



**Department of  
Education  
and Training**

**STUDENTS ONLINE**

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## 1 POLICY STATEMENT

Online Services provided to students in public schools will only be used for learning related activities and require informed parental consent and appropriate management.

## 2 BACKGROUND

Students need to be protected from exposure to inappropriate online material or activities, to be aware of the risks associated with some online activities, and to adopt protective online behaviour. The Department makes every reasonable effort to achieve this by educating and informing students and parents, as well as by putting measures in place to monitor email traffic and internet access. All activities conducted using the Department's online services may be logged and accessed for administrative, legal or security purposes.

This policy has been developed to assist teachers to put in place school-based processes and procedures that will both protect and inform students and parents in their use of Departmental online services. The Department continues to work with NetAlert, the government-supported Internet safety advisory body set up to provide independent advice and education on managing access to online content.

## 3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all public school principals, teachers and supervisors of public school students accessing online services from any of the Department's locations including, but not limited to, schools.

## 4 DEFINITIONS

### 4.1 PARENT AND RESPONSIBLE PERSON

In this policy the term parent will be used for brevity, and also includes 'responsible person' as defined below.

In the *School Education Act 1999*, Part 1, Section 4, Definitions, parent in relation to a child, means a person who at law has responsibility -

- a) for the long-term care, welfare and development of the child; or
- b) for the day to day care, welfare and development of the child

except in sections 9 (2), 10 (b), 25, 27, 38 (1) and Division 2 Part 2 where it only has the meaning given by paragraph (b).

Section 25 of the *School Education Act 1999* the "responsible person", in relation to a student means-

- a) a parent of the student;
- b) in the case of a student who has turned 18 or is a prescribed child, the student;  
or

- c) a person whose details have been provided under section 16(1) (b) (ii) (II) which states any adult person, not being a parent, who is responsible for the child.

## 4.2 ONLINE SERVICES

Any services including, but not limited to, email, calendaring, instant messaging, web conferencing, discussion groups, Internet access and web browsing, that may be accessed using the computer networks and services of the Department.

## 4.3 INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Content that is considered unsuitable or harmful to students. It includes material that is pornographic, that promotes illegal activities, violence or prejudice on the grounds of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

## 4.4 SPAM

A generic term used to describe electronic 'junk mail.' That is, unwanted messages sent to an email account or mobile phone. Messages do not have to be sent out in bulk to be considered spam - under Australian law, a single electronic message can also be considered spam.

## 5 RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR AUTHORITY

*Copyright Act, 1968*

*Copyright Amendment (Digital Agenda) Act 2000*

*Copyright Amendment (Moral Rights) Act 2000*

*School Education Act 1999*

*School Education Regulations 2000*

### 5.1 RELATED DET POLICIES

*Behaviour Management in Schools*

*Child Protection*

*Copyright for Schools*

*Duty of Care for Students*

*Educational Institutions – Legal Aspects of Internet Compliance*

*ICT Security Procedures: 1.2 Password and User I.D.*

*Information Privacy and Security*

*Moral Rights Introduced*

*Music Copyright for Schools*

*National Education Access Licence for Schools (NEALS)*

*Network Security for Schools and District Education Offices*

*Risk Management Within the Education and Training Portfolio*

*Software Licenses Policy and Guidelines*

*Statement on Video Classifications*

*Telecommunications Use*

## 6 PROCEDURES

### 6.1 ACCESS AND SECURITY

Principals must:

- inform parents and teachers of this policy's existence;
- provide students access to online services-enabled computers within the limits of available resources;
- advise parents that while the Department will make every reasonable effort to provide a safe and secure online learning experience for students when using the Department's online services, it is not possible to guarantee that students will not be exposed to inappropriate material;
- advise parents that any Internet browsing by their child at home or from other non-school locations, will not be via the Department's online services and therefore will not be filtered by the Department; and
- approve any material planned for publication on the Internet or intranets and verify appropriate copyright and privacy clearance.

Teachers must:

- provide appropriate supervision for students using the Internet and other online services at school.
- issue and maintain student passwords in a confidential and secure manner, with additional consideration and provision given to early primary and special needs students.

### 6.2 CONDITIONS OF USE

Teachers must receive an *Acceptable Usage Agreement* signed by the student or parent before granting students access to online services (see samples in Appendices A to E).

### 6.3 PERSONAL INFORMATION, PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Principals must gain written permission from the student or their parent if the student is under 18 years of age, before publishing video recordings, photographs or comments relating to their students.

Teachers must advise students they should not reveal personal information including names, addresses, financial details (e.g. credit card), telephone numbers or images (video or photographic) of themselves or others.

#### **Guidelines**

*The school address or email address may be used where it is necessary to receive a reply.*

*Students should also be made aware that, since their online services email address contains their personal name, this address should also be protected and should never be used in non-school online communications.*

*Further information on the importance of online anonymity and protective online behaviours is available at: <http://www.netalert.gov.au>*

## 6.4 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT

Teachers must advise students of the need to:

- be aware of the legal requirements regarding copyright when downloading information;
- gain permission before electronically publishing users' works or drawings;
- acknowledge the creator or author of any material published; and
- observe appropriate copyright clearance including acknowledging the author or source of any information used.

## 6.5 MISUSE AND BREACHES OF ACCEPTABLE USAGE

Principals and teachers must:

- follow procedures for fairness and due process where there is an alleged misuse or breach of this policy including investigating any reported misuse and, where possible, accurately retracing misuse to the offender;
- tailor disciplinary action taken in relation to students to meet specific concerns related to the breach, and assist students in gaining the self-discipline necessary to behave appropriately when using the online services; and
- promptly address the online publication of defamatory material about staff or students.

Teachers must inform students:

- of the consequences of breaches caused by them allowing any other person to use their online services account;
- that the consequences of misusing online services will be withdrawal of access to online services and other consequences outlined in the *Behaviour Management in Schools* policy; and
- of their possible legal liability for offences committed using online services.

### 6.5.1 REPORTING MISUSE, BREACHES AND INAPPROPRIATE MATERIAL

Principals must report to the *ICT Customer Service Centre* any suspected technical security breach by users of Department Online Services outside the school as well as security breaches within the school that the school cannot resolve.

#### **Guidelines**

*Appropriate action by the principal should be taken in accordance with the Department's Behaviour Management in Schools policy.*

*The Department provides a level of content filtering through its basic list of banned sites service. This lists and bans access to sites that have been identified as unsuitable for the education market. Schools should notify Curriculum Materials Information Services (CMIS) at [cmiseval@det.wa.edu.au](mailto:cmiseval@det.wa.edu.au) of sites which they consider inappropriate and wish to have added to the Department's list of banned sites. Many schools also operate local filtering systems in an endeavour to reduce the risk of student exposure to inappropriate content.*

## 7 CONTACT DETAILS

ICT Customer Services Centre provides support for a range of ICT-related issues including Schools Online Curriculum Services, Notebooks for Teachers, Learning with ICT projects and remote access services from the Customer Service Centre on 1800 012 828 or 9264 5555.

Curriculum Materials and Information Services should be contacted to request sites be added to the Department's list of banned sites, or to have a blocked site reviewed and reconsidered. Email the details to Curriculum Materials Information Services (CMIS) at [cmiseval@det.wa.edu.au](mailto:cmiseval@det.wa.edu.au).

## 8 GUIDELINES

### 8.1 RESPONSIBLE USE OF ONLINE SERVICES

The agreements and forms provided in the appendices provide examples of the type of document that can be used to obtain agreement and sign-off from students and parents or responsible persons. These forms do not constitute or contain legal disclaimers but they do help to meet the requirement to make students and parents aware of their obligations and the risks associated with online services use. Similarly the *logon reminder text* in the appendix is provided as an example of the type of information window that schools may find useful to have automatically displayed to all users when logging in to the school network.

Schools may wish to periodically repeat requests for sign-off (e.g. at the start of the school year) on the agreements by students and parents as a means of reminding them of their responsibilities when using the Department's information and communication technologies.

Monitoring and tracking online activity across the Department's network is a complex and expensive activity, resulting in the creation of extremely large system event log files which are difficult to store and use. It is important therefore to realise that it will not always be possible for ICT staff to trace online activity or to provide comprehensive historical details of individual online activity.

#### 8.1.1 ACCEPTABLE USAGE AGREEMENT

A typical school *Acceptable Usage Agreement* should stipulate that students:

- agree to adhere to the rule's set out in the *Acceptable Usage Agreement* each time they log on to online services (see Appendix B, C and D);
- ensure that all communication using online services is related to learning or school activities;
- keep passwords confidential, and change them when prompted or when known by another user;
- never knowingly allow others to use their personal online services account unless directed to by a teacher for the purposes of collaborative learning;
- log off at the end of each session to ensure that nobody else can use their online services account;
- not send or publish unacceptable or unlawful material or remarks including offensive, abusive, defamatory or discriminatory comments;

- not access or attempt to access inappropriate material;
- not engage in any bullying, intimidation or other inappropriate behaviour online;
- ask a staff member's advice if another user is seeking excessive personal information, asks to be telephoned, offers gifts by email or wants to meet them;
- immediately tell a nominated staff member if they receive a computer virus or a message that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable;
- never knowingly initiate or forward emails containing:
  - a message that was sent to them privately;
  - a computer virus or attachments that are capable of damaging recipients' computers;
  - chain letters and hoax emails; and
  - spam like unsolicited advertising material, or mail unrelated to learning;
- be made aware by teachers that emails sent or received via the Department's online services may be audited and traced to the online services accounts of specific users;
- not damage or disable computers, computer systems or networks of the school or the Department; and
- ensure that online services are not used for unauthorised commercial activities, political lobbying, gambling or any unlawful purpose.

## 8.2 GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS

It is recommended that teachers:

- are aware of their responsibilities for supervising student use of online services as laid out in this policy and the *Duty of Care for Students* policy;
- maintain an informed view of the relative risks and educational benefits of online activity by their students. A variety of resources are available from Net Alert (<http://www.netalert.gov.au>) to assist with this including wall charts, quick reference guides and detailed background information;
- ensure that students are aware of the possible negative consequences of publishing identifying information online including their own or other students' images;
- refrain from publishing student images or any student-identifying information on the Internet. If such publication is necessary, limit the amount of time the information is online as much as possible;
- check that any material planned for publication on the Internet or intranets has the approval of the principal and has appropriate copyright and privacy clearance;
- are aware of the steps to take and advice to give if students notify them of inappropriate or unwelcome online activity by fellow students or members of the public. Such steps may include:
  - collecting as much information as possible about the incident including copies of communications;
  - emphasising to the student that the event is not necessarily their fault;
  - identifying any risky behaviours on the part of the reporting student and counselling them on the need to adopt more protective behaviours; and
  - if the incident warrants further attention, escalate it to school and/or Department authorities, notifying police only if you suspect the law may have been broken, such as a possible attempt by an adult to groom or encourage the student to meet face-to-face;
- inform parents that student Internet access from home or other non-school sites does not occur via the Department's online services and therefore Internet browsing may not be filtered;

- use group photos only with subjects in regular school uniform or day clothing when publishing on the Department's intranet or Internet. Photographs of lone individuals, of students in swimming costumes, or similar should be avoided;
- promote the use of strong passwords for students who can cope with the complexity. Stronger passwords:
  - contain a mixture of alphabetic and non-alphabetic characters;
  - are changed frequently;
  - do not contain dictionary words;
  - do not contain easily identified personal information such as name, date of birth, etc;
  - do not contain any part of the account identifier such as the username; and
  - are not written down.

Full details on password security can be found in the *ICT Security Procedures: 1.2 Password and User ID* policy;

- adapt the sample 'Acceptable Usage Agreements' attached to this policy to suit the class context and the needs of students. In particular, giving consideration to the value of having students with disabilities or younger students signing an agreement. Teachers may choose to use the agreement as a guide to discuss responsibilities with students or provide an option for parents to sign on their behalf.

### 8.3 GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICAL USE OF ONLINE SERVICES

It is recommended that principals and teachers:

- set realistic expectations with students prior to use of online services, for example when they can expect email replies;
- use mail enabled groups and list services to facilitate communication within and between schools;
- encourage users to manage their mailbox, deleting unnecessary email and backing up important emails or attachments; and
- encourage users to avoid submitting large attachments to forums and email list services.

## APPENDIX A SAMPLE ONLINE CONSENT FORM

(School letterhead)

Dear parent / responsible person

Our school now has access to the online services provided by the Department of Education and Training. These increase the range of teaching tools available to staff and will enhance the opportunities available to students.

I am writing to you to seek approval for your child to be given access to these online services. This will involve the school using the student's full name, preferred name, class and year to create a unique online services account.

The Department's online services currently provide:

- individual email accounts for all students and staff;
- access to the internet, with all reasonable care taken by schools to monitor and control students' access to web sites while at school;
- access to email services from home if the home computer is connected to the Internet;
- access to the Online Teaching and Learning System (OTLS); and
- access to Instant Messaging.

If you agree to your son or daughter making use of these online services, please complete the permission slip attached to this letter. You will also need to ensure that your son or daughter reads or understands the acceptable usage agreement, also attached to this letter, before the permission slip is signed. Both signed documents should be returned to school so that an online services account can be created for your child.

Please note that while every reasonable effort is made by schools and the Department to prevent student exposure to inappropriate online content when using the Department's Online Services, it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk of such exposure.

You should also be aware that general Internet browsing by your child from home or locations other than school is **not** monitored or filtered by the Department since it is not conducted via the Department's online services and that you are responsible for supervision of your child's use of the internet from home.

Yours sincerely

(insert name)

Principal



## APPENDIX B SAMPLE ACCEPTABLE USAGE AGREEMENT FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS K-3

### On-line Rules

I agree to follow the on-line rules set out below when I use the internet or a log-on account:

- I will ask the teacher first before using the school computer.
- I will not give my password out to others.
- I will not let other people log-on to my account without checking with the teacher first.
- I will tell the teacher if I think someone is using my log-on account.
- I will tell the teacher if I see anything that makes me feel uncomfortable.
- I will only use work from the internet if I have asked the teacher.
- If I download work or pictures from the internet I will say where it comes from.
- I will not give out my name, phone number, address, name of the school, photographs or other details about myself or others without checking with the teacher first.
- I will take care when using the computer equipment and will not change the computer settings.
- I will not use the school computers to be mean, rude or unkind about other people.

I understand that:

- If I use the internet or my log-on account in a way that I shouldn't I may not be able to use these in the future.
- I may be legally liable for misuse of the computer and the police may be contacted.

I agree to abide by the acceptable usage agreement for school students.

I understand that if I am given an online services account and break any of the rules in the agreement, it may result in disciplinary action, determined by the principal in accordance with the Department's *Behaviour Management in Schools* policy.

**Name of student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Office use only: Date processed:     /     /

Processed by (initials): \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** *This Agreement should be filed by the teacher and a copy provided to both the parent and the student.*

## APPENDIX C SAMPLE ACCEPTABLE USAGE AGREEMENT FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS 4-7

If you use the online services of the Department of Education and Training you must agree to the following rules:

- I will use the school computer only with the permission of a teacher.
- I will follow all instructions from teachers when using school computers.
- I will not let anybody else know my password.
- I will not let others use my online services account unless it is with the teacher's permission.
- I will not access other people's online services accounts.
- I know that I am responsible for anything that happens when my online services account is used.
- I will tell my teacher if I think someone is using my online services account.
- I know that the school and the Department of Education and Training may see anything I send or receive using the email service.
- I will make sure that any email that I send or any work that I wish to have published is polite, carefully written and well presented.
- I will use material from Internet sites or other sources only if I have permission to do so.
- If I use material in my work that I have found on the Internet, I will say where it comes from.
- If I see any information on the computer that makes me feel uncomfortable I will tell my teacher straight away.
- I will not reveal personal information, including names, addresses, photographs, credit card details and telephone numbers of myself or others.
- I will not damage or disable the computers, computer systems or computer networks of the school, the Department of Education and Training or any other organisation.

I understand that

- I will be held responsible for my actions while using online services and for any breaches caused by allowing any other person to use my online services account;
- the misuse of online services may result in the withdrawal of access to services and other consequences dictated in Schools policy; and
- I may be held legally liable for offences committed using online services.

I agree to abide by the acceptable usage agreement for school students.

I understand that if I am given an online services account and break any of the rules in the agreement, it may result in disciplinary action, determined by the principal in accordance with the Department's *Behaviour Management in Schools* policy.

**Name of student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Office use only: Date processed:     /     /

Processed by (initials):

**Note:** *This Agreement should be filed by the teacher and a copy provided to both the parent and the student.*

*Students Online*

*All policy and procedural statements contained within this document are lawful orders for the purposes of section 80(a) of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA) and are therefore to be observed by all Department of Education and Training employees.*



## APPENDIX E PERMISSION TO PUBLISH STUDENTS' WORK OR IMAGES OF STUDENT ON WEB SITES

Dear parent or responsible person,

I request your permission for video or photographic images of your child to be taken during school activities. If such images are captured, they would be used for the purpose of educating students, promoting the school, or promoting public education. I am also seeking your permission for the school to publish images and/or samples of your child's work.

If you give your permission, the school may publish images of your child and/or samples of work done by your child in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, online and hard copy school newsletters, Department of Education and Training Internet web sites or intranet web sites, school annual magazines and local newspapers. If published, third parties would be able to view the photographs and work.

If you sign the attached form it means that you agree to the following:

- The school is able to publish images of your child and samples of your child's work as many times as it requires in the ways mentioned above.
- Your child's image may be reproduced either in colour or in black and white.
- The school will not use your child's image or samples of your child's work for any purpose other than for the education of students or for the general promotion of public education and the school.
- The school will only publish the first name of the student. Family names will not be revealed.

Any images captured by the school will be kept for no longer than is necessary for the above-mentioned purposes and will be stored and disposed of securely. Whilst every effort will be made to protect the identity of your child, the Department of Education and Training cannot guarantee that your child will not be able to be identified from the image or work.

If you agree to permit the school to capture images of your child, and to publish images of your child, or samples of your child's work, in the manner detailed above, please complete the consent form below and return it to the school by ...(SCHOOL TO INSERT DATE)..... This consent, if signed, will remain effective until such time as you advise the school otherwise.

---

### **CONSENT FORM**

I agree to the videoing or photographing of my child during school activities for use by the school in educating students and promoting the school and public education. I also agree to the publication of images or samples of work of (insert child's name) \_\_\_\_\_ in ways including, but not limited to, web sites or intranet web sites of the Department of Education and Training, school newsletters (print and online), magazines and the local newspaper, subject to the conditions set out above. I will notify the school if I decide to withdraw this consent.

**Name of student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Form / Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of parent/responsible person:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** This consent form should be filed by the school and a copy provided to the parent.

## APPENDIX F LOGON REMINDER NOTICE

The notice shown below, or some variation of this notice, could usefully be displayed to all students when logging into the Department's Online Services:

### **Appropriate Use of Online Services**

The Department of Education and Training's online services such as e-mail, Internet access, instant messaging and learning services are provided to assist you in your education.

By using these services you agree to obey the rules set out in the Acceptable Usage Agreement and to abide by the Department's policies. You also give consent to logging, monitoring, auditing and disclosure of your use of these services.

Inappropriate use of these services can result in disciplinary action that may include suspension of access to services.

You can view the Department of Education and Training's *Students Online* policy and other related documents at: [http://policies.det.wa.edu.au/our\\_policies](http://policies.det.wa.edu.au/our_policies).