

CYBERBULLYING

STUDENT FACT SHEET 1: WHAT IS CYBERBULLYING?

WHAT IS CYBERBULLYING?

Cyberbullying is the inappropriate use of social media or electronic devices and equipment for the purposes of bullying or harassing other persons. It can include:

- Posting hurtful comments or embarrassing photos on online discussion boards or social media
- Sending abusive messages or images through mobile phones or the internet
- Sending emails that vilify, demean or humiliate a person or group
- Setting up hate websites or blogs to vilify someone
- Targeted and persistent personal emails or postings aimed at ridiculing, insulting, damaging or humiliating a person in relation to, for example, physical appearance, background, preferences, religion, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation and/or political beliefs
- Encouraging someone to self-harm
- Using chat rooms, instant messaging or gaming areas to harass or threaten someone
- Accessing another person's online account without their permission

WHAT MAKES CYBERBULLYING SO HURTFUL?

While any type of bullying can be hurtful, cyberbullying can hurt someone just as much as physical or verbal bullying because:

- It's public – lots of people can see it
- It spreads quickly
- It can be hard to escape
- The bully can be anonymous
- Removing it can be difficult

IF YOU ARE BEING CYBERBULLIED REMEMBER:

- It's not your fault
- You are not alone
- There is help available - talk to your educators. TAFE Queensland will provide you with strategies to address the issue

CYBERBULLYING IS MAJOR MISCONDUCT

- Cyberbullying is Major Misconduct under the TAFE Queensland Student Rules and Policies
- Any student engaging in cyberbullying will be subject to a formal disciplinary process.

TAFE Queensland

- Has a zero tolerance for cyberbullying
- Is committed to ensuring learning environments are safe, respectful and inclusive
- Will encourage and support students to speak up if they are being bullied online
- Is committed to addressing and resolving all incidents of student misconduct

Talk to your educators if you need help.

Source: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/cyberbullying>



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STUDENT FACT SHEET 2: STEPS FOR DEALING WITH CYBERBULLYING



TALK TO A TAFE QUEENSLAND EDUCATOR OR STAFF MEMBER:

If you are being bullied online you should talk to a TAFE Queensland educator or other staff member.

They will help you with some strategies to deal with the issue. We have summarised the approach you can take below.

SAVE:

- Save any evidence of the bullying.
- Keep a record of it to support the actions you can take to stop the cyberbullying.

BLOCK:

- Block future messages or connections with the person undertaking the cyberbullying.
- Don't reply to any bullying targeted at you online. Often people will say hurtful things just to get a reaction, so don't give them the satisfaction. Only if you feel safe, you may let the cyberbully know this is not ok and you want them to stop before blocking them.

LOG OFF:

- Log off from the messages or sites where the bullying is occurring.
- This will keep you from seeing any future messages. It will be better to talk to TAFE Queensland and agree on your forward approach before logging back on.

TALK:

Your educator or other staff member will help you have further discussions with a TAFE Queensland counsellor (or other counselling service if you prefer) to provide further support and strategies. You can also refer directly to TAFE Queensland's [Student Support Services](#) page directly to book an appointment with a counsellor if you prefer.

COMMENCING A STUDENT MISCONDUCT PROCESS:

If you are being bullied online by a TAFE Queensland student, they are committing Major Misconduct under the TAFE Queensland Student Rules and Policies.

Your educator or other staff member will be able to help you report the incident under TAFE Queensland's Student Misconduct process. Or you can refer directly to the [Student Misconduct](#) page to make a report online.

TAFE Queensland will ensure that all reports of cyberbullying are treated in a sensitive, fair, and timely manner.

FURTHER REPORTING:

If the content is on a TAFE Queensland social media site, for example a Connect discussion board, your educator will remove the item immediately.

If the content is on an external social media site you can ask that site to have it removed. If you are having trouble getting it removed, this information will help:

- If you are Under 18 report it at [eSafety](#). They can work with you to get the offensive content taken down. They can also point you to [help and support](#).
- If you are over 18, select this link for information: [adult cyber abuse](#).

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Sources: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/young-adults/issues/cyberbullying>
<https://www.esafety.gov.au/young-people/cyberbullying>



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STUDENT FACT SHEET 3: SUPPORTING EACH OTHER IN CASES OF CYBERBULLYING



DON'T ENCOURAGE OR PARTICIPATE IN CYBERBULLYING:

If you notice that another student is being bullied online, make sure you don't support cyberbullying by encouraging it or participating in it.

Cyberbullying is wrong, and is Major Misconduct under the TAFE Queensland Student Rules and Policies.

OFFER EMOTIONAL SUPPORT:

Provide the other student with emotional support if they are being bullied online.

Invite them to talk about what has happened. Depending on what you feel confident doing, helping them could be as easy as sending a direct message to make sure they're OK, remind them you think they are great, and encourage them to ignore the cyberbully.

REMIND EACH OTHER TO TALK TO TAFE QUEENSLAND:

Let the student know that if they are being bullied online they should talk to a TAFE Queensland educator or other staff member.

If they are too upset or embarrassed to do that, let them know you can talk to someone. Speak to one of your educators for guidance and support.

REMIND EACH OTHER OF TAFE QUEENSLAND'S STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH CYBERBULLYING:

Remind the other student of TAFE Queensland's strategies for dealing with cyberbullying:

- **Save** any evidence of the bullying.
- **Block** future messages or connections with the person undertaking the bullying.
- **Log off** from the messages or sites where the bullying is occurring.
- **Talk** to a TAFE Queensland educator. They will also offer you support from a TAFE Queensland counsellor if you are feeling distressed.

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Sources: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/young-adults/issues/cyberbullying>
<https://www.esafety.gov.au/young-people/be-an-upstander-not-a-bystander>