

# Student Rights and Responsibilities in the Digital Learning Environment: What Do I Need to Know?

NIC is committed to fostering a culture of integrity, mutual respect, and responsible behaviours to provide a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment for all. Everyone has the right to enjoy a welcoming and respectful learning environment -- online or offline. Remember that your instructors may be future references, and your classmates may be future coworkers.

**Here are a few reminders to ensure your learning experience and the learning experience of others is positive.**

**Integrity** – You must represent yourself honestly in all communications, assignments, tests, and examinations. You may not use another student’s account or allow anyone else to access your account. Read more about Academic Integrity in the NIC Community Code of Personal and Professional Conduct 3-06. [\[link\]](#)

**Responsibility** - You are responsible for your actions and how they impact others. It’s important that *before you act or say something*, consider how others might interpret your words or actions. Any inappropriate behaviours or messages to students, faculty, or staff via online chat, email or in virtual classrooms are unacceptable as per our NIC Community Code of Personal and Professional Conduct 3-06.[\[link\]](#). Be kind.

**Understanding** – It is important to be understanding of others’ feelings, experiences, intentions, and think about things from another point of view. It’s not always easy to convey meaning through email or online chat environments, and sometimes this can be frustrating. Differences of opinion occur in academic learning. Be respectful. If you are confused or unclear about something, *ask for clarification*.

Consider:

- ✓ Would I say this out loud to a person’s face? If the answer is no, do not make the post.
- ✓ Could my tone or choice of words be misunderstood?
- ✓ Am I disagreeing or arguing in a way that may be considered rude or insensitive? If the topic is heated, be extra careful of the words and tone used. Perhaps get a second opinion before you post to avoid misunderstandings.
- ✓ Did I use all caps? This is often interpreted as anger or yelling. It is strongly advised to not use all caps in any communications, academic or social.
- ✓ Did I use emoticons, humour or sarcasm? Emoticons and humour are not understood by everyone the same way. They are best not used in online academic learning

**Respect** - We expect all interactions to be respectful. NIC will not tolerate any behaviours or messages that are offensive, abusive, derogatory, discriminating, bullying, harassing, or threatening. Think before you post anything!

**Cyberbullying** - Cyberbullying takes many forms. Personal insults, excluding others from academic discussions, posting pictures without someone’s permission, gossiping, and discussing others online, cyberstalking and trolling can all be considered cyberbullying. This is against NIC’s Community Code of Personal and Professional Conduct. If you experience any of these, please inform your instructor or contact Felicity Blaiklock, Director, Student Affairs [felicity.blaiklock@nic.bc.ca](mailto:felicity.blaiklock@nic.bc.ca)

**Patience** - We all have different ways of learning. Every student will approach online learning differently, so be patient with others and help them feel included by offering support if you can.

*Adapted (with thanks) from Mohawk College ‘Netiquette’ and Saskatchewan Polytechnic [https://saskpolytech.ca/student-services/support/documents/Online%20Conduct\\_Colour.pdf](https://saskpolytech.ca/student-services/support/documents/Online%20Conduct_Colour.pdf)*

**Familiarize yourself with the following North Island College policies:**

- ✓ Community Code of Personal and Professional Conduct 3-06 [\[link\]](#)
- ✓ Student Appeals 3-30 [\[link\]](#)
- ✓ Student Complaint Resolution 3-31 [\[link\]](#)
- ✓ Sexual Violence and Misconduct 3-34 [\[link\]](#)
- ✓ Academic Standing and Progression 3-37 [\[link\]](#)

Connect with your instructor if you have any questions about your rights or responsibilities as a student, or if you have a question or concern about behaviours that may contravene one of our policies.

If you have further questions, please contact:

*Felicity Blaiklock, Director Student Affairs*

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