

Policy History
Policy No. IM4
Approving Jurisdiction: President
Administrative Responsibility: Vice President Finance & Administration/Associate Vice President, Human Resource Services
Effective Date: November 20, 2014

Confidentiality Policy

A. CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

1. Kwantlen Polytechnic University is responsible for the accuracy, integrity and confidentiality of a variety of private or proprietary information. Security and confidentiality of this information are matters of concern to all KPU employees and students. The purpose of this document is to clarify all employees’ responsibilities and to ensure that this undertaking is fulfilled.
2. Breaches of confidentiality can cause serious harm to, or damage the reputation of, the persons involved and, potentially, undermine public confidence and trust in the University as a whole. The University and its employees shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that such breaches do not arise.

B. SCOPE AND LIMITS

1. This policy applies to all KPU employees including those hired on casual service and other contracts. The obligation to maintain confidentiality as described in this policy, or of any information obtained through the employee’s role at KPU, continues after the employee has left his/her position at KPU. Behaviour expected of members of the Board of Governors with regard to confidentiality is addressed in the *Standards of Ethical Conduct for Directors of Public Sector Organizations*.
2. For the purpose of this policy, private or proprietary information includes but is not limited to files, documents, records (including electronic records), or any other materials, in any format, maintained, stored, controlled, or possessed by the University or any knowledge learned through employment with KPU; this may include, but is not limited to, any of the following: personal records, labour relation issues, internal memos and minutes, proposals, bids,

quotations or personal information provided to KPU by applicants, students, employees or any other third party.

C. STATEMENT OF POLICY PRINCIPLES

1. Application of this Policy

- a. All employees whose status as a KPU employee gives them access to private or proprietary publications, documents, records, or other information pertaining to KPU applicants, students, and employees, or to the business or affairs of the University not in the public domain are in a position of trust. They are required to use such information only for purposes related to the business of the University.

- b. Since conduct, either on or off the job, could affect or threaten the security and confidentiality of this information, all KPU employees who have access to private or proprietary information at KPU are expected to adhere to this policy at all times. Any breach of confidentiality is prohibited. The following examples of inappropriate conduct regarding confidentiality are supplied for illustrative purposes only and are not exhaustive:
 - i. unauthorized use of any information at any time;
 - ii. use of any information for possible personal advantage, or to allow others to gain advantage;
 - iii. exhibiting or divulging the contents of any record or report to any person except in the conduct of his/her work assignment and in accordance with KPU policies and procedures, or as required by law or by a law enforcement agency;
 - iv. removing any official record or report, or copy thereof, from the office or virtual location where it is maintained or copied or printed via electronic means, except in the performance of an employee's duties, and in accordance with established procedures;
 - v. attempting to discover or use other users' passwords and/or keys; and
 - vi. aiding, abetting, or acting in conspiracy with another to violate any part of this policy.

2. Employee Responsibilities Regarding Possible Breaches of Confidentiality

- a. KPU expects an employee to notify his/her immediate supervisor or the appropriate vice-president as early as possible if s/he has any reason to believe that confidential information has been lost, stolen, misused, or improperly disclosed to anyone who does not have a legitimate reason to have it, or if any situation exists which may create, or may be perceived as creating, a breach of confidentiality.

- b. It is the responsibility of any employee who believes that a breach of confidentiality has gone unreported to report the situation causing concern to the appropriate vice-president, or designate as quickly as possible.

3. University Responsibilities

- a. Where the University, after receiving a report from an employee, or on its own initiative, determines that a situation which may create, or may be perceived as creating, a breach of confidentiality has arisen, or may arise, the University will quickly take the steps it considers appropriate to eliminate and/or remedy such a situation.
- b. Where the University, after receiving a report from an employee, or on its own initiative, determines that an actual breach of confidentiality has, or appears to have, arisen, the University, after consultation with the affected employee(s) and the direct supervisor involved, will take the steps it considers appropriate to eliminate and/or remedy the situation as quickly as possible.
- c. Breaches of confidentiality, actual, suspected, or potential, shall be dealt with in a fair, impartial, and timely manner with due consideration for the protection and confidentiality of the employee(s) involved and those of any person bringing the alleged breach of confidentiality to the attention of the University.
- d. Where the University determines that an employee or former employee has breached confidentiality, the University may take disciplinary action up to and including termination, as appropriate. Relevant information may be turned over to law enforcement authorities in circumstances where that action is deemed to be appropriate.

D. DEFINITIONS

Refer to the related Procedures document for definitions which will enhance the reader's interpretation of this Policy.

E. RELATED POLICIES & LEGISLATION

AR3 Confidentiality of Student Records/Files
BP5 Use of University Property Policy
HR1 Conflict of Interest Policy
HR24 Protected Disclosure Policy
IM2 Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy
IM3 Information & Educational Technology Usage
RS2 Integrity in Research and Scholarship Policy
ST7 Student Conduct (Non-Academic)
Employee Code of Conduct

F. RELATED PROCEDURES

Refer to IM4 *Confidentiality Policy Procedures*