Policy Statement – Information Technologies: Acceptable and Responsible Use

The College expects students to exercise judgment at all times regarding accessing appropriate internet sites related to their studies. Any student who uses any device in an inappropriate manner or to access inappropriate material can expect a sanction to be issued. The same applies to any student who brings inappropriate reading, dvds or other stored electronic images to school.

All students from Years 4 to 12 are required to have read this policy and understood the College’s expectations regarding the use of technology. Logging on to the College’s network by all users infers an acceptance of this policy.

1. STATEMENT

The following policy clearly sets out the expectations that Somerset College has for acceptable and responsible use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) by all members of the College community. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Somerset College Information Technologies Device Policy which sets out the guidelines under which students are able to bring their own devices.

2. THE LAW

Criminal Code (QLD)
Privacy Act 1988 (CTH) and Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000
Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)
Cyber Crimes Act 2001 (Cth)
Telecommunications Act 1997 (Cth)
Software Licensing Agreements

3. PRINCIPLES

The welfare of staff and students at Somerset College is of primary importance. All users have a responsibility to ensure that any use of Somerset College’s digital environment is appropriate, acceptable, and does not jeopardise the integrity and good name of the College or the security and functionality of the system.

4. DEFINITION

ICTs includes but is not limited to computer devices, mobile devices including mobile phones, cameras, email, the Internet, removable hard drives, iPods, USBs, online programs and software.
Online environments and online communication includes but is not limited to the College’s Administration System, the College’s network, the portal, email, wikis, blogs and other web based and online systems including the Internet.

5. **IMPLEMENTATION**
Students are asked to sign their acceptance of this policy in their diary annually. A copy of this policy is available online. This policy may be updated throughout the year. The most recent version can be found on the College’s website.

Somerset College takes all reasonable measures to ensure that we provide a safe digital environment that supports quality teaching and learning. The environment is maintained to ensure the effective use of ICTs and the network by all. An essential part of this is educating in the acceptable and responsible use of ICTs and in cyber safety. The College has a commitment to maintaining a proactive approach to educating students in these areas.

The College believes parents share this responsibility for ensuring their children understand the requirement for responsible, ethical and acceptable use of all ICTs in the College environment.

Students have important responsibilities to ensure that they behave in an acceptable manner in the College’s digital environment and exercise all proper precautions to keep themselves and others safe; and alert a staff member immediately if there is any inappropriate activity, whether intentional or accidental.

6. **ACCEPTABLE AND RESPONSIBLE USE AGREEMENT**
As a member of Somerset College, I agree to the following as a condition for being allowed to use ICTs at the College. The use of ICTs confirms the acceptance of the following:

1. I accept that the primary use of ICTs is for educational and work purposes.
2. I accept that I must use ICTs, including all devices, with integrity at all times. ICTs are to be only be used in a responsible and acceptable manner. I accept that the use of ICTs is not a right, but a responsibility.
3. I accept that I am responsible for keeping my account secure and accept any responsibility for its misuse. I will keep my password secret. I will only use my account to access devices at the College. If I believe my account has been accessed or my password is known to someone else, I will immediately change my password and see an IT staff member.
4. I will not use any ICTs to cyberbully, harass or behave in an inappropriate or wrong manner. This involves making another person feel uncomfortable or acting in a morally or ethically inappropriate manner.

5. I will not use ICTs to access or create inappropriate material or share them with others. This includes not accessing illegal sites, pornographic or sexually explicit sites, sites that incite hatred or violence, sites that discriminate or contain inappropriate games and material.

6. I will not attempt to search for anything that the College would find unacceptable.

7. If I find anything inappropriate I will inform a teacher or IT staff member immediately.

8. I accept that the network, including the Internet, is monitored actively at all times. I will not attempt to get around any security or monitoring software and will immediately report any breaches.

9. I will use email or means of online communication appropriately. I will only use my College email account to communicate with teachers and I understand that access to third party email software is restricted. I will use my email and other forms of online communication responsibly and take care when sending or posting messages to not reflect poorly on the College. I accept that all communication can be logged and accessed if required.

10. Posting media content that has been created at the College online, outside of any College provided online environments, shall only be allowed with the express permission of the College. Examples include photos, music, or movies. I accept that I will not take photos or videos with a device unless I have received the explicit permission of a teacher or the College.

11. I accept that the use of social networking sites are restricted within the College and access is at the discretion of the Dean of Information Technologies. I understand that no staff are allowed to have any current students as friends on any social networking account. All members of the Somerset College community need to take care in identifying themselves with the College on any site or social networking site. If they do so, then care must be taken that they bring no disrepute to the College.

12. I will not attempt to create any peer to peer network, including sharing Internet access from my mobile phone or Internet enabled device to bypass the College’s Internet. I accept that all use of the Internet whilst in the College grounds on any devices, including laptops, mobile devices and mobile phones is to be entirely via the College provided wireless and Internet.

13. I will not attempt to install any software onto the College devices, or use malicious software on any devices or damage any devices or digital resources. I will report any damage to these immediately to staff. I will not bring in or store any software or files which may cause damage to the College’s network or ICT environment.
14. I will take care regarding giving out personal information about myself, or others without permission, via the Internet. This includes via photo, email, text or the Internet. I will report any suspicious activity immediately to a teacher.

15. I will behave in an ethical and legally correct manner. This includes not plagiarising or breaking copyright, installing illegal or pirated software or acquiring media, including music and movies, in an illegal manner, such as by file sharing.

16. I accept that gaming is only allowed for educational purposes and with the express permission of a teacher.

17. I understand that I am part of a community and that my use of ICT resources needs to respect the rights of users to use these.

7. **CONSEQUENCES FOR UNACCEPTABLE USE**

I accept that the breach of any of the above is taken very seriously by the College and may result in serious sanctions and disciplinary action for a first offense, in consultation with the College’s Behaviour Management Policy. I am aware that my parents may be contacted and informed of my actions.

Any breaches involving inappropriate images or videos and cyber-bullying are unacceptable and are taken very seriously by the College, whether via images, games, videos, animations or other means, and will be referred to the Headmaster or his delegate for disciplinary action. It should also be noted that some forms of cyberbullying and accessing illegal sites are criminal acts and in such cases, the College is required to report these matters to the police or other appropriate authorities.

8. **ACCEPTANCE**

As a student, I understand and agree to observe the conditions in the Agreement as outlined above.

As a parent, I understand that the Internet and access to Information Technologies can provide students with valuable learning experiences. I understand that Somerset College cannot always control what is accessible and some information available may be dangerous, illegal or offensive. I understand that I have responsibility for ensuring that my child understands and uses ICTs in an acceptable and responsible manner. I accept that, while teachers will always exercise their duty of care in relation to these matters, protection against exposure to harmful information should ultimately rely upon responsible use by students.