



# Confidentiality Relating to Students Policy

Last Updated: September 2023 by BS

Confidentiality can be defined as the treating of information as private and not for distribution beyond specifically identified individuals or organisations, nor used other than for specifically identified purposes.

1. **Respect for Confidentiality:** The student's right to privacy and personal confidentiality will be respected wherever possible. A general respect for privacy means that matters relating to, for instance, the health and welfare of students must be treated as confidential.
2. **Advising Students/Need to Know:** Those involved in advising students should, where possible, seek the consent of the individual for the onward disclosure of relevant information to those with a clear need to know basis. Where such consent is not forthcoming, the person entrusted with the information should make it clear that in exceptional circumstances (e.g. Title IX reportage), it may be necessary to disclose the information to others, whilst also making it clear that such disclosure would be on a need-to-know basis only, preserving strict confidentiality in relation to any other third party.
3. **Contact with Families:** As all FIE students are technically adults it is generally inappropriate to speak to a student's family against the student's wishes. Contact may occasionally be justified in the students' best interests e.g. when a student is at risk of self-harm or suffering from a serious physical illness. The decision to do so should be made at the highest level and the student should normally be informed.
4. **External Sharing:** Except where there is a legal, public interest or contractual expectation to do so, confidential information will not be given out externally, e.g. outside of FIE, without an individual's permission.
5. **Legal and Professional Context:** All confidential information will be handled in compliance with the law, with due diligence as to the security of the data and with levels of discretion appropriate to the sensitivity of the subject matter in compliance with the [Data Protection Action 1998](#) which should be read.
6. **Disabilities:** FIE is required to treat students with disabilities no less favourably than others and, where necessary, to make reasonable adjustments to policies, practices and procedures in order to achieve this. FIE will need to ensure that students are aware that information about their disability may need to be provided to others so as to meet their particular needs. However if a student insists on confidentiality, it may be necessary to inform him or her that it will not be possible to make certain provisions.