

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT INFORMATION

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

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**DEFINITIONS****Personal information**

As defined in Alberta's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, it is recorded information about an identifiable individual, including:

1. The individual's name, home or business address or home or business telephone number;
2. The individual's race, national or ethnic origin, colour or religious or political beliefs or associations;
3. The individual's age, sex, marital status or family status;
4. An identifying number, symbol or other particular assigned to the individual;

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5. The individual's fingerprints, other biometric information, blood type, genetic information or inheritable characteristics;
6. Information about the individual's health and health care history, including information about a physical or mental disability;
7. Information about the individual's educational, financial, employment or criminal history, including criminal records where a pardon has been given;
8. Anyone else's opinions about the individual; and
9. The individual's personal views or opinions, except if they are about someone else.

GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

1. SAIT has a legal right to collect, compile, and disclose personal information to deliver educational programs and services authorized under the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*. SAIT recognizes the need to control the collection, compilation and use of this information.
2. All employees and contractors must respect the confidential information about students that they acquire in the course of their work.
3. Students have a legal right of access to and privacy of their personal information contained in SAIT student records.

PROCEDURE

A. Authority and Responsibility

1. The registrar controls and administers this procedure.
2. All employees and contractors must refer requests for transcripts, certifications or other similar information to the Office of the Registrar.

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B. Personal Information Principles

1. SAIT will collect or compile personal information about a student only where such collection or compilation is:
 - a) Directly related to and required for the delivery of educational and training programs authorized under the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*.
 - b) For law enforcement purposes.
 - c) Specifically authorized or required under a statute.
2. The collection, compilation, use, retention and disclosure of a student's personal information must comply with the requirements of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP Act)*. These include:
 - a) Notification of SAIT's authority for collection and intended use of personal information, except where excepted from notice under the provisions of the *FOIP Act*;
 - b) Collection of personal information directly from the student except where the *FOIP Act* provides otherwise or as authorized by the student;
 - c) Use of the personal information only for the stated purpose or a consistent purpose; and
 - d) Disclosure of the personal information only in accordance with the requirements of the *FOIP Act*, for a purpose consistent with the purpose of collection or as the student has authorized.
3. The use, disclosure and retention of a student's personal information is limited to the academic or administrative process for which it was initially collected and to the period in which the student is actively involved in that process, unless statutory authority provides otherwise or the student has provided written consent.

C. Protection and Disclosure of a Student's Personal Information

1. SAIT will make every reasonable effort to protect the confidentiality of student records.

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2. The Office of the Registrar maintains student records and files. The Office of the Registrar is the only agency at SAIT authorized to release a student's academic record or other information on a student's official record or file, unless the registrar or designate has provided written consent otherwise. The registrar or designate will determine the legitimacy of all such requests.
3. A student has the right to inspect that student's academic record and is entitled to an explanation of the information recorded on it, subject to the following:
 - a) A student is allowed access to the academic record during normal business hours, upon written request and proof of identification.
 - b) When the original 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.
 - c) 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 person, unless that other person has given written permission. The student may not have access to the personal information of any other person which may be in the student's financial assistance file.
 - d) The student has the right to ask SAIT to correct the personal information that SAIT holds about that student. The Office of the Registrar shall make routine changes in statistical information. In the event of a dispute as to the accuracy of the information that SAIT maintains, a student may appeal to the registrar.
4. SAIT employees who have a legitimate interest in the academic record of a student and a demonstrated need to know (for example, faculty members and administrative staff) will be permitted access to the student's records. The registrar or designate will determine whether the need to have access to the student's record has been demonstrated.
5. 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 concerned. In particular, disclosure without statutory authority and/or consent is not permitted to:
 - a) Commercial or credit agencies of any kind;
 - b) Debt collectors;

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- 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) Parents, relatives or guardians;
 - h) Representative of foreign states;
 - i) School boards, high schools and other academic institutions.
6. 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;
 - c) The Government of Alberta ministry responsible for advanced education.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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
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manner in which it is to be reported. It is the student's responsibility to arrange to have this information forwarded as required.

10. Urgent requests for student information, such as address, telephone number or immediate whereabouts, based upon an apparent emergency, should be handled by the Office of the Registrar or other appropriate official unless the student has expressly authorized the release of this information or as authorized elsewhere in this procedure.
11. No personal information will be given by telephone except to authorized personnel concerned with purposes for which the information was collected or as otherwise specified in this procedure. When the caller is not personally known, the name of the caller and the telephone number shall be taken and the call returned. If there are any doubts as to the authenticity of the caller or the request, information shall not be released.
12. Disclosure of information from other official records
 - a) Access to financial assistance, academic advising, counseling, 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 gathered on a student may be used for research purposes provided that the data is anonymous. 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 procedure [AC.4.4.2 Free and Informed Consent](#) and procedure [AC.4.4.3 Privacy and Confidentiality](#).

POLICY/PROCEDURE REFERENCE

AD.1.1	Compliance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act policy
AD.1.1.1	Personal Information – General Guidelines procedure
AD.1.1.3	Confidentiality of Employee and Affiliate Information procedure

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