



MOBILE PHONE USE POLICY

Name of policy	MOBILE PHONE USE POLICY
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1. Purpose statement

Cell phones have changed the appearance of the college student. Carrying a cell in their hand or as a headset for quick response to a call is typical. College students are fluent in the digital language of computers, cellular telephones, video games, and the Internet. Hence, the widespread ownership and use of mobile phones among students requires that the university take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly on campus, and particularly in Lecture and exam rooms. The mobile phone Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving use of phones by students can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring that students continue to enjoy benefits that the devices provide. It is therefore the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to lecture and exam rooms to abide by the guidelines outlined in this policy.

2. Background

Mobile phones, when used appropriately, offer students advantages in terms of ease of communication and a sense of personal safety. Not only can the cell phone be used for emergency alerts on campus, but also assist in the learning process. Mobile phones could replace textbooks in the future and with the limited screen size, publishers will reformat information for maximum effectiveness. Nonetheless, mobile phones can have a negative impact on the learning environment. As a result, many college professors ban the use of cellular telephones in their classrooms. The reason given is the distraction to the learning process and compromising of examinations. Until recent years, students cheated by writing on their palms, sneaking notes up their sleeves or whispering answers to classmates. With cell phones, cheating has turned high tech. Students can text messages of answers to tests, take pictures of tests or search the internet for answers. Hence, this policy establishes guidelines for the use of mobile phones by students at the University of Kigali.

3. Definition of terms

3.1 Mobile phone: A mobile phone is a wireless handheld device that allows users to make and receive calls and send and receive text messages. It is a portable device that connects to a mobile network for the provision of voice, text, and multimedia messaging services, as well as (in some cases) data connectivity.

3.2 Smartphone: A Smartphone is a type of mobile telephone that has data connectivity for email access, calendar management, and web browsing capabilities, as well as the capability to run numerous applications.

3.3 Mobile device: A mobile device is a portable device that connects to a mobile network for the provision of voice, messaging, and/or data services. Examples of cellular devices include mobile phones, iPads, and modems allowing laptops to connect to mobile data networks.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all students at the University of Kigali (UoK).

For the purpose of this policy, mobile phones include Cellular/mobile phones, and Smartphones; and Scope of mobile phone use refers to all functions of a mobile phone, including but not limited to:

- (i) Texting
- (ii) Making and taking phone calls
- (iii) Internet browsing
- (iv) Using social media
- (v) Video recording
- (vi) Audio recording
- (vii) taking photographs
- (viii) using calculator functions
- (ix) Playing games
- (x) listening to music

5. The principles

5.1 Acceptable uses of mobile phones in lecture rooms

- 5.1.1 Mobile phones should be switched off and kept out of sight during lectures and while moving between lectures.
- 5.1.2 While on university premises at break times only, students should use soundless features such as text messaging, answering services, call diversion and vibration alert to receive important calls.
- 5.1.3 Mobile phones should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the University.
- 5.1.4 Students should display courtesy, consideration and respect for others when using a mobile phone or electronic device.
- 5.1.5 Students will be able to access the University's Wi-Fi for internet and email access as required.
- 5.1.6 The University recognizes the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones e.g. camera and video recording, internet access, MP3 and MP4 playback, blogging etc. Lecturers may wish to utilize these functions to aid teaching and learning and students may have the opportunity to use their mobile phones in the lecture room. On these occasions, students may use their mobile phones in the lecture room when the lecturer has given express permission. The use of personal mobile phones in one lesson for a specific purpose does not mean blanket usage is then acceptable.

5.2 Unacceptable uses of mobile phones in lecture rooms

- 5.2.1 Unless express permission is granted, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos or use any other application during lectures.
- 5.2.2 The Bluetooth function of a mobile phone must be switched off at all times and not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones.
- 5.2.3 Mobile phones must not disrupt lectures with ring tones, music or beeping. They should be turned off during lecture times.
- 5.2.4 Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated. In some cases, it can constitute criminal behavior. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence it is unacceptable regardless of whether 'consent' was given.

- 5.2.5 It is forbidden for students to “gang up” on another student and use their mobile phones to take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate that student and then send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website for public viewing. This also includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any student or member of staff without their consent.
- 5.2.6 Should there be more than one disruption to lectures caused by a mobile phone; the responsible student may face disciplinary action or the phone will be confiscated. This may also include a mobile phone ban in college.

6. *Other banned use of mobile phones by students*

- 6.1 Mobile phones are banned from all examinations. Students are expected to leave their mobile phones in their bags switched off before entering the exam hall. Any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination will have that paper disqualified as per the resolutions of senate.
- 6.2 Mobile phones and electronic devices should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the University
- 6.3 Inappropriate use of the School’s Wi-Fi is not permitted.

7. *Sanctions*

- 7.1 Students who infringe the rules set out in this policy could face having their phones confiscated by any university staff that will pass the same to the University Administrator for custody until end of Trimester.
- 7.2 Parents will be notified and the student will not be permitted to collect the phone without a parent/caretaker’s consent at the end of the trimester. For record keeping, all confiscated phones will have a sticker bearing the student’s Reg. number. Besides, students shall also have to sign a duly filled form bearing their names, brand of phone and series and date of its surrender to the university authorities.
- 7.3 Any further infringements of the mobile phone code of conduct may result in a ban on bringing a mobile phone to the University.

8. *Implementation of the policy*

- 8.1 This policy shall be implemented by the DVC Academics through Deans, Associate Deans, HoDs and the university administrator.
- 8.2 All cover pages of examination papers; CATS and exam booklets must bear the rule “No phones in exam rooms”.
- 8.3 Written permission must be obtained for students whose jobs require them to have their phones everywhere including in exam / lecture rooms.