

# Intellectual Freedom and Libraries Procedure

This procedure is governed by its parent policy. Questions regarding this procedure are to be directed to the identified Procedure Administrator.

<b>Functional category</b>	Academic
<b>Parent policy</b>	Program Management and Advisory Committee Policy
<b>Approval date</b>	June 2, 2023
<b>Effective date</b>	June 2, 2023
<b>Procedure owner</b>	Vice President, Learner Experience
<b>Procedure administrator</b>	Chair, Library Services

## Overview

The NorQuest College Library adheres to a series of values that form its overall governance. One of these values is Intellectual Freedom. The library recognizes and adopts the [Canadian Federation of Library Association's \(CFLA\) statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries](#). The library also respects articles contained in [the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People with respect to Indigenous Knowledge](#), particularly Article 31 which states: "Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions."

The authority to establish this procedure is derived from the [NorQuest College Board of Governors Policy No. 5](#), which delegates authority to the President and

CEO to establish policies and procedures for the college's management and operation.

## Procedure

This procedure provides guidance to library staff and library users, while supporting the CFLA's Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries. Library materials, content, events, and displays are chosen and/or designed in accordance with the values expressed in this statement and in accordance with NorQuest's strategic plan, [NorQuest 2030: We Are Who We Include](#).

When concerns are raised about the legitimacy of library material; choice of library content; nature of library events or guests; or content or placement of library displays; a Library [Challenge Form](#) is to be completed and submitted to the Chair, Library Services.

When a Challenge Form is received by the Chair, Library Services, the Chair may request input from a member of the college community who has special insight or knowledge into the subject matter of the item, content, display, or event being challenged. In some cases, this may include, but is not necessarily limited to, consultations with members of the Office of Equity or, in the case of Indigenous issues or material being involved in the challenge, with an Elder, Knowledge Keeper, Cultural Advisor, or other Indigenous member of the college community.

While a challenge is being assessed, no material will be removed from the library collection.

Once the outcome of a challenge is determined, the challenge will be anonymized and posted on the library website (under the heading "Reconsideration requests and challenges to Intellectual Freedom") along with the library's response, rationale, and/or action. The library will protect the identities and activities of library clients except when required by the courts<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> NorQuest Library. (2019). *Library Statement of Confidentiality*.  
<https://library.norquest.ca/Library/media/PDF/about/Library-statement-on-confidentiality.pdf>

## Definitions

**Canadian Federation of Library Associations:** National Federation of Canadian Library Associations (CFLA).

**Cultural Advisor:** A person who advises on their specific culture and who has the knowledge and rights to pass on further teachings. This role is defined in different ways by different communities and is not equivalent to an Elder or Knowledge Keeper.

**Elder:** A First Nations, Métis, or Inuit individual who has acquired in-depth knowledge about their culture and traditions, and who has been given the title and recognition as Elder by their community or nation.

**Indigenous Peoples:** Indigenous peoples are defined in international or national legislation as having a set of specific rights based on their historical ties to a particular territory, and their cultural or historical distinctiveness from other populations that are often politically dominant. In what is now known as Canada, Indigenous peoples are defined as First Nations, Métis and Inuit. FNMI is sometimes used as a collective term to describe these different populations.

**Intellectual Freedom:** The fundamental right, subject only to the Constitution and the law, to have access to the full range of knowledge, imagination, ideas and opinion, and the right to express thoughts publicly<sup>2</sup>.

**Knowledge Keeper:** A person designated by Elders and/or members of a cultural community as being knowledgeable about their culture, perspectives, and products.

**Library content/library collection:** The print, audio, video, and digital resources acquired and collected by the library.

**Library display:** Any physical or digital display hosted and/or created by library staff regarding library content, collections, events, guests, and activities.

**Library events:** Coordinated activities that are initiated or hosted by the library with a specific purpose.

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<sup>2</sup> Canadian Federation of Library Associations. (2019). *Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries*. <http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/guidelines-and-position-papers/statement-on-intellectual-freedom-and-libraries/>

**Métis:** A person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Indigenous peoples, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, and who is accepted by the Métis Nation.<sup>3</sup>

**Métis Nation of Alberta:** The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) signed an Agreement (Métis Nation within Alberta Government Recognition and Self-Government Implementation Agreement) in 2019 that officially recognizes the Métis Nation within Alberta as an Indigenous government with an inherent and constitutionally protected right to self-government. NorQuest resides within MNA Region Four.<sup>4</sup>

**Traditional Protocol:** Practices one must follow when requesting cultural assistance. This is unique to each and every Elder, Cultural Advisor, and Knowledge Keeper. It is customary to meet in person with tobacco in hand to make an offering to inquire what their protocol preferences are and typically they will share the meaning behind this.

**Treaty 6:** Historical document signed on August 23, 1876 at Fort Carlton in Saskatchewan. The area of this Treaty reaches across western Alberta, through Saskatchewan, and into Manitoba and includes 50 First Nations. This Treaty ensures access to healthcare (medicine chest provision) and the right to education.<sup>5</sup>

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada:** The TRC is a component of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Its mandate is to inform all Canadians about what happened in Indian Residential Schools (IRS). The Commission will document the truth of survivors, families, communities and anyone personally affected by the IRS experience.

This includes First Nations, Métis, and Inuit former IRS students, their families, communities, the Churches, former school employees, Government and other Canadians (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2021)<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Métis Nation of Alberta. (n.d.). <https://albertametis.com/faqs/>

<sup>4</sup> Métis Nation of Alberta. (n.d.). <https://albertametis.com/news/mna-and-canada-sign-self-government-recognition-and-implementation-agreement/>

<sup>5</sup> Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations. (n.d.). About us. <https://www.treatysix.org/>

<sup>6</sup> National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. (n.d.) *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. <https://nctr.ca/about/history-of-the-trc/truth-and-reconciliation-commission-of-canada/>

The Commission completed its five-year mandate in 2015 and released its [final reports and 94 Calls to Action](#).

## Related information

### NorQuest College

- [Academic Freedom Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct Policy](#)
- [External College Communications Procedure](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy \(FOIP\) Act Policy](#)
- [Library Statement of Confidentiality](#)
- [NorQuest 2030: We Are Who We Include](#)
- [NorQuest Library Challenge Form](#)
- [Program Management and Advisory Committee Policy](#)

### External

- [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)
- [CFLA Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries](#)
- [Freedom of Expression and Inclusive Libraries](#)
- [Library Collection Development Guidelines \(contact the Library for details\)](#)
- [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

## Next review date

January 2027

## Revision history

Date	Version Number	Action
January 2019	V1	New
August 2019	V2 (published as V1-C)	Compliance Office template & reorganization update
April 2021	V3 (published as V1-C)	Retired Program Management and Academic Operations Committee Policy and replaced with Program Management and Advisory Committee Policy, updated this procedure accordingly

May 2023	V4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Inclusion of the library's recognition of United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and library's support for Indigenous data sovereignty as a companion intellectual freedom principle</li><li>2) Inclusion of procedures to seek input from community members, the Office of Equity and/or Cultural Advisors/Knowledge Keppers/Elders</li><li>3) Inclusion of Indigenous definitions</li><li>4) Inclusion of new links under 'external' section</li></ol>
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