

# Regulations for Student Academic Integrity

## Academic Integrity

1. Honesty and integrity are central to the academic work of HKUST. The University **Senate adopted an *Academic Honor Code*<sup>1</sup> for students in June 2005. All students who join HKUST are committed to this Code.**
2. The University's approach to cases of academic misconduct, through breaches of the *Academic Honor Code* and academic integrity, is fundamentally educational. The process for dealing with these cases is designed to enable students to understand better the nature of academic misconduct and the high standards of academic integrity that are expected. The sanctions available in confirmed cases of academic misconduct are intended to signal the importance that the University places on maintaining these high standards and to communicate this to students.
3. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:
  - 3.1 **Cheating:** conduct designed to mislead those responsible for making a judgment on a student's academic performance or standing, including:
    - (i) Unauthorized access to, conveyance of or receipt of examination or test questions;
    - (ii) The giving, receiving or utilizing of unauthorized information or assistance in completing an assignment, test or examination;
    - (iii) Breaches of the *Rules for the Conduct of Examinations* set out in the **Annex**;
    - (iv) Impersonating another student or allowing oneself to be impersonated by another student in participating in a test or examination;
    - (v) Submission of academic work containing purported statements of fact or references to sources and/or data that have been fabricated or falsified;
    - (vi) Presenting for credit work that has already been accepted for credit in another course;
    - (vii) Submission of fraudulent documents and/or information in relation to a student's academic performance or standing (e.g. fraudulent medical certificates to support requests to be excused from attendance or to be granted a make-up examination; fraudulent certificates or transcripts in support of applications for credit transfer or course exemption).
  - 3.2 **Plagiarism:** the presentation of work which originates from other sources, including the work of other students, as the student's own work, without appropriate attribution to the source.

## Reporting of Cases of Academic Misconduct

4. In applying the following Regulations, Heads of Department/Division, Deans, the Director, IPO (DIPO), the Provost and the President, as Investigating Officers, may nominate delegates to review cases on their behalf. However, decisions (for example to dismiss an allegation, to impose sanctions, to refer cases to the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee, or to uphold or reject an appeal) are the responsibility of Investigating Officers and not their delegates and shall be determined by Investigating Officers, after considering reports and recommendations from their delegates where applicable.
5. Allegations of misconduct which are ambiguous in nature should be referred to the Dean of Students in the first instance, who shall decide under which Regulations the case initially should be reviewed. In such cases, where the Dean of Students determines that an allegation relates to both student misconduct and student academic misconduct, the Dean of Students may refer the allegation to the relevant Head of Department/Division, for initial investigation of the alleged student academic misconduct under the *Regulations for Student Academic Integrity*, prior to investigation of the alleged student misconduct under the *Regulations for Student Conduct*.
6. Anonymous allegations normally shall not be considered.
7. Invigilators who consider that a student has breached the *Rules for the Conduct of Examinations* and have taken action as set out in the **Annex** should submit a *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* to the Head of the Department/Division responsible for the course in question, via the Course Instructor where applicable, indicating the circumstances of the case.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://ugadmin.ust.hk/integrity/honor.html>

8. Instructors, students' supervisors or other members of the University community who consider that a student or group of students has or may have committed cheating or plagiarism as defined in Regulation 3 above, or other academic misconduct in the submission of assignments or other student work that may contribute to an award of the University (including alleged fabrication, falsification or plagiarism of a student's research proposal, project report, laboratory report, essay, dissertation or thesis), should submit a *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* to the Head of the Department/Division responsible for the course or program in question, as appropriate (in the case of undergraduate and taught postgraduate students) or to the relevant Dean/DIPO (in the case of research postgraduate students). Reports should indicate the circumstances of cases and include any relevant evidence (e.g. copies of original texts and the student's work highlighting any alleged plagiarism).
9. Allegations of other research misconduct not covered above ("Research Misconduct") against students, and allegations of Research Misconduct or plagiarism against graduates with respect to their studies while students of the University, should be referred and dealt with under the '*Policy on Research Conduct and Integrity*'<sup>2</sup>. If there is any discrepancy between the '*Regulations for Student Academic Integrity*' and the '*Policy on Research Conduct and Integrity*' for research related work or issues, the latter shall take precedence.
10. Allegations of academic misconduct (as defined in Regulation 3 above) other than plagiarism against graduates with respect to their studies while students of the University shall be investigated by an *ad hoc* committee established by the Provost.

## **Review by Head of Department/Division**

11. Heads of Department/Division, in reviewing *Reports on Student Academic Misconduct* referred in accordance with Regulations 7 or 8 above, will consult as appropriate.
12. Heads should refer cases to the relevant Dean(s)/DIPO for review where:
  - (i) a case involves students who are not enrolled on a course or program under the Head of Department/Division;
  - (ii) a Head considers there may be a possible conflict of interest for the Head;
  - (iii) the case involves persons who are not members of the University community.
13. Students will be informed of academic misconduct allegations and asked to attend a meeting with the Head of Department/Division, to respond to the allegation of student academic misconduct and present any relevant evidence. If a student refuses, or is unable, to attend the meeting, the Head of Department/Division shall review the allegation based on the written evidence.
14. Where a Head of Department/Division is satisfied that a student has committed academic misconduct, the Head of Department/Division may either (a) submit a *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* to the relevant Dean/DIPO for further review where the sanctions available to the Head of Department/Division are considered to be insufficient with respect to the nature of the misconduct or (b) impose one or more of the following sanctions, the details of which shall be confirmed in writing:
  - (i) A verbal reprimand, of which no record shall be kept;
  - (ii) A written reprimand, to be held on the student's record until graduation or for another specified period of time;
  - (iii) A make-up assignment or test/examination;
  - (iv) A requirement to resubmit work contributing to an award;
  - (v) A reduced grade for the component of the course assessment in question or a reduced grade for the course, including a failed grade;
  - (vi) Require the student to undertake a period of mentoring or instruction, to enhance the student's ability to make good ethical choices.
15. Where a student is considered to have committed academic misconduct and a sanction imposed, the Head of Department/Division shall complete the *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* and forward it to the Dean/DIPO responsible for the student's program for information, with a copy of any written reprimand. Copies will also be sent to the Academic Registrar, for retention. Unless otherwise instructed, misconduct Reports and written reprimands shall be discarded when the student graduates.

---

<sup>2</sup> [http://vprd.ust.hk/rd/eng/research\\_policies\\_n\\_guidelines/HKUST\\_Policy\\_on\\_Research\\_Integrity.pdf](http://vprd.ust.hk/rd/eng/research_policies_n_guidelines/HKUST_Policy_on_Research_Integrity.pdf)

16. Where the Academic Registrar receives a *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* for a student who already has either a *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* or a *Report on Student Misconduct* on their record, all such Reports shall be referred to the Dean/DIPO responsible for the student's program, for action under Regulation 17 below.

## **Referral of Cases to the Dean/Director, IPO (DIPO)**

17. Where a *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* has been referred to the relevant Dean/DIPO in accordance with Regulations 8, 12, 14 or 16 above, the Dean/DIPO will review the Report in relation to any previous misconduct Reports and ask the student to attend a meeting, to present any relevant evidence. If a student refuses, or is unable, to attend the meeting, the Dean/DIPO shall review the allegation based on the written evidence.
18. Where a Dean/DIPO determines that a student has committed academic misconduct, the Dean/DIPO may either (a) refer the *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* (and all previous misconduct Reports, where applicable) to the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee (Senate SDC) for further review and decision where the sanctions available to the Dean/DIPO are considered to be insufficient with respect to the nature of the misconduct or (b) impose any of the sanctions available to the Head of Department/Division in Regulation 14 above and/or one or more of the following sanctions, the details of which shall be confirmed in writing, recorded on the *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* and submitted to the Academic Registrar for retention:
  - (i) University community service;
  - (ii) Withdrawal or suspension of academic or other University benefits, rights or privileges;
  - (iii) Require the student to take a reduced maximum credit load;
  - (iv) Request the Academic Registrar to make a notation of academic misconduct on the student's transcript, to be removed at a specified time, or upon graduation, or to be a permanent record.
19. Where a case has been referred to a Dean/DIPO or to the Senate SDC under Regulations 14 and 18 above, respectively, the *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* will summarise the investigation process and include the reasons why the Investigating Officer considers the sanctions available to the Investigating Officer to be insufficient. The student will be informed that the case has been referred to the Dean/DIPO or the Senate SDC, as appropriate, for review and decision.

## **Referral to Dean of Students**

20. Where an allegation of student academic misconduct has been found proven by a Head of Department/Division or Dean/DIPO, as appropriate, and includes student misconduct (for example where the academic misconduct includes the forgery of documents (see Regulation 3.1 (vii) above), or the theft or destruction of another student's work), the Head/Dean/DIPO shall refer their academic misconduct decision and the allegation to the Dean of Students, for investigation of the student misconduct under the *Regulations for Student Conduct*. Where such a case has been referred to the Dean of Students and a Dean/DIPO has also referred the case of academic misconduct to the Senate SDC in accordance with Regulation 18 (a) above, the Senate SDC shall await the decision of the Dean of Students with respect to the allegation of student misconduct before considering the student academic misconduct allegation.

## **Student Appeals to the Provost**

21. Students will be informed of their right to appeal decisions of Heads of Department/Division and Deans/DIPO, with such decisions remaining effective pending the outcome of any appeal.
22. A student who denies a charge of academic misconduct and/or who believes that a sanction imposed by a Head of Department/Division or Dean/DIPO was inappropriate may appeal the decision to the Provost. The appeal must be made, in writing, within fourteen calendar days of the date of the written communication informing the student of the Head of Department/Division/Dean/DIPO's decision, stating the grounds for the appeal. Normally, appeals shall be considered only on the basis of procedural irregularity and/or new evidence. The Provost will accept any evidence or documentation not previously submitted in support of an appeal **only** if good reason is provided for not submitting the evidence/documentation to the Head of Department/Division or Dean/DIPO at the initial review of the allegation.
23. The *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* and the student's written appeal will be reviewed by the Provost. The student will be asked to attend a meeting with the Provost, to explain the grounds for the appeal and to present any relevant evidence. Students attending such a meeting may be accompanied by a

family member or a member of the University community, who shall act only in a supportive role and shall not participate in the formal proceedings. If a student refuses, or is unable, to attend the meeting, the Provost shall review the appeal based on the written evidence.

24. Where the Provost determines the charge of academic misconduct to be not proven on the basis of procedural irregularity and/or new evidence, the case shall be dismissed.
25. Where the Provost concludes that the appeal has merit, the Provost may impose a lesser sanction from those available to the Head of Department/Division or Dean/DIPO in Regulations 14 and 18 above, respectively, as deemed appropriate.
26. Where the appeal is not upheld, the Provost shall confirm the sanction(s) imposed by the Head of Department/Division or Dean/DIPO, as appropriate, and has the discretion, additionally, to impose one or more of the other sanctions available to the Head of Department/Division or Dean/DIPO in Regulations 14 and 18 above, respectively.
27. The decision of the Provost on student appeals under Regulations 22-26 above shall be final. The outcome of the appeal process will be recorded on the *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* and sent to the Academic Registrar for retention until the student has graduated.

## **Referral of Cases to the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee**

28. Where a *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* has been referred to the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee (Senate SDC) in accordance with Regulation 18 above, the Senate SDC shall review the case and ask the student to attend a meeting of the Committee. Students attending Senate SDC meetings may be accompanied by a family member or a member of the University community, who shall act only in a supportive role and shall not participate in the formal proceedings. If a student refuses, or is unable, to attend the meeting, the Committee shall review the allegation based on the written evidence. A written report of the review process will be made and sent to the Academic Registrar, together with the *Report on Student Academic Misconduct*, for retention until the student has graduated.
29. The Senate Student Disciplinary Committee may impose any of the sanctions available to the Dean/DIPO in Regulation 18 above and/or one or more of the following sanctions, the details of which shall be confirmed in writing:
  - (i) Cancellation of academic credits already earned;
  - (ii) Ineligibility for honors on graduation;
  - (iii) Discontinuation of studies and suspension from the University for a set period, with re-admission being subject to satisfactory fulfilment of conditions where specified;
  - (iv) Termination of studies;
  - (v) Any other sanction(s) deemed appropriate by the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee.
30. Where an allegation of research misconduct against a student has been considered under Regulation 9 above and confirmed, the case shall be referred to the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee to decide on the sanction to be imposed from those in Regulation 29 above.
31. A sanction of termination of studies shall result in automatic de-registration as a student. The Senate Student Disciplinary Committee also may recommend that termination of studies should result in deprivation of the conferment of a degree or other academic award of the University for which the student may be qualified, subject to the resolutions of both the Council and the Senate.

## **Student Appeals to the President**

32. Students will be informed of their right to appeal decisions of the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee, with such decisions remaining effective pending the outcome of any appeal.
33. A student may appeal against a decision of the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee to the President. The appeal must be made, in writing, within fourteen days of the date of the written communication informing the student of the Senate SDC's decision, stating the grounds for the appeal. Normally, appeals shall be considered only on the basis of procedural irregularity and/or new evidence. The President will accept any evidence or documentation not previously submitted in support of an appeal **only** if good reason is provided for not submitting the evidence/documentation to the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee at the initial review of the allegation.

34. The Report of the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee and the student's written appeal will be reviewed by the President. The student will be asked to attend a meeting with the President to explain the grounds for the appeal and to present any relevant evidence. Students attending appeal meetings may be accompanied by a family member or a member of the University community, who shall act only in a supportive role and shall not participate in the formal proceedings. If a student refuses, or is unable, to attend the meeting, the President shall review the appeal based on the written evidence.
35. Where the President determines the charge of academic misconduct to be not proven on the basis of procedural irregularity and/or new evidence, the case shall be dismissed.
36. Where the President concludes that the appeal has merit, the President may impose a lesser sanction from those available to the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee in Regulation 29 above.
37. Where the appeal is not upheld, the President shall confirm the sanction(s) imposed by the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee and has the discretion, additionally, to impose one or more of the other sanctions available to the Senate SDC in Regulation 29 above.
38. The decision of the President on student appeals under Regulations 33-37 above shall be final. The outcome of the appeal process will be recorded and sent to the Academic Registrar with the Report of the Senate Student Disciplinary Committee, for retention until the student has graduated.

Approved by the Senate on 19 February 2019

## **Annex: Rules for the Conduct of Examinations**

[Includes tests and other assessments held under examination conditions  
but excludes examination of theses, final year projects or other similar assessments]

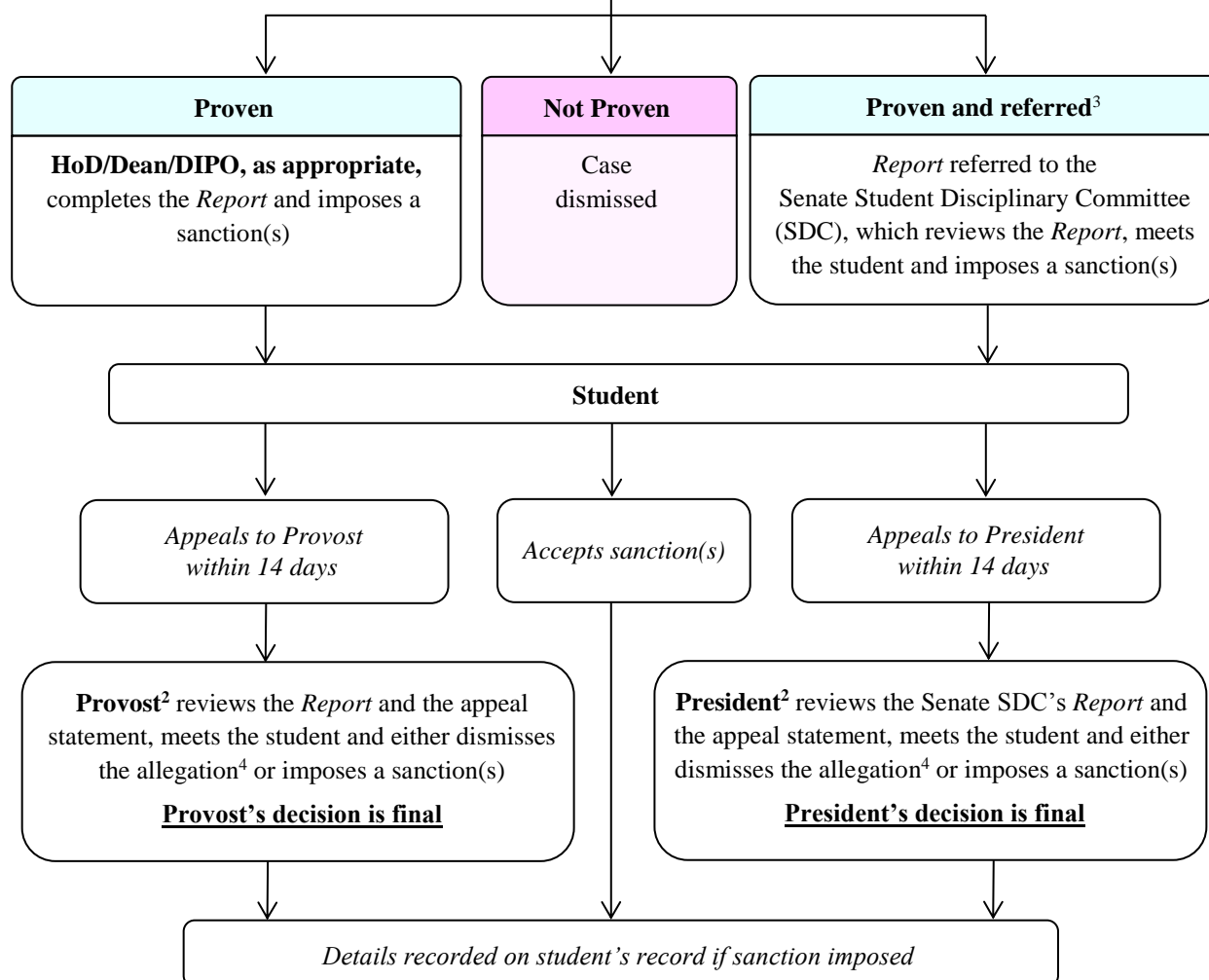
1. Only students who are enrolled in the course and able to present their student identity cards (or in exceptional circumstances their HKID card) are allowed to sit for a course examination.
2. Only in exceptional circumstances are examinees (a) permitted to leave the venue in the first 30 minutes of an examination or (b) permitted to join an examination after the first 30 minutes. Examinees admitted late to an examination will not be given extra time for the examination.
3. Except for items explicitly permitted for an examination, all books, bags, papers, mobile phones and communication devices, etc. must be placed so that they cannot be accessed, ideally at the front, rear or side of the venue. These items may be placed under desks and seats only where they are easily visible and with an invigilator's permission.
4. Conversation is not allowed during an examination unless specifically permitted by an invigilator. Any questions must be addressed to an invigilator.
5. Examinees should write only on their answer books or on any supplementary sheets provided for the purpose. All answer books, examination papers and supplementary sheets must be handed in at the end of the examination. Examinees are permitted to remove printed or written materials from the examination room only with the permission of the examiner.
6. Examinees may leave examination venues to visit washrooms or for any other reason only with an invigilator's permission, and must be accompanied by an invigilator. Examinees may not take examination materials or electronic devices to washrooms; other personal items may be taken only with an invigilator's permission.
7. Examinees are not allowed to leave the examination venue during the last fifteen minutes of an examination and must remain seated until the invigilator has collected all examination answer books and examination papers at the end of the examination.
8. Invigilators are authorised to expel students from an examination if they discover cheating or repeated misconduct. Where an invigilator considers that a student has committed an act of academic misconduct during an examination/test, the student should be asked to stop writing and leave the venue. If the student denies the charge of academic misconduct and/or refuses to leave, the invigilator should write 'Academic Misconduct Suspected' on the front page of the student's script and the time of their intervention, and allow the student to complete the examination/test. Immediately following the examination/test, the invigilator should submit a *Report on Student Academic Misconduct*, indicating the circumstances of the case, to the Head of the Department/Division responsible for the course, via the Course Instructor where applicable, for consideration under the *Regulations for Student Academic Integrity*.

*Revised on 19 February 2019*

## Regulations for Student Academic Integrity

- (A) Invigilators who consider that a student has breached the *Rules for the Conduct of Examinations* should submit a *Report on Student Academic Misconduct* to the **Head of Department/Division (HoD)** responsible for the course in question.
- (B) Instructors, students' supervisors or other members of the University community who consider that a student or group of students has or may have committed cheating, plagiarism or other academic misconduct<sup>1</sup> as defined in the *Regulations for Student Academic Integrity* should submit a *Report on Student Academic Misconduct*, including any supporting materials, to the **HoD** responsible for the course/program in question (for undergraduates and taught postgraduates) or to the relevant **Dean/DIPO** (for research postgraduates).
- (C) *Reports on Student Academic Misconduct* ("Report") will be reviewed by HoDs/Deans/DIPO<sup>2</sup>, as appropriate, who will meet the student(s).

**Investigation of Student Academic Misconduct by HoDs/Deans/DIPO, as appropriate**



### Notes

- Allegations of academic misconduct that include an allegation of misconduct as defined in Regulation 3 of the *Regulations for Student Conduct* or which are ambiguous in nature should be referred to the **Dean of Students** via a *Report on Student Misconduct*, who will decide whether the case initially should be reviewed under the *Regulations for Student Academic Integrity* or the *Regulations for Student Conduct*. Other research misconduct ("Research Misconduct") should be referred and dealt with under the "*Policy on Research Conduct and Integrity*".
- While Investigating Officers may nominate delegates to review cases on their behalf, decisions are the responsibility of Investigating Officers and not delegates.
- Where Deans consider the sanctions available to them are insufficient with respect to the nature of the misconduct or where a student has a proven case of misconduct or academic misconduct on their record.
- On the basis of procedural irregularity and/or new evidence.