

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT INFORMATION

Section:	Administration (AD)
Subject:	Organization of the Institution
Legislation:	<i>Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (RSA 2000 cF-25); Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulation AR186/2008; Post-Secondary Learning Act (SA 2003 cP-19.5).</i>
Effective:	December 8, 2006
Revision:	September 1, 2016 (reformatted); April 10, 2024

APPROVED: _____
President and CEO

POLICY

The policy of the Board of Governors is to comply with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

PROCEDURE**DEFINITION****Personal information**

Recorded information about an identifiable individual and includes, but is not limited to, name, residential address and phone number, personal email address, sex (sex assigned at birth), gender identity, title, pronouns, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, Indigeneity, ethnicity, disability status, languages spoken, immigration status, identification number, education and employment history, health information including documentation of approved accommodations for physical or mental disability, an individual's personal views or opinions and information about an individual's financial matters.

Student

A person currently enrolled in a SAIT program or course, or who is an applicant to SAIT.

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GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

1. SAIT is committed to protecting the confidentiality and privacy of the personal information contained in student records and files within the custody or under the control of SAIT. Refer to procedure [AD.1.1.1 Personal Information – General Guidelines](#).
2. SAIT will collect personal information directly from the individual except where the *FOIP Act* provides otherwise.
3. This procedure applies to former students.

PROCEDURE

A. Student Information

1. SAIT maintains student records and files, with the exception of student records and files relating to academic or non-academic misconduct, which the Office of the Registrar has designated to be maintained by the Office of Community Conduct.
2. The Office of the Registrar, Associate Registrar and Continuing Education and Professional Studies are the only authorities at SAIT authorized to release a student's academic record and/or other personal information on a student's official record or file, unless the student has provided consent. Each authority will determine the legitimacy of all such requests. Urgent requests for student information based on an apparent emergency may also be handled by the Safety and Community Services department in consultation with a designated authority.
3. The student record and file consists of student personal and academic information relating to a student's education at SAIT. This permanent record includes personal information required in the administration of official student academic records and academic information such as grades, credential or transfer credit awarded and program withdrawal or expulsion. This information may also include assessments, correspondence and other information provided by the student.
4. Student records are maintained in perpetuity and in accordance with SAIT's Classification Scheme and Records Retention Schedule (refer to procedure [AD.3.2.3 Retention and Disposition Schedule](#)).

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B. Student Access

1. Upon written request, the student's records and files will be released to the student (or the parent or legal guardian of a minor student, who is under the age of eighteen years).
 - a) When the original record is shown, examination should be permitted only under conditions which will prevent its alteration or mutilation. Original permanent record cards may not be removed from the Office of the Registrar.
 - b) Equivalent access is available to the student's financial assistance file. A student may not authorize anyone else to view that student's financial assistance file if it contains financial information about any other individual, unless that other individual has given written permission. The student may not have access to the personal information of any other individual which may be in the student's financial assistance file.

C. Employee Access to Student Personal Information

1. SAIT employees may be provided access to student information where it is demonstrated that the information is necessary to perform their duties (for example, faculty members and administrative staff). The Office of the Registrar or designate will determine whether the need to have access to the student's record has been demonstrated.
2. SAIT employees are prohibited from sharing student personal information to the extent that they may not acknowledge whether an individual is enrolled at SAIT or provide any personal information about the student, without the consent of the student or except as otherwise authorized by the *FOIP Act*.

D. Disclosure of Student Personal Information

1. Disclosure to other persons or agencies of any personal information is prohibited, except as authorized elsewhere within this procedure or with the written consent of the student. Please see Schedule A Information Waiver form, an Associated Document to this procedure. In particular, disclosure without statutory authority and/or consent is not permitted to:
 - a) Commercial or credit agencies of any kind.

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- b) Debt collectors.
 - c) Employers.
 - d) Government or other agencies including sponsoring bodies.
 - e) Legal agents (except by a court order or appropriate legislation).
 - f) Other students.
 - g) Parent or legal guardian, unless the student is a minor.
 - h) Representative of foreign states.
 - i) School boards, high schools and other academic institutions.
 - j) Any other third party not listed above.
2. Because of the relationship of those responsible for students who receive financial aid funding from the federal and provincial governments and banks, SAIT has, in specific identifiable situations, the responsibility to release information that the student would have submitted in support of an application for financial assistance to:
- a) Chartered banks with which a registered student negotiated government student loans (if specific authorization is part of the loan application documentation);
 - b) Student Finance Board; and
 - c) The Government of Alberta ministry responsible for post-secondary education.
3. A waiver for release of information is usually incorporated in all government student loan documents, copies of which are maintained by the Canada Student Loans Administration and agency negotiating the loan. However, the waiver varies from form to form and may or may not include non-government agencies. Information shall only be released to agencies with the student's waiver. Please see Schedule A Information Waiver form, an Associated Document to this procedure.
4. Except as provided for under the *Post-secondary Learning Act*, government agencies have no legal right to further information or access to student files and records without the student's written authorization. Further information will be released only on court order or subpoena.

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5. External agencies providing scholarships or other direct assistance to a student may require periodic reports of the student's progress as a condition of their grants. The student, however, shall be fully informed, preferably by the external agency itself, of all such requirements, the kind of information required, and the manner in which it is to be reported. It is the student's responsibility to arrange to have this information forwarded as required.
6. Disclosure of information from other official records:
 - a) Access to financial assistance, academic advising, counselling, student services and disciplinary files is limited to those officials responsible for those matters and may not be released to anyone except as otherwise stated in this procedure.
 - b) Information about student accommodation information and documentation is kept confidential. Refer to procedure [AC.3.16.1 Accommodations for Students with Disabilities](#).
 - c) The Office of the Registrar shall make routine changes in statistical information.
 - d) Information gathered on a student may be used for research purposes provided that the data is anonymous and only for the purpose for which that information was obtained or compiled. Should a research project require that a student's name be attached to the data, the student must give free and informed consent. Refer to procedures [AC.4.4.2 Free and Informed Consent](#) and [AC.4.4.3 Privacy and Confidentiality](#).

E. Release of Personal Information in Emergency Situations

1. Under Section 34(1) of the *FOIP Act*, SAIT is permitted to collect emergency contact information containing personal information about other individuals.
2. SAIT may disclose the emergency contact information provided to SAIT, only so that the designated individual may be contacted. The use and release of this information is authorized by the Office of the Registrar or designate, Safety and Community Services and/or deans/directors or designates of applicable schools/departments, in relation to students.

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ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Schedule A Information Waiver

POLICY/PROCEDURE REFERENCE

- AD.1.1 Privacy Policy
- AD.1.1.1 Personal Information – General Guidelines procedure
- AD.1.1.3 Confidentiality of Employee Information procedure
- AD.1.1.4 Formal Access to Information procedure
- AD.1.1.5 Privacy Complaints procedure

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PROCEDURE