

- Details on where the policies and procedures are published and efforts taken to ensure students, faculty, and staff are aware of the policies.
- An example of a written student complaint resolution (with sensitive information redacted).
- A description of how the institution maintains a record or records of written student complaints that includes :
 - The individuals/offices responsible for maintenance of the record(s).
 - Elements of a complaint review that are included in the record(s).
 - Where the record(s) is located if centralized, or how records are maintained if decentralized.

Reference to SACSCOC Documents, If Applicable

SACSCOC policies: [Complaint Procedures Against SACSCOC or Its Accredited Institutions](#)
[Distance and Correspondence Education](#)

This standard requires a policy or procedure; see Appendix A of this document for implications. See also:

SACSCOC Good Practices:

[Developing Policy and Procedures Documents](#)

Cross-References to Other Related Standards/Requirements, If Applicable

Standard 14.5 (*Policy compliance*)

12.5 **The institution protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of its student records and maintains security measures to protect and back up data.** (*Student records*)

Rationale and Notes

The security and confidentiality of student records is critical to the integrity of the institution. This standard acknowledges the institution’s responsibility to oversee the release and use of all student records and institutional data with personally identified information and identifies four key aspects of that responsibility: security, confidentiality, integrity, and data protection and backup. As applied to this standard, integrity means to ensure that the records are not changed without appropriate oversight and sufficient security measures. Special security measures emphasize the imperative for the institution to protect confidentiality, preserve the integrity of its students’ academic records and data,, and oversee the release of records in accord with state and federal mandates and commonly accepted standards and practices among institutions of higher learning.

Questions to Consider

- What types of student records does the institution store?
- What are the definitions, policies, and procedures governing the security, confidentiality, and integrity of student records? How does the institution ensure that it adheres to these policies and procedures?
- How does the institution manage the physical security of record storage?
- How does the institution manage the security of electronic data storage systems, paper storage, and/or other storage?
- What is the institution's disaster plan for records retrieval?
- How does the institution ensure that faculty and staff understand and carry out the commitments to confidentiality, integrity, and security of student academic records?
- Are there special circumstances that affect records (e.g., an early college high school where student age may be an issue)?
- What training is required for those with access to student records?

Sample Documentation

- The policies and procedures governing student records, their security, integrity, and confidentiality, their use, and their release.
- Security measures adopted by the institution that apply to the protection and backups of data.
- Publications used by students and personnel that:
 - Discuss student academic records, including statements addressing confidentiality of student records.
 - Identify specific policies for the security of records and include statements about physical security of records, storage of records, backup of records in both electronic and hard copy, receipt of course grades, issuance of transcripts, etc.
- Documentation that faculty and staff are trained regarding policies on the confidentiality, integrity, and security of student records.
- Documentation of data backup procedures.
- Procedures for response to security breaches.

Reference to SACSCOC Documents, If Applicable

SACSCOC policy: [Distance and Correspondence Education](#)

Cross-References to Other Related Standards/Requirements, If Applicable

Standard 10.6 (*Distance and correspondence education*)