

GRANT MACEWAN UNIVERSITY POLICY MANUAL

Use of Personal Information for Research Purposes Procedure

D7500-2

1.0 PURPOSE

This procedure sets out the process for access to personal information by researchers for academic or statistical research purposes.

2.0 SCOPE

This procedure applies to academic researchers who seek to use personal information that is in the custody or under the control of MacEwan University (“University”) for academic or statistical research purposes.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 “academic research” means an academic inquiry or investigation that is undertaken by an academic researcher with the intention of peer dissemination;

3.2 “academic researcher” means:

- (i) an employee of the University who is bound by the Grant MacEwan Faculty Association Collective Agreement;
- (ii) an employee of the University who holds an academic employment but is not bound by the Grant MacEwan Faculty Association Collective Agreement;
- (ii) an academic who is an employee of a post-secondary institution and member of a faculty association of that post-secondary institution; or
- (iii) a student of the University who conducts a research as part of a course of study;

3.3 “personal information” means recorded information about an identifiable individual, including:

- (i) the individual’s name, home or business address or home or business telephone number;
- (ii) the individual’s race, national or ethnic origin, colour or religious or political beliefs or associations;
- (iii) the individual’s age, sex, marital status or family status;
- (iv) an identifying number, symbol or other particular assigned to the individual;
- (v) the individual’s fingerprints, other biometric information, blood type, genetic information or inheritable characteristics;
- (vi) information about the individual’s health and health care history, including information about a physical or mental disability;

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- (vii) information about the individual's educational, financial, employment or criminal history, including criminal records where a pardon has been given;
 - (viii) anyone else's opinion about the individual; and
 - (ix) the individual's personal views or opinions, except if they are about someone else.
- 3.4 "privacy department" means the Privacy and Information Management Department;
- 3.5 "record" means a record of information in any form and includes notes, images, audio-visual recordings, x-rays, books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers and papers and any other information that is written, photographed, recorded or stored in any manner, but does not include software or any mechanism that produces records.

4.0 REGULATIONS

- 4.1 An academic researcher who wishes to use personal information that is in the custody or under the control of the University for academic or statistical research purposes must, prior to the commencement of the research, submit an application for ethics review to the Research Ethics Board of the University.
- 4.2 Upon receipt of an application for ethics review from an academic researcher whose research involves the use of personal information that is in the custody of the University, the Research Ethics Board will request the academic researcher to submit an application to access personal information to the privacy department.
- 4.3 An academic researcher's application to use personal information for research must outline the following:
- (i) a general description of the research project, including the objectives of the project and the proposed methods(s) of analysis;
 - (ii) an explanation of why the research project cannot be accomplished without access to personal information about identifiable individuals;
 - (iii) a detailed explanation of how the personal information will be used, including a description of any proposed linkages to be made between personal information in the records requested and any other personal information;
 - (iv) the expected period of time during which access to these records may be required and the records used;

- (v) a description of the security measures and access control to be put in place to safeguard the personal information from dissemination outside the scope of the research; and
 - (vi) if the personal information obtained from the University will be stored on a server or file storage system that is outside the control of the University, a statement of the security measures employed by the owner of the external server or file storage system.
- 4.4 If the privacy department is satisfied with the controls regarding security and confidentiality of the personal information to be used for research purposes, it may approve the academic researcher's application to access the personal information that is in the custody of the University and request the academic researcher to sign a document that obligates the academic researcher to:
- (i) maintain the security and confidentiality of the personal information to which he/she has been granted access by the University;
 - (ii) remove or destroy personal identifiers at the earliest possible time;
 - (iii) only use the personal information for this research and are prohibited from any subsequent use or disclosure of the personal information without the express authorization of the privacy department; and
 - (iv) comply with these conditions, the *Freedom of Information and protection of Privacy Act* the privacy policy and this procedure.
- 4.5 An academic researcher who has been granted access to personal information by the University is prohibited from subsequently using or disclosing the information in an individually identifiable form.

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FACT SHEET

Relevant Dates

Approved: 2015.02.26
Effective: 2015.02.26

Source

2015.02.26 This is a new procedure which supports policy D7500 – Privacy – approved by Board Motion 02-02-26-2014/15.
2021.11.01 Minor revision to update position title. Approved by Policy Sponsor.

Authorization

Office of Accountability: General Counsel

Office of Administrative Responsibility: Privacy and Information Management Department

Approved By: Board of Governors

Contact Area: Privacy and Information Management Department

Authority: Alberta's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
D7500: Privacy

Related and Associated Matters

Associated Procedures:

D7500-1: Access to Records and Correction of Personal Information

Related Policies:

C5052: Ethical Review of Research
D7500: Privacy