



COLLEGE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

TOPIC: LEARNER RECORDS

Procedure No.	LS-206-PR	Division	Learner Services
Supersedes	n/a	Board Policy Ref.	n/a
Related Policy	LS-206	Effective Date:	June 27, 2007 (R1)

PROCEDURE

1.0 Learner Records

There are two types of learner files:

1. Those which are kept as working copies by Instructors and Guidance Counsellors;
2. Those which are kept permanently in the campus Registrar's office. These are to be maintained as paper originals/microfilms as well as electronically.

Instructors may keep working copies of learner achievement on file; however, these files are to be considered **UNOFFICIAL FILES** from which instructors may **NOT** release final grades information to learners.

The original paper/microfilm learner file will be maintained by the Campus Registrar's office.

An electronic database of learner records will also be maintained. All campuses will have electronic access to these files as needed and as authorized. Files maintained by the College Registrar's Office are the only files considered as official College files.

The following information is to be maintained in the permanent record:

1. Biographical data

2. Dates of attendance
3. Achievement records; i.e., Record(s) of Achievement for Certificate programs and Transcripts for Diploma programs.

It is the responsibility of the Registrar or designate to ensure the security of learner records as per this policy and the proper disposal of obsolete files as per the College's Records Management, Retention and Disposal policy.

It is the responsibility of the Registrar or designate to ensure the maintenance of permanent electronic records as per the College's Records Management, Retention and Disposal Policy.

The paper file/microfilm is a backup and always used as the final authority in case of dispute. Paper files are to be kept for 50 years if they are not otherwise electronically stored.

2.0 Graduation Documents

The working copy of the Record of Achievement (ROA) is to be completed by the instructor in the program and submitted to the campus Registrar's Office when the learner leaves the program.

The final copy of the ROA, is prepared by and filed at the Campus Registrar's Office. This office is also responsible for preparation of all Diplomas, Certificates, transcripts and grade reports.

Copies of Diplomas, Certificates or Records of Achievement

Learners will be issued a Diploma/Certificate upon successful completion of all program requirements. Normally, the College will not provide replacement copies of these Diplomas/ Certificates.

The Record of Achievement will be issued when learners leave the College whether or not they have completed their program. Certified copies of the Record of Achievement are available upon request.

Certified copies of marks (transcripts) are also available upon request.

3.0 Access to & Release of Learner Information

3.1 General Policy

This policy is designed to specify the conditions which govern access to and release of official learner information. Official Learner Information is defined as that information contained in hard copy files or listings or which

is accessible through computer terminals or whatever other means may be available within the College.

A transcript includes the learner's academic record to date, including academic decisions which may have been taken. Segments of transcripts are never issued.

3.2 Primary Responsibility for Learner Records

The Vice President of Academic and Learner Services, through the Registrar, is responsible for controlling access to learner records and, as such, determines the nature of such information which may be available to other administrative officers. Campus Administrators who have been granted access to learner records must control unauthorized access to those records in their offices or other offices under their control. In this context, access extends to both physical and electronic access to learner files.

Other administrative and learner services offices which have been given access to learner files or directories are responsible for their security and the confidentiality of the information contained therein. The Registrar or designate is the sole officer of the College authorized to release official or unofficial learner information in the form of transcripts, grade reports, or letters of standing whether this be in the form of individual or aggregate information.

3.3 Disclosure to the Learner

- A. Learners are entitled to a certified transcript of academic record upon submitting a signed request and payment of the appropriate fee. Such transcripts will be withheld for non-payment of fees, including outstanding library resources or laboratory equipment.
- B. Learners have the right to inspect their academic record. An employee of the Registrar's Office will be present during such an inspection.
- C. Documents submitted by or for learners in support of an application for admission or for transfer of credit will not be returned to learners, nor sent elsewhere. For example, a transcript from another college or a high school record will not be sent to a third institution. Learners must request another transcript from the original institution. In exceptional cases, however, where another transcript is unobtainable, or can be secured with the greatest difficulty, copies may be prepared and released to prevent hardship to learners. Learners must present a signed request. The copy released will be marked as a certified

copy. In rare instances, the original may be released and the copy retained with a notation to this effect.

- D. Learners have the right to access their financial records with the College.
- E. Learners have the right to access their personal files kept by the College.

3.4 Disclosure to Faculty and Administrative Officers

Faculty and administrative officers with a demonstrated need to know will be permitted to examine the academic and personal records (excluding health and counselling records) of learners and will only have to access to the minimum amount of information necessary in order to carry out their duties. Financial information including scholarships, awards and data relating to Learner Loan Programs of the various provinces is restricted to the staff responsible for administering such programs. All faculty and staff must respect the confidentiality of the information.

3.5 Release of Individual Learner Information to the Public

Personal information includes, but is not limited to, a learner's contact information, biographical data, health records, educational status (whether he or she is enrolled as a learner currently or in the past), attendance records, and details on their course of study or grades.

Personal information, as defined by the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act is considered private and confidential and may not be released to the public except with the learners' prior written consent, or in accordance with the requirements of professional licensing of certification bodies, or otherwise under compulsion of law. Academic information will generally only be released in the form of an official transcript from the Registrar's office.

Written consent does not include a consent or permission sent by email. Faxed signatures are acceptable. Written consent must be sent directly to the Registrar's, or the Registrar delegate's office

The "public" includes spouses, parents, other relatives, employers or potential employers.

Exceptions to the foregoing may be made in emergency situations at the discretion of the Vice President of Academic and Learner Services. Information and/or transcripts may be supplied at the discretion of the Registrar to other educational institutions to expedite the admission of learners. (Such releases are considered a courtesy to the institution and to the learners concerned.) Also, for learners seeking co-op work term employment, transcripts are routinely supplied to prospective employers as part of the co-operative job placement exercise. Learners applying for the co-op programs will be required to sign an official waiver giving the College authority to proceed in this manner.

Requests from a philanthropic or sponsoring organization for a statement of academic performance on learners being supported by the organization will not be honoured without prior approval from the learners.

3.6 Minor Learners

The College will not release information on learners under the age of majority and over the age of 17 to the public, including parents or guardians, without the learner's written consent.

3.7 Release of Information to Government Agencies

Information will be released without learner consent to persons in compliance with a judicial order or subpoena or as required by the federal or provincial legislation. Information of a public nature or data required for normal statistical and financial purposes may be released or verified for particular provincial or federal agencies.

3.8 Access to Learner Data for Research

Requests by persons or agencies within or outside the College for access to learners' academic records for the purpose of research may be granted by the VP of Academic and Learner Services. Statistical material drawn from individual learner records must preserve the confidentiality and anonymity of these records. Personal information, as defined by the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, will not be shared for research or statistical purposes except in accordance with section 32 of the Act.

In considering such requests, the Vice President of Academic and Learner Services will consider the following criteria:

- A. The intended use of the data which should be clearly stated in the request and judged to be an appropriate use of the data.
- B. The appropriateness of the requesting agency to receive the data for the purpose stated.
- C. The disruption and extra work imposed on the operation of the Registrar's Office.
- D. The cost implications for the College which, if applicable, the researcher must be prepared to cover.
- E. The right of the College to review the results of any research or analysis based on the data provided and to comment on the use of the data prior to publication.
- F. The agreement of all personnel involved in the project to sign a Statement of Confidentiality which binds those involved to hold secret all identifiable information with which they come in contact.
- G. The signing of an appropriate information sharing agreement.

3.9 Access to Learner Data for Research or Analysis by Learners

The College will not, as a matter of policy, grant current College learners the privilege of access to learner records for research or analysis relating either to course work in progress or longer term research to satisfy these requirements.

3.10 Counselling Records

- A. Where learners have gone on their own initiative as a client to the Counselling Service, the contents of their files are private, in accordance with professional ethics or codes of behaviour.
- B. Where learners have been referred by an authorized officer of the College to the Counselling service, the consultant's opinion will be reported to the authorized officer if learners give written permission to do so. Such written permission shall be granted when learners sign a release form, the nature of which will be determined by the Service in question. The nature and content of any report provided

by the Counsellor will be determined by the ethics and codes of behaviour of the counsellor's profession. If learners authorize the counsellor to release a report, the counsellor may discuss the contents of the report with the learners.

- C. In either of A or B above, reports may be released to faculty or administrative officers with the written permission of the learner.

3.11 Disclosure by Other Offices of the College

- A. The foregoing guidelines are applicable to handling any request for personal information about learners or former learners received by any member of the faculty, administration or clerical staff. The guidelines are intended to protect learners' right to privacy and the confidentiality of academic records.
- B. All College personnel should be alert to refer promptly to the Office of the Registrar requests for transcripts, certificates or other information which that office typically provides. Faculty members and the various institutional offices should restrict their responses to acknowledging, when appropriate, the receipt of requests for learner information, or limit their response to that information germane to their sphere of responsibility or their relationship to the learners.

Approval History	
Approved by President	June 20, 1997
Revision 1	June 27, 2007
Next Review	June 2011