

## SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE POLICY

### INTRODUCTION/RATIONALE

All those who are connected through the Northern College of the Arts & Technology (further referred to as NCAT) community; students, parents, teachers, administrative staff, have the right to benefit from the opportunities that exist from being members of our community. They should all behave within and outside of the School in such a manner that the image of the College is not negatively affected or brought into disrepute.

**NCAT accepts that the use of social media can be an effective business and social tool and that such media is commonly used by the NCAT community to express their views, comments, ideas and criticism on a whole range of issues.**

### PURPOSE

NCAT expects those who are in any way connected to NCAT, when using social media, to show courtesy and respect to others, including those within the direct NCAT community. Social media should not be used to abuse others, expose them to offensive or inappropriate content or to denigrate or show disrespect for NCAT.

**The purpose of this policy is to set standards of behavior for the use of social media that are consistent with the broader values and expectations of the NCAT community.**

### SCOPE/RIGHT TO MODIFY POLICY

This policy applies to our College community, NCAT staff, internal students, external students, parents and any other persons or groups that are associated with the College.

NCAT has the right to hold staff that are not employed directly by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to the same policies that the Department outlines and are discussed in this document.

NCAT reserves the right to modify this Policy at any time.

### NCAT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Online behavior should at all times demonstrate respect for the dignity of each person.

1. The Child Protection protocols and policies of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development must always be observed.
2. Staff and student online interaction must occur only in an educational context.
3. Staff and students must behave in an ethical manner when interacting and using online community sites and resources.
4. Educational programs are provided for students to ensure the appropriate use of social network and community learning sites on the Internet.

### RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The College community is expected to show respect to other and are also expected to give due respect to the reputation and good name of the College and persons/groups associated with the College.

When using social media, our College community is expected to ensure that they:

- \ Respect the rights and confidentiality of others
- \ Do not impersonate or falsely represent another person
- \ Do not bully, intimidate, abuse, harass or threaten others
- \ Do not make defamatory comments
- \ Do not use obscene or offensive language towards others
- \ Do not post content that is hateful, threatening, pornographic or incites violence against others
- \ Do not harm the reputation and good standing of NCAT or those within its community
- \ Do not use excessive criticism to portray a person as socially, mentally, physically or intellectually inferior.

## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

### **STAFF USE OF ONLINE COMMUNITY SITES FOR LEARNING**

- \ Staff are encouraged to use online learning communities with their students in order to achieve educational outcomes.
- \ When using online community sites with students, consideration must always be given to the age and developmental level of the students.
- \ Staff must ensure that they prepare students to act in accordance with the guiding principles before using online community sites for learning.
- \ The College Social Media Team must authorize the use of any online community sites.
- \ Students must not be asked to falsify their age or identity to register on any site for educational purposes.
- \ Staff must respect student's rights to privacy in academic work, records and results when posting online. Permission from the student must be granted to the person/s who are posting the information.
- \ The learning activity must not be linked back to student's own personal social network pages.

### **PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN USING ONLINE LEARNING COMMUNITIES WITH STUDENTS**

- \ Discuss any use of online community sites with the Social Media Team outlining the activity and its educational goals.
- \ Keep a record of the student's login names (students should not publish their real names on a public site).
- \ Clearly communicate to students their responsibility for appropriate interaction with others and suitable content posting online.
- \ Ensure that students and their parents have signed the Student Photograph and Digital Recording Authorisation Form before identifying photographs are posted online.
- \ Ensure a member of the Social Media Team sets up sites or accounts and continues to have full administrator access.
- \ Monitor the site frequently and actively review the content.

## **STAFF ARE REQUIRED TO EDUCATE STUDENTS USING SOCIAL MEDIA OF ANY KIND TO:**

- \ Respect themselves and others when publishing or communicating online.
- \ Keep communication channels transparent and supervised by adults. - (*This is created by using the "Fake Person" and a generic password so that anyone can log in and see what has been discussed.*)
- \ Set social network sites to private security setting. This usually means 'friends only' can see the student's pages and details.
- \ Keep personal information private.
- \ Not share usernames and passwords with anyone.
- \ Report any attacks or inappropriate content directed at them.

## **STAFF PERSONAL SOCIAL NETWORK PAGES**

- \ The DEECD recommends that staff do not add or accept students as 'friends' on their own social network sites.
- \ Staff are advised to use professional discretion before accepting ex-students or parents of current students as friends.
- \ Staff must not discuss students, students' parents, co-workers or publicly criticize school policies or personnel on social networking sites.
- \ Staff must check their profile's security and privacy settings. At a minimum, educators should have all privacy settings set to 'only friends'. Do not use 'Friends of Friends' and 'Networks and Friends' as these open your content to a large group of unknown people. Your privacy and that of your family may be a risk.

## **DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION & CONFIDENTIALITY**

NCAT acknowledges that if students do not restrict access to their accounts on social media platforms this creates opportunities to access student information.

NCAT does not support using social media platforms for this purpose. In the event where a NCAT staff member does see information through the use of a College social media account, this information is confidential, it must be disregarded and discretion must be maintained.

NCAT in no way supports staff members using this information to influence their behavior towards said student or be reflected in the assessment of their work. The only exemption in the disclosure of information obtained through College social media accounts is information of intended or past self-harm, harm of another individual or intent to harm another individual.

## **TRADEMARKS AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

NCAT will always acknowledge the any work that is used by students, staff or a third party.

Students who provide work to NCAT to be published on College social media sites retain the right to their Intellectual Property and/or any registered Trademarks.

Any work that is supplied by employees of The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to be used on NCAT social media sites belongs automatically to the Department.

## CYBER BULLYING

NCAT believes that every person has the right to live free from bullying and harassment.

NCAT follows the guidelines set out by The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development set out through publications such as: *Building Respectful and Safe Schools Publication: A Resource for school communities* and *Acceptable Use Policy for the Department's Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) Resources*.

NCAT acknowledges that by these guidelines bullying in schools, including cyber bullying is a shared responsibility. NCAT leadership, teachers and parents will be included to assist and support affected students and/or staff members.

### **Disrespectful, harassing, threatening or bullying behaviour may be considered a criminal offence under State and/or Federal law. Under the:**

- Criminal Code Act 1995 (Commonwealth) it is an offence to use a carriage service to menace, harass or cause offence.
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) it is an offence to publish on the internet a statement or material relating to the victim or material claiming to originate from the victim or to give offensive material to the victim, including through electronic means (stalking).
- Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) (Enforcement) Act 1995 (Vic) it is an offence to use an on-line information service to publish, transmit objectionable material or make objectionable material available for transmission
- It may be grounds for other legal action such as defamation proceedings.

NCAT suggests the following websites and publications as resources for staff, students, parents/guardians and the wider community.

- \ *Building Respectful and Safe Schools Publication: A Resource for school communities*, (2010), Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Melbourne:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/health/Pages/respectfulsch.aspx>
- \ *Acceptable Use Policy for the Department's Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) Resources*, (2011), Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Melbourne:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/infrastructure/Pages/acceptableuse.aspx>
- \ Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/referenceguide/default.html>
- \ Bullying. No Way! (Australia):  
<http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au>
- \ Australian Communications and Media Authority Cyber safety Website (Australia):  
<http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/>

## **REMOVAL OF INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT FROM THE INTERNET**

As an educational facility that caters to youth as well as mature-age students NCAT will follow a strict duty of care in the implementation of social media platforms.

NCAT follows the protocols provided by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Developments *Step-by-step Guides*. In the event of inappropriate content appearing any of the Colleges social media accounts or profiles these steps will be acted upon swiftly by the NCAT Social Media Team and/or the Principal or their delegate.

The Guides available are:

- \ *Step-by-step Guide for Responding to Online Incidents of Inappropriate Behavior by Students*
  
- \ *Step-by-step Guide for Removing Inappropriate Content from a Website, Facebook or other Social Media Site*
  
- \ *Step-by-step Guide for DEECD Employees to Access Legal and Wellbeing Support for Online Incidents of Concern*

These Guides can be found on the Colleges network drives for staff and students or online here:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/prinsteps.aspx>

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY**

The policy will be made available through the College website for public record as well as on the student and staff servers of NCAT.

PDF Publications that have been referenced to in this Policy in conjunction with other resources will be made available to staff and students on the respective College network drives.

## **BREACH OF THIS/THESE POLICIES BY STUDENTS**

Breach of these policies will result in the minimum of a meeting with the student and their parent (if under 18) with the relevant staff.

In the result of a severe breach the result could be expulsion or dismissal from NCAT with action taken further by relevant authorities.