
INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

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AUTHORITY	PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL
PRIMARY CONTACT	VP ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

POLICY

GENERAL

The Board of Governors or its successor body has both the duty and the responsibility to make as much information available to the public about the affairs of Thompson Rivers University (TRU) as is feasible. In the case of financial information, however, a basic conflict exists between this duty to keep the public informed and the need to keep certain information confidential in the public interest. A similar conflict exists between the need to keep information about students and TRU employees confidential and TRU's responsibility to provide references and official transcripts of record. The Financial Information Act, and Thompson Rivers University Act, provide general instructions for the handling of some information, however, current legislation does not cover all of the possible demands which may be made on the vast amount of information developed and retained by TRU. This policy is written to provide the TRU Administration with guidelines for dealing with the many requests for information about financial matters, employees, or students which it receives.

These requests can be divided into three basic categories:

I. REQUESTS FOR VARIOUS TYPES OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Bursar is responsible for ensuring that all reports required by statute or government regulations are prepared and supplied to those agencies or individuals entitled to receive them. In addition, the Bursar is responsible for providing detailed information to other members of the TRU Administration as directed by the Chief Executive Officer. In addition, the Bursar will supply all administrators in charge of divisions and all departmental chairpersons with the relevant information on the sections of the budget for which they are responsible. In general, this information will take the form of regular reports on the state of the relevant section of the operating and capital budget and such other reports as the Bursar is directed to provide from time to time by the Chief Executive Officer. In addition, the entire TRU financial statements become a public document as soon as they are adopted by a resolution of the Board.

II. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION ABOUT TRU EMPLOYEES

In general, information held by TRU about its employees as individuals is treated as confidential. As a basic principle, any TRU employee is entitled, upon reasonable notice, to examine any file containing information about that individual. TRU, however, reserves the right to supply information about its employees to the Ministry of Advanced Education upon request, and to any other agency of government entitled by statute to receive it.

1. Requests for Employment References

Persons employed as supervisors of TRU employees may supply employers seeking information about persons under their supervision with a personal assessment, written or verbal, of the capability of that person to perform the duties assigned to them at TRU. Similar references may also be supplied by the Vice-President Administration & Finance for any member of the TRU staff, whether or not that person was under his or her direct supervision. In both cases, references will only be supplied upon the written request of the employee concerned. All persons supplying such references are cautioned to ensure that information supplied represents an objective evaluation of the employee in question, and that all reasonable efforts are made to ensure the accuracy and objectivity of any information supplied.

2. Information Released on the Request of an Employee

An employee of TRU may request, in writing, that personal information be supplied to an outside agency by the Human Resources Department. This is done on a routine basis in response to mortgage applications and similar activities. Employees are cautioned that unless they give written clearance prior to an inquiry being made, no information will be released.

III. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION ABOUT STUDENTS

In general, all information held by TRU about its students as individuals is confidential. Students who are sponsored by outside agencies such as the Ministry of Labour, are required to sign a waiver authorizing the release of information to the sponsor as a precondition of registration. Official transcripts are only released on the written authority of the student concerned on the payment of the fee established from time to time by the Board of Governors. Within TRU, access to student files is restricted. In general, only the Registrar and his staff have unrestricted access to all student records.

The President, the Vice Presidents, the Dean of Student Development, and the Counsellors have access to student records in the performance of their duties and Deans and department Chairpersons and instructors may have access to the records of those students for whom they are responsible.

1. Student Directory

A current list of the names and addresses of all students who are enrolled in credit courses is generated by the Registrar from the Student Record System. Unless students specifically request that their names be included in the directory, this information will be considered as "private." In addition, name and address information will be supplied to the TRU Student Union or its successor body for any student enrolled in a credit course, and such a list will serve as the register of members of that body. In addition, for purposes of student elections, the Manager of Admissions and Records may provide the TRU Student Union or any successor body with verification of registration for candidates for student office.

2. References

Instructors, chairpersons, divisional directors or other administrators, may provide students with personal references upon written request. Officially, TRU limits its statements about students to those contained in the diplomas and certificates awarded by the institution, and to the official transcripts of the student's record.

3. Other Inquiries

TRU reserves the right to supply information about its students to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development upon request, and to any other agency of government entitled by statute to receive it.