



ELECTRONIC AND COMMUNICATION DEVICE POLICY

From the beginning of Term 1 2024, all Queensland State School students must keep their mobile phones switched off and 'away for the day' during school hours. 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. *Mobile phones and wearable devices include all mobile phones, smartwatches, handheld devices and other emerging technologies which have the ability to connect to telecommunication networks or the internet.*

This document also applies to student attendance at school 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 educational activity that complies with the school's local implementation approach, 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.

'Away for the day' will support schools to maintain a strong focus on educational achievement, and student wellbeing and engagement by:

- providing optimal learning and teaching environments
- encouraging increased face-to-face social interactions between students
- promoting the health and wellbeing of students through increased social interaction and physical activity
- reducing the potential for students to be exposed to the negative impacts of the digital world, resulting from unsafe or inappropriate technology use.

The Monto SHS Electronic and Communication Device Policy has been formulated in consultation with students, staff and parents. The Department of Education guidelines related to the use of personal electronic devices and social media have been consulted in the creation of this document.

For the purposes of this policy, 'Electronic Devices' are defined as any device which can transmit, store or record information in a digital/electronic format. This approach applies to all types of mobile phones. The Smart wearable device types this approach applies to are smart watches (Apple, Samsung etc), EarPods, and smart glasses (e.g., Ray-Ban type).

Some specific examples commonly used by our students (but not exclusive to) include:

- mobile phones
- smart phones
- iPads
- iPods
- recording devices
- electronic tablets
- laptops
- android devices
- MP3s
- network enabled devices
- digital cameras
- ear phones/listening devices
- smart watches

It is not realistic to prohibit communication devices from being brought to school nor is it logistically possible for schools to collect these each morning and return them to students in the afternoon.

Students will be able to bring devices with them under the conditions outlined below:

1. Prior to entering the school grounds, devices are to be switched off and put away for the day. Devices can be used upon exiting the school grounds. Students will not be able to use their device throughout the entire day and INCLUDES LUNCH BREAKS and TRANSITION TIMES unless authorised.
2. Communication devices must not be used for any purpose (e.g., phoning, texting, internet use, taking photos or videos, listening to music etc, EFTPOS payments at the tuckshop or office.) in the school grounds or at a school sanctioned activity.
3. Devices must always be switched off (not on silent mode) and kept out of view in students school bags or the provided pocket system in the office.
4. Students who feel unwell MUST contact home via the front office, and NOT use their mobile phones/devices. This allows first aid staff to monitor the sick person while they wait to be collected.
5. Parents who need to urgently contact students must do so through the front office. Staff will ensure that students receive messages.
6. If a person breaches these rules, they are subject to the Student Code of Conduct.
7. This also applies to school activities such as representative sport, camps and excursions, unless an exception is made by the Principal. If this is the case, information will be included in the excursion permission form.
8. Students may only use their mobile phone or have wearable device notifications enabled during these times if they are participating in a teacher-led educational activity that complies with the school's local implementation approach, or have an approved exemption for medical, disability and/or wellbeing reasons. Students are to display courtesy, respect and consideration for others when using communication devices in the school, under these conditions. Camera and video recording functions on communication devices are not to be used at ANY time, unless with express written permission of a teacher (e.g., Film assessment, English oral, etc.) Teachers may use their discretion to permit use for specific and agreed educational purposes.
9. Students with an approved exemption must only use their mobile phone or wearable device for the intended, approved purpose. *Please see the exemptions section below*
10. Students bringing communications devices to school do so at their own risk, and Monto State High School takes no responsibility for their loss, damage or theft. For these reasons we strongly discourage students bringing these devices to school.

Storage

Mobile phone devices are to be switched off before entering the school gates. They may be switched off and kept in students' bags, or students may choose to store their device using the office pocket system. Students bringing communications devices to school do so at their own risk, and Monto State High School takes no responsibility for their loss, damage or theft. For these reasons we strongly discourage students bringing these devices 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.

Students with an approved exemption must only use their mobile phone or wearable device for the intended, approved purpose.

Individual circumstances

Consideration of individual circumstances must be given to students who require temporary or ongoing exemptions to the school's local implementation approach, 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.

Principals (or their delegates) will consider requests for exemption received from students or parents on a case-by-case basis. When considering an exemption request, principals (or their delegates) may seek additional information to support the need for the student to access their mobile phone or wearable device during the school day.

Approved exemptions, including details of how and when a student may access their mobile phone or wearable device, should be documented in the student's One School Support Provisions tab and communicated to school staff, including temporary relief staff.

In making a decision not to approve an exemption, principals (or their delegates) 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 should 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 should be made available in accordance with the Customer complaints management procedure.

School specific exemptions (at Principal discretion)

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

Each school, in consultation with their school community, will determine whether provisions for any of the following exemptions will be included in their school's local implementation approach:

- Teachers, in line with their school's local implementation approach, may give permission for students to use their mobile phone or wearable device in the classroom, for a specific and agreed educational purpose
- Principals may determine to allow the use of mobile phones and wearable devices to make school payments, including for tuckshop, uniform shop and office payments, and/or
- Principals 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](#)).

Where Principals make a decision to permit the use of mobile phones and wearable devices under these specific circumstances, consideration should be given to:

- 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
- whether the student's mobile phone is able to be connected to the school's network, to support safe and filtered access to the internet (in accordance with the [Use of ICT systems procedure](#)), and
- ensuring students only use their mobile phone or wearable device for the intended, agreed purpose