FOR INFORMATION   **OPEN SESSION**

TO: Academic Board

SPONSOR: Professor Heather Boon, Vice-Provost, Faculty and Academic Life
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PRESENTER: See Sponsor
CONTACT INFO:

DATE: November 10, 2021 for November 17, 2021

AGENDA ITEM: 8a

ITEM IDENTIFICATION: Provost's Annual Report on Cases of Academic Discipline 2020-21

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, 1995* requires the Provost to report annually in statistical format on cases of academic discipline to Academic Board.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1.   **Academic Board [for information] (Nov 17, 2021)**

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

On November 18, 2020, the Academic Board received the Provost's Annual Report on Cases of Academic Discipline for 2019-20.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Please see attached summary narrative Report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications.

RECOMMENDATION:

For information.

Provost's Annual Report on Cases of Academic Discipline
2020-21

Background:

Academic integrity lies at the heart of the University's academic mission. U of T's academic integrity strategy is led institutionally by the tri-campus Provostial Advisory Group on Academic Integrity. Responsibility for academic integrity, however, is shared with the divisions. Dean's Offices, dedicated offices within the larger divisions, as well as faculty, instructors, librarians, writing centre instructors, and academic advisors all work together to support students to meet our expectations around academic integrity. The Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation also plays a significant role in supporting instructors to design assignments and syllabus structures that facilitate students' ability to showcase their knowledge and skills while meeting our expectations with respect to academic integrity.

The University's *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* establishes two sets of procedures for addressing offences: one process for cases that are able to be managed entirely within the divisions, and one for those that proceed to the University Tribunal. Cases proceed to the Tribunal based on the seriousness of the type of offence, the relative weight of an assessment in which an offence has been alleged to be committed with respect to the course grade, or the fact that a student has not admitted to the behavior being charged. The Provost's Annual Report on Cases of Academic Discipline contains two Appendices that reflect these two processes:

- **Appendix A** outlines statistics and trends pertaining to cases that were overseen completely by the divisions

- **Appendix B** provides statistics and timeliness of cases that were escalated to and addressed by the University Tribunal

The reporting of these statistics enables all members of our community to assess statistical trends pertaining to academic misconduct across the University.

2020-21 Synopsis:

This year's Report demonstrates that the pandemic has had a significant impact on the number of academic integrity offences in some of our largest undergraduate divisions, but little to no impact in most other divisions.

Last year's Annual Report demonstrated an immediate increase in academic offences committed at the beginning of the pandemic—that is, in the final weeks of the 2019-20 winter term, and over the 2020 spring/summer terms. The real impact of the pandemic, however, is seen in this year's statistics, which capture offences committed throughout the entire 2020-21 academic year. In the last academic year, the numbers of offences rose dramatically in the Faculty of Applied Science &

Engineering, nearly doubled in the Faculty of Arts & Science, and nearly tripled at the University of Toronto Mississauga, which had not finalized many of its 2019-20 cases when it reported last year's numbers.

When courses moved online in March 2020, so too did virtually all forms of assessment at the University. Online assessments presented students with increased opportunity to cheat on assessments written for the most part in their homes, with no proctor present. Academic integrity research indicates that a perception of "opportunity to cheat" can lead some students to engage in academic dishonesty.[1] While the University invested in online or video proctoring software, which was used in a small number of large courses in the first terms of the pandemic, this software was not able to be scaled for use in all courses. Moreover, as the pandemic progressed, the technical, equity, diversity, and inclusion concerns posed by online proctoring solutions led many divisions to refrain from pursuing video proctoring for assessments. Online proctoring is not a fool-proof solution to academic integrity issues, and the University advises instructors that while they may choose to use such software, this should not be their first or only tool to combat academic offences; other options for creating effective online assessments should first be examined.

The biggest increase in type of offence over the past year was in 'unauthorized aid' offences, which increased by more than 250 percent and surpassed plagiarism as the leading type of offence for the first time. Unauthorized aids include any outside material or device used by a student in an assessment where the use of outside materials is expressly prohibited. Some students writing assessments while sitting at home faced the temptation of using unauthorized aids when no proctor was supervising their work.

This pandemic challenge to academic integrity is not a University of Toronto problem; it is a global problem. Our partner universities across Ontario, Canada, the US, Australia, Germany, the UK and beyond have reported in provincial, national, and international academic integrity meetings that they too have faced increases, often dramatic, in the number of offences brought on by students writing assessments in their homes.

The University and its instructors have not been complacent in the face of this situation. Instructors have uniformly worked hard over the past year to create assessments that are least likely to lead to academic offences: assessments with clear instructions on what kind of notes or assistance can be accessed during the test, and that ask students more 'authentic' questions based on classroom experiences. The Provost's Office and the Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation have also asked divisions to circulate to every instructor in their division a reference document on creating online assessments that are least likely to lead to academic integrity offences. Some divisions also have designated leads to coach and support their colleagues on online assessment and instruction design, and have created some unique techniques to minimize academic integrity issues within their division.

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[1] See for instance Tracey Bretag, Rowena Harper, Michael Burton, Cath Ellis, Philip Newton, Pearl Rozenberg, Sonia Saddiqui & Karen van Haeringen (2019) Contract cheating: a survey of Australian university students, *Studies in Higher Education*, 44:11, 1837-1856.

Template academic integrity declarations for students to sign at the beginning of assessments have also been distributed to all divisions, some written by our Psychology faculty members to inspire maximum impact on students. And the Provost's Office worked with Student Life's Innovation Hub to create a student-focused social media campaign emphasizing that academic integrity standards have not changed just because of the pandemic. Those campaign materials were made available to instructors to use in their courses, and to all divisions.

Instructors have also used existing classroom technology to create multiple versions of quizzes and tests, despite the significant additional work that this has created for them. Most STEM area instructors are keenly aware of the online math problem-solving websites that some students turned to during online assessments, and have scoured those websites to assess whether answers to their assessments were posted online. Some students were most surprised to discover that their instructors are aware of those sites, and that the website provides the University with names of those who have accessed the website during the test window. Our persistent investigation and charging of such offences at the outset of the pandemic aimed to deter students from using such websites as word spread that instructors were highly aware of these sites.

The Provost's Office has been working closely with divisions to track systemic issues, such as the existence of the math-solving websites, and to develop responses and approaches, sometimes in concert with Ontario peer universities. The University has had numerous conversations with third-party answer-providing companies to make clear that students receiving any form of assistance during assessments may be sanctioned for an academic offence.

Despite this increase in number of total offences, it is important to note that the vast majority of U of T students continue to uphold our academic integrity standards and did not cheat on assessments last year. Numerous divisions had no academic offences reported, only a very slight increase, or even decreases in their numbers of academic offences. The Provost's Advisory Group on Academic Integrity, which comprises Vice-Deans from each of the divisions, acts as a discussion forum for the sharing of best practices, and is meeting this month to discuss what has worked best in some of these divisions that did not see increases.

As a result of the increase in total offences this year, the number of new cases forwarded to the University Tribunal also more than doubled, to the highest number in recent years. This increase in numbers, and the resulting increase in time it took for cases to be heard and resolved at the Tribunal, is concerning and being closely monitored by the Provost's Office. As a result, since the start of the pandemic, the following steps have been taken by the Appeals, Discipline & Faculty Grievances Office (ADFG):

- The Tribunal moved to electronic hearings as the default format, and is now conducting such hearings for all types of cases, including those that are contested. The Tribunal was one of the first tribunals in Ontario to move to electronic hearings for fully contested hearings, decreasing the number of steps in the process and gaining efficiencies in terms of time spent organizing hearings;

- The ADFG Office added an additional hearing secretary;

- The number of potential chairs, faculty, and students on the slate of Tribunal members was increased by approximately 5 from each constituency;

- The number of hearing dates per month that were offered for scheduling increased to 10 from 7 per month; and

- There was a quadrupling in the number of cases that were resolved by minutes of settlement, rather than a full hearing over the past year.

The Provost's Office and the new University Counsel and Chief Legal Officer are closely examining ways in which to further increase the speed by which cases are resolved while maintaining the integrity, fairness, and transparency of our processes.

The Provost's Office, and indeed colleagues across the University, continue to actively monitor academic integrity issues in light of the continuation of online assessments this year. Academic integrity remains integral to all students' education and learning at the University of Toronto, and individuals from across the University continue to spend many extra hours every week to ensure that our system remains fair to all students.

# Provost's Annual Report on Cases of Academic Discipline

Appendix A: Summary of Divisional Academic Discipline Cases 2020-2021

Table 1: Total Number of Student Offenders by Division
(only where a sanction is imposed and the case is closed by the division)

| Division	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	Total # of Student Offenders by Division	% of Offenders based on Student Population	Total # of Student Offenders by Division	% of Offenders based on Student Population	Total # of Student Offenders by Division	% of Offenders based on Student Population	Total # of Student Offenders by Division	% of Offenders based on Student Population	Total # of Student Offenders by Division	% of Offenders based on Student Population
Applied Science & Engineering	75	1.3%	57	1.1%	70	1.3%	226	4.2%	365	6.6%
Architecture	13	1.4%	29	2.8%	10	0.9%	11	1.1%	13	1.2%
Arts & Science	718	2.6%	535	1.9%	657	2.4%	751	2.7%	1396	4.9%
Dentistry	7	1.6%	2	0.5%	3	0.7%	5	1.1%	7	1.6%
Graduate Studies	41	0.2%	51	0.3%	34	0.2%	39	0.2%	46	0.2%
Law	0	0%	2	0.3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Medicine	4	0.1%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%
Music	0	0%	8	1.5%	19	3.5%	24	4.3%	3	0.5%
Nursing	1	0.3%	3	0.9%	3	0.9%	1	0.3%	0	0%
OISE / UT	0	0%	0	0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pharmacy	21	1.9%	7	0.6%	4	0.4%	7	0.6%	96	8.2%
Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education	21	2.0%	7	0.7%	16	1.5%	7	0.7%	17	1.6%
U of T Mississauga	503	3.6%	511	3.6%	582	4.0%	460	3.0%	1339	8.7%
U of T Scarborough	414	3.2%	493	3.6%	192	1.4%	608	4.4%	386	2.7%
Total	**1818**	**2.1%**	**1705**	**1.9%**	**1590**	**1.8%**	**2140**	**2.3%**	**3668**	**3.9%**

Table 2: Total Number of Repeat Student Offenders by Division
(only where sanction is imposed)

Division	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Applied Science & Engineering	10	14	4	23	85
Architecture	0	2	3	4	2
Arts & Science	58	49	57	75	175
Dentistry	0	0	1	0	0
Graduate Studies	0	1	5	2	1
Law	0	0	0	0	0
Medicine	0	0	0	0	0
Music	0	0	0	1	0
Nursing	0	0	0	0	0
OISE / UT	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pharmacy	0	0	0	0	0
Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education	0	0	1	0	0
U of T Mississauga	54	79	94	60	200
U of T Scarborough	11	79	29	35	54
Total	**133**	**224**	**194**	**200**	**517**

Total Number of Offenders and Repeat Offenders Per Year - All Divisions
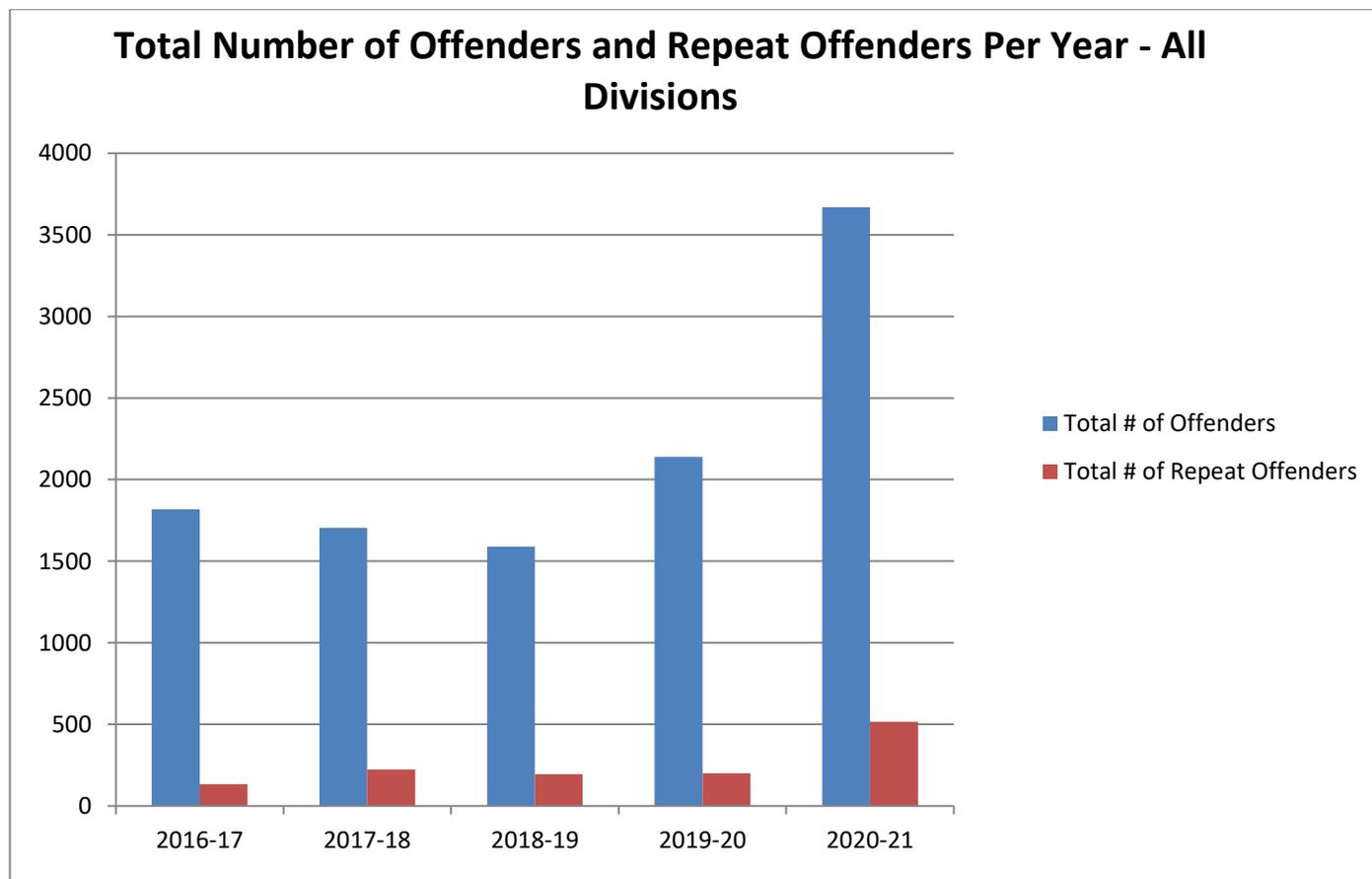
Table 3: Total Number of Offences by Type – All Divisions

Charge Code	Charge Text	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
B.i.1(a)	Forgery (documents, not transcripts)	46	28	64	40	32
B.i.1(b)	Unauthorized aid	649	600	578	953	2400
B.i.1(c)	Personation	13	3	5	0	2
B.i.1(d)	Plagiarism	1002	1082	935	1124	1356
B.i.1(e)	Re-submission of work	31	14	21	25	49
B.i.1(f)	Concoction	5	14	13	15	20
B.i.3(a)	Forgery (academic records)	6	0	0	1	0
B.i.3(b)	Cheating for academic advantage	66	46	43	45	42
	Total	**1818**	**1787**	**1659**	**2203**	**3901**

Total Number of Offences by Type Per Year - All Divisions
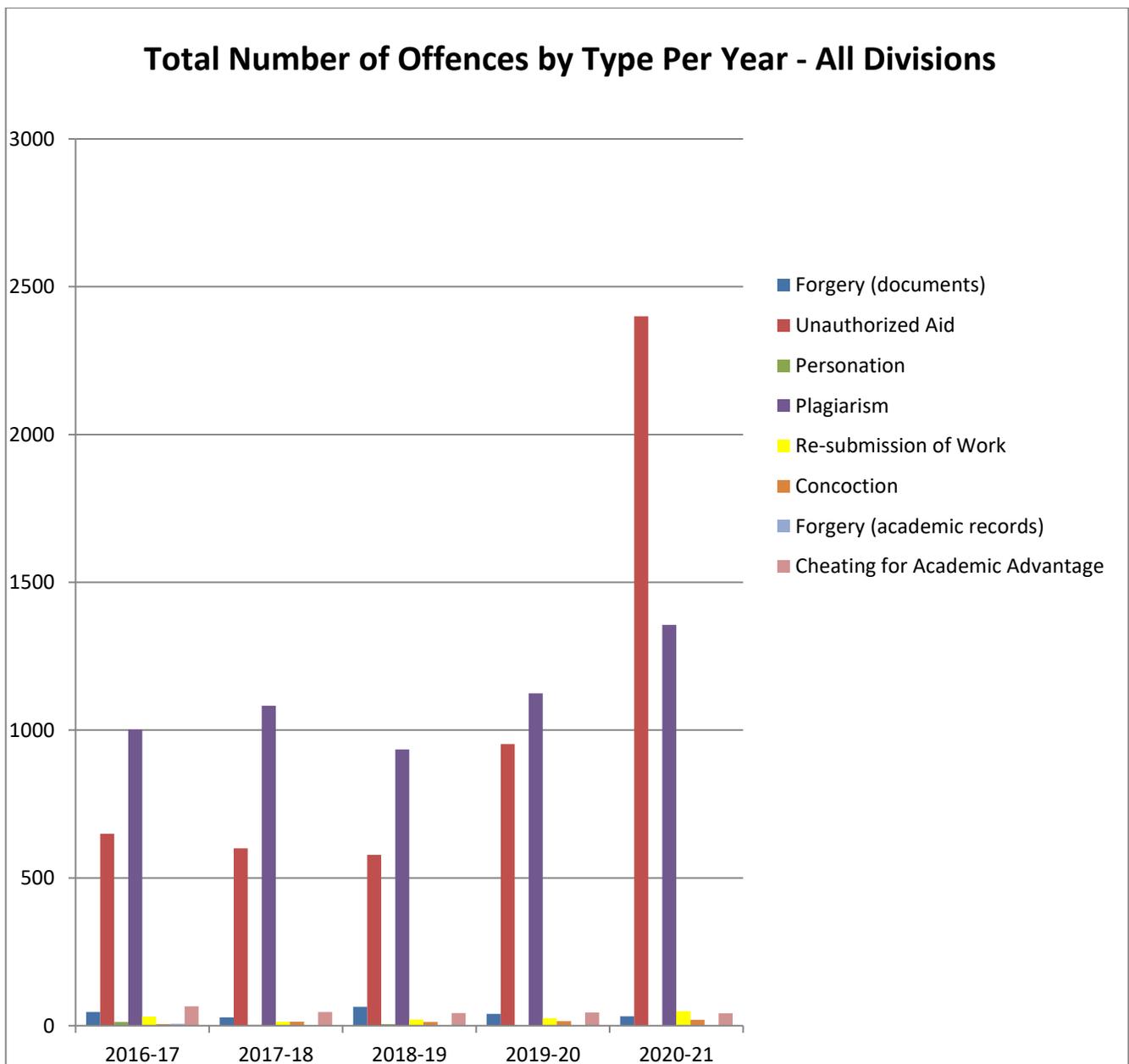
Total Top Two Offences Per Year - All Divisions
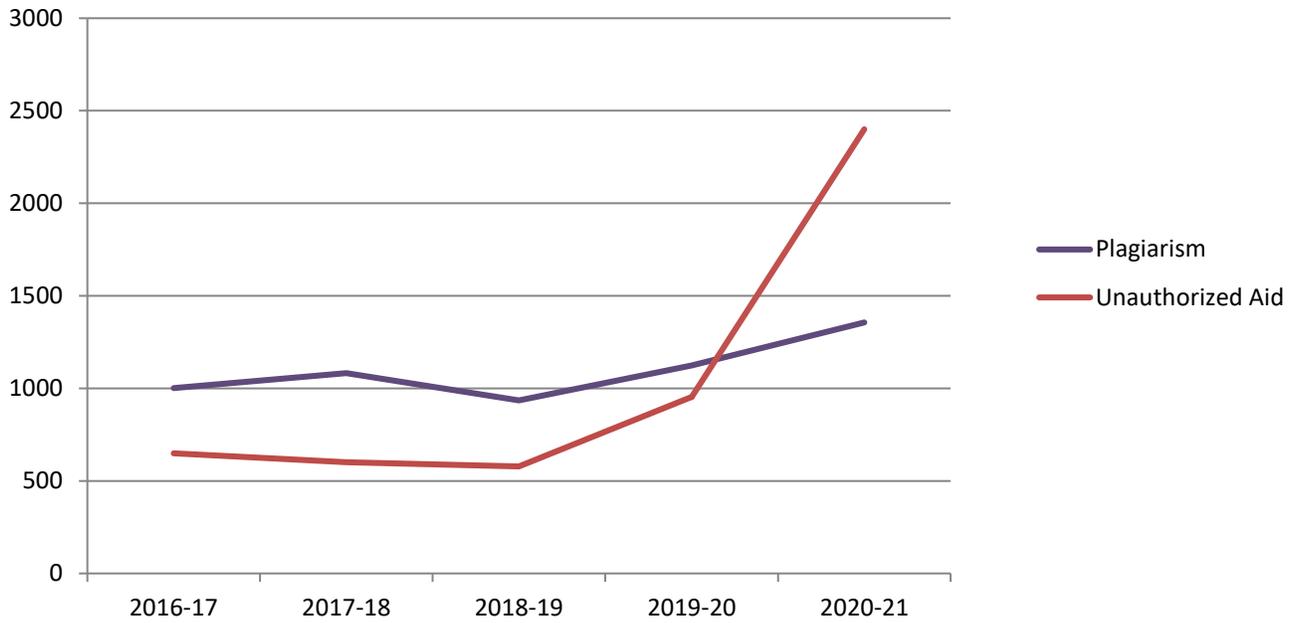
Total Number of Offences by Type for 2020-21 - All Divisions *

- Plagiarism - 35%
- Unauthorized Aid - 61.5%
- Cheating for Academic Advantage - 1%
- Forgery (Academic Records) - 0%
- Re-submission of Work - 1.25%
- Concoction - 0.5 %
- Personation - 0.05%
- Forgery (Documents) - 0.82%
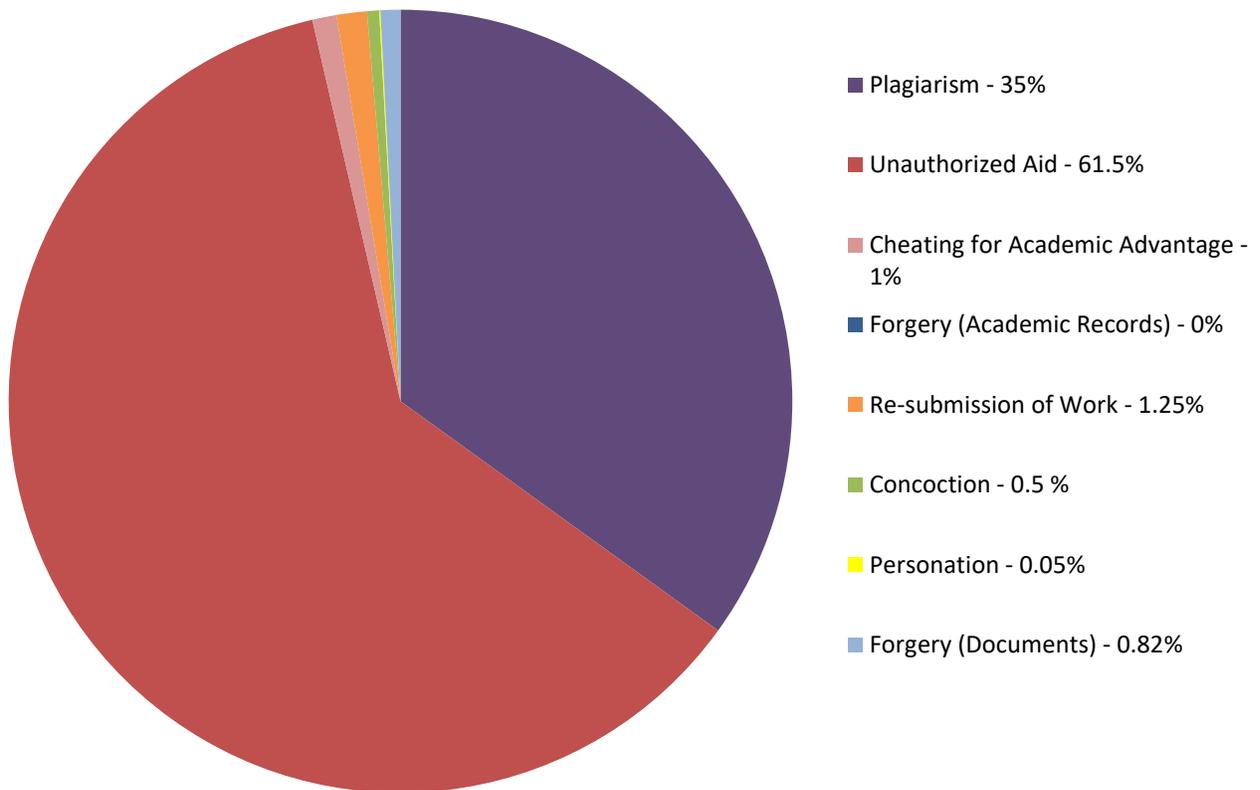
Table 4A: Timeliness between Date of Offence and Case Resolved

Year July 1-June 30	Time between Date of Offence and Case Resolved				
	Within 6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	Total
2016-17	89.2%	6.3%	1.9%	2.5%	99.9%
2017-18	77.5%	8%	5.3%	9%	99.8%
2018-19	79.5%	8.7%	5.5%	6.3%	99.9%
2019-20	86.5%	7.5%	2.9%	1.3%	98.2%
2020-21	79.7%	10.5%	6.3%	2.5%	99%

Table 4B: Timeliness between Date Academic Integrity Office Became Aware and Case Resolved

Year July 1-June 30	Time between Date Academic Integrity Office Became Aware and Case Resolved				
	Within 6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	Total
2016-17	94.7%	2.9%	1.2%	1.2%	100 %
2017-18	81%	6.3%	2.2%	10.2%	99.7%
2018-19	86.6%	5.2%	4.2%	3.9%	99.9%
2019-20	92.1%	4.7%	1.4%	0.4%	98.6%
2020-21	89.1%	4.8%	4.1%	1.3%	99.3%

Table 4C: Timeliness for 2019-2020- By Division

Division	2020-21				
	Time between Date of Offence and Case Resolved				
	6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	Total
Applied Science & Engineering	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Architecture	92.3%	0%	0%	7.6%	99.9%
Arts & Science	89.1%	9.6%	1.1%	0.1%	99.9%
Dentistry	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Graduate Studies	98%	2%	0%	0%	100%
Law	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Medicine	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Music	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Nursing	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Pharmacy	4.2%	5.2%	61.4%	29.2%	100%
Kinesiology & Physical Education	94%	6%	0%	0%	100%
U of T Mississauga	69.3%	13.8%	10.9%	3.7%	97.8%
U of T Scarborough	73.9%	16.1%	4.7%	4.2%	98.9%
Total	79.7%	10.5%	6.3%	2.5%	99.0%

Table 4D: Timeliness for 2019-2020 By Division

Division	2020-21				
	Time between Date Academic Integrity Office Became Aware and Case Resolved				
	6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	Total
Applied Science & Engineering	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Architecture	92.3%	0%	0%	7.6%	99.9%
Arts & Science	99.2%	0.7%	0%	0%	99.9%
Dentistry	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Graduate Studies	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Law	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Medicine	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Music	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Nursing	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Pharmacy	5.2%	14.6%	60.4%	19.8%	100%
Kinesiology & Physical Education	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
U of T Mississauga	79.3%	10.9%	6.9%	1.3%	98.5%
U of T Scarborough	90.9%	3.3%	2.1%	2.8%	99.1%
Total	89.1%	4.8%	4.1%	1.3%	99.3%

*For Timeliness Tables 4 A, B, and D, some totals do not equal 100%, because of rounding or due to the fact some cases took longer than 15 months to resolve.

Provost's Annual Report on Cases of Academic Discipline

## Appendix B: Summary of University Tribunal Cases 2020-21

Table 1: Overview of Open Cases

Year July 1-June 30	Cases Carried Forward charges laid before July 1	New Cases charges laid	Total Open Cases	Cases Resolved*	Cases Carried Forward ** (as of July 1, 2021)
2016-17	53	68	121	61	60
2017-18	60	47	107	56	51
2018-19	51	49	100	49	51
2019-20	51	50	101	35	66
2020-21	66	128***	194	99	95

*These include cases that were returned to the decanal level/settled/withdrawn. There was also one resolved academic discipline case that was not processed through the *Code of Behaviour*.

** Some of these cases that were active (carried forward) on July 1st have since been closed.

*** This number represents cases that went through the *Code of Behaviour*. In addition to these cases, there were two academic discipline cases where charges were laid, but not processed under the *Code of Behaviour*.

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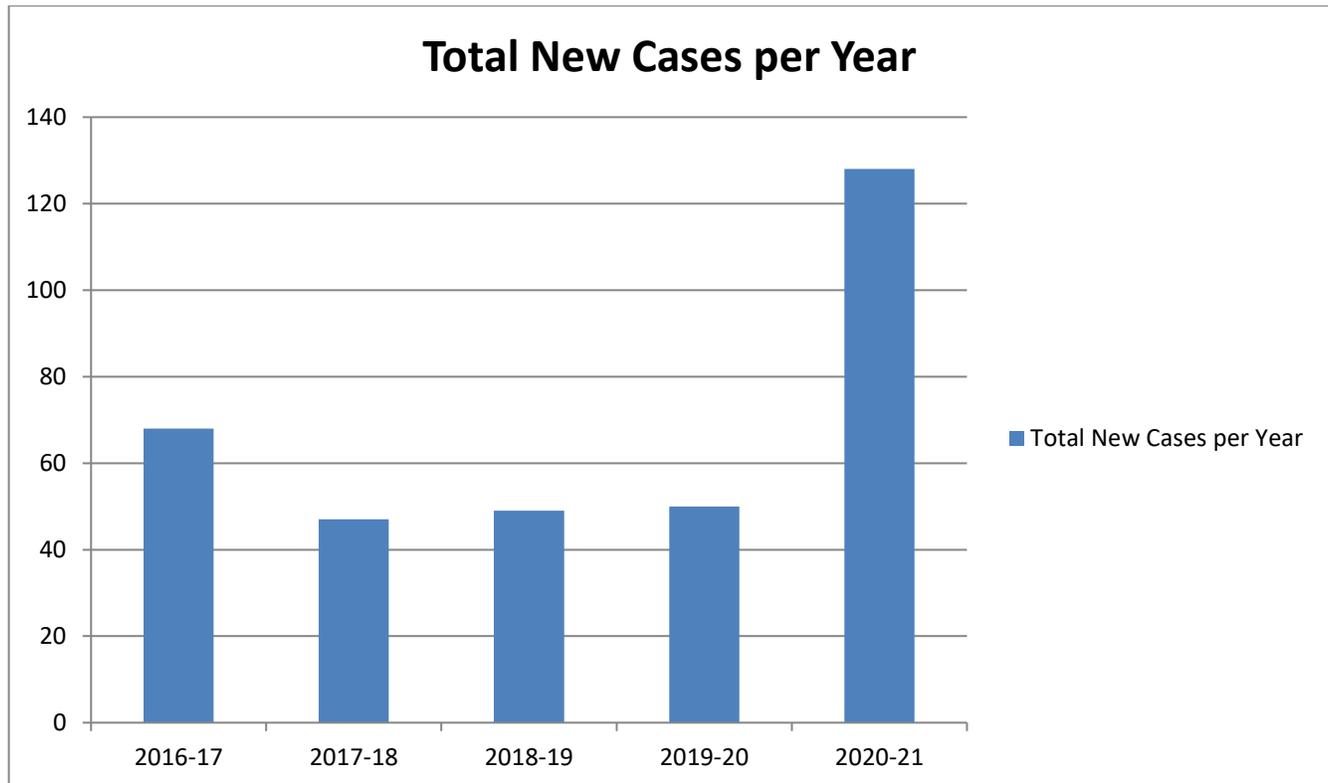
Table 2: Total Number of Cases by Final Outcome

Outcome	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Acquittal	0	1	0	0	1
Degree Recall	0	2	1	0	0
Degree Suspension*	0	0	1	0	0
Expulsion from University	8	16	13	7	6
Suspension	31	17	13	11	21
Returned to Decanal Level / Minutes of Settlement/Charges Withdrawn	22	21**	21	17	71

NOTE: this column refers to those acquitted of <u>all</u> charges, not those acquitted of partial charges.

* The Degree Suspension column was added to the chart in 2018-19, when we recorded the first such sanction.

** There was one case inadvertently missed in the 2017-18 reporting year, which was Returned to the Decanal Level.

Table 3: Total Number of Cases Appealed*

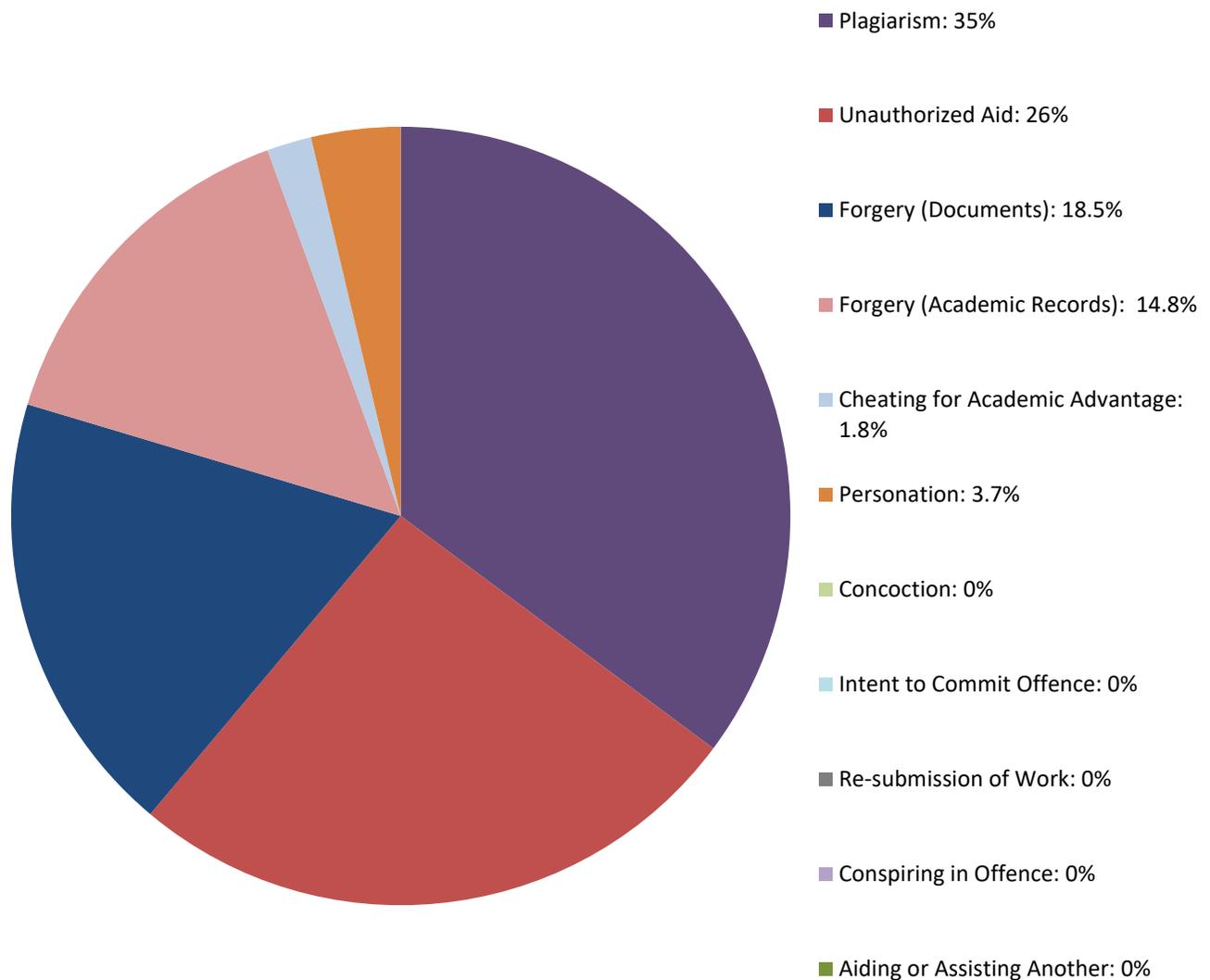|	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total	2	4	1	0	1

* Appeal cases are reported in the year the decision is issued, and not in the year the appeal is filed.

Table 4: Total Number of Offences by Type*

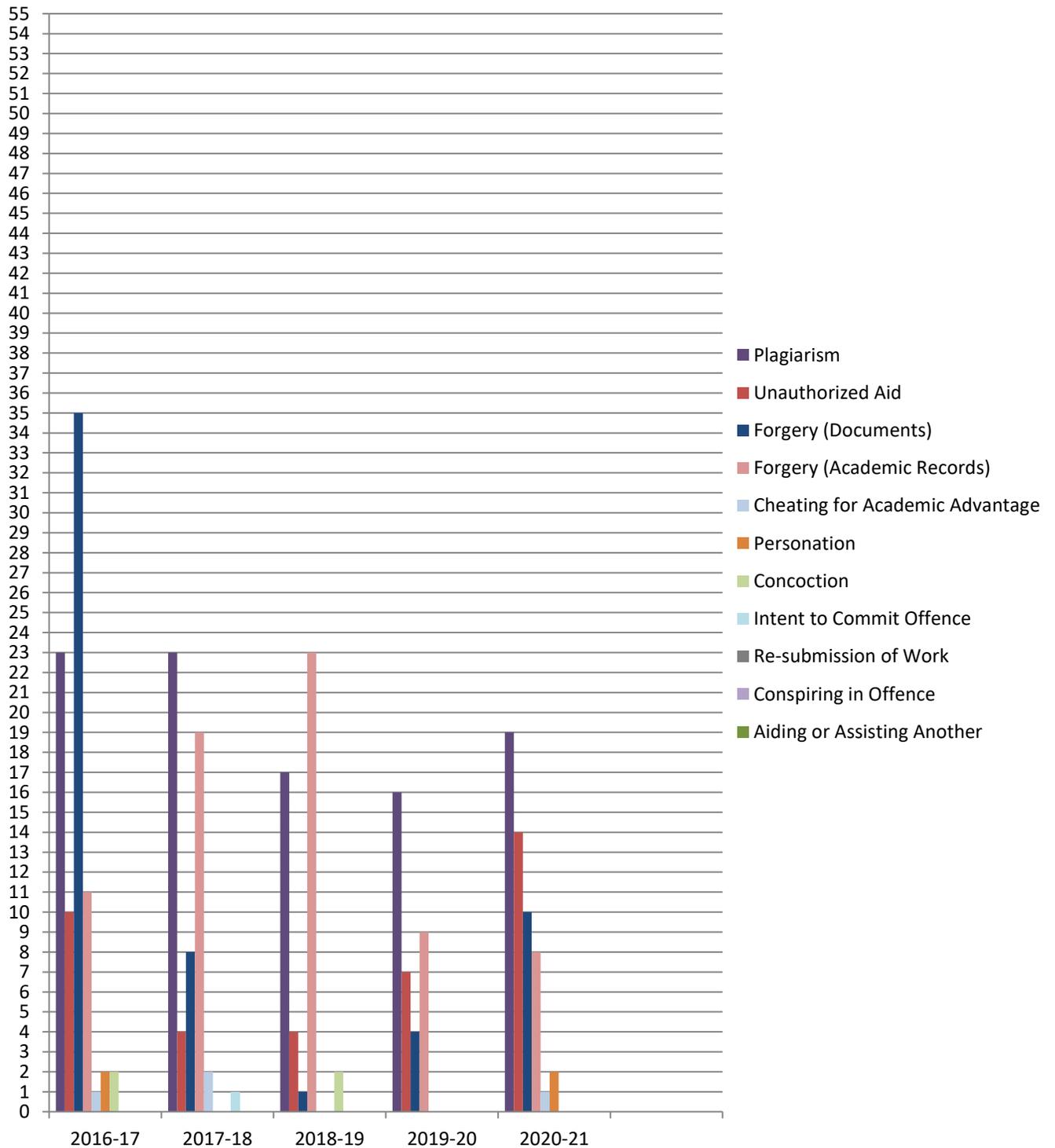| Charge Code	Charge Text	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
B.i.1(a)	Forgery (documents, not transcripts)	35	8	1	4	10
B.i.1(b)	Unauthorized aid or receiving assistance	10	4	4	7	14
B.i.1(c)	Personation	2	0	0	0	2
B.i.1(d)	Plagiarism	23	23	17	16	19
B.i.1(e)	Re-submission of work	0	0	0	0	0
B.i.1(f)	Concoction	2	0	2	0	0
B.i.3(a)	Forgery (academic records)	11	19	23	9	8
B.i.3(b)	Cheating for academic advantage	1	2	0	0	1
B.ii.1(a).ii	Aiding or assisting another	0	0	0	0	0
B.ii.1(a).iv	Conspiring in offence	0	0	0	0	0
B.ii.2	Intent to commit offence	0	1	0	0	0

* This chart captures all offences for which the Tribunal made an official finding of guilt. Offences that went back to the decanal level are counted by the Division, in order to avoid double counting.

Total Percentage of Offences by Type for 2020-2021*

- Plagiarism: 35%
- Unauthorized Aid: 26%
- Forgery (Documents): 18.5%
- Forgery (Academic Records): 14.8%
- Cheating for Academic Advantage: 1.8%
- Personation: 3.7%
- Concoction: 0%
- Intent to Commit Offence: 0%
- Re-submission of Work: 0%
- Conspiring in Offence: 0%
- Aiding or Assisting Another: 0%

*The percentages may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

Total Number of Offences by Type per Year

Legend:
- Plagiarism
- Unauthorized Aid
- Forgery (Documents)
- Forgery (Academic Records)
- Cheating for Academic Advantage
- Personation
- Concoction
- Intent to Commit Offence
- Re-submission of Work
- Conspiring in Offence
- Aiding or Assisting Another

Table 5: Total Number of Offenders by Division*

Division*	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Applied Science & Engineering	2	0	2	0	6
Architecture, Landscape, Design	2	0	1	1	1
Arts & Science	12	14	10	13	61
Dentistry	0	0	0	0	0
Graduate Studies	4	7	8	1	1
Law	0	0	0	1	0
Medicine	0	0	0	1	1
Music	0	0	0	0	0
Nursing	0	0	0	0	0
OISE / UT	0	0	0	0	0
Pharmacy	1	3	0	0	0
Kinesiology & Physical Education	0	0	0	0	0
U of T Mississauga	34	19	21	13	14
U of T Scarborough	6	13	7	5	15

* This chart includes offenders whose cases went back to decanal level for resolution/settlement/withdrawal.

Table 6a: Timeliness between Charges Laid and Order Issued

Year July 1-June 30	Time between Charges Laid and Order Issued				
	Within 6 months	6-9 months	9 -12 months	12-15 months	Total*
2016-17	74.3%	20%	3%	0%	97%
2017-18	50%	30%	13%	3%	96%
2018-19	70%	11%	15%	4%	100%
2019-20	53%	33%	13%	0%	99%
2020-21	44%	22%	7%	7%	81%

* The total is calculated based on the total number of cases where an Order was issued. For 2020-21, an Order was issued in all but one case that went to a hearing, and this was because the Student was found not guilty.

Table 6b: Timeliness between Charges Laid and Written Reasons

Year July 1-June 30	Time between Charges Laid and Written Reasons				
	Within 6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	Total
2016-17	33%	31%	31%	0%	95%
2017-18	17%	26%	29%	11%	83%
2018-19	36%	43%	4%	14%	97%
2019-20	22%	39%	17%	11%	89%
2020-21	21%	18%	25%	7%	71%

NOTE: Tables 6a and 6b do not include offenders whose cases went back to decanal level for resolution or were settled, but it does include decisions that were appealed. Also, in 79% of cases that proceeded to a hearing, either an Order or written reasons were issued within 15 months. There were eight cases where the process took longer than 15 months.