



MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Victorian College for the Deaf's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Victorian College for the Deaf and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones, iPads, Apple watches or similar 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. For the purpose of this policy, "mobile phone" refers to mobile phones and any device that may connect to or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone such as smart watches.

School hours will include students travelling to Victorian College for the Deaf on DET provided transport currently known as a taxi.

POLICY

Victorian College for the Deaf students may bring a personal mobile phone to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

At the Victorian College for the Deaf:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones and personal technological devices including smart watches to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours. A lockbox safeguarded by the office is provided.
- 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 Victorian College for the Deaf 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 and Insurance

Mobile phones, iPads and smart watches owned by students at VCD 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 Victorian College for the Deaf 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, Victorian College for the Deaf will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so.

Taxi travellers

When students board a DET funded taxi, they are required to hand phones or personal technological devices including iPads and smart watches that have connectivity to the Supervisor who will secure their devices in a lockbox. The Supervisor will hand the lockbox into the office at VCD for safekeeping for the duration of the day. For the return run home, the opposite will happen. The Supervisor will collect the lockbox from the office. The Supervisor will return devices to students as they disembark from the taxi.

Independent Travellers

At Victorian College for the Deaf students are required to hand phones or personal technological devices including iPads and smart watches to the office at the start of the day to be placed in a lockbox. Students arriving late are also required to leave their device at the office. All phones and devices will be available for collection at the office from 3pm. A staff member will be on duty to assist with collection.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Victorian College for the Deaf may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement policies, *Wellbeing and Engagement* and *Bullying Prevention* policies.

At Victorian College for the Deaf 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 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) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for real time captioning purposes • VET and VCAL classes held in the Tradeblock Café and ABlock bike shop 	Unit of work, learning sequence outlining the potential use of personal devices for capturing evidence
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Learning Plan, Individual Education Plan

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	Student Health Support Plan

3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite

Specific exception	Documentation
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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
Students who attend VET at a TAFE college or cluster school	Risk assessment planning documentation Cluster school mobile phone policy

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

Victorian College for the Deaf 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
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience
- Students who are undertaking VET somewhere other than a school, i.e. TAFE

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- *Student Wellbeing and Engagement*
- *Bullying Prevention Policy*
- *Digital Technologies policy*
- [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](#)
- [Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items](#)
- [Personal Goods – Department policy](#)

REVIEW PERIOD

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

