Information and Communication
Technologies (ICT) Policy and Procedures
Revised: August, 2011

Introduction:
Information and communication technologies are a part of our daily life. As an educational body it would be remiss of us to ignore the impact of ICT on students’ lives at school and at home.

As an educational body, we have a duty to help learners shape the future in a socially just and life enhancing way. ICT provides an opportunity for students and teachers to use their creative gifts in enhancing the quality of life for all.

Definition:
ICT refers especially to the hardware and software aspects of those electronic technologies including computers and other devices used for communication, and to the software used within the school network and in accessing the internet.

Internet in this policy refers to the World Wide Web and email, and to the various Web 2.0 sites and programs used in learning.

Policy aim:
It is our intention to:
   a) Provide fair and equitable access to, and support in the use of, ICT for all students.
   b) Provide access to and support for staff of our schools.
   c) Provide a safe environment for students and staff in which to use ICT.
   d) Provide an environment in which students are able to develop their skills in ICT, so that those tools are of value to them in their work at school and beyond.
   e) Provide a framework for the maintenance and development of the ICT network at Our Lady of the Southern Cross College.

Values:
The Information and Communication Technologies Policy gives expression to the six Defining Features of Catholic Schools (Voices: 2001) which are inherent in the creation of a college faith community.

The ICT Policy seeks to reflect truth, learning, faith, community, service, equity and compassion, openness, joy, sense of wonder, trust and responsibility, respect, reconciliation and witness as espoused by Jesus.

Policy Statement:
Our Lady of the Southern Cross College is committed to providing students and staff with the best available facilities thus creating the opportunity for all to reach their potential. In the area of ICT this means providing and maintaining an ICT network which allows students and staff to make the best possible use of digital resources both within the College and online.

Consequences:
Fair and equitable access for all students
   • Sufficient hardware is available in working order for students to complete tasks.
   • All students in Year 4 and above have their own user account.
   • ICT are not seen as a ‘stick’ or ‘carrot’ (to be withdrawn as a punishment or offered as a reward for good work or behaviour), but offered as a matter of course to all students.
• Pupils with special needs have the same entitlement as other students. However, some particular applications of ICT could be used for
  o students with difficulties in learning, who need to be motivated in a particular way;
  o students who require the support that ICT can provide;
  o specially adapted machines for use in communication across the curriculum;
  o students of high ability who may be extended through the use of programs which offer challenge and opportunities for investigation.

• In planning and setting tasks that have an ICT component, teachers need to be aware that some students do not have access to computers and/or internet access at home, and that special arrangements might need to be made at school to cater for these students. (89.4% of students in Yrs 6-12 have indicated they have ‘adequate’ access to a computer at home; 95.5% have internet access. Student survey, Feb 2011)

• An ICT Support Officer will be appointed to oversee network maintenance.

Support for all students
• Teachers will plan for ICT skill development throughout the curriculum as appropriate
• Teachers should ensure they have a working knowledge of ICT hardware and software they expect their students to use.

Access for all staff
• All staff members have working user accounts on the College network.
• Junior School class teachers, and Senior School teachers have computers supplied by the Catholic Education Office. Some computers for the use of teachers and school officers will be available in the staff room.
• An ICT Coordinator with PAR privileges will be appointed to assist staff in development of their personal and curriculum skills and knowledge.

Support for staff
• Formal and informal professional development will take place through emails, notices and at staff meetings, or in a one to one situation with the ICT co-ordinator or ICT Support Officer.
• All staff will be involved in ongoing formal professional development provided by the Catholic Education Office and other sources.

A safe environment for students and staff
• The College will provide content-filtering through CNA (Catholic Network Australia) for internet connections.
• Students will be advised of a protocol, designed and approved by teaching staff, to follow should they be exposed to inappropriate material while using the internet.
• An active virus-checking program will be installed and kept current.
• Students will be taught effective and appropriate internet search skills, and discernment.
• Staff will be made aware of the Catholic Education Office’s policy on acceptable email use. (see appendix 1)

A framework for maintenance and development of the network
• An ICT Management Committee, consisting of appropriate staff from Junior and Senior schools, the College’s Finance Manager and the ICT support officer will meet as required to discuss issues relating to network maintenance, development and expansion. Other sub-committees may be formed from time to time to manage particular issues.
• Future purchases and additions to the network will be made in line with the existing infrastructure.

Responsibilities of users
• To gain access to the internet, students must sign an Acceptable Use Agreement (appendix 2), to show that they understand that their use of College resources is for educational purposes. Signing this document further shows that they understand what
their rights and responsibilities are while using the College facilities, especially with regard to appropriate and inappropriate online practices. Students’ parents/guardians are required to co-sign this agreement.

- The ICT Committee is empowered to edit and alter the Agreement as required to meet the changing nature of the place of ICT in the College.
- Staff will be provided with material explaining their responsibilities as educational leaders with regard to (a) personal internet use; and (b) ensuring online safety for their students.

**Privacy and Health and Safety issues**

- Staff will be regularly inserviced on matters pertaining to online safety and privacy, using materials sourced from the ACMA (Australian Communications and Media Authority) and other sources.
- Students will receive education pertaining to online safety and privacy, including cyberbullying,
- Teachers need to familiarize themselves with the school’s Workplace Health and Safety documents, and pay particular attention to issues concerning:
  - The setting up of and moving of equipment
  - Establishing appropriate working conditions
  - General electrical safety
  - Ergonomics, with special awareness of the appropriate height of desks and chairs, monitor position, and posture.

Attached:

Appendix 1  Catholic Education Office of Toowoomba, ‘Policy for Use of Electronic Facilities’ 2007

Appendix 2  Network and Internet Access for Students: Acceptable Use Agreement