I. POLICY STATEMENT

Northern Kentucky University’s (NKU) institutional data is a valuable asset and resource and must be maintained and protected as such. Although individuals, offices, departments, programs or colleges may have responsibilities for creating and maintaining portions of university information and records, NKU itself retains ownership of, and responsibility for the information.

The purpose of this policy is to protect NKU’s information resources from accidental or intentional unauthorized access, modification, or damage, while also preserving the open information sharing requirements of its academic culture.

Permission to access institutional data should be granted to all university employees for all legitimate university purposes.

II. ENTITIES AFFECTED

All Northern Kentucky University community members who have access to university institutional data as well as all university colleges, units, divisions and their agents and contractors. It also applies, to the extent possible, to any person or organization, whether affiliated with the university or not, in possession of university institutional data.

III. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy applies regardless of the environment, media or device where the data resides or is used and regardless of how the data is transmitted or stored.

IV. DEFINITIONS
Data Classification – Classification of data to provide a basis for understanding and managing institutional data based on the level of criticality and required confidentiality of data. For NKU’s data classifications see the data classification table located here:

Data Communities - Data stewards /data custodians who are responsible for ownership of common data elements used across the university. Data community members work together to provide a formal communication to NKU data producers/consumers when common data elements require a change.

Data Custodians - Individuals appointed by and accountable to the data stewards. Data custodians are responsible for the operation and management of systems and servers that collect, manage, store, and/or provide access to institutional data.

Data Producers/Consumers - All NKU employees who produce and/or have access to institutional data in order to perform assigned duties or in fulfillment of assigned roles or functions within the university; this access is granted solely for the conduct of university business. Data producers/consumers are responsible for knowing and following university policies and procedures on data governance.

Data Stewards – Institutional officers, who are appointed by the President or Provost, and have authority over policies and procedures for one or more types of institutional data and the access and usage of that data within their delegations of authority. Each data steward appoints data custodians for their specific functional area of responsibility.

Data Quality - The management, process, and measurement of information’s fitness to serve its purpose in a given context. Aspects of data quality encompass:

- Accuracy
- Completeness
- Consistency across the university
- Relevancy
- Unduplicated
- Traceability
- Interpretability
- Timeliness
- Accessibility

Institutional Data - Data elements which are created, received, maintained, and/or transmitted by NKU administrative information systems. Information is a collection of Institutional Data representing quantitative/qualitative measurements and facts related to the business of the University. Click here for types of NKU institutional data.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES AND INFORMATION

All university community members who work with or use institutional data in any way must comply with all federal, state and other applicable laws, university policies, procedures and guidelines and applicable contracts and licenses. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Kentucky Open Records Laws
- Kentucky Revised Statutes
- Kentucky Statutes regarding Personal Information Security and Breach Investigations (KRS 61.934 to 61.934)
NKU employees and their supervisors are responsible for understanding and complying with all laws, rules, policies, standards, guidelines, contracts and licenses that are applicable to their own and their subordinates’ specific uses of institutional data.

Employees are expected to:

- Access confidential data only for the purpose of conducting university business
- Access only the confidential data required to perform their job
- Respect and protect the confidentiality and privacy of the individuals whose confidential records they have access to
- To abide by all applicable laws or policies with respect to access, use, or disclosure of confidential information

Employees should not:

- Disclose confidential data to others except as required by their job responsibilities
- Use confidential data for their own or others personal gain or profit
- Access confidential data to satisfy personal curiosity
- Forge, falsify, or alter (without authorization) documents, records, or university data in any form (including financial documents)

University community members who are acting in one or more specific roles when collecting, maintaining, accessing or using institutional data must understand and fulfill the responsibilities associated with their roles. These roles are (see definitions in Section IV.):

- Data Steward
- Data Custodian
- Data Producer/Consumer

For specific instructions on how to access institutional data via NKU administrative information systems, please contact the designated Data Custodian of that system.

VI. COMMITTEE

The Data Governance Committee was formed to recommend and oversee the implementation and management of a formal data governance program that functions across the university. For a list of the members of the committee, please click here.

Data classifications are created and maintained by the Data Governance Committee.

VII. VIOLATIONS

Any member of the university community found to have violated this policy is subject to discipline in accordance with applicable university policies and procedures, or, in the case of student violations processed under the Code of Students Rights and Responsibilities, expulsion.

VIII. DATA QUALITY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

To submit an NKU data quality issue, click here. You will need to sign in using your NKU user ID and password.
IX. REFERENCES AND RELATED MATERIALS

REFERENCES & FORMS

Link any forms or instructions needed to comply or implement this policy. If links are unavailable, attach forms to this policy as examples.

Data Governance Website, Data Dictionary and Report Repository

RELATED POLICIES

Link any currently existing policies related to this policy. If unable to obtain a link, simply list the names of the related policies.

Credit Card Processing and Security Policy, Security Policy, Records Management Policy

REVISION HISTORY

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