

ACCESS TO CONFIDENTIAL STUDENT RECORDS & INFORMATION

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Effective Date	May 19, 2022	Policy Type	Academic
Responsibility	Associate Vice-President, Students, in consultation with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Coordinator	Cross-Reference	Records Management Policy, Post-Secondary Learning Act, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Approver	Board of Governors	Appendices	Appendix 1 –Information Release Form
Review Schedule	Every 5 years.		

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. Northwestern Polytechnic (NWP, or “the Institution”), under the authority of the Post-Secondary Learning Act, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Statistics Act (Canada) and the Taxation Act (Canada) will collect and maintain student information. Student records are maintained confidentially in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

2. Background

- 2.1. NWP recognizes that the information it collects from students or creates in process of student attendance is sensitive and access to these records must be carefully controlled to protect student privacy.

3. Policy Objective

- 3.1. This policy provides general guidelines for access to confidential student information. In addition, the policy provides recommendations for the protection and security of personal and other sensitive records and information regarding students, in any medium, that are in the custody or under the control of NWP.

4. Scope

- 4.1. This policy applies to:
 - 4.1.1. All types of records created, stored or exchanged, whatever the format – i.e., paper as well as electronic records, emails, databases, etc.
 - 4.1.2. All institution offices and campuses.
 - 4.1.3. All students, employees, consultants, contractors, agents and authorized users accessing institution records.

5. Definitions

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- 5.1. **“Record”** – Demographic, academic, or other personal information about a student collected by NWP. Personal information records may be in many forms such as paper, computer, photos, drawings, social networking, etc. and may be created outside the regular office setting or conveyed through various means of technology to the regular work site.

6. Guiding Principles

6.1. Student Information and Records

- 6.1.1. The Registrar’s Office will maintain official academic records for all students attending NWP. The records will include personal student information.
- 6.1.2. Access to confidential student records and information is administered by the Registrar’s Office. All institutional personnel should refer requests for student information to the Registrar’s Office.

6.2. Access to Confidential Student Records and Information

- 6.2.1. All requests for information shall be reviewed on a case by case basis. Confidential student information will normally be disclosed as follows:

6.2.2. Student

- 6.2.2.1. A student has the right to view their personal information records and shall be permitted access upon proof of identification. A written request may be required for clarity or where the request is considered to extend beyond the routine.

- 6.2.2.2. Students’ examination of original record documents shall be permitted only under conditions that prevent alteration or damage. Students may request a printed or digital copy of their personal records.

6.2.2.3. Withholding Information from Students

- 6.2.2.3.1. Conditions such as outstanding financial obligations to the institution, failure to return library books or materials and violations of non-academic regulations will normally result in withholding official academic records such as a transcript, diploma, or certificate from a student.

6.2.3. Personnel

- 6.2.3.1. Dean of Students and Registrar’s Office personnel act as custodians of student records and, therefore, have full access to all student information; however, access will normally be restricted to the information necessary for the performance of the duties of the employee.

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- 6.2.3.2. Academic advisors will have access to the full and complete academic record and contact information for all students that they advise.
- 6.2.3.3. Faculty and Administrative officers of the Institution who require information to better serve the interest of a student may be permitted access to the student's records as per item 6.1.2. of this policy.
- 6.2.3.4. The Manager, Institutional Planning and Research will have access to the full and complete academic and non-academic records of all past, current, and future students of the Institution.
- 6.2.3.5. A NWP chairperson will have access to the full and complete academic record and the contact information for all students in the programs administered by that Chairperson.
- 6.2.3.6. A course instructor will have access to information confirming the student's eligibility for the course (i.e., prerequisite requirements).

6.2.4. Partnership Programming

- 6.2.4.1. Other academic institutions with whom NWP has a partnership agreement may include, but are not limited to, collaborative programs and dual credit students. These partners may have access to information or provide information to NWP regarding students enrolled in programs. This enrollment shall be taken as approval to share this information. This information may include, but is not limited to, student identification numbers, demographic information necessary to confirm identity, registration and program information, final grades, and academic transcripts.

6.2.5. External Access

- 6.2.5.1. All requests for information shall be reviewed on a case by case basis.

6.2.5.2. Parents, Spouses and Guardians

- 6.2.5.2.1. Personal Information and academic records will be released to parents, spouses, or guardians only with written approval from the student (see Appendix 1 for the Information Release Form).

6.2.5.3. Government Agencies

- 6.2.5.3.1. Properly identified representatives from federal, provincial, or local government agencies, such as the Ministry of Advanced Education, Statistics Canada, the RCMP and Public Health Authorities, may be given select information if expressly requested, but not limited to, verification of date of birth, program enrolment, dates of enrolment, credential earned, and honours received.

- 6.2.5.3.2. Requests from a sponsoring agency for student academic records may be honoured with prior approval from the student in the form

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of a signed Information Release Form (Appendix 1).

6.2.6. Other Individuals and Organizations

6.2.6.1. Requests from other individuals and organizations shall only be honoured with prior approval from the student.

6.2.7. Research

6.2.7.1. Information gathered on students may be used for research purposes provided that the data is anonymous, and the Research and Ethics Committee has approved the request. Should a research project require that names be published, students will be asked to complete an Information Release Form (Appendix 1).

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Board of Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve and formally support this policy.
Academic Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend and formally support this policy.
Provost and Vice-President Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and formally support this policy.
Registrar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, maintain and implement this policy.
Information & Privacy Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide advice on records access as it pertains to legislative compliance.
Information Technology Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage permissions to all electronic document systems or applications.
All Users (employees and contractors, students, and volunteers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with the applicable requirements of this policy at all times. Report all instances of non-compliance with this policy (observed or suspected) to their supervisor, instructor or institution representative.

8. Exceptions to the Policy

8.1. Exceptions to the guiding principles in this policy must be documented and formally approved by the AVP, Students.

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8.2. Policy exceptions must describe:

8.2.1. The nature of the exception.

8.2.2. A reasonable explanation for why the policy exception is required.

8.2.3. Any risk created by the policy exception.

8.2.4. Evidence of approval by the AVP, Students.

8.3. Extraordinary requests for student information must be approved by the Registrar or the Information & Privacy Coordinator.

9. Inquiries

9.1. Inquiries about this policy can be directed to the AVP, Students.

10. Amendments (Revision History)

Approved by Academic Council: March 8, 2001

Revised and Approved by Academic Council: March 10, 2003

Revised and Approved by Academic Council: April 12, 2006

Revised and Approved by Academic Council: October 8, 2009

Revised and Approved by Academic Council: May 5, 2022

Approved by Board of Governors: May 19, 2022

Northwestern Polytechnic (NWP) collects and protects personal information under the authority of the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act for the purposes of operating the programs and services of NWP.

If you require the disclosure of your personal information to another person, designated agent or agency, legal counsel or for other purposes, please complete the following informed consent document as required under the Act.

Last Name	First Name	Student ID Number
Student Signature		Date

I (print full name), _____ authorize NWP to disclose the personal information listed below to (name of person/organization) _____ for the period of (provide the date range for which permission will exist): _____.

I voluntarily authorize the Registrar's Office to disclose/release (check all that apply):

Transcripts

T2202

Academic Performance

Verification Documents

Academic Progress

Student Account Financial Details

Academic Registration Details

Other (please list specifically):

Consents may be revoked at any time by so indicating in writing to the office seeking consent.

Protection of Privacy – The personal information requested on this form is collected under the authority of Section 33(c) of the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. It will be used for the purpose of administering disclosure of personal information in student records. Questions concerning the collection, use and disposal of this information should be directed to the Registrar at (780) 539-2758.

This information will be retained and disposed of in accordance with approved records retention and disposal schedules of NWP.