

Education Queensland International (EQI) Internet Usage Guidelines for International Students



Queensland
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As an international student, you may be given permission to share internet with your homestay provider, you may like to pre-purchase mobile internet, or you may be staying with your own family. Regardless of your situation, it is important to be aware of risks and costs associated with using the internet. The aim of this guide is to provide advice and information to students about using internet during your stay here in Australia.

If you live with a homestay provider, sharing the household internet is not always an option. A major reason internet problems occur in homestays is that Australian internet plans are different from what is available in your home country where there may be no limits to internet use. In Australia, some families are on set internet plans that only allow a certain amount of data downloads to be used. If the homestay provider is allowing you to share their home internet, it is important to be aware of their data download limits and the costs associated. You may be required to obtain your own pre-paid data device to manage your own data. The international staff at your school can assist you with this.

What is appropriate internet use?

All students require access to the internet to perform tasks associated with their studies. The amount of time required will vary from week to week, depending on the assignments or research required. You may need an hour or more some days to perform some study tasks. Additionally, you need time to communicate with family and friends and the internet generally provides a lower cost alternative for this communication than telephone.

When does internet use become inappropriate?

If sharing internet with the homestay provider, ask for clear instructions regarding what your homestay family considers inappropriate use and any limitations with data downloads. You must respect and adhere to these restrictions.

Inappropriate use of the internet may include:

- spending excessive amounts of time online (playing games, watching movies etc.)
- engaging in unlawful online behaviours (e.g. hacking, accessing pornographic content, visiting prohibited websites, downloading TV series, movies and music)
- cyberbullying and/or inappropriately communicating with others.

Possible outcomes from inappropriate internet use include:

- a reduction in internet speed, or additional charges
- loss of sleep and study time, that may lead to poor performance at school (maintaining satisfactory course progress is a condition of your student visa)
- addiction to certain games and/or activities, may lead to social and psychological problems
- exposure to unwanted material or communication (e.g. spam and advertising)

- being a victim of cyberbullying and/or being harassed or offensive content posted about you. (by other students or strangers)
- the risk of criminal prosecution from engaging in unlawful online behaviour
- tension within the home.

If you engage in inappropriate behaviour online, your school will be informed and may issue you with a behavior warning letter.

The 7 steps to a positive digital footprint

What you post online, you post to the world. This is known as your digital footprint. Future partners, employers, workmates and landlords may view what you believe you're just sharing with your friends. Once it's online, it could be there forever! Maintain a positive digital footprint by going through the following steps:

1. **Google yourself** - Check your name and online usernames to make sure you're happy with what is out there. If you find any negative content, delete it or report to the website where it is hosted. If you find an old social media account, take steps to remove it. If you have lost access to these accounts, contact the social media provider and request it be deleted.
2. **Privacy overhaul** - Stay on top of your privacy settings, social media platforms change these frequently. Set accounts to 'private' or 'friends only' to limit who sees your stuff. The less people who see it, the less chance there is for something to go wrong.
3. **Un-tag yourself** - Have you been tagged in an embarrassing photo or video? Ask the person to delete it. If they won't, report the post and un-tag it yourself. Never share or tag photos and videos of others without their permission.
4. **Unfriend/unfollow** - Have you added a 'random'? If you don't know and trust them in your real world, delete or block them. Don't be fooled by fake profiles or mutual friend suggestions. Unfriend your randoms today!
5. **Make positive choices** - Stay in control of your online world. If you make poor choices while on social media or online games there may be social or legal consequences. Remember, anything can be screen captured. Keep your online interactions positive, useful and true.
6. **Build your brand** - What you say and post could affect your future. Use the power of social media to brand yourself and connect to professional networks. Share your achievements, talents and passions online. Your social media accounts should portray you in a positive way.
7. **Remember...** Treat others the way you would like to be treated. If you or a friend are experiencing a difficult time online, reach out for some offline support.

Help

For more tips, advice and useful resources:

- [Cybersafety in Queensland state schools](#)
- [Protecting yourself online](#)
- [eSafety issues](#)
- [Games, apps and social networking](#)
- [Classroom resources](#)
- [Legal Aid Cyberbullying Sexting and Facebook Guide](#)
- [ThinkUKnow](#)
- [Budd:E Cybersecurity](#)