ROUTINE ACCESS TO RECORDS POLICY

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KALASALINGAM ACADEMY OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

(Deemed to be University)

(Under the section 3 of UGC act 1956)

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Policy Preparation & Verification Team

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ROUTINE ACCESS TO RECORDS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education (KARE) is committed to ensuring transparent, efficient, and secure access to institutional records while safeguarding confidentiality, privacy, and legal compliance. Routine access to records is essential for supporting academic processes, administrative functions, research activities, and stakeholder engagement.

This policy establishes guidelines for providing access to records in a manner that balances openness with responsibility, ensuring that sensitive information is protected while enabling legitimate access. It also ensures compliance with applicable data protection laws, institutional policies, and ethical standards.

2. DEFINITIONS

- Record: Any information created, received, or maintained in the course of institutional activities, in physical or digital form
- Applicant: Individual or entity requesting access to records
- Routine Access: Standard access granted for operational or legitimate purposes without requiring formal legal procedures
- Third Party: Any individual or organization not directly associated with the institution
- Confidential Information: Sensitive data that requires restricted access
- Authorized Personnel: Individuals permitted to access specific records based on their role
- Amendment: Correction or updating of inaccurate or incomplete records
- Access Classification: Categorization of records based on the level of confidentiality and access permissions.
- Access Log: A record maintained by the University documenting requests, approvals, access provided, date, user identity, and purpose of access.
- Redacted Record: A copy of a record from which confidential, personal, or legally protected information has been removed before disclosure.

3. ACCESS CLASSIFICATION OF RECORDS

Institutional records shall be classified into the following categories to ensure appropriate protection and controlled access:

- Public: Information approved for public disclosure (e.g., University prospectus, annual reports, public notices, policies published on the website).
- Internal: Records intended for use by University employees and students in the normal course of institutional activities.
- Confidential: Records containing sensitive personal, financial, examination, research, or administrative information requiring restricted access.
- Restricted: Highly sensitive records whose disclosure could adversely affect individuals, institutional interests, legal proceedings, security, or regulatory compliance. Access shall be limited only to specifically authorized personnel.

Access rights shall be determined based on the classification of the record and the principle of "need-to-know."

4. MAKING THE APPLICATION

Requests for access to records must be submitted through designated channels, such as:

- Official application forms
- Institutional email
- Authorized online portals

The request must clearly specify:

- Details of the record required
- Purpose of the request
- Identification of the applicant (where applicable)

Incomplete or vague requests may result in delays or rejection. Applicants are encouraged to provide sufficient details to facilitate efficient processing.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND NOTIFICATION OF DECISIONS

- Acknowledgement of receipt shall ordinarily be issued within three (3) working days of receiving a complete request.

- The designated authority shall communicate its decision ordinarily within seven (7) working days. Where additional verification or consultation is required, the applicant shall be informed of the reasons for any extension.
- The decision shall specify:
    - Approval or refusal;
    - Any conditions or limitations;
    - Applicable fees (if any);
    - Appeal mechanism where applicable.

6. THIRD PARTY APPLICATIONS

Requests made by third parties will be subject to stricter scrutiny to ensure protection of institutional and personal data.

Such requests must:

- Demonstrate a legitimate purpose
- Comply with legal and ethical requirements
- Obtain consent from the concerned individual(s), where required

Unauthorized or unjustified third-party access will not be permitted.

7. APPROVAL AUTHORITIES

Routine access requests shall ordinarily be approved by the following authorities depending on the nature of the records:

Record Category	Approving Authority
Departmental academic records	Head of Department
Student academic and administrative records	Registrar / Controller of Examinations (as applicable)
Employee service records	Registrar / Human Resources Office
Financial records	Finance Officer
Research records	Dean (Research) / Principal Investigator, where applicable
Legal or statutory records	Registrar in consultation with the Legal Officer
Restricted institutional records	Vice-Chancellor or an authority specifically authorized by the Vice-Chancellor

8. EXCEPTIONS TO ROUTINE ACCESS

Certain records may be restricted from routine access due to:

- Confidentiality and privacy concerns
- Legal or regulatory restrictions
- Ongoing investigations or audits
- Intellectual property considerations
- Security-sensitive information

Access to such records may only be granted under special authorization or legal mandate.

9. PROVIDING ACCESS TO RECORDS

Access to records may be provided through:

- Physical inspection of documents
- Certified copies (hard or soft)
- Secure digital access

Conditions for access:

- Access must be supervised where necessary
- Records must not be altered, damaged, or removed
- Usage must comply with institutional policies

The University may levy reasonable reproduction or administrative charges as approved by the competent authority. Students requesting copies of their own academic records and requests made under statutory obligations may be exempted from such charges in accordance with institutional regulations.

Every instance of access shall be recorded in an Access Register or electronic Access Log, including the identity of the requester, date of access, approving authority, records accessed, and purpose of access.

10. AMENDMENT OF RECORDS

Individuals have the right to request correction of inaccurate or incomplete records.

Procedure:

- Submit a formal request with supporting evidence
- Review by the designated authority
- Approval or rejection based on verification

All amendments must be properly documented to maintain record integrity.

11. REQUESTS FROM THE MEDIA

Media requests must be handled with caution to protect institutional reputation and confidentiality.

- All media inquiries must be routed through the authorized communication office
- Only designated spokespersons may provide official information
- Sensitive or confidential data must not be disclosed

12. FAXING/EMAILING OF INFORMATION

Transmission of institutional records through electronic means shall ensure confidentiality and integrity.

- Sensitive records transmitted by email shall be encrypted or password protected wherever appropriate.
- Sharing institutional records through personal email accounts, personal cloud storage, messaging applications (such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, etc.), or other unauthorized platforms is prohibited unless specifically approved for official purposes and protected by appropriate security controls.
- Recipients shall be verified before any confidential information is transmitted.

13. OTHER MECHANISMS FOR ACCESS TO RECORDS

- **Court Orders:** Records must be disclosed when mandated by a valid court order, subject to legal verification.
- **Subpoena:** The institution shall comply with legally issued subpoenas requiring production of records.
- **Search Warrants:** Authorized law enforcement agencies may access records under valid search warrants, following due process.

14. SUPPLY OF INFORMATION TO REGULATORY AUTHORITIES

The institution shall provide information to authorized regulatory bodies in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Such disclosures must be:

- Verified and documented
- Limited to the scope of the request
- Approved by competent authority

15. ACCESS AUTHORISED OR PERMITTED BY STATUTE

Access to records may be granted where permitted by applicable laws or statutory provisions. The institution shall ensure compliance with such legal requirements while safeguarding sensitive information.

16. ACCESS PROHIBITED BY STATUTE OR REGULATIONS

Certain records may be legally restricted from disclosure. The institution shall strictly adhere to such prohibitions and deny access where required by law.

17. REQUESTS FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES

Requests from law enforcement agencies must:

- Be supported by valid legal documentation
- Be reviewed by the appropriate authority
- Comply with applicable legal and institutional requirements

Unauthorized requests will not be entertained.

18. INFORMATION REQUESTED FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES

Access to records for research purposes may be granted subject to:

- Approval by relevant committees (e.g., Ethics Committee)
- Ensuring anonymization of personal data
- Compliance with data protection and confidentiality requirements

Researchers must use the data strictly for approved purposes.

19. CONFIDENTIALITY

Individuals granted access to institutional records shall:

- Protect confidential information from unauthorized disclosure.
- Use records only for the approved purpose.
- Not copy, distribute, publish, or retain records beyond the authorized purpose without prior approval.

- Comply with all applicable data protection, confidentiality, and information security requirements.

Any breach of confidentiality or misuse of accessed records shall constitute a violation of this Policy and may result in disciplinary, civil, or legal action, as applicable.

20. REVIEW

- This Policy shall be reviewed at least once every three (3) years or earlier if required due to changes in applicable laws, regulatory requirements, technology, or institutional needs.
- Amendments shall be recommended by the Records Management Officer and approved by the Vice-Chancellor or other competent authority authorized under the University's Statutes.

21. FURTHER INFORMATION

For clarification or assistance, individuals may contact:

- Records Management Officer
- Administrative Office
- Legal/Compliance Office

CONCLUSION

This Routine Access to Records Policy ensures that Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education maintains a balanced approach to transparency and confidentiality, enabling efficient access to information while safeguarding institutional and personal data.