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1 Purpose

This document provides guidance on official Department for Education, Children and Young People (the department) use, along with other professional and personal use of social media. The document outlines specific requirements and advice for learners, staff and administrators on preparing, engaging and responding to social media activity, including establishing and maintaining positive community relationships.

This document applies to all permanent, part-time, casual, and temporary and contract staff of the department, across all department sites.

2 Policy statement

Social media provides an opportunity to communicate, interact and engage with various audiences. Social media enables users to express themselves, empower others, contribute ideas, make connections, and access information. Through the development and growth of relationships, social media enables users to build cultural values alignment and increase visibility of their activities.

Using social media in schools, Child and Family Learning Centres (CFLCs), libraries and business units can benefit learners, their families, staff and the broader community. It can be a communication tool of critical importance between department sites and their communities, particularly when face-to-face communication is not readily possible. For example, in the Coronavirus pandemic, department sites used their social media accounts to provide essential site-specific and broader information about the pandemic response.

Using social media in schools, CFLCs, libraries and business units also carries some risk. Department sites are to use social media applications and technologies with the highest safety, privacy and security standards possible.

The department supports staff members professional and responsible participation in social media applications that allow users to create, publish, share, discuss and comment on content. Advice is available to staff through this Social Media Policy and Procedure (all staff) and the Social Media Procedures for Account Administrators (all staff) on the intranet.

The department also provides a range of other supports for staff and official social media use. These include the Social Media Resource Toolkit and online CANVAS training for social media administrators, as well as the Social Media Administrators Teams area and socialmedia@decyp.tas.gov.au inbox.

3 Overview

The procedures provide guidance to all department staff on official department use, other professional use and personal use of social media.

The procedures provide specific details and advice for engaging with, preparing, managing and responding to social media activity.

This Social Media Policy and Procedure (for all staff), the Social Media Procedures for Account Administrators (for all staff) and the Social Media Toolkit (for all staff) can be found on the department intranet. Additionally, all social media administrators are to complete the mandatory Social Media Administrators Canvas training.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Secretary

• Ensure the relevant legislation is adhered to.
4.2 Deputy Secretaries

- Ensure that schools, libraries, Child and Family Learning Centre (CFLCs) and business units are provided with appropriate guidance through the provision of policy, procedures and the resource toolkit.

4.3 Directors, Managers, Site Managers, Principals, Leaders

- Ensure that all staff, including support staff, are familiar with and adhere to the Policy and Procedure, Procedures for Account Administrators, the Social Media Toolkit, and in the case of social media administrators - have completed the mandatory Social Media Administrators Canvas training.

- Implement the policy and procedures, including giving initial approval for official department accounts (the account must be setup/established by Communication Services via socialmedia@decyp.tas.gov.au), being responsible for content on the account and supporting staff wellbeing.

- Raise awareness of the policy, procedures, and resources with relevant community groups, such as School Associations, and the broader department community.

4.4 Staff

- Comply with the policy and associated procedures, including learner participation, wellbeing and privacy, and staff professional boundaries, wellbeing and privacy.

- Be familiar with the resources for learners and staff in the Social Media Toolkit.

4.5 Account Administrators of official department social media accounts

- Comply with the policy and procedures, including Procedures for Account Administrators.

- Complete the mandatory Social Media Administrators Canvas training.

- Request Facebook page access to or removal from a departmental Facebook page from the Communication Services team.

- Request access from the Communication Services team to the department’s Social Media Administrators Teams group.

- Stay up to date and be across department directives relating to social media usage, for example closed comments directives.

- Be familiar with the resources for use by learners, staff, administrators, and School Associations.

4.6 Learners

- Follow policies, procedures and guidelines on respectful behaviours and use of mobile phones in schools.

4.7 Parents, families, carers, volunteers

- Ensure learners are aware of and understand the requirements of policies and procedures on the use of social media in learning settings.

- Work in partnership with the department and/or relevant community groups, such as School Associations, to model and promote the responsible use of social media. This includes being familiar with and adhering to the Social Media Terms of Use.

- Where required support learners with cyber safety and behaviour through the eSafety Commissioner resources.
4.8 **Communication Services**
- Update the Social Media Toolkit and online training in conjunction with Learning Services.
- Share/publish relevant resources through appropriate channels, such as the Social Media Administrators Team page.
- Update department administrators of department social media directives and actions required.
- Coordinate the department centralised archiving of social media records with our archiving vendor.

4.9 **Learning Services**
- Share/publish social media resources through appropriate department channels, such as Principal Matters and Learning News.
- Update the Social Media Toolkit and online training in conjunction with Communication Services.
- Support departmental accounts/pages and administrators.
- Support schools with social media incident management responses and advice including escalation to appropriate contact points.

4.10 **Libraries Tasmania**
- Manage and support library centres with their social media.

## 5 Using social media

Resources to help schools, CFLC and Libraries undertake the below processes (including example text to use) are included in the [Social Media Toolkit](#). Communication Services also provides ongoing support and advice related to social media accounts.

### 5.1 Principles for the Use of Social Media

<table>
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| Professional| When using social media in a work-related or personal capacity, staff will comply with regulatory and policy expectations. | • Staff will maintain clear professional boundaries by not friending or following learners, unless the learner is a member of the staff member’s family, or they are caring for them in a formal capacity (e.g. foster care, respite care or as a homestay host).  
  • Staff will differentiate between personal and department views and will not disclose confidential information obtained through their work.  
  • Only department accounts/pages will publish information relevant to those sites. |
| Protective  | When using social media in a work-related or personal capacity, staff will ensure the privacy and wellbeing of | • The content of department accounts will be archived (centrally, or by each site).  
  • Staff will manage their privacy settings so learners cannot see their accounts, unless the learner is a |
5.2 Learner use – participation, wellbeing and privacy

Participation for teaching and learning

Learning environments using social media must comply with the Use of Mobile Phones by Students at School Policy and support the active participation of all learners.

Age requirements

All staff:

- Must not ask learners to participate in any social media application if learners do not meet the age requirements of the social media application.
- Are to provide parents, families and learners with information about the risks of having underage personal social media accounts. For more information see the advice from the Office of the eSafety Commissioner.
- Are to speak with the learner (and then notify their parent or carer as necessary) if staff become aware of learners being in breach of age requirements of social media applications.

Purposeful

The department’s social media accounts will only be used for learning and department business.

- Accounts will only contain content and engage on matters of learning or business purposes.
- Accounts that cease to be relevant to the learning and business need will need to be archived. Contact Communication Services for support.
- Staff who are no longer associated with the learning or business purpose of accounts are to cease being an administrator.
Learner wellbeing

Preventing and responding to cyberbullying and abuse on social media is a shared responsibility of all staff, learners, parents and carers. All parties are to contribute to the safety and wellbeing of learners by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

As a department we stay up to date with the eSafety Commissioner’s website and regularly promote their resources as best practice.

The duty of care owed by staff may extend outside of the site boundary or normal site hours where there is a reasonable belief or knowledge that a child or young person is at risk of harm. This includes when staff suspect or know that a child is a victim, or at risk, of cyberbullying and online abuse (e.g. child sexual abuse, including grooming). See the Duty of Care Procedure for further information.

Learning environments must support learners impacted by cyberbullying or online abuse that is affecting their learning and/or wellbeing in that environment.

Child abuse - online

All staff and volunteers must comply with all mandatory reporting obligations as outlined in the Mandatory Reporting Procedure. Any suspicion, disclosure or concerns of abuse or doubt about a person’s behaviour must be reported, actioned and recorded in accordance with the department’s policies and procedures

• If the matter relates to online child sexual exploitation or child sexual abuse, including grooming and child abuse material, staff and volunteers must follow the Advice for Staff - Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Sexual Abuse.

• If the matter relates to harmful sexual behaviour by a child or young person, staff and volunteers must comply with the Responding to incidents, disclosures or suspicions of harmful sexual behaviour Flowchart for Principal/Site Leader/Delegate.

The department is committed to implementing the recordkeeping recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (RCIRCSA).

Cyberbullying

Preventing and responding to cyberbullying is a shared responsibility of all staff, learners, parents and carers. Regardless of when and where cyberbullying behaviour is taking place, the consequences can have a detrimental impact.

When cyberbullying occurs between students at the same school:

• Both the student being bullied, and the student who was bullying must be provided with support (e.g. informal support from staff, formal counselling with Professional Support Staff).

• Non-punitive and restorative approaches are to be utilised to address cyberbullying.

When cyberbullying occurs outside of school between students from Tasmanian Government Schools:

• A third-party may have the authority to deal with the cyberbullying that has occurred.

• Tasmanian Government schools are to support parents or carers to engage with the relevant third party (such as the Office of the eSafety Commissioner – Making a cyberbullying complaint and/or police) to resolve the issue.

• Tasmanian Government schools are to provide support to their student/s (e.g., informal support from staff, formal counselling with Professional Support Staff).

When cyberbullying occurs between students from different school sectors (for example, independent and government schools):
• Tasmanian Government schools are to make resources available to the parents or carers of Tasmanian Government school students on how to report behaviour to relevant authorities/channels (such as the Office of the eSafety Commissioner – Making a cyberbullying complaint and/or police).

• Tasmanian Government schools are to provide support to their student/s (e.g. informal support from staff, formal counselling with Professional Support Staff).

Protecting learner privacy
When using social media, the safety and privacy of learners must be maintained.

Schools, CFLCs and Libraries:
• Must ensure all social media administrators have completed the compulsory Social Media Administrators Training which outlines processes for ensuring the protection of learner privacy.

• Must provide information and reminders to their communities (in written communications and at relevant activities) to minimise the risk of learners’ imagery or information being inappropriately shared.

• Are to provide their communities with the link to the Australian Government’s eSafety Commissioner to help them understand online privacy and to enable them to make decisions to help protect their children as they see fit.

• All staff and third parties (such as approved visiting groups and organisations) are to be mindful of the information they are publishing regarding learners’ identity.

Image permissions
Permission to publish a learner’s information on social media is not the same as permission for learners to participate in social media. If a learner has permission to have a social media account, staff must still obtain permission from the learner’s parent or guardian to publish information, images, work, etc.

All staff:
• Must comply with parent / guardian consents in enrolment and validation forms (See the Publications Photo and Video Permissions FAQs).

• Must only publish a learner’s photograph, first name, work or information if they have received signed permission to publish from the parent or guardian. (See the Publications Photo and Video Permissions FAQs).

5.3 Staff use – professional boundaries, wellbeing and privacy
The department is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all our staff, which includes practical measures for staff to maintain professional boundaries and relationships, wellbeing and privacy.

Professional boundaries and relationships
Any concern or doubt about a staff member or volunteer’s behaviour on social media must be reported, actioned, and recorded in accordance with the department’s policies and procedures. Tolerance of the behaviour by others is irrelevant. All concerns must be taken seriously as they may be relevant to a pattern of behaviour, or the commencement of a pattern of behaviour, which indicate the person is grooming or abusing a child or young person.

All staff must ensure that professional boundaries are clear and carefully consider the risks and benefits of friending or following parents, carers, guardians, clients or families with whom they have a professional relationship through their own school, library, CFLC or business unit.
In line with the Professional Standards for Staff Policy, staff who work at schools, libraries or CFLCs must not ‘friend’ or ‘follow’ learners, or allow learners to ‘friend’ or ‘follow’ them on their personal social media accounts, unless the learner is a member of the staff member’s family, or they are caring for them in a formal capacity (e.g. foster care, respite care or as a homestay host):

- Section 2.2 states that ‘interactions between staff and learners must have an educationally valid context’, and ‘staff MUST manage their privacy settings so learners cannot see their social networking pages and photos’, unless the learner is a member of the staff member’s family, or they are caring for them in a formal capacity (e.g. foster care, respite care or as a homestay host).

- Section 2.3 states that ‘staff must not commence or maintain a personal relationship with any student unless the learner is a member of the staff member’s family, or they are caring for them in a formal capacity (e.g. foster care, respite care or as a homestay host). This applies to the use of social media.

There may be circumstances where staff and learners are members of the same social media groups, external to a department environment. For example, a teacher and student may both be members of the same netball club and both members of that club’s closed Facebook group. Such circumstances may be appropriate, providing the teacher manages their privacy settings to ensure the student cannot access their personal account, and providing professional boundaries and standards are maintained.

All staff are to be aware of the requirements under the department’s Information and Communications Technology Conditions of Use Policy - in particular unlawful or inappropriate use and sanctions — including under the State Service Act 2000:

- The Conduct and Behaviour Standards (Section 2: Professionalism and Ethical Conduct) states that ‘At all times staff should conduct themselves in a manner that does not bring the department into disrepute’.

- The Professional Standards for Staff Guidelines (Appropriate Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media) states that ‘social and mobile digital media should not be used for communication of a personal nature that is beyond that required for business or learning purposes’. Examples of appropriate and inappropriate communication by staff are listed.

All staff must apply the standards for professional and personal use of social media by:

- Adhering to the relevant State Service Principles and State Service Code of Conduct, Conduct and Behaviour Standards, and the Professional Standards for Staff Policy.

- Distinguishing between personal activities and work activities.

- Differentiating personal views from the department’s views.

- Not disclosing confidential information obtained through work.

In addition to the directions listed above, it is strongly suggested that staff make clear on their personal account/s (such as in their ‘bio’ section depending on the account being used) that the views expressed are their own and not the views of the department or the State Service.

See the Making Public Comment Infosheet for more information about making personal comments and opinions about the department or state service.

5.3.1 Employee wellbeing

Elements contributing to staff wellbeing include respectful relationships, safety at work, values and job satisfaction.

All staff are to exercise appropriate online behaviours, including:
• Managing their social media privacy and security settings so personal details, posts and pictures are private (set privacy settings so only approved friends can access information, comments and images – not allowing ‘friends of friends’ access).

• Maintaining professional and responsible social media profiles.

• Seeking support as and when needed, recognising that online abuse impacts wellbeing and is not something to be managed alone.

All managers:

• Must be aware of legislated Workplace Health and Safety obligations, and the need to take reasonably practicable measures for staff wellbeing in the management of social media incidents. For further information go to Workplace Health and Safety portal.

• Are to put in place supports (such as the Employee Assistance Program) to assist staff who may be emotionally impacted by comments on social media. Support information is to be easily accessible.

If a staff member is the victim of cyberbullying by other staff, they are to discuss this with their manager. Depending on the circumstances, individual matters may be considered as a breach of the State Service Code of Conduct. Managers may follow the Grievance Resolution Policy and Grievance Resolution Procedure.

Protecting your own privacy

All staff using social media for personal use are to:

• Keep professional and personal identity separate.

• Not use a department email address to join or create social media accounts.

• Not make personal details public, such as addresses, date of birth and place of employment.

• Carefully consider how what is said, written and uploaded may appear online – information can potentially be tagged, shared, copied, posted and viewed anywhere by anyone.

• Set privacy settings so only approved friends can access information, comments and images.

• Always be mindful of who can see, react, or comment before sharing post information.

5.4 Official department use – managers/principals, account administrators and member relationships

Schools, CFLCs, libraries or business units may choose to establish an official social media account for engaging with members of their community. We do not encourage secondary pages, for example sports groups, musicals, etc. The manager / principal / leader must make the decision to establish an official social media presence; considering the capacity to manage, monitor, archive and respond to member participation on the account/s; as well as the availability of suitable content for the account/s.

Staff who establish, administer and moderate official social media accounts are to:

• Use appropriate processes and procedures that mitigate risk.

• Use accounts contained within department-evaluated technologies/platforms/applications.

• Meet archiving responsibilities by ensuring the below step to contact the department’s social media team has been taken.

Request access and setup from Communication Services by emailing socialmedia@decyp.tas.gov.au.

When using social media, the safety and privacy of learners, staff, volunteers and visitors to schools, CFLCs, libraries and business units must be maintained. If the required consent to share images, videos or
information about another person on social media has not been appropriately given, that content must not
be shared.

Only official department social media accounts may post information about official department activities and
events. Individuals who are not administrators of official department social media accounts must not establish
and maintain private accounts for the purposes of creating and posting official department activities.

Official department social media accounts may be used to support fundraising causes that are relevant,
promote a site’s activities as per any other advertising decision, and to gather feedback from members.

Each official department social media account:

- Must have at least two site-based administrators approved by the site manager or principal. (Only
department staff are to be administrators.) All administrator requests (including new administrators) must
be managed by the Communication Services team.

- May include the site manager or principal as an administrator, and if they are not an administrator, they
must develop processes and procedures to ensure they are aware of, and take responsibility for,
information that is shared on their site’s official social media accounts, including comments on posts
placed on accounts by community members e.g. if a comment was received before the administrator was
able to turn off comments under the current position on closing comments.

- Must include a member of the site’s leadership/management team as an administrator if an account is
public.

- Must include at least two members of the Communication Services team.

Managers / Principals
The manager / principal must make the decision to establish an official social media presence in writing. See
‘4.1 Decision to have an official account’ in the Procedures for Account Administrators for a list of things to
consider before making a decision. This written record must be kept on file at the site.

The site manager or principal may be an administrator of an official public department social media account if
they choose to and have the necessary skills. If the site manager or principal is not an administrator:

- A member of their leadership/management team must be an administrator of the official public
department social media account.

- The site manager or principal must develop processes and procedures to ensure they are aware of, and
take responsibility for, information that is shared on their site’s official social media accounts, including
information placed on accounts by community members.

Account Administrators
See the Procedures for Account Administrators for the steps to set up and administer official accounts.

Member relationships
Schools, CFLCs and libraries are to provide information about responsible and respectful behaviours on
social media to their communities. This information may include the:

- Link from the accounts ‘about’ or ‘blurb’ section to the department’s Social Media Terms of Use.
- Enquiries and Complaints resources – explaining how best to approach schools about concerns.
- Respectful School Volunteer and Visitor Behaviour Policy and Process – sharing links and information
from the school’s policy and what is agreed as unacceptable behaviour of volunteers and visitors.
- DECYP Values materials – linking behaviours to our values.
When comments are made or posts are shared that negatively impact on Tasmanian Government schools, libraries, CFLCs or business units, but they are not made on official department social media accounts, administrators / managers / principals are directed to follow the steps outlined in the responding to disrespectful posts on pages not owned by the department flowchart.

See the Social Media Resource Toolkit for guidance on managing and responding to incidents on official accounts.

5.5 School Association use

Department staff must not administer any School Association social media accounts, unless they are members of a School Association Committee.

Department staff who are School Association Committee members may be administrators of School Association social media account/s, although this is not expected. School association pages are not managed or supported by the department.

Department staff:

- May choose to become members of, or contribute to, their School Association’s social media activity in a professional manner.
- Are to consider any risks to their privacy and reputation, and their obligations to identify and manage issues related to conflicts of interest.
- Only official department social media accounts may use official department logos to identify themselves. No other individual, group or organisation, including School Associations, may use official department logos for the purposes of social media profile pictures, cover photos, or any other branding purpose.

5.6 Groups and Closed Groups

The department does not endorse or provide a support service for the use of private or closed groups.

6 Establishing an official social media page

You must notify the Communication Services team when you wish to have an official social media page set up by emailing socialmedia@decyp.tas.gov.au. In doing this, Communication Services can set up the account, provide ongoing support and advice related to social media accounts, maintain a central social media register, and record and archive selected department social media accounts. All administrators must complete the mandatory Canvas online Social Media Administrators Training.

Communication Services monitors corporate department social media accounts (the whole-of-department Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts), including monitoring outside of usual business hours when required. We are limited in what actions we can take against individuals, groups and organisations who post on social media accounts outside of the department managed accounts. Communication Services work within the guidelines of individual social media platforms. While we aim to support business units, we are restricted in what actions we can undertake.

Further resources are available in the Social Media Toolkit on the department intranet.

7 Related policies

- Conduct and Behaviour Standards
- Information and Communications Technology Conditions of Use Policy
• Grievance Resolution Policy
• Professional Standards for Staff – Policy
• Respectful School Volunteer and Visitor Behaviour Policy and Process
• Student Behaviour Management Policy
• Use of Mobile Phones by Students at School Policy

8 Related procedures
• Duty of Care for Students on Departmental Educational Sites Procedure
• ICT User Agreement – Guidelines for Employees
• Grievance Resolution Procedure
• Mandatory Reporting Procedure
• Professional Standards for Staff – Guidelines
• Security and Emergency Management Procedures
• Social Media Procedures for Account Administrators
• Student Behaviour Management Procedure

9 Supporting information/tools
• Advice for Staff - Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Sexual Abuse.
• CANVAS training for social media administrators
• DECYP Values
• Employee Assistance Program
• Enquiries and Complaints resources
• Legal Services
• Making a cyberbullying complaint
• Making Public Comment Infosheet
• Occupational Violence and Aggression
• Office of the eSafety Commissioner
• Publications Photo and Video Permissions FAQs
• Respectful Schools Respectful Behaviour
• Responding to disrespectful posts on pages not owned by the department flowchart
• Responding to incidents, disclosures or suspicions of harmful sexual behaviour Flowchart for Principal/Site Leader/Delegate
• Safe, Secure, Supported, Our Safeguarding Framework
• Social Media Glossary (external)
• Social Media Resource Toolkit
• Social Media Terms of Use
- Student Wellbeing Hub
- Workplace Health and Safety portal

### 10 Definitions

**Administrator**
Any department staff member who is responsible for contributing to, updating, monitoring, filtering and responding to the social media presence of a department site on official department social media accounts.

**Child abuse material**
Any material that depicts or describes a child, or a representation of a child, who is or appears to be under the age of 18, and who is or appears to be in a sexual pose or sexual activity, or that shows or describes the person’s sexual organs or breasts as a dominant characteristic; this definition also includes material that depicts or describes a child, or a representation of a child, as a victim of torture, cruelty or physical abuse.

**Child Sexual Abuse**
Any act (including grooming) that exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes that are beyond their understanding, are contrary to accepted community standards, or are outside what is permitted by law.

**Friend or Follower**
A ‘friend’ or ‘follower’ is someone (personal, organisational or conceptual) that is added to a social media account. A ‘friend’ or ‘follower’ may or may not be someone with whom you have met or interacted in person, and may be able to view your social media account information depending on your privacy settings.

**Grooming**
Any online or in-person behaviour intended to manipulate and control a child, their family, kin or carers, or other support networks or organisations, with the aim of gaining access to the child; obtaining the child’s compliance; maintaining the child’s silence; and/or avoiding discovery of sexual abuse. Grooming may be difficult to identify, and can be done by people already known to the child, including by a child’s family member, kin or carer.

**Harmful sexual behaviour**
Developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people that may be harmful or abusive (Hackett, 2014), encompassing a range of behaviours, from problematic to abusive, that are directed towards other children, young people or adults, and that may be harmful to those displaying the behaviour as well as those to whom it is directed.

**Learner**
A person who is participating in learning programs in department environments.

**Member**
Any person (department staff, learners, School Association members, parents/carers, Library and CFLC clients, volunteers, department contractors and consultants, and the broader community) who has joined official department social media accounts.

**Official Department Social Media Accounts/Pages**
Any department approved public social media account established by Communication Services and managed by department staff, that is created for the purposes of publishing, sharing or communicating information, or for enabling interaction related specifically to department activities, including learners and their work.
Online child sexual exploitation

When an individual (adult or another child) or group uses technology or the internet to facilitate the sexual abuse of a child, including the production and sharing of child sexual abuse material online.

Responsibilities

The meaning of MUST, IS/ARE TO and MAY:

- ‘Must is to be understood as being mandatory.
- ‘Is to’ and ‘are to’ are to be understood as being directory.
- ‘May’ is to be understood as being discretionary or enabling, as the context requires.

Site

A department operated location or place of work, including schools, CFLCs, libraries, business units and other workplaces.

Social Media

Any electronic or online service, mobile application and virtual community that has the following features:

- Has the sole or primary purpose of enabling social interaction between two or more end users
- Allows end users to link to or interact with other end users, and
- Allows end users to post material on the service.

Types of social media applications include message boards, social networking sites, blogs and microblogs, image, video and music sharing sites and mobile applications. Specific examples of social media applications include Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram.

For a continually updated glossary of social media terms and definitions, visit: https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-glossary-definitions/

Legislation

- Archives Act 1983 (Tas)
- Copyright Act 1969 (Cwth)
- Education Act 2016 (Tas)
- State Service Act 2000 (Tas)
- State Service Code of Conduct
- State Service Principles