



Students Using Mobile Phones Policy

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Traralgon College's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours based on section 5.2.1(2)(b) of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

RATIONALE

The Victorian government and Traralgon College takes the safe and responsible use of digital technologies, student safety and wellbeing, and the development of social skills and positive behaviour, very seriously.

Whilst the Victorian government acknowledges that we live in a technology-rich world where mobile phones are an important communication tool, research has found that mobile phones can be disruptive in classrooms and open to misuse at school. The unregulated presence of mobile phones in classrooms can undermine students' capacity to think, learn, remember, pay attention and regulate emotion.

At recess and lunchtime, opportunities for students to communicate with each other face-to-face or be involved in physical activity are also valued, rather than students being focused on a mobile phone, particularly when they are using it to engage with social media.

This new policy acknowledges that technology is increasingly affecting how students learn and communicate. Therefore, when a student has been given explicit permission to access and use such devices to enhance learning by the classroom teacher, mobile phones will be permitted for that specific purpose. For a small number of students with particular health and wellbeing needs, an exception to the policy may also be granted.

This policy will remove a major distraction from our classrooms, so that teachers can teach, and students can learn in a more focused, positive and supported environment.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Traralgon College and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones brought onto school premises during school hours, including recess and lunchtime.

DEFINITIONS

A mobile phone is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network.

POLICY

Traralgon College understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.



At Traralgon College:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored in their locker during school hours
- Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see below for further information)
- When emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school's office.

Personal mobile phone use

In accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Traralgon College during school hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted.

Where a student has been granted an exception, the student must use their mobile phone for the purpose for which the exception was granted, and in a safe, ethical and responsible manner.

Secure storage

Mobile phones owned by students at Traralgon College are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner's (student's or parent/carer's) risk. Students are encouraged not to bring a mobile phone to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Please note that Traralgon College does not have accident insurance for accidental property damage or theft. Students and their parents/carers are encouraged to obtain appropriate insurance for valuable items. Refer to the Department's [Personal Goods policy](#).

Where students bring a mobile phone to school Traralgon College will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Traralgon College students are required to store their phones in their lockers.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Traralgon College may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing Student Engagement: Behaviour and Inclusion policy and our Safe and Orderly Learning Environment (SOLE) processes.

At Traralgon College inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted, and particularly use of a mobile phone:

- in any way that disrupts the learning of self and others
- to send inappropriate, harassing or threatening messages or phone calls
- to engage in inappropriate social media use including cyber bullying
- to capture video or images of people, including students, teachers and members of the school community without their permission
- to capture video or images in the school toilets, changing rooms, swimming pools and gyms
- during exams and assessments

Exceptions



Exceptions to the policy:

- may be applied during school hours if certain conditions are met, specifically,
 - Health and wellbeing-related exceptions; and
 - Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite.
- can be granted by the principal, or by the teacher for that class, in accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#).

The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#) are:

1. Learning-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
For specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Unit of work (UbD)
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Learning or Education Plan

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	Student Health Support Plan
Students who are Young Carers	Individual Education Plan

3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite

Specific exception	Documentation
Travelling to and from excursions	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students on excursions and camps	Risk assessment planning documentation
When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel	Risk assessment planning documentation

Where an exception is granted, the student can only use the mobile phone for the purpose for which it was granted.

Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities



Traralgon College will provide students and their parents and carers with information about items that can or cannot be brought to camps, excursions, special activities and events, including personal mobile phones.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school
- Laptop devices
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. structured workplace learning and / or work experience
- Students who are undertaking external VET

RELATED LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- **Traralgon College - Student Engagement: Behaviour and Inclusion policy, *SWPBS Code of Conduct, Safe and Orderly Learning Environment (SOLE)***
- **Education and Training and Reform Act 2006 (Vic)**
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/legislation/Pages/act2006.aspx>
- **Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)**
<https://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/the-law/equal-opportunity-act>
- **Reporting and Managing Emergencies and Incidents**
- **Mobile Phones – Department Policy**
- **Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items**
- **Personal Goods – Department policy**

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on November 2019 and is scheduled for review on November 2022.