



Social Media Policy

Statement of Purpose

Hawkesbury High School recognises that students, staff, parents and other members of the school community may wish to use Social Media in their personal lives. This policy does not intend to discourage nor unduly limit personal expression or online activities. However, the policy recognises the potential for damage to be caused (either directly or indirectly) to students, the school, staff, parents and the wider school community in certain circumstances via the personal use of Social Media. Accordingly, students, staff, parents and community members are encouraged to follow this policy to ensure that the risk of such damage is minimised.

Social Media is an important part of modern communities where people share, connect, receive and provide information. Social Media may include, although is not limited to:

- social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Bebo, Yammer)
- video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube)
- blogs, including personal blogs
- blogs hosted by media outlets
- micro-blogging (e.g. Twitter)
- wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia)
- forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool)
- vodcasting and podcasting
- online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. Roblox, Minecraft, Fortnite)
- instant messaging (including SMS)
- geo-spatial tagging (Foursquare)

The essence of community is the idea that it exists so that people can support each other. Community members need to balance personal and professional information, and understand the important role that transparency plays in building a community. Our community shouldn't be an environment where competition is encouraged or emphasised, but rather a platform where we feel comfortable to share, connect, receive and provide help and information.

Community members, including students, staff and parents are personally responsible for the content they publish in a personal capacity on any form of Social Media platform. Where comments or a profile can identify an individual as a student, staff member or a parent of a child at the school, the individual should:

- only disclose and discuss publicly available information
- ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading
- be polite and respectful to all people
- refrain from making comments about students, staff, parents or other community members which are personal, aggressive or defamatory.
- adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws.

In using Social Media members of the Hawkesbury High School community, including students, staff and parents should not:

- post material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright or is otherwise unlawful
- imply that the individual is authorised to speak as a representative of the school, the student body, or the parent body, nor give the impression that the views the individual expresses are those of other community members, including students, staff or other parents
- imply the individual is authorised to speak on behalf of the school, other students, parents or staff, or give the impression that any views expressed are those of the school
- make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to the reputation of students, staff, parents, or the school, or bring them into disrepute.

Students

Students are not permitted to use Social Media at school, including at school-related activities outside of the school. Accessing Social Media through mobile phones, tablets, computers, media players, laptops, or any other communication device is not permitted at school.

Students who attend Hawkesbury High School may wish to use Social Media in their personal lives outside of school. However, any school-related issues published or discussed on Social Media, even in students' own time or at home, including direct or indirect references to students, staff or parents, must be polite and respectful. Any comments or posts on Social Media must refrain from making comments about the school, students, staff, parents or other community members which are personal, aggressive, defamatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist or sexist. Any such comments or posts may result in disciplinary action at school, including formal cautions, after school detentions or suspension from school.

Hawkesbury High School students have a responsibility to:

- become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- be aware of the school's Social Media Policy and not to engage in behaviour in Social Media which may be aggressive, defamatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist or sexist.
- develop positive responses to incidents of Social Media bullying consistent with the school's discipline code
- report incidents of school-related Social Media bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with staff and other students to resolve incidents of Social Media bullying when they occur.

Parents and Caregivers

Many parents of students who attend Hawkesbury High School use Social Media in their personal lives. However, any school-related issues published or discussed on Social Media, including direct or indirect references to students, staff or other parents, should be polite and respectful. Any comments or posts on Social Media should refrain from making comments about the school, students, staff, parents or other community members which are personal, aggressive, defamatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist or sexist.

Parents are encouraged to contact the school directly should they have a concern about any school-related issues. Open and direct communication will ensure that any concerns by parents are addressed immediately and by following due process. Social Media should not be a medium where parents and caregivers voice their concerns or disagreement with decisions

made by the school. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to contact the school directly with any concerns or attend Parent and Citizens' Association meetings where they can express their views and concerns in person.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- be aware of the school's Social Media Policy and to assist their children in understanding behaviour which may be aggressive, defamatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist or sexist.
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of Social Media bullying consistent with the school's discipline code
- report incidents of school- related bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of Social Media bullying when they occur.

Staff

Many Hawkesbury High School staff use Social Media in their personal lives. However, in using Social Media, staff must at all times comply with the Department of Education's Code of Conduct.