



Procedure

Student use of mobile devices procedure

Version: 1.1 | **Version effective:** 12/02/2024

Audience

All state schools.

Purpose

This procedure outlines the responsibilities and processes for student use of mobile devices in Queensland state schools, to support safe and productive learning environments.

Overview

Queensland state schools are committed to reducing the distraction of mobile devices to provide optimal learning environments for all students.

For the purpose of this procedure, mobile devices include mobile phones, wearables such as smartwatches, handheld devices and other emerging technologies which have the ability to connect to telecommunication networks or the internet.

All state school students must keep mobile phones switched off and 'away for the day' during school hours. Wearable devices, such as smartwatches, must have notifications switched off so that phone calls, messages and other notifications cannot be sent or received during school hours.

Students and their parents may apply for an exemption from this requirement based on certain criteria. Students with pre-existing school approval to use a mobile device on an ongoing basis to support certain medical, disability and/or wellbeing needs will not need to reapply under this procedure.

This procedure 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 (BYOx) approach. For information about accessing the department's ICT applications, systems and networks, please refer to the [Use of mobile devices procedure](#) and the [Use of IT systems procedure](#).

Responsibilities

Principals

- consult with their school community and develop a local policy approach to implementing this procedure

- document the school's local policy approach in the *Student Code of Conduct*
- communicate the school's local policy approach with students, parents and school staff and ensure they comply with this procedure
- consider and make decisions (or delegate decision-making to an appropriate staff member) about requests for exemptions from this procedure
- document exemption decisions in the student's OneSchool Student Profile - Support tab and communicate to all staff, including temporary relief staff
- ensure the school's local policy approach is compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld)
- are mindful of their obligations under the [Disability Standards for Education 2005 \(Cwth\)](#).

State school staff

- ensure familiarity with the school's local policy approach for student use of mobile devices, as outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct*
- ensure familiarity with, and implement approved exemptions for students
- implement expectations for student mobile device use consistent with the school's *Student Code of Conduct*.

Parents

- support their child to meet expectations of the school's local policy approach for student use of mobile devices, as outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct*
- support implementation of the local policy approach by using the school's preferred communication channels to contact their child during school hours
- if required, apply for exemptions for medical, disability and/or wellbeing reasons in accordance with the school's local policy approach, outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct*
- work with the school to resolve issues regarding student compliance with the school's local policy approach.

Students

- keep mobile phones switched off and away for the day, and notifications disabled on wearable devices during school hours
- if required, apply for exemptions for medical, disability or wellbeing reasons in accordance with the school's local policy approach, outlined in the *Student Code of Conduct*
- if permitted to use a mobile device at school under an approved exemption, only use it for the intended and agreed purpose.

Process

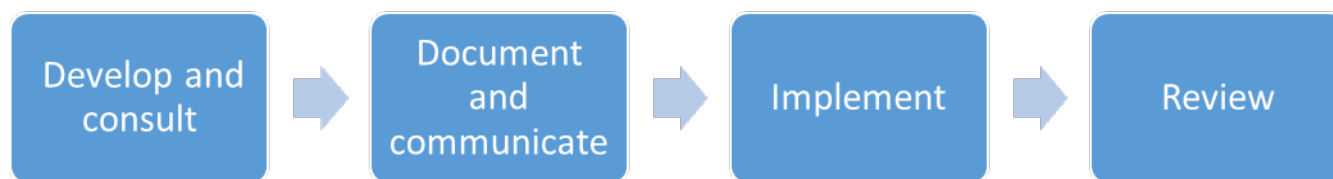


Image 1 – Process for Student use of mobile device procedure

1. Develop the local policy approach and consult with school community

Principals must develop a local policy approach for their school, consistent with this procedure.

Mandatory policy inclusions

All schools must require state school students (except for those with approved exemptions) to keep mobile phones switched off and away for the day and/or disable notifications on wearable devices during school hours.

Principals must also ensure that the school's local policy approach includes a process for requesting exemptions for students who require access to their mobile device during school hours for medical, disability and/or wellbeing reasons.

Local policy approach

The school's local policy approach to student use of mobile devices must include details of how the approach will be tailored to the local school and community context. Details of these elements are decided by the Principal, in consultation with the school community, including school staff, students and parents. The Principal will determine the format and extent of consultation on:

- details of the exemptions process (see exemption section below)
- when students can and cannot access and use their mobile device during school hours or at school activities. For example, 'from the time students arrive at school, until the conclusion of the school day' or 'from 8:45am until 3:00pm'
- the school's approach to storage of student devices (for example, on their person, in their school bag, in a lockable pouch, in student lockers, or in a secure location in the school)
- whether the school will allow students to use mobile devices for payments at the school tuckshop, uniform shop or school office, and conditions of use
- the expectations and conditions of use of mobile devices during school sports, camps and excursions at specified and supervised times (in accordance with the [School excursions procedure](#))
- the expectations and conditions for teachers to permit the use of mobile devices for specific and agreed educational purposes.

Exemption process

Students with pre-existing school approval to use a mobile device on an ongoing basis for specific medical, disability and/or wellbeing needs will not need to reapply for an exemption under this procedure.

Principals must document the process for requesting a new exemption in their local policy approach. Such exemptions include where:

- the mobile 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 device is used as an agreed reasonable adjustment for a student with disability or learning difficulties
- the student uses the mobile device as an augmentative or alternative communication system or as an aide to access and participate in the environment (for example, navigation or object/people identification applications)
- the mobile 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 device during school hours, 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
- the student is in Year 11 or 12 and is applying for Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) for assistive technology.

The school's local policy approach to exemption processes should also include:

- that Principals (or their delegate) may seek additional information to support consideration of the need for the student to access their mobile device during school hours (for example, a letter from a doctor, psychologist or registered health professional)
- that parents and students must inform the Principal (or their delegate) of any changes to individual circumstances that relate to approved exemptions.

2. Document and communicate the local policy approach

- The Principal ensures that:
 - the school's local policy approach for student use of mobile devices is documented in the *Student Code of Conduct*
 - a signed copy of the *Student Code of Conduct* is publicly available on the school website
 - all staff, students and the wider school community are aware of the content and can access the *Student Code of Conduct*.

3. Implement the local policy approach for student use of mobile devices

- Parents and students follow the school's local policy approach, documented in the *Student Code of Conduct* when applying for exemptions from this procedure.
- The Principal (or their delegate):
 - considers requests for exemptions received by students or their parents on a case-by-case basis, following the process and considerations set out in the school's local policy approach

- undertakes an assessment of the human rights that may be impacted by any decision and consider whether the limit placed on those human rights is reasonable and justified. The assessment must be documented appropriately
- documents exemption decisions in the student's OneSchool Student Profile - Support tab, including details of how and when the student may access their mobile device, and clear expectations for the safe and respectful use of the device
- communicates approved exemptions to relevant staff (including temporary relief staff), students and parents, including details of how and when the student may access their mobile device, and how the student will communicate their approved exemption to staff.
- Students, if permitted to use a mobile device at school under an approved exemption only use the device for the intended, agreed purpose.
- Principals and school staff support students to meet the stated expectations of the local policy approach, and respond promptly when the approach is not followed, in accordance with the school's *Student Code of Conduct*.

4. Review the local policy approach

- Principals, in accordance with the [Student discipline procedure](#), review the *Student Code of Conduct* annually to maintain currency, and comprehensively review every four years in line with cycles of the [School Strategic Plan](#) (DoE employees only).

Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|------------------------------|---|
| Delegate | Deputy Principal or other appropriate staff member, who has the capability and capacity to fulfil the responsibilities of the Principal in relation to this procedure. This delegation is to be documented in the school's <i>Student Code of Conduct</i> . |
| Approved exemption | An exemption from this procedure, approved by the Principal (or their delegate), which allows the student to use their mobile device during school hours for specific purposes including for medical, disability and/or wellbeing reasons. |
| Local policy approach | Principals, in consultation with their school community, have the authority to make decisions about how the requirements of this procedure will be implemented at the local level to meet the needs of their school's individual context. |
| Mobile devices | Technology devices including mobile phones, wearables such as smartwatches, handheld devices and other emerging technologies which have the ability to connect to telecommunication networks or the internet. Does not include 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 (BYOx) approach. |

| Term | Definition |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Parent | See section 10 Meaning of parent under Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) . |
| Reasonable adjustments | An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it achieves this purpose while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with disability, the education provider, staff and other students. |

Legislation

- [Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cwlth\)](#) Part 2, Division 2, Section 22
- [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Human Rights Act Qld \(2019\)](#)

Delegations/Authorisations

- Nil

Policies and procedures in this group

- Nil

Supporting information for this procedure

- Nil

Other resources

- [Customer complaints management procedure](#)
- [Human rights impact assessment: decision making tool](#) (DoE employees only)
- [Inclusive education policy](#)
- [Managing students' health support needs at school procedure](#)
- [School excursions procedure](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Student discipline procedure](#)

- [Student use of mobile devices - OnePortal](#) (DoE employees only)
- [Temporary removal of student property by school staff procedure](#)
- [Use of ICT systems procedure](#)
- [Use of mobile devices procedure](#)

Contact

For further information, please contact your [closest regional office](#).

Review date

24/01/2026

Superseded versions

Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.

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