

Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct

The Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) developed the Code of Conduct as required by Part 2.6 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. The Code of Conduct is a set of principles or standards for the behaviour and conduct of all Victorian teachers in the Victorian Government Teaching Service and the non-Government sector.

The VIT Code of Conduct is not a disciplinary tool. A breach of the Code of Conduct will not lead to teacher registration disciplinary proceedings or action by DEECD for misconduct or unsatisfactory performance. DEECD has its own policies and processes to deal with conduct, performance and discipline entitled the *Guidelines for Managing Complaints, Misconduct and Unsatisfactory Performance*.

The following principles are of particular relevance when using social media tools:

Principle 1.5: Teachers are always in a professional relationship with the students in their school whether at school or not. Teachers hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with students.

Principle 1.6: Teachers maintain a professional relationship with Parents (Guardians, Caregivers).

Principle 1.7: Teachers work in collaborative relationships with students' families and communities.

Principle 2.1: The personal conduct of a teacher will have an impact on the professional standing of that teacher and on the profession as whole.

While teachers can be friendly with students, parents and communities their relationship must always remain professional and should never be on a personal footing. It is important for teachers to consider the consequences of their actions. The world of social media can seriously damage reputations and propel bullying to new levels. Even with security settings in place, issues may still arise.

Staff are encouraged to visit these principles in full and ensure they are up to date with advice from VIT and DEECD regarding social media.

A copy of the 'The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct' is attached.

Advice from DEECD is also available online at 'Using Social Media – Guide for Department Employees:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/101/guides/sm/default.htm>

Evaluation:

- This set of guidelines will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle to ensure it remains current and reflects best practice and advice.