MOBILE PHONES AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES – STUDENT USE POLICY

October 2026

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 9826 07111 or at mhs@mhs.vic.edu.au.

PURPOSE

This policy explains our requirements and expectations relating to the student use of personal electronic devices during school hours and school activities outside school hours, in accordance with:

- the department's Mobile Phones and Personal Electronic Devices – Student Use Ministerial Policy
- the department's Smart Glasses and Covert Filming Devices Ministerial Policy
- Ministerial Order No. 1515 – Personal Electronic Devices in Victorian schools
- the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. all students at Melbourne High School.
2. students' mobile phones, smart glasses, wearable devices, personal audio devices and other personal electronic devices.

DEFINITIONS

Assistive hearing device means a device manufactured for the primary purpose of assisting a person with a hearing impairment to hear, including hearing aids, cochlear implants, external sound processors and remote microphones designed for use with hearing aids or cochlear implants.

Mobile phone means a telephone with the capacity to connect to cellular telecommunication systems.

Personal audio device means wired or wireless headphones, earphones or headsets.

School hours means the hours within which a student is expected to attend the school at which they are enrolled.

Smart glasses means a device that is designed to be worn as spectacles and has the capability to send, receive, store, record or process digital information.

Wearable device means a device that is designed to be worn on the body and that has the capability to send, receive, store, record or process digital information, including a smartwatch, but does not include an assistive hearing device, a surgically implanted medical device, or smart glasses.

POLICY

At Melbourne High School, the following requirements apply to students' personal electronic devices:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off (or placed on silent) and store them securely upon arrival at school and until leaving school grounds having finished their last on-site activity.
- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off (or placed on silent) and store them securely upon arrival at school and until leaving school grounds having finished their last on-site activity.
- Students may not use their mobile phones to purchase food or other items from the canteen and must use either a physical card or cash to pay at the canteen.
- Wearable devices must have notifications, cellular connection and recording functions turned off during school hours.
- Personal audio devices must not be used during school hours.
- Students may not wear wired or Bluetooth headphones (such as airPods) during school hours unless specifically given permission by a teacher for class-related activities.

Smart glasses must not be worn or used on school premises or at any school organised activity or event. This includes school organised activities that occur outside school hours or offsite. If they are brought to school or to a school activity, they must be switched off and stored securely.

Other covert filming devices must not be used on school premises or at any school organised activity or event.

During school hours, Melbourne High School will provide secure storage for mobile phones and smart glasses, if they are brought to school.

Exemptions to this policy may be granted if certain conditions are met (see below for further information).

When emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school's office.

Secure storage of mobile phones and smart glasses and other personal electronic devices

Personal electronic devices owned by students or their parents/carers are brought to school at the owner's risk. Students should not bring smart glasses to school unless they have been granted an exemption as a reasonable adjustment for disability.

Our school 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 department's Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy.

Where students bring a mobile phone or smart glasses to school, our school will provide secure storage during school hours. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. During school hours, students are required to store their phones and smart glasses in their lockers

During school activities that occur outside school hours, students should not bring smart glasses. Where students bring these devices, they must be switched off and securely stored in a way that restricts access to them. Melbourne High School will inform students how they must store these devices if brought to these activities.

Enforcement and inappropriate use of personal electronic devices

Students who use their personal electronic devices inappropriately at Melbourne High School may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement polices (including the MHS Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and/or the Bullying Prevention Policy).

If a student is found in possession of a mobile phone or smart glasses, in breach of this policy, the following apply:

First Offence

- The student must immediately take the phone to Reception
- They must return to the teacher with a verification receipt confirming check-in
- An automatic letter will be sent to parents notifying them of the breach
- At the end of their final scheduled class or activity, the student may retrieve the device from Reception upon presentation of their ID card. Having collected their device, it is not to be used until leaving the school grounds
- If the phone is not handed into Reception within 10 minutes of instruction, the student will be considered in double breach of the policy and the consequences of a second offence will also apply.

Second Offence

If a student breaches this policy twice within a year:

- They must follow the same procedure as the first offence (phone handed into Reception immediately and letter send home)
- In addition, the student will be required to hand in their phone at the start of each school day and collect it at the end of the day. This arrangement will remain in place for a period of three weeks.

Inappropriate use of a mobile phone includes using it, failing to have it switched off, or failing to store it securely during school hours, unless an exemption has been granted.

Inappropriate use of smart glasses includes wearing or using them on school premises or at any school-organised event or activity, unless an exemption has been granted.

Inappropriate use of a wearable device occurs when notifications, cellular connection or recording functions are enabled or used during school hours, unless an exemption has been granted.

Inappropriate use of a personal audio device is any use during school hours unless a specific use is permitted by this policy or an exemption has been granted.

Inappropriate use of any personal electronic device includes use:

- that disrupts the learning of others
- to send messages or make phone calls that are inappropriate, harassing or threatening
- to engage in inappropriate social media use, including cyberbullying
- to capture audio, video or images of people, including students, teachers and members of the school community, without their knowledge or permission
- to capture audio, video or images in toilets, change rooms, swimming pools or gyms
- to gain an unfair advantage during exams and assessments.

Exemptions

Exemptions to restrictions on personal electronic devices other than smart glasses may be granted to individual students or groups of students by the principal or a teacher, in accordance with this policy, under the following three exemption categories:

- to support student learning, for example:
    - specific learning activities
    - reasonable adjustments because of a disability and/or learning need
- to support student health and wellbeing, for example:
    - students with a health condition
    - students who are young carers
- to manage risks to students relating to participation in offsite activities, for example:
    - travel to and from excursions and camps
    - activities not on school grounds and unsupervised
    - during inter-school or inter-campus travel.

A teacher may grant exemptions for devices other than smart glasses, in accordance with this policy and the direction of the principal.

Where an exemption is granted, the student may only use the personal electronic device for the specific purpose outlined in the exemption.

All exemptions will be documented in writing. Exemption documentation will include details about:

- the student or group of students to whom the exemption applies
- the basis for the exemption
- the period for which it applies
- any limitations or conditions.

The principal or teacher granting the exemption decides where these details are recorded based on the type of exemption and the needs of the student or group of students. This ensures details are recorded in the appropriate place, for example in:

- Individual Education Plans
- camp or excursion planning documents
- Student Health Support Plans
- a student's administrative record.

Exemptions that do not disclose student health or disability information may also be recorded in:

- lesson plans
- units of work.

Exemptions for smart glasses

An exemption for smart glasses can only be granted by the principal, and will only be granted:

- where their use is a reasonable adjustment for a student with disability, for example, a student with vision impairment, and
- the adjustment cannot be reasonably provided by another device or approach.

Any exemption will be limited to the functions and circumstances required for the adjustment. Before granting an exemption, the school will follow the department's protocols for smart glasses outlined in the Mobile Phones and Personal Electronic Devices – Student Use policy and the Smart Glasses and Covert Filming Devices policy. If an exemption is granted, a privacy notice must be issued before the smart glasses are used.

Camps and excursions

The policy restrictions on all personal electronic devices continue to apply during school hours when students are on excursions or camps, unless an exemption is granted.

The policy restrictions on smart glasses apply for the entirety of any camp or excursion.

Melbourne High School will provide students and their parents/carers with information about items that can or cannot be brought to camps, excursions, special activities and events, including personal mobile phones. Students are not permitted to use mobile phones at the Millgrove Outdoor Education Centre and a breach of this may result in a suspension.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to:

- travelling to and from school
- school-owned devices
- assistive hearing devices (including hearing aids and cochlear implants).

For mobile phones, wearable devices and personal audio devices, this policy does not apply to events outside school hours, except as set out in the 'Camps and excursions' section. For smart glasses, the requirements remain in place for all school organised events and activities, including those outside school hours.

A student undertaking workplace or curriculum-related offsite learning activities managed by an external provider, for example, work experience, a VET course or offsite VCE studies, must comply with any policies of the provider or employer responsible for the activity. While undertaking these activities, they do not need to comply with the personal electronic devices policy of Melbourne High School.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	November 2026
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	November 2030