

MOBILE PHONES POLICY – STUDENT USE



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Melba College.
Phone 03 9955 5700.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department of Education and Training (DET) and Melba College's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices during school hours.

NOTE: this policy includes other personal mobile communication devices that have a similar functionality to a mobile phone, including smart watches (and iPads and Tablets for students in Years 7 to 10).

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Melba College
2. Personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices brought onto school premises during school hours, including use at recess and lunchtime.

DEFINITION

A mobile phone is a device 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, including but not limited to items such as smart watches and other items as listed above.

POLICY

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

At Melba College:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours, from 8:45 am to 3:02 pm.
- Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see below)
- When emergencies occur, parents or carers are expected to contact the school's office on 03 9955 5700 for information. Updates (during any emergency) will be sent out to all families via Compass as needed.
- Students at school, who need to contact their family/parents/carers, should discuss this with their Year Level Leader/Assistant, Wellbeing Centre or one of the Assistant Principals.

Personal Mobile Phone Use

In accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy](#) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Melba College during school hours (from 8:45 am to 3:02 pm), 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. Exceptions to the mobile phone use policy can only be granted by the Melba College Principal or one of the Assistant Principals.

Before and after school

Responsible use of mobile phones is permissible before and after school.

In class

Students are not permitted to have mobile phones in class. Phones should be locked securely in the students' locker.

Recess and lunch

Students are not permitted to access their mobile phone at their lockers and are not permitted to have mobile phones in the schoolyard or inside the buildings. Phones should be locked securely in the students' locker.

Exceptions

Exceptions to the policy:

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

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

1. Learning-related exceptions

| Specific exception | Required Documentation |
|--|---|
| For specific learning activities (class-based exception, for example in Media Studies or IT related areas) | Unit of work, learning sequence or other learning task that requires the use of a mobile phone or communication device |
| For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty | Individual Education Plan that includes an adjustment to a student's mobile phone use in order to fulfil the requirements of the learning tasks |

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

| Specific exception | Required Documentation |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Students with a health condition | Student Health Support Plan |
| Students who are Young Carers | A localised student record |

Note:

Some examples of health and wellbeing related exceptions may include but are not limited to:

- a student with diabetes using their mobile phone to monitor their blood sugar
- a young carer providing care to a parent with a health issue may need to use their mobile phone to discuss health issues with medical professionals and the person they are caring for, during the school day.

3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite

| Specific exception | Required 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 |

Exceptions to use a mobile phone at Melba College can only be granted by a member of the Principal Class team. Where an exception is granted, the student can only use the mobile phone for the purpose for which the exception was granted.

Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

Melba 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. This information will appear on Compass connected to the event information.

Secure Storage

Mobile phones owned by students at Melba 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 Melba 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 Melba College's Personal Property Policy and/or the Department's [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#).

If a student brings a mobile phone to school, the student is required to use their locker as secure storage. Every student must have their locker locked at all times.

Enforcement

The enforcement of the mobile phone policy at Melba College will comply with the [Weapons — Banning, Searching and Seizing Harmful Items](#) policy relating to 'other items'. This states that staff *'should instruct the student to hand over the item(s) and if the student refuses to hand over the items, implement the relevant disciplinary provision within the student code of conduct.'*

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Melba College will be issued with consequences consistent with Melba College's existing 'Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy'.

At Melba College inappropriate use of mobile phones is understood to include **'any use of a mobile phone or other communication device during school hours'**, unless an exception has been granted by a member of the Principal Class.

This particularly includes, but is not limited to, mobile phone use:

- that in any way disrupts the learning of others
- to send inappropriate, harassing or threatening messages or phone calls
- to engage in 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, and gyms
- during exams and assessments
- to listen to music/audio at any time during the school day, including recess and lunch. Headphones and earbuds/air pods etc. can only be used from a Chromebook/laptop when directed by a teacher for class-based educational activities.

Additionally:

- Students who become unwell during the day must not use their mobile phone to contact their parent/guardian to sign them out from school. Students should follow the correct procedure of reporting to Sickbay where necessary arrangements will be made
- If there is a need for parents/guardians to contact students during the day, calls should be made to the relevant admin area on 03 9955 5700. Students may see their Year Level Leader/Assistant or Administration Receptionist in instances requiring urgent contact with a parent/guardian.

Consequences for Inappropriate Use of a Mobile Phone

- The student must immediately hand their phone/device to a staff member when requested to do so
- The staff member will hand the phone/device to the administration staff as soon as practicable, for safe keeping for the remainder of the day.
- Phones will be stored in the following offices:
 - Years 7 and 8 Building B

- Years 9 and 10 Building E
- Years 11 and 12 Building D
- The administration staff in these offices will document all infringements
- The student can collect the phone/device from these secure storage areas from 3 pm.
- If there is a second infringement, the phone/device will be returned by an Assistant Principal. The administration staff will advise the student which Assistant Principal to report to.
- A third (and any further) infringement will result in the Assistant Principal contacting the parent/carer. The phone/device will be returned to the parent/carer. It will not be given to the student.
- Further consequences will result if the student is non-compliant with any of the steps above.

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 off campus

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on the College website
- Included in induction processes for relevant staff
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed and parent information nights
- Included in our staff handbook
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

RELATED DET POLICIES

- [Mobile Phones – Student Use Policy](#)
- [Weapons – Banning, Searching and Seizing Harmful Items](#)
- [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#)

RELATED MELBA COLLEGE POLICIES

- Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

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| Policy last reviewed | January 2021 |
| Person Responsible for Policy Development | Assistant Principal - Accountabilities |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | January 2024 |