

Use of mobile phones and other devices by students

Important to note

- For the purpose of this document, *mobile phones and wearable devices* include mobile phones, smartwatches, headphones (including air pods, ear buds etc.), handheld devices and other emerging technologies which have the ability to connect to telecommunication networks or the internet.
- This document does not apply to personal or school-owned devices, such as iPads, tablets or laptops, that are approved for educational use as part of the school's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy.

Purpose

This policy:

- outlines the requirement for all students to keep mobile phones **switched off** and **'away for the day'** during school hours, and while attending college activities, such as representative school sport, excursions and camps
- outlines the requirement for all students to **switch off** notifications on wearable devices, including smartwatches, during school hours, and while attending college activities, such as representative school sport, excursions and camps
- outlines our college approach to managing student mobile phones and wearable devices that are brought to school, and
- outlines our college approach to the application of exemptions for students who require access to their mobile phone or wearable device during school hours.

Overview

Mango Hill State Secondary College is committed to reducing the distraction of mobile phones and wearable devices to provide optimal learning environments for all students.

'Away for the day' aims to:

- provide optimal learning and teaching environments, free from the distractions caused by personal use of mobile phones and wearable devices
- create safe and supportive learning environments that prioritise student engagement and wellbeing
- encourage increased face-to-face social interactions between students
- promote the health and wellbeing of students by providing opportunities for social interaction and physical activity during break times, and
- reduce the potential for students to be exposed to the negative impacts of the digital world, resulting from unsafe or inappropriate use of technology, such as cyberbullying, accessing harmful content or breaches of personal privacy.

Student use of mobile phones and wearable devices at school

From Term 1 2024, all students must keep their mobile phones **switched off** and **'away for the day'** from the time they enter the college grounds until they leave the college grounds at the conclusion of the school day, including during break times.

- 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.
- Headphones (including air pods, ear buds etc.) **must not be used at any time** unless under the direct instruction of a teacher or member of staff.
- Students **will not** be allowed the use of mobile phones and wearable devices to make payments, including for canteen and office payments.
- This policy also applies to student attendance at college activities, such as representative school sport, excursions and camps, unless otherwise determined by the school principal.
- Students may only use their mobile phone or have wearable device notifications enabled during these times if they are participating in a teacher-led activity, or have an approved exemption for medical, disability and/or wellbeing reasons.
- Students participating in activities, such as off-site Vocational Education and Training or work placements must follow the expectations of the organisation in charge regarding the use of mobile devices.

Bringing mobile phones and wearable devices to school

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**.

Storage and loss or damage to mobile phones or devices

- If students choose to bring their phone to school, they must **switch it off** and keep it in their school bag or on their person (ie. in their pocket or pencil case) during school hours.
- Smartwatches and other devices can be worn, however notifications must be **switched off**, this includes during lessons and break times, as well as other school activities.
- The school makes no provision for the storage of student mobile phones or other personal devices, except for the safe keeping of devices confiscated for a breach of this policy under the school's Student Code of Conduct and in compliance with the [Temporary removal of student property by school staff procedure](#).
- Students' personal devices brought to school are at the risk of the student. The college will not accept liability in the event of loss/theft/damage of any device.
- In any circumstance, the school is not responsible for the replacement of, or compensation to, the student or parent for any loss or damage to a device the student brings to school.

Exemptions

The Department of Education consulted with key stakeholder groups to develop a list of exemptions for instances where students may require access to, and use of a mobile phone or wearable device during the school day.

- Parents or carers may apply on behalf of their child for an exemption to the 'Away for the day' policy. Students with an approved exemption must only use their mobile phone or wearable device for the intended, approved purpose.
- Principals will consider requests for exemption received from parents on a case-by-case basis. When considering an exemption request, principals may seek additional information to

support the need for the student to access their mobile phone or wearable device during the school day.

- Exemptions granted under this policy may be temporary for a fixed period, or ongoing in consideration of a student's individual circumstances, 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 in Years 11 and 12 are applying for Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) for assistive technology.
- Approved exemptions, including details of how and when a student may access their mobile phone or wearable device, will be documented in the student's OneSchool Support Provisions tab and communicated to school staff, including temporary relief staff.
- In making a decision not to approve an exemption, the principal will undertake an assessment of the human rights that may be impacted by the decision and consider whether the limit placed on those human rights is reasonable and justified. The assessment will be documented appropriately.
- Where an exemption is not approved and the student or their parent expresses dissatisfaction with the decision, information about how to make a customer complaint and how a complaint will be managed will be made available in accordance with the [Customer complaints management procedure](#).

General exemptions

It is acknowledged that the use of mobile phones and wearable devices can support the college's teaching and learning programs by providing valuable learning experiences for students, as well as supporting day-to-day school operations. At Mango Hill State Secondary College:

- Teachers may give permission for students to use their mobile phone or wearable device in the classroom, for a specific and agreed educational purpose. Prior to granting permission, teachers will consider whether the same outcome can be achieved using student or school-owned devices approved for educational use as part of the school's BYOD policy.
- There is **no general exemption** for the use of mobile phones or wearable technology in the playground. Students who have a Principal exemption to use and/or wear such devices consistent with their specific need will have this recorded as part of their support provisions. The Principal may designate a place or places in the school where responsible use is permitted for activities such as quiet reading or quiet listening.

- The Principal may determine to allow students access and use of mobile phones and wearable devices during school representative sports, camps or excursions at specified and supervised times (in accordance with the [School excursions procedure](#)).

Students are NOT permitted to, and there will be NO exemption granted to allow students to:

- connect their mobile phone to the school's network at any time, that avoids safe and filtered access to the internet (in accordance with the Use of ICT systems procedure), and
- use their device to "hot spot" their school provided or BYO device, ensuring students only use their mobile phone or wearable device for the intended, and agreed purpose.

Supporting responsible use of mobile phones and other devices

The Mango Hill State Secondary College *Student Code of Conduct* details staff responsibilities to support students to understand and meet behavioural expectations of the college, and guidance on the application, where required, of disciplinary consequences.

Students seen using their phone or wearable device during the school day will be issued with the following consequences:

First offence:

- Students will be provided with a verbal reminder about expected behaviour.
- Students will be asked to hand in their mobile phone or wearable device at the office. The phone or wearable device will be held securely in the office to be collected at the end of the school day.
- A formal warning will be issued to the student for a first non-compliance with policy, and parents will be contacted.

Second and ongoing offence/s:

- If the phone or wearable device is used following a formal warning, the student will be asked to hand in their mobile phone or wearable device at the office. The phone or wearable device will be held securely in the office to be collected at the end of the school day by a parent or guardian.
- Ongoing, persistent and/or deliberate non-compliant behaviour may result in a Student Disciplinary Absence (SDA) in line with the college *Student Code of Conduct*.
- Mobile phones and wearable devices that have been temporarily removed from the student will be stored and retained in accordance with the department's [Temporary removal of student property by school staff procedure](#).
- The college has taken a whole-school approach that promotes the safe, respectful and positive use of mobile phones and other technology through delivery of the Australian Curriculum and specific programs focused on digital literacy.

- When managing inappropriate online behaviours or reputation management incidents, the primary concern is the safety and wellbeing of the students and/or staff members involved.

Parent Communication with your student at school

- Parents and carers will be able to contact their child during school hours using the school's existing communication channels.
- Likewise, school staff will contact you directly wherever needed.
- Students are to report to a school staff member if they become unwell or experience an issue at school. Staff can then provide appropriate support, including contact with parents and following formal processes for early collection from school where necessary.

Legislation

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Human Rights Act Qld \(2019\)](#)

Delegations / Authorisations

- [Nil](#)

Other resources

- [Customer complaints management procedure](#)
- [Cybersafety and reputation management](#)
- [Inclusive education policy](#)
- [Managing students' health support needs at school procedure](#)
- [Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure](#)
- [Student discipline procedure](#)
- [Temporary removal of student property by school staff procedure](#)
- [Use of ICT systems procedure](#)
- [Use of mobile devices procedure](#)