or her absence and such absence shall not invalidate the hearing or the decision of the Panel.
- 2.6 If the accused past student attends the hearing, the Chairperson will read the charge to the accused past student and ask for an admission or denial thereto. If the past student admits the charge, the hearing will be terminated and the Panel shall proceed to the executive session. If the past student denies the charge, the hearing will continue and the Panel shall determine whether the charge is proved and if so, the sanction.

- 2.7 The complainant and/or other persons may be invited to attend the hearing to present information related to the charge if deemed necessary.
- 2.8 The Chairperson may guide the members to exclude irrelevant, immaterial, and unduly repetitious evidence.

3. Executive Session

- 3.1 The Panel will then enter into an executive session in private to determine whether the charge is proved. The accused past student, complainant, and/or other invited persons shall be excused.
- 3.2 The civil standard of proof of preponderance of probability shall be adopted. The more serious the act or omission alleged under the charge, the more compelling must be the evidence need to prove it on a preponderance of probability.
- 3.3 A quorum consists of three members of the Panel. Decision of the Panel shall be made by a majority of the members present. In the event of equality of votes, a verdict of not guilty shall be recorded.
- 3.4 If the accused past student is found guilty of the charge, the Panel shall decide the sanction to be imposed.
- 3.5 Upon conclusion of a hearing, members of the Panel shall return to the Secretary of the Panel all documents pertaining to the matter, including but not limited to the following: agenda, agenda documents, incident reports, police reports, written statements, memoranda, declarations, objects, any other materials submitted by the complainant or the accused past student, as well as any personal notes taken during the meeting.
- 3.6 The Panel shall send a written notification to the accused past student within fourteen (14) working days after the conclusion of the proceedings of the Panel, stating the findings of the Panel and decisions/recommendations on the sanction(s), if any.
- 3.7 If the Panel recommends revocation of one or more of the sub-degree(s)/degree(s) previously awarded by the University to the past student as the sanction, the recommendation shall be subject to the approval of the Senate and Council and the past student shall be informed accordingly.