

**THE UNIVERSITY TRIBUNAL  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**

**IN THE MATTER OF** charges of academic dishonesty filed on January 30 & April 10, 2025,

**AND IN THE MATTER OF** the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, 2019*,

**AND IN THE MATTER OF** the *University of Toronto Act, 1971*, S.O. 1971, c. 56 as am. S.O. 1978, c. 88

**BETWEEN:**

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**

- and -

D [REDACTED] H [REDACTED]

**REASONS FOR DECISION**

**Date of Hearing:** January 8, 2026, via Zoom

**Members of the Panel:**

Michael Hines, Chair  
Professor Manfred Schneider, Faculty Panel Member  
Jennifer Wu, Student Panel Member

**Appearances:**

William Webb, Discipline Counsel, Paliare Roland Rosenberg Rothstein LLP

**Hearing Secretary:**

Karen Bellinger, Associate Director, Office of Appeals, Discipline & Faculty Grievances

**Not In Attendance:**

D [REDACTED] H [REDACTED]

## Charges and Hearing

1. This panel of the University Tribunal held a hearing on January 8, 2026, to consider charges brought by the University of Toronto against D■■■■ H■■■■ (“the Student”) under the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, 2019* (the “Code”).

## Procedural Issues

2. The Student was charged with the Offences set out in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9, below (the “Charges”). Essentially, they concern three related allegations, all arising in the spring of 2024: first, that that the Student obtained unauthorized assistance in connection with the final exam in MAT235Y1: Multivariable Calculus (“MAT235”) through communications during the exam with an outside source; second, that that the Student obtained unauthorized assistance in connection with the final exam in MAT246H1: Concepts in Abstract Mathematics (“MAT246”) through communications during the exam with an outside source; and third, that the Student obtained unauthorized assistance in connection with Term Test 2 in MAT246. The first set of charges shall be referred to below as the “MAT235 Final Exam Charges”. The second set of charges shall be referred to below as the “MAT246 Final Exam Charges”. The third set of charges shall be referred to as the “MAT246 Term Test 2 Charges”.
3. As the Student was aware well prior to this hearing, the University had charged several students with the same or similar types of misconduct in relation to academic work in MAT246H1 and/or MAT235Y1 in Winter 2024. Prior to the hearing in this matter, the Student agreed that that this proceeding and one or more other proceedings in relation to academic misconduct in MAT246H1 and/or MAT235Y1 in Winter 2024 might, in whole or in part, be heard one immediately after the other by the same panel, pursuant to Rule 30 of the *Rules of Practice and Procedure*. This, in fact, took place.
4. The Student did not appear at the hearing. However, the University provided the panel with a Consent signed by the Student on September 24, 2025 which requested that the hearing proceed in the Student’s absence on the basis of an Agreed Statement of Facts (“ASF”) that the Student had signed on May 20, 2025. This procedure was accordingly adopted.
5. Paragraphs 3 and 4 of that ASF read as follows:
  3. The Office of Appeals, Discipline, and Faculty Grievances sent the Student a letter with information about Downtown Legal Services, the Law Society Referral Service, and the hearing process. The Student has reviewed this letter, the University has given the Student an opportunity to obtain legal advice, and the Student has obtained legal advice about this matter. A copy of the letter from the Office of Appeals, Discipline, and Faculty Grievances to the Student is attached to the ASF at Tab B.

4. The Student acknowledges that they have received a copy of the charges, waives the reading of the charges, and pleads guilty to all charges.

### **Charges**

6. As stated above, the hearing addressed three different sets of charges. These are set out immediately below.
7. By letter dated January 30, 2025, the Student was charged with the MAT235 Final Exam Charges as follows:
  1. On or about April 16, 2024, you knowingly used or possessed an unauthorized aid or aids or obtained unauthorized assistance in connection with the final exam in MAT235, contrary to section B.I.1(b) of the Code.
  2. In the alternative, on or about April 16, 2024, you knowingly represented as your own an idea or expression of an idea or work of another in connection with the final exam in MAT235, contrary to section B.I.1(d) of the Code.
  3. In the alternative, on or about April 16, 2024, you knowingly engaged in a form of cheating, academic dishonesty or misconduct, fraud or misrepresentation not otherwise described in the Code to obtain academic credit or other academic advantage of any kind in connection with the final exam in MAT235, contrary to section B.I.3(b) of the Code.
8. By that same letter, the Student was charged with the MAT246 Final Exam Charges as follows:
  1. On or about April 26, 2024, you knowingly used or possessed an unauthorized aid or aids or obtained unauthorized assistance in connection with the final exam in MAT246, contrary to section B.I.1(b) of the Code.
  2. In the alternative, on or about April 26, 2024, you knowingly represented as your own an idea or expression of an idea or work of another in connection with the final exam in MAT246, contrary to section B.I.1(d) of the Code.
  3. In the alternative, on or about April 26, 2024, you knowingly engaged in a form of cheating, academic dishonesty or misconduct, fraud or misrepresentation not otherwise described in the Code to obtain academic credit or other academic advantage of any kind in connection with the final exam in MAT246, contrary to section B.I.3(b) of the Code.
9. By letter dated April 10, 2025, the Student was charged with the following supplemental charges concerning Term Test 2 for MAT246:
  1. On or about March 8, 2024, you knowingly used or possessed an unauthorized aid or aids or obtained unauthorized assistance in connection with term test 2 in MAT246, contrary to section B.I.1(b) of the Code.

2. In the alternative, on or about March 8, 2024, you knowingly represented as your own an idea or expression of an idea or work of another in connection with term test 2 in MAT246, contrary to section B.I.1(d) of the Code.

3. In the alternative, on or about March 8, 2024, you knowingly engaged in a form of cheating, academic dishonesty or misconduct, fraud or misrepresentation not otherwise described in the Code to obtain academic credit or other academic advantage of any kind in connection with term test 2 in MAT246, contrary to section B.I.3(b) of the Code.

## **Evidence and Findings**

10. Put briefly, the Charges arose out of the discovery by the University of a sophisticated scheme to cheat on the final exams in MAT235 and MAT246. This discovery then led the University to analyze the results of the MAT246 Term Test 2, written earlier that term, which again revealed a scheme of cheating.
11. Given that the discovery of cheating in the MAT235 Final Exam and the MAT246 Final Exam preceded (and led to) the discovery of cheating in the earlier MAT246 Term Test 2, we will describe the events and evidence concerning the two Final Exams first.
  - a) **MAT235 Final Exam**
12. In April 2024, the department of mathematics received a tipoff that a cheating account on WeChat advertised cheating services in relation to several final exams. The department asked instructors to consider this when grading final exams.
13. The final exam in MAT235 was administered in person on April 16, 2024. The final exam was worth 30% of the final grade in the course. Students were prohibited from using or possessing aids or obtaining assistance on the final exam.
14. During the final exam in MAT235, an invigilator caught a student, S.Z., using a smartphone. Around the same time that day, another invigilator caught a different student, H.W., leaving the washroom with scrap paper with answers to questions on the second half of the final exam. The invigilator also found scrap paper with answers to questions on the first half of the final exam on H.W.'s desk and noted that H.W. had made several trips to the washroom earlier that morning.
15. The course instructor subsequently compared the answers that students had submitted. It was determined that ten students (B.C., D.H., S.J., B.J., Z.L., M.L., X.L., Z.L., F.Z., and J.Z.) wrote answers that had striking similarities and that it was highly unlikely that the similarities were coincidental. The student "D.H." referred to above was the Student in our hearing.

16. The course instructor later reviewed the scrap paper that invigilators confiscated from H.W., and S.Z.'s final exam, and found that there were striking similarities between all 12 students' answers.
17. The course instructor then alleged that the 12 students obtained unauthorized assistance from a cheating service.
18. The exam materials upon which these various allegations were based were filed as exhibits in this hearing.

**b) MAT246 Final Exam**

19. The final exam in MAT246 was administered in person on April 26, 2024. It was worth 42% of the final grade in the course. The usual directions and warnings concerning academic dishonesty had been provided during the course and were repeated on the exam materials.
20. The scheme involved more than a half-dozen students using what the ASF refers to as "spy technology" such as button cameras and concealed smart watches. Through these hard-to-detect devices, the exam participants could communicate exam questions to and receive answers from an unauthorized source evidently located outside of Canada. This scheme was commercial in nature – the involved students paid their source for the information supplied.
21. The mathematics department had received information shortly before the writing of the final exam in MAT246 that identified three students, J.Z., S.J. and D.H (the Student in our case) as possible participants in a cheating scheme. In the course of the MAT246 final exam on April 26, 2024, suspicious behaviours were observed. As stated in paragraph 43 of the ASF:
  43. [X] invigilated the final exam in MAT246. During the first 30 minutes of the final exam, [X] saw J.Z. tilting their exam booklet in front of their chest and flipping through the pages without writing anything. After 30 minutes, [X] saw J.Z. writing vigorously. [X] saw J.Z. wearing a shirt with black buttons that were the same shape and colour as a button camera, but she did not notice any other features of the buttons to indicate that one of them was a camera.
22. The invigilator did not intercede at that time but rather made notes and a report which led to further investigation, as described below.
23. Following the final exam, a comparison was undertaken concerning the answers of the students who had written the exam. As stated in paragraph 45 of the ASF, this revealed that "that several students (Y.D., S.J., X.L., X.M., J.Z., and S.Z.) wrote answers that had striking similarities to D'H.'s answers, and that it was highly unlikely that the similarities were coincidental." As noted, "D.H." was the Student in our case.

24. The exam materials upon which these conclusions were based were filed as exhibits in this hearing.
25. Based upon the foregoing, allegations were made against several students, including the Student in this case, that they had obtained unauthorized assistance from a third party or a cheating service in connection with the final exam in MAT246.

**c) Dean's Meetings**

26. In the spring of 2024, the Student, as well as B.C., S.J., B.J., Z.L., M.L., X.L., Z.L., H.W., F.Z., J.Z., and S.Z. attended dean's designate meetings to discuss the allegations that they obtained unauthorized assistance from a third party or a cheating service in connection with the final exam in MAT235.
27. In the spring of 2024, the Student and Y.D., S.J., X.L., X.M., J.Z., and S.Z. attended dean's designate meetings to discuss the allegations that they obtained unauthorized assistance from a third party or a cheating service in connection with the final exam in MAT246.
28. In particular, on June 20, 2024, the Student attended a dean's designate meeting to discuss the MAT235 allegations. At the start of the meeting, Professor John Coleman, a dean's designate for academic integrity, gave the Student the dean's warning in the Code. During the meeting, the Student stated that they attended a tutoring session the night before the final exam, the session was hosted by someone called "orange senior", they memorized notes from the session before the final exam, and their answers may be the same as other students' answers because other students attended the review session. The Student denied obtaining unauthorized assistance from a third party or a cheating service on the final exams in MAT235 and MAT246.
29. During the dean's designate meetings, only one of the accused students (referred to below as the "Co-operating Student") acknowledged their guilt. The others, including the Student at issue here, denied any wrongdoing.
30. As stated, the Co-operating Student admitted their guilt and provided insights as to how the scheme operated. This occurred at a dean's designate meeting to discuss the allegations that the Co-operating Student had obtained unauthorized assistance from a third party or a cheating service in connection with the final exam in MAT235 and the final exam in MAT246 in Winter 2024.
31. At the start of that meeting, Professor Graeme Hirst, a dean's designate for academic integrity, gave the Co-operating Student the dean's warning in the Code. The Co-operating Student then admitted that they paid a third party for answers to the final exam in MAT235 and the final exam in MAT246. The Co-operating Student explained that the third party told them that other students paid for the service, and that other students sent pictures of each final exam to the third party. The Co-operating Student stated that they had received answers via their

smartwatch for the final exam in MAT246 and had received answers via their cellphone for the final exam in MAT235. The Co-operating Student explained that the answers did not come in all at once because the third party needed time to write the answers.

32. The Panel was provided with a copy of the meeting notes from this meeting.
33. The Co-operating Student subsequently sent the division pictures of the answers to the final exam in MAT235 and the final exam in MAT246 that they had received from the third party during the final exams. These photographs, coupled with a detailed comparison of the answers submitted by the students under suspicion, assisted the University further in connecting the Student in our case (and others) to that scheme.

**d) Term Test 2 in MAT246**

34. Term Test 2 in MAT246 had been administered in person on March 8, 2024. Term Test 2 was worth 20% of the final grade in the course. The front page of Term Test 2 in MAT246 stated that students were not permitted any aids during the term test.
35. That same day, students in MAT246, including the Student in our case, submitted their term tests for academic credit. Evidently, no academic misconduct was suspected at the time.
36. Following the discovery of widespread, organized cheating in the MAT246 Final Exam, the professor in the course reviewed other academic work previously submitted by the suspected students. It was determined that the Student and a number of others had submitted answers to Term Test 2 in MAT246 that had striking similarities. It was then alleged that these students had obtained unauthorized assistance on Term Test 2 in MAT246 from a third-party or a cheating service.
37. On April 1, 2025, ten months after attending the dean's designate meeting described in paragraph 28, above, the Student attended a dean's designate meeting to discuss the MAT246 Term Test 2 allegations. At the start of the meeting, Professor Walid Saleh, a dean's designate for academic integrity, gave the Student the dean's warning in the Code. During the meeting, the Student admitted to committing an academic offence in connection with Term Test 2 in MAT246.

**Admissions and Acknowledgements**

38. As noted at the outset of these Reasons, the Student ultimately signed an ASF on May 20, 2025. This ASF deals with all of the academic offences described above. Paragraphs 58-63 of the ASF read as follows:

58. The Student admits to the following facts in relation to the final exam in MAT235: they used and possessed electronic aids on the final exam; they obtained

unauthorized assistance from a third party or a cheating service on the final exam; they paid for the unauthorized assistance on the final exam; they performed no meaningful academic work on the final exam; they knew that they were prohibited from using or possessing an aid or aids or obtaining assistance on the final exam; and they were dishonest about the allegations at their dean's designate meeting.

59. The Student admits that they knowingly used and possessed unauthorized aids and obtained unauthorized assistance in connection with the final exam in MAT235, contrary to section B.I.1(b) of the Code.

60. The Student admits to the following facts in relation to the final exam in MAT246: they used and possessed electronic aids on the final exam; they obtained unauthorized assistance from a third party or a cheating service on the final exam; they paid for the unauthorized assistance on the final exam; they performed no meaningful academic work on the final exam; they knew that they were prohibited from using or possessing an aid or aids or obtaining assistance on the final exam; and they were dishonest about the allegations at their dean's designate meeting.

61. The Student admits that they knowingly used and possessed unauthorized aids and obtained unauthorized assistance in connection with the final exam in MAT246, contrary to section B.I.1(b) of the Code.

62. The Student admits to the following facts in relation to term test 2 in MAT246: they used and possessed electronic aids on the term test; they obtained unauthorized assistance from a third party or a cheating service on the term test; they paid for the unauthorized assistance on the term test; they performed no meaningful academic work on the term test; and they knew that they were prohibited from using or possessing an aid or aids or obtaining assistance on the term test.

63. The Student admits that they knowingly used and possessed unauthorized aids and obtained unauthorized assistance in connection with term test 2 in MAT246, contrary to section B.I.1(b) of the Code.

39. In our hearing, based on this evidence, the Panel found the Student guilty of Charge 1 of the MAT235 Final Exam Charges, Charge 1 of the MAT246 Final Exam Charges and Charge 1 of the MAT246 Term Test 2 Charges, as set out in paragraphs 7-9, above, namely that the Student knowingly used or possessed an unauthorized aid or aids or obtained unauthorized assistance in connection with the final exams in MAT235 and MAT246, and in Term Test 2 in MAT246, contrary to section B.I.1(b) of the Code.
40. Pursuant to an agreement noted in the ASF, upon the making by the Panel of this finding, the University withdrew the remaining Charges.

## **Sanction**

41. The sanction aspect of the hearing was facilitated by the fact that the University and the Student had, prior to the commencement of the hearing, agreed upon a joint submission on penalty (“JSP”) that would be operative in the event of a finding of misconduct. According to an Agreed Statement of Facts on Penalty (“ASFP”), the Student acknowledged that the Provost had advised the Student of their right to obtain legal advice, and the Student had obtained that advice.
42. Through the ASFP, the Panel was advised that the Student had previously engaged in academic misconduct, having admitted to obtaining unauthorized assistance in the completion of the final assignment in AST201H1S: The Sun and Its Neighbours, in Winter 2022. This ultimately resulted in the imposition of the following sanction on the Student: a final grade of zero on the final assessment in AST201H1S and a notation on their academic record and transcript until August 31, 2024.
43. The parties also filed an Undertaking signed by the Student in which the Student agreed and undertook that, going forward, they would not register for any courses at the University and/or apply for admission to any programs at the University (the “Undertaking”).
44. The critical contextual factor within which to evaluate the issue of sanction in this case is, of course, the existence of the JSP. We are not asked, in this case, to fashion a remedy that, in the Panel’s opinion, best suits the proven offences. That is not to suggest that the Panel disagrees with the agreed upon penalty. That issue simply does not arise for discussion.
45. Rather, for reasons expressed in many previous cases, the Panel recognizes and respects the deference that is customarily accorded to JSPs (see, for example, *University of Toronto and M.A.* (Case No. 837, December 22, 2016)).
46. Accordingly, for our purposes, it is sufficient for the Panel to determine whether or not the JSP in our case would be contrary to the public interest or would otherwise bring the administration of justice within the University into disrepute.
47. We will shortly return to the application of this principle to the JSP in our case. Before doing so, we will consider the factors that the Tribunal would typically apply to a case such as this in the absence of a JSP. This will assist us in performing our task – determining whether the sanction proposed in the JSP falls, in all of the circumstances, within the parameters outlined immediately above.
48. Apart from the JSP, Discipline Counsel asked the Panel to consider the factors typically reviewed in other, similar cases. Assessing the Student’s conduct in this case against these criteria, we observe:
  - (a) **Character:** Because the Student chose not to attend the hearing, we have no direct evidence before of us of the Student’s character. We note, however, that the Student in this case has committed a total of four separate academic offences. Moreover, while the Student ultimately acknowledged their wrongdoing and

entered into ASFs and a JSP, the Student initially dishonestly refused to acknowledge their guilt at the first opportunity to the dean's designate;

**(b) Likelihood of Repetition:** Given the evidence of the Student's multiple offences in this case, there is considerable risk of the same offences currently under review being repeated absent a significant sanction;

**(c) Nature of Offence:** the deliberate, premeditated reliance on unauthorized forms of assistance in tests and examinations is a very serious offence. It strikes at the heart of the University's core values of honesty and integrity. It has the potential to affect other students adversely by allowing cheaters to obtain grades higher than they actually merit by presenting the knowledge of others as their own. It harms the reputation of the University as a whole. The Code itself makes all this very clear. Consequently, those who commit this offence merit serious sanctions;

**(d) Extenuating Circumstances:** There is no evidence of any extenuating circumstances in this case;

**(e) Detriment to the University:** As noted above, offences of the kind committed in this case strike at the heart of the University's core values of honesty and integrity. They cannot be tolerated;

**(f) Deterrence:** Serious sanctions are required to discourage others from committing similar offences.

49. Discipline Counsel also asked us to bear in mind how similar cases have been dealt with in the past. It was pointed out that in similar cases arising recently that do not involve a JSP, the Tribunal has found that expulsion was an appropriate sanction (see, for example, *University of Toronto and J.M.* (Case No. 1573, October 30, 2024)).
50. Most recently, in *University of Toronto and X.M.* (Case No. 1722, December 29, 2025), arising out of the very same MAT246 commercial cheating scheme that is at issue here, the Tribunal accepted a sanction in a JSP that was expressed in precisely the same terms as that proposed in the JSP before us. It should be noted that the student in that case had a prior academic offence on record but had, like the Student in our case, provided an undertaking that they would never re-apply for admission to the University. Because the sanction in that case was arrived at through a JSP, its precedential value is somewhat lessened.
51. As in the case of *X.M.* noted immediately above, a striking feature of our case involves the methodology and context within which the offence took place. Specifically, the Student in our case sought to make use of sophisticated "spyware" (an agreed upon term) provided to them as part of trans-national commercial enterprise. This very troubling feature would, standing alone, invite the most severe response from the University. Moreover, in our case, the Student has been convicted of not one but three separate academic offences. As noted, however,

the Student has provided an undertaking that they will never re-apply for admission to the University, as had the student in *X.M.*

52. As stated at the outset of this Decision, our case involving the Student is only one of many cases before the Tribunal arising out of the extensive cheating scheme discovered in the Mathematics Department in the spring of 2024. It would be analytically possible (some might say tempting), to try to assess with precision the many factors that can vary from student to student and case to case – past disciplinary record, the number of courses and tests/exams in which the student cheated in 2024, the method(s) used to cheat, the timing and content of any admissions, cooperation in other prosecutions, the presence or absence of an apology and/or an undertaking not to re-apply, and so on.
53. This could lead to an exquisite “titration” of these many cases, with fine distinctions being drawn – perhaps calculated in months rather than years of suspension or notation – in an attempt to make each punishment precisely fit each academic offence.
54. The reality and practicality of the situation dictate a different approach. Any rejection of a JSP, however “justified” by a calculus of the kind described above, would invite an appeal. The costs to the University, both immediate and in the longer term administration of discipline, would be substantial.
55. In view of this, the Panel is prepared to accept the mandate described above in the presence of a JSP. We recognize that the sanction proposed in this case, when compared to the acceptance of the identical sanction in other cases involving objectively less egregious facts, may appear relatively lenient. We note for the record Discipline Counsel’s assertion to us that, in the absence of the Student’s Undertaking never to re-apply to the University, the penalty of expulsion would have been sought. The University’s position in this regard was explicitly acknowledged by the Student in the written Undertaking referred to in paragraph 43, above. It is a position that would clearly have been supported by the facts of this case.
56. In all of the circumstances of this case, we do not find that the sanction proposed by the parties, one which falls just short of expulsion, would be contrary to the public interest, nor would it otherwise bring the administration of justice within the University into disrepute. That, is our response to the question that, as stated above, is set before us for determination.
57. Accordingly, the terms of the JSP, set out in in paragraph 58, below, are hereby adopted by the Panel as the appropriate penalty in this case.
58. Based upon the foregoing, and after reading the evidence submitted and hearing submissions from Discipline Counsel, the Tribunal orders that:
  - (a) the hearing may proceed in the absence of the Student;

- (b) the Student is guilty of knowingly using and possessing unauthorized aids and obtaining unauthorized assistance in connection with the final exam in MAT235, contrary to section B.I.1(b) of the Code;
- (c) the Student is guilty of knowingly using and possessing unauthorized aids and obtaining unauthorized assistance in connection with Term Test 2 in MAT246, contrary to section B.I.1(b) of the Code;
- (d) the Student is guilty of knowingly using and possessing unauthorized aids and obtaining unauthorized assistance in connection with the final exam in MAT246, contrary to section B.I.1(b) of the Code;
- (e) the following sanctions shall be imposed on the Student:
  - (i) a final grade of zero in MAT235Y1 in Winter 2024;
  - (ii) a final grade of zero in MAT246H1 in Winter 2024;
  - (iii) a suspension from the University for 5 years from the date of the Tribunal's order;
  - (iv) a notation of the offence on the Student's academic record and transcript for 6 years from the date of the Tribunal's order; and
- (f) this case shall be reported to the Provost for publication of a notice of the decision of the Tribunal and the sanctions imposed, with the name of the Student withheld.

Dated at Toronto this 19th day of February, 2026.

Original signed by:

Michael Hines, Chair

On Behalf of the Panel