

Responsible Use of Electronic Devices and Mobile Phone Policy

Inspiring Great Minds



Queensland Academy
for Science Mathematics
and Technology



1. RATIONALE

The Queensland Academy for Science, Mathematics and Technology (QASMT) uses technology as a tool to support our mission of ensuring that all students meet high academic standards and are prepared for lifelong learning and productive global citizenship. Every user needs technology skills and knowledge to succeed as an effective and productive citizen. The 21st century learning environment at QASMT includes a variety of digital resources including but not limited to:

- computing and technology devices
- internet sites
- software
- images, text and audio
- interactive multimedia
- Learning Management Systems (LMS)

The responsible use of electronic devices and mobile phones is imperative in the lives of students and is best taught in partnership between home and school. Safe and responsible behaviour is explicitly taught at QASMT and parents and caregivers are requested to reinforce this behaviour at home.

In consultation with the broader school community, QASMT has determined that explicit teaching of responsible use of electronic devices and mobile phones is a critical component of digital literacy. The knowledge and confidence to navigate and use these technologies safely while developing digital literacy is a responsibility shared between parents/caregivers, school staff and students.

It is also agreed that time and space should be provided at school where technology is not permitted for students in Years 7 – 9, and those students are encouraged to engage in other social learning and development activities. Students in Years 7 – 9 are not permitted to use electronic devices, such as laptops, during break times unless they are using their device for educational purposes in the Research Centre.

Mobile Phone Use

From 2024, in line with all other Department of Education schools, mobile phones must be 'Away for the Day' and students are not permitted to use mobile phones during school time. 'Away for the Day' will support schools to maintain a strong focus on educational achievement, and student wellbeing and engagement by:

- providing optimal learning and teaching environments
- encouraging increased face-to-face social interactions between students
- promoting the health and wellbeing of students through increased social interaction and physical activity
- reducing the potential for students to be exposed to the negative impacts of the digital world, resulting from unsafe or inappropriate technology use.

Mobile phones may be brought to school however, they must be switched off and not be visible at any time throughout the school day. Notifications on wearable devices, such as smartwatches, must be switched off so that phone calls, messages and other notifications cannot be sent or received during school hours. This also applies to student attendance at school activities, such as school sport, excursions and camps, unless otherwise determined by the Principal. Students are not permitted to bring any mobile phone or wearable device into an examination.

Phones and wearable devices are switched off and away for the day with the following exemptions:

QASMT Specific Exemptions

- Teachers, may give permission for students to use their mobile phone or wearable device in the classroom, for a specific and agreed educational purpose
- Payment at the refectory

Individual Circumstances

Consideration of individual circumstances will be given to students who require temporary or ongoing exemptions to the school's local implementation approach, including where:

- the mobile phone or wearable device is used by the student to monitor or manage a medical condition (in accordance with the [Managing students' health support needs at school procedure](#))
- the mobile phone or wearable device is used as an agreed reasonable adjustment for a student with disability or learning difficulties
- the mobile phone or wearable device is used by the student as an augmentative or alternative communication system or as an aide to access and participate in the environment, e.g. navigation or object/people identification applications
- the mobile phone or wearable device is used as an agreed adjustment for a student with English as an additional language or dialect
- the student has extenuating circumstances that necessitates the need for access to their mobile phone or wearable device during the school day, including (but not limited to) students who contribute financially to their household, independent students, and students who are primary carers for a child or family member, or
- students who are applying for Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments for assistive technology.

Students who are seeking to apply for exemption for individual circumstances should email the Principal EAtPrincipal@qasmt.eq.edu.au, providing a medical certificate and/or other supporting material to assist with the application for exemption.

Students are permitted to bring mobile phones and wearable devices to school to:

- support safe travel to and from school
- make contact with parents, friends and part-time employers outside of the school day, and
- be contacted about their own child or person under their care.

During school hours, urgent communication between students and parents should be directed through the school office. Non-urgent communication between students and parents should be done via email.

If a student has been asked to comply with the above policy on the use of electronic devices, mobile phones or Smart watches and fails to do so, the Student Code of Conduct will be enacted.

2. SCHOOL COMMUNITY BELIEFS ABOUT THE IMPORANCE OF USING TECHNOLOGY

It is important that students, staff, parents and caregivers have a shared understanding of the importance of the responsible use of technology, both at school and at home.



The Academy:

- Believes students and staff should have ready access to the vast instructional potential of technological tools available to support learning.
- Believes that the school has a responsibility for students' digital literacy and safety outside of school hours by promoting safe internet and social media use.
- Is committed to incorporating digital technologies into students' lessons, where appropriate.
- Feels that this policy reflects the importance the school places on students displaying courtesy, consideration and respect for others whenever they are using technology devices.

It is acceptable for students at QASMT to use their electronic device (lap top) safely and responsibly for:

- assigned class work and assignments set by teachers
- developing appropriate literacy, communication and information skills
- authoring text, artwork, audio and visual material for publication on the intranet or internet for educational purposes, as supervised and approved by the school
- conducting general research for school activities and projects
- communicating or collaborating with other students, teachers, parents/caregivers or experts in relation to school work
- accessing online references such as dictionaries, research data bases, the digital library etc.
- researching and learning through the department's eLearning environment

Expectations on the responsible use of technology:

- be courteous and considerate of others when using an electronic device
- respect the rights and confidentiality of others
- follow the direction of teachers when using an electronic device and seek approval where they wish to use an electronic device under special circumstances.

It is unacceptable for students at QASMT to use mobile phones or electronic devices at any time in an unlawful, disrespectful or irresponsible manner which may include but is not limited to:

- film, photograph, screen capture, or record members of the Academy community without permission and these artefacts must not be shared or used without permission
- use a mobile phone or wearable device with notifications switched on, during the school day
- publish on any social media platform, material relating to the school, including photos of students wearing school uniforms, without permission of Academy staff
- download, distribute or publish offensive messages or pictures
- use obscene, inflammatory, racist, discriminatory, derogatory or hurtful language
- use language and/or threats of violence that may amount to bullying and/or harassment, or stalking
- insult, harass or attack others or use obscene or abusive language
- deliberately waste printing and internet resources
- damage computers, printers or network equipment
- commit plagiarism or violate copyright laws
- ignore teacher direction for viewing online material, text, social media, online email and internet chat

- send chain letters or spam email (junk mail)
- knowingly download viruses or any other programs capable of breaching the department's network security
- use in-phone or IT device cameras anywhere a normal camera would be considered inappropriate, such as in change rooms or toilets
- invade someone's privacy by recording personal conversations or daily activities and/or the further distribution (e.g., forwarding, texting, uploading, Bluetooth use etc.) of such material
- use a mobile phone, smart watch or similar (including those with Bluetooth functionality) to cheat during exams or assessments.

At all times students, while using ICT facilities and devices, will be required to act in line with the requirements of the QASMT Student Code of Conduct. In addition, students and their parents/caregivers should:

- understand the responsibility and behaviour requirements (as outlined by the school) that come with accessing the department's ICT network facilities.
- ensure they have the skills to report and discontinue access to harmful information if presented via the internet or email.
- be aware that:
 - access to ICT facilities and devices provides valuable learning experiences for students and supports the school's teaching and learning programs
 - schools may remotely access departmentally owned computers or electronic devices for management purposes
 - students who use school ICT facilities and devices in a manner that is not appropriate may be subject to disciplinary action by the school, which could include restricting network access
 - despite internal departmental controls to manage content on the internet, illegal, dangerous or offensive information may be accessed or accidentally displayed. Teachers will always exercise their duty of care, but parents and caregivers should take measures to reduce student access to these types of sites.

General Standards

Students will:

- be aware of and follow the Responsible Use of Electronic Devices and Mobile Phone Policy and the Appropriate Use of Social Media Policy.
- not disable settings for virus protection, spam and filtering that have been applied as a departmental standard.
- ensure that communication through internet and online communication services is related to learning.
- keep passwords confidential, and change them when prompted, or when known by another user.
- use passwords that are not obvious or easily guessed.
- never allow others to use their personal e-learning account or loan their device to others.
- log off at the end of each session to ensure that nobody else can use their e-learning account.
- promptly tell a staff member if they suspect they have received a computer virus or spam (i.e. unsolicited email), or if they receive a message that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- seek advice if another user asks for excessive personal information, asks to be telephoned, offers gifts by email or wants to meet.

- never knowingly initiate or forward emails or other messages containing:
 - a message that was sent to them in confidence.
 - a message that may be hurtful to others
 - a computer virus or attachment that is capable of damaging recipients' computers.
 - chain letters and hoax emails.
 - spam, e.g. unsolicited advertising material.
- never create, send, share or publish:
 - unacceptable or unlawful material or remarks, including hurtful, offensive, abusive or discriminatory comments.
 - threatening, bullying or material harassing another person or making excessive or unreasonable demands upon another person.
 - sexually explicit or sexually suggestive material or correspondence.
 - false, damaging or defamatory information about a person or organisation.
- ensure that personal use, whilst at school, is kept to a minimum and internet and online communication services is generally used for genuine curriculum and educational activities.
- use of unauthorised programs and intentionally downloading unauthorised software, graphics or music that is not associated with learning, is not permitted.
- never damage or disable computers, computer systems or networks of the department.
- ensure that services are not used for unauthorised commercial activities, political lobbying, online gambling or any unlawful purpose.
- software that is capable of accessing protected sections of any network, damaging the network or obtaining other people's passwords is prohibited and must not be used.
- never use the network to disrupt its use by other individuals or by connecting networks.
- ensure that teachers are able to clearly see digital work in progress, and that no means are used to avoid teacher scrutiny.
- be aware that all use of internet and online communication services can be audited and traced to the e-learning accounts of specific users.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Students will:

- never publish or disclose the email address or other personal information of a staff member or student without that person's explicit permission.
- not reveal personal information including names, addresses, photographs, credit card details and telephone numbers of themselves or others.
- ensure privacy and confidentiality is maintained by not disclosing or using any information in a way that is contrary to any individual's interests.

Intellectual Property and Copyright

Students will:

- never plagiarise information and will observe appropriate copyright clearance, including acknowledging the author or source of any information used.
- ensure that permission is gained before electronically publishing users' works or drawings.

- always acknowledge the creator or author of any material published.
- ensure any material published on the internet or intranet has the approval of the Principal or their delegate and has appropriate copyright clearance.

Parents/Caregivers will:

- ensure that their child follows the school's Responsible Use of Electronic Devices and Mobile Phone Policy and the Appropriate Use of Social Media Policy.
- assist the school by monitoring problematic online and social media behaviour by students.
- talk to their students about being a courteous, respectful and safe user of technology.

The Academy will:

- inform the school community of the school's Responsible Use of Electronic Devices and Mobile Phone Policy and Appropriate Use of Social Media Policy
- maintain a high level of digital security on the school network
- explicitly teach students safe and responsible digital and online behaviour
- monitor students' use of digital technology at school and in class
- enact the Student Code of Conduct if students are accessing their mobile phones during school hours, or if they are not using technology in a responsible manner.

3. ASSESSMENT AND EXAMS

Mobile phones, other electronic devices and wearable technologies are not permitted in any exam room. Personal electronic devices and laptops are permitted only when explicitly directed by the classroom teacher.

Special circumstances

Students who require the use of a personal assistive technology device in circumstances that would contravene this policy (for example to assist with a medical condition or other disability or for a special project) should negotiate a special circumstances arrangement with the Deputy Principals of Middle Years or Senior Years.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES STUDENTS, STAFF, PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Recording voice and images

Every member of the Academy should feel confident about participating fully and frankly in all aspects of school life without concern that their personal privacy is being invaded by them being recorded, including screenshots or editing of recordings, without their knowledge or consent.

We uphold the value of trust and the right to privacy at QASMT. Students using personal technology devices to record inappropriate behaviours or incidents (such as vandalism, fighting, bullying, staged fighting or pranks etc) to disseminate to others (including distribution by phone or internet posting) build a culture of distrust and disharmony and will be in breach of the Student Code of Conduct.

Students, staff and parents/caregivers must not record images anywhere that recording would not reasonably be considered appropriate (e.g. in change rooms, toilets or any other place where a reasonable person would expect to be afforded privacy). The Academy will not tolerate any images or sound, if it may cause embarrassment or hurt to individuals of the school.

Breach of this policy may be subject to discipline, including suspension. Students should note that the recording or dissemination of images that are considered indecent or unlawful (such as nudity or sexual acts involving children), is against the law and if detected by the school will result in a referral to the Queensland Police Service.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES STUDENTS, STAFF, PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Recording private conversations

It is important that all members of the school community understand that under the Invasion of Privacy Act 1971, 'a person is guilty of an offence against this Act if the person uses a listening device to overhear, record, monitor or listen to a private conversation'. It is also an offence under the Act for a person who has overheard, recorded, monitored or listened to a conversation to which s/he is not a party to publish or communicate the substance or meaning of the conversation to others.

Students need to understand that some conversations are private and therefore to overhear, record, monitor or listen to such private conversations may be in breach of this Act, unless consent to the recording is appropriately obtained.

6. CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Devices potentially containing evidence of criminal offences may be reported to the police. In such cases police may take possession of such devices for investigation purposes and students and parents/caregivers will be advised to contact the Queensland Police Service directly.

Students will be aware that:

- they are held responsible for their actions while using internet and online communication services.
- they are held responsible for any breaches caused by them allowing any other person to use their e-learning account to access internet and online communication services.
- the misuse of internet and online communication services may result in disciplinary action which includes, but is not limited to, the withdrawal of access to services.
- network administrators may review files and communications at any time to maintain integrity and ensure users are using the network responsibly.

7. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Students will report:

- any internet site accessed that is considered inappropriate.
- any suspected technical security breach involving users from other schools or from outside the Queensland Department of Education.
- Students should be aware that:
- their emails are monitored for use of inappropriate conversations or language. Emails are also archived and their web browsing is logged. The records are kept for seven years.
- the email archive and web browsing logs are considered official documents.
- they need to be careful about putting their personal or sensitive information in emails or on websites.
- these records may be used in investigations, court proceedings or for other legal reason.