
DOCUMENT REFERENCE:	PPP144
RESPONSIBLE MANAGER:	School of Education and Creative Arts
CATEGORY:	Academic & Student Information
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RELATED DOCUMENTS:	PPP141 Complaints Resolution and Appeals Procedure PPP145 Social Media Guidelines PPP149 Student Code of Conduct PPP149b Addendum: Student Code of Conduct. PPP163 Complaints and Appeals Policy TL115 Standards of Behaviour Student Agreement TL116 Student Behavioural Incident Form. TL117 Student Behaviour Plan – VET DSS TL117a Behavior plan Class Evaluation – VET DSS
LEGISLATION:	Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 Child Safe Standards 2022 Victorian Department of Education and Training https://www.vic.gov.au/mobile-phones-schools

1. Introduction

This guideline is designed to support all South West TAFE (SWTAFE or the 'Organisation') VET DSS and Senior Secondary staff and students to enjoy a safe, comfortable, and supportive work/learning environment. It also describes the actions to be taken when a breach of this Guideline occurs.

2. Background.

Victorian Department of Education and Training. 'From Term 1, 2020 there will be a new [mobile phone policy](#) for all government schools (including for VET DSS students at TAFE). The policy means phones brought to school must be switched off and stored securely during the school day.

The aim of this policy is to provide:

- a safe environment to learn without inappropriate mobile phone use (including cyberbullying) or distractions
- greater opportunities for social interaction and physical activity during recess and lunchtimes.

3. Scope

This Guideline applies to all students enrolled at SWTAFE under the VET DSS and Senior Secondary program who are under the care of a SWTAFE teacher. Where guidance is related specifically to VET DSS students or combined VET DSS & Senior Secondary classes, this is indicated.

4. Definition

For the purpose of this policy, "mobile phone" also refers to any device that may connect to or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone (including devices that have their own cellular or mobile connectivity such as iPads, tablets or smart watches that contain a SIM card).

5. VET DSS and Senior Secondary Program Mobile Phone Guidelines

SWTAFE understands that students will bring a personal mobile phone, personal laptop, iPad, tablet or other Smart device to use in class for study purposes (with teacher permission) or during breaks for personal reasons. Any such use is bound by SWTAFE's Social Media Guideline or Student Code of Conduct including Student Code of Conduct Addendum PPP149b.

At SWTAFE:

- Students are allowed to bring a mobile phone into class but it must not be used or accessed unless under the permission of the teacher for learning related tasks.
- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to TAFE must have them switched off or on silent if not being used for class activities. SWTAFE staff may request students store phones away in their bags at the beginning of class.
- VET DSS classes (which may include Senior Secondary Students from time to time) are provided with 'Safe Boxes' where students may request their phone or other device be stored if the student isn't comfortable leaving it in their bags.
- Students may access their phones during break-times. Any use of a mobile phone during break time and before / after class must be in accordance with SWTAFE's Social Media Guidelines PPP145 and the SWTAFE's Student Code of Conduct PPP149 & PPP149b.
- Student mobile phones maybe taken on excursions as directed by the teacher.
- When an emergency occurs, parents/guardians should reach their child by calling the School of Education Administration Staff on +61 3 5564 8824 who will contact the student's SWTAFE teacher, VET DSS Schools Partnership Leader or the Curriculum Education Manager for Senior Secondary Program Students.

6. Exceptions

Exceptions to the guideline may be applied during SWTAFE hours if certain conditions are met, specifically,

- Health and wellbeing-related exceptions.
- Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite.
- Teacher permits usage so student can complete work – set time only using SWTAFE online or another approved online training platform.

7. Secure storage

Mobile phones owned by students at SWTAFE are considered valuable items. SWTAFE will take all reasonable steps to ensure the security of items, however personal items such as a phone brought to SWTAFE are the responsibility of the student. If students feel their device is unsafe within their school bag they have an option to hand their device to their program teacher to store in a lockable container (where a safe box is available).

8. Misconduct Response

If students use their mobile phone (or iPad, tablet or Smartwatch) during SWTAFE class hours and an exception has not been granted (for example: Accessing Social Media, playing games or contravening SWTAFE's Social Media Guideline or Student Code of Conduct) SWTAFE staff may:

1. instruct the student to place the mobile phone into a secure place (in their bag or in the 'Safe Box' if available) where it cannot be accessed during class
2. If students are using their mobile/devices in class without permission, SWTAFE staff have permission to confiscate the device and place it in the 'Safe Box' where available to be returned after class has concluded.
3. If a VET DSS student becomes disruptive follow Time Out or Class Exclusion Procedures (see Student Code of Conduct PPP149 & PPP149b).

9. Applications for Exceptions

Individual student exceptions to the Guideline:

- may be applied during class hours if certain conditions are met (*in line with Victorian State Government – Students Using Mobile Phones policy see ‘Background’ above*)
- can be granted by the Curriculum Education Manager, Teaching Education Manager or by the teacher, in accordance with this Guideline. Prior to an exemption being granted, the student may be required to provide supporting evidence. For example, if the exemption is in relation to a medical condition, the student may be asked for supporting evidence from their treating medical professional
- must be documented and kept with the students’ academic file (if an exception is granted for an ongoing personal issue).

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

10. Definitions of Breaches

Minor Breach – Using Social Media, playing games or personal messaging during class with-out teacher permission

Serious Breaches – Repeated breaches in one day/Bullying or harassment/refusal to follow teaching instruction

11. Record Keeping

Serious breaches of this Guideline PPP144 must be noted in Student Communication Logbooks and dated by the attending staff member. For any breaches resulting in a suspension period of greater than one day the relevant staff member must complete a PPP116 Student Behavioural Incident Form. and if relevant, PPP117 *Student Behavioural Plan VET DSS* and PPP117b *Behaviour Plan Class Evaluation*

12. Communication

The VET DSS and Senior Secondary Program mobile phone guideline PPP144 will be distributed to all students as part of the enrolment or Course Orientation process. It will also be displayed in relevant student activity areas. It is also the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the guidelines are regularly communicated and outlined to students.

13. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

SWTAFE is committed to making diversity, equity and inclusion part of everything we do, including in the implementation of this policy/procedure/guideline. For more information, please visit the ‘Our Values’ page on our [website](#) [external] or the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Homepage on ECHO [internal]. [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion \(DEI\)](#)

14. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

South West TAFE is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a Child Safe Program designed to keep children safe within our organisation. For Child Safe key documents, resources, contact officer details please go to: [Child Safe Commitment](#)