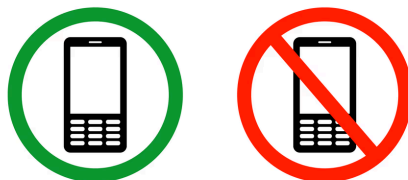


Pre Degree Mobile Device Responsible Use Policy



Rationale

1. The widespread ownership of mobile devices amongst young people requires that staff, teachers, pupils, parents and carers take steps to ensure that they are used responsibly at the University.
2. The purpose of this policy is to prevent unacceptable use of mobile devices and thereby to protect the University's staff and students from undesirable materials, filming, intimidation or harassment.
3. This policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile devices can be clearly identified and addressed. This will ensure the benefits that mobile devices provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students, whilst at the same time ensuring they assist with their learning, where necessary, and do not interfere with learning.
4. Pre-Degree has established this Responsible Use Policy for mobile devices that provides teachers, students, parents and carers with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of them during Pre-Degree hours and when on site. This policy sets out Pre-Degree's framework for determining what is 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' use of mobile technology by students while attending the university.
4. Note: For the purposes of this policy, all references to 'mobile devices' should be taken to include mobile digital devices including mobile phones / smartphones (e.g. Apple iPhone, Samsung Galaxy, Google Pixel), smart watches (e.g. Apple Watch, Garmin Watch), tablets (e.g. Ipad, Honor Pad) and Smart Glasses (e.g. RayBan / Oakley Meta).

Definition: a mobile device is a small, portable computing tool defined by smartphones, tablets, and smartwatches. It runs on a built-in battery, connects wirelessly to networks, and uses a touch screen or small keyboard for input. For the purpose of the policy smartglasses are also included.

Context

5. In order for this policy to be effective it must be used alongside other University policies. :

- Student Code of Conduct / Disciplinary Procedures for Students (non-academic)
- Data Protection Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- IT and Cyber Security Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Harassment & Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Academic Honesty Policy

6. At Pre-Degree, we recognise that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well.

7. With regards to mobile phones specifically, we understand that they are owned by almost all students and recognise the need for parents to give their young person mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about students travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to University. We understand that providing a young person with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their young person if they need to speak to them urgently.

8. We do not consider it realistic or desirable to prohibit mobile phones being brought to University, nor is it logistically possible for the Pre-Degree staff to collect phones in each morning and return them in the afternoon. It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones into the Pre-Degree campus to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document. The decision to provide a mobile phone to their young people should be made by parents or carers. It is incumbent upon parents to understand the capabilities of the phone and the potential use/misuse of those capabilities.

9. Parents/carers should be aware that if their young person takes a mobile phone to University it is assumed that household or individual mobile phone insurance will provide the required cover in the event of theft, loss or damage. Any mobile phones brought onto site are solely the liability of the student.

10. It is our policy to allow students to have a mobile phone with them in University under the conditions outlined in this policy. Despite this, the use of mobile phones does present a number of issues for us as an institution. For example:

- the high monetary value of many mobile phones - they are a valuable piece of equipment prone to loss and theft.
- the integration of cameras into mobile phones leading to potential young person protection and data protection issues with regard to students filming events, each other, inappropriately taking pictures of events / staff / their peers and using or distributing images inappropriately or illegally.
- the potential for mobile technology to be used to bully or harass other students.
- the potential to use the mobile phone (e.g. for texting) whilst on silent mode in class.
- the potential to bypass the University's safety network as a result of the increasing sophistication of mobile phone technology.

11. It is recognised that these documents must be reviewed and revised regularly in response

to developments in technology.

Responsible Use

12. The Pre-Degree campus is a creative space, however mobile phones can interfere with study and be a distraction on campus, even when in silent mode. Pre-Degree expects that when not used for an acceptable use below, mobile phones are kept in bags throughout the day.

13. Mobile phones must always be switched to silent mode and kept out of view. If a member of staff sees a student using a mobile phone irresponsibly during university hours, the student will be asked to put it away. Multiple instances of a phone being used irresponsibly will trigger the Intervention Process. If a student wants to know the time they should wear a watch.

14. Headphones / earphones may not be used at any time during curriculum delivery. Headphones/earphones may be used when indicated by staff or when reasonable adjustments apply. Volume should be kept at a reasonable level and not disturb any staff or other students within the session.

15. Mobile devices (including watches and iPads) must be kept on silent and must not disrupt classroom lessons with ring tones, music or beeping.

16. Occasions may arise where there may be a legitimate reason for making use of a mobile device's digital technology within a lesson. In this instance, mobile phones can only be used if a teacher specifically requests that students may use them within their lesson.

17. It is strictly against University rules to record, publish or to live stream / broadcast photographic images (still or video) or sound recordings of studios, staff or students at any time without their explicit permission (or that of a staff member in the case of campus spaces).

18. Any student found to be filming another person (and/or uploading images or video onto the Internet) will have their phone confiscated. Such instances may be subject to a disciplinary investigation with severe or repeated incidents potentially resulting in the student being permanently withdrawn from study.

19. In accordance with UK law the University reserves the right to search a phone if there are "reasonable grounds" to suspect it contains prohibited items, illegal content, or is linked to bullying or rule-breaking. Staff can examine and delete data if it's deemed harmful or disruptive, often without parent (guardian) / student consent.

20. Once a phone has been confiscated, the member of staff has discretion about how long they keep it for. You are unable to claim compensation against the University if the phone is damaged while it is in their care.

21. However, [government guidance](#) states that the relevant staff must consider whether it is appropriate to return the item to the student or parent / carer. The student's welfare will be considered when making this decision.

22. Acceptable use covers all physical areas of the University including classrooms, social

spaces, corridors and other campuses during taught session times. Outside of these times, such as break times, students are welcome to use their phones in a safe and responsible manner.

23. This policy has been devised to ensure that efficient, effective and safe environments for learning can be maintained at all times. We rely on the cooperation of parents and carers in supporting this policy. If you do not wish the University to confiscate a phone then please ensure that your young person follows this policy.

24. All mobile devices plus headphones, ear buds and smart glasses are banned from all examinations nationally unless approved for access arrangements. These must be turned off and handed into the invigilator before the start of the exam.

Acceptable Use

25. The following are deemed as acceptable use for mobile digital devices in Pre Degree:

- research & information finding
- creative documentation - photography, film, sound recording etc.
- creative production - digital drawing, photography, filming making etc.
- note-taking
- accessing Google Classroom
- consuming media whilst undertaking individual coursework under agreement with staff (e.g. listening to music, having films playing in the background etc.)
- health related uses such as blood sugar monitoring
- translation
- trips outside the university

Non acceptable Use

26. The following non-exhaustive list is deemed as non-acceptable use for personal mobile digital devices and University-owned devices in Pre Degree:

- bullying, harassing or intimidating students, staff or members of the public
- use of all social media without explicit agreement from staff (when part of the creative process) including but not limited to Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and Snapchat
- use of message boards including but not limited to Reddit, Telegram and Discord
- filming, photographing or in any other way recording students, staff or members of the public without explicit consent
- live streaming, video calling or any other live recording, distributing of images, film or playing recorded sound without explicit consent
- consuming media without agreement from staff (e.g. watching video during seminars or lectures)
- playing video/computer games without agreement from staff.

Maths and English courses

27. Due to the nature of study required for these courses the strict rule is no use of mobile

phones or other digital devices and students will be required to turn their devices to silent and give them to their tutor for the length of time of these sessions. Exceptions can be made in cases where there are prearranged access requirements.

Sanctions that apply if the policy is not followed

28. The following sanctions may apply if the policy is breached:

- if a student is observed using an unsanctioned mobile device by a member of staff, that member of staff will request that the device be put away as the first informal warning.
- on the second occasion within a term on which their mobile device is used inappropriately, the student will be invited to a Stage 1 intervention, a formal meeting to discuss the ongoing misconduct.
- continued misuse may lead to further sanctions such as a mobile device ban and could lead to the student being withdrawn, through the Intervention process.

Emergencies

29. If a student needs to contact their parents/carers in exceptional circumstances they may speak to a member of staff who will give them permission to make a telephone call using an available landline on campus.

30. If a parent needs to contact their young person urgently they should phone the University Reception or the Pre-Degree Administrator and a message will be relayed promptly.

31. Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the University Reception remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your young person is reached quickly and assisted in any relevant way. Passing on messages through the University Reception also reduces the likelihood of disrupting lessons inadvertently.

Notes - *Confiscating items—What the law says:*

Key Legislation (UK/England)

- **Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 91 & 94):** Grants school staff the general power to discipline pupils, which includes confiscating, retaining, or disposing of a student's property. Crucially, Section 94 protects staff from liability for loss or damage to confiscated items if they acted lawfully.
- **Education Act 2011 (Section 2):** Amends the **Education Act 1996** to provide specific powers for searching electronic devices. It allows authorised staff to examine data or files on a confiscated device if they have a "good reason" to believe it has been or could be used to cause harm or disrupt teaching.
- **Equality Act 2010:** Schools must ensure confiscation policies do not unfairly disadvantage students with protected characteristics. For example, allowing a student with diabetes to use a phone for glucose monitoring may be a "reasonable adjustment".
- **Human Rights Act 1998 (Article 8):** While students have a right to privacy, this is not absolute. Confiscation and searches are generally considered lawful interference if they are justified and proportionate to maintaining school discipline.

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Policy owner and Lead contact:	Head of Pre Degree / Pre Degree Quality & Examinations Manager Email: jsmeaton@aup.ac.uk / dkingston@aup.ac.uk