School Public Website Policy
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1. **Purpose**

The Department of Education (DoE) aims to deliver websites operating on contemporary platforms that support school communication strategies. This policy:

- Provides guidance in meeting the security and web accessibility requirements of Government websites.
- Applies to all DoE school public websites.
- Provides a framework for the process of undertaking school website projects.

2. **Policy Statement**

The Strategic, Marketing, Communications and Media (SMCM) Unit is committed to providing advice and support to schools in delivering website solutions that meet school needs and fulfil DoE public website requirements. This support will help to achieve the following benefits:

- Website content is accessible and available to users with a range of abilities, including users of assistive technologies, users with disabilities, and readers of varying literacy levels and cultural backgrounds. This inclusive access supports the commitments made in DoE’s Disability Action Plan.
- Website content is well maintained, authorised, and accurate.
- Websites are hosted on secure platforms, ensuring they are protected and stable.
- *Design Style Guide* requirements are adhered to, which helps to ensure that websites are consistently identifiable with DoE and State Government branding principles and policies.

2.1 **Key Information**

School websites are to be considered DoE public websites. Support, advice, and guidance is provided by SMCM during the process of their development and maintenance to ensure that websites:

- are approved by the school’s Principal,
- meet the appropriate web accessibility standards (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines – WCAG),
- follow DoE’s Design Style Guide,
- are published under a DoE domain name,
- achieve compliance with relevant Australian Government Digital Service standards,
- include content which is authorised, accurate, and correctly formatted, and
- comply with Australian Privacy Principles where users’ personal information is being collected.
2.2 Web Accessibility

- A school website must be compliant with WCAG conformance level AA.
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth) with reference to the Disability Standards for Education.
- If a school is engaging an external provider, compliance with the standards can be supported by including a clause that states the following:

  The [School] website and web content (including all file formats) must be conformant to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0 (WCAG 2.0) Level AA. The site should be accessible to people with a disability or who are using adaptive technologies to read websites.

  A certificate, or statement of compliance to WCAG 2.0 Level AA is required to confirm that the site has passed a test for compliance. This provides evidence of compliance and can be used to ensure this clause is met.

  To test for compliance with Level AA of the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, we recommend using the WebAIM WCAG 2.0 Checklist.

- If certain content cannot be made to meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance – for example, new technologies that are not yet accessibility supported, then a suitable conforming alternative must be provided.

2.3 Style Guide and Logo Policy

Websites must meet the style guide requirements for DoE websites, which are the following:

- The Tasmanian Government logo is to appear in the site’s header, and link to the Tasmanian Government website.
- The Learners First logo device is to appear and link to DoE’s website.
- The site’s body text font is to be Arial.
- The colour scheme is to adhere to the whole-of-government palette.
- The website must not contain attribution to the provider, the provider’s contact information, links to their website, or any third party advertising material.

The Department of Education Design Style Guide should be consulted for further information, and may be supplied to providers for their reference when developing the school’s website.


2.4 Domain Names

Domain names (web addresses) for school websites must be published under a DoE web address, in the form of [school].education.tas.edu.au. Schools are provided with assistance by the Web Technologies team, who organise the application of the website address, as well as the creation of new addresses in cases where the school does not have one or is using a non-DoE address.

2.5 Australian Government Digital Service Standard

Websites must meet the Digital Services Standard, published by the Australian Government. The following criteria are essential:

- Make it secure – identify the data and information the service will use or create and put security measures in place

  Websites must be secure. The Web Technologies team can provide assistance and advice to providers to ensure that sites are successful in meeting security standards.

  As a guide, if your site has the ability to collect and/or retain information input by a web user (ie, log-in information, or form data such as a contact form), then you should discuss this with the Web Technologies team. Any collection of personal data will require a security assessment to be undertaken by ITS.

- Consistent and responsive design – build the service with responsive design methods using common design patterns and the style guide.

  Websites must be optimised for use on all major browsers for desktops, tablets and smart phones.

  The Web Technologies team can provide assistance and advice to providers to ensure that sites are successful in meeting design standards across a range of devices.

2.6 Website Content

Content for school websites is to be current, auditable, and approved by an appropriate content owner (in most cases this will be the School Principal). Content also needs to have proper resources allocated to its ongoing maintenance and management. This should involve regular review to ensure that information remains accurate, and that all links to external content are live and relevant.

- Written content should be clear, concise, and accurate to enable readers to quickly and accurately understand the information. Content authors should use Plain English principles when preparing web content. Plain English is an approach to authoring and presenting written material in a manner which emphasises inclusivity, clarity, and efficiency. The 26TEN organisation provide a useful guide to using Plain English entitled, Communicate Clearly – A Guide to Plain English.

  Images and videos featuring students must have current consent as provided by parents/guardians.
2.7 Requirements

Selecting a provider

When choosing a provider to develop a web presence for the school, schools may consider whether their offering includes the following:

- Ongoing support and maintenance, including keeping the website software up to date, providing technical support, and resolving technical issues.
- The ability to provide a website that can meet web content accessibility requirements.
- The ability for the school to easily self-manage the site’s content.
- Hosting of the website, and the ability for the site to be migrated to different hosting providers if necessary.
- Integration with social media and mobile apps.

Prior to engaging an external provider, a school should consult with Web Technologies. Web Technologies can assist with identifying whether an external provider’s offering meets the mandatory requirements and support the school in finding a suitable solution for their needs.

Engaging a provider

Providers can be supplied with the School Public Websites Policy to support communicating the requirements of a school website.

The provider and/or school can contact Web Technologies to discuss the technical procedures involved in developing a school website that meets requirements as well as the process of the website going live.

Procurement is to be carried out in accordance with the procedures as described in DoE’s Procurement Review Committee Guidelines. See also the Procurement Process Flowchart.

Website development
This phase involves the provider:

- Building the website in consultation with the school to establish design, content, structure and functionality.
- Setting up an account for the school if using an off the shelf product, which can offer standardised templates and functionality.
- Conducting guidance and training for site administration, content editing, and any other necessary tasks and procedures.

Quality assurance

A school website must be reviewed by Web Technologies for quality assurance prior to going live.

The Web Technologies team will review for compliance, consult with the provider on any issues identified and provide assistance where necessary. The quality assurance process is a collaborative approach where solutions and recommendations are made to ensure mandatory requirements are achieved.

Going live

The content of a school website must be approved by the Principal before going live.

When the website development has been completed and approved, the next step is to publish it under the school’s public website address. This procedure is facilitated by Web Technologies.

2.8 Roles and responsibilities

- Principals must approve development of a school website to be carried out by a provider as well as the content that will be presented on the website.
- Providers must develop school websites in compliance with the requirements described in the School Public Website Policy.

2.9 School website checklist

- Website must be compliant with WCAG conformance level AA.
- Websites must meet the style guide requirements for DoE websites.
- Websites must not contain attribution to the provider, the provider’s contact information, links to their website, or any third party advertising material.
- Websites must be published under a DoE web address.
- Websites must be secure
- Websites must be optimised for use on all major browsers for desktops, tablets and smart phones.
• Images and videos featuring students must have current consent as provided by parents/guardians.
• All content must be compliant with copyright requirements.
• The content of a school website must be approved by the Principal before going live.

3. **Related policies**

Nil

4. **Related procedures**

Nil

5. **Supporting information/tools**

**Internal information/tools**
- Design Style Guide
- Disability Action Plan
- Procurement Review Committee Guidelines
- Procurement Process Flowchart

**External information/tools**
- Australian Copyright Council
- Australian Privacy Principles – Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
- Communicate Clearly – A Guide to Plain English – 26TEN
- Digital Services Standards – Australian Government Digital Transformation Agency
- Disability Standards for Education – Australian Government Department of Education and Training
- Make Content Accessible – Victorian Government Digital Standards
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 – World Wide Web Consortium
- Web Content Management Guidelines – Tasmanian Government Department of Premier and Cabinet

6. **Definitions**

Nil
7. Legislation

- The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* is the legislation that informs the accessibility requirements of this policy.