Unacceptable behaviour in class and other public places

Lateness

People in Australia expect others to arrive on time. If you are late by more than 5 minutes it may be considered impolite. It is okay to be late once or twice but it is considered extremely impolite if you are late often.

If you are late for a class enter the room quietly and sit down with as little disruption as possible. Try to catch up to where the class is if you can. If you can’t, quietly ask the person next to you to explain where the class is up to.

Mobile telephones

It is considered very impolite to answer a mobile telephone or leave a mobile telephone switched on when you are in class. If you have a mobile telephone turn it off before each class. Teachers/lecturers may ask you to leave the class if your mobile telephone rings. It is important to note that mobile telephones should not be used in cinemas and are banned at most live theatres, opera performances and formal occasions (such as graduations).

Talking

It is considered impolite to speak with another member of class, even in whispers, when someone else in the class is speaking. If you have a contribution to make to the class wait for an opening in the conversation and speak. If you are having trouble finding an opening in the conversation try to gain the teacher’s/lecturer’s attention by looking at them and raising your hand. Some times class discussions become very loud and seem uncontrolled, this is just the way Australian students and teachers/lecturers interact with each other.

Shouting

It is considered impolite to raise your voice above the normal speaking level in class. You should never shout at another student or a teacher, even if they are shouting at you.

Racist and sexist behaviour

It is against the law to behave in a racist or sexist manner in Australia. This means you cannot refuse to sit next to or work with another student on the basis of their national origin, gender or religion. You may not use insults that refer to a person’s race, gender or religion. If it is against your religious beliefs to work with students of the opposite gender you should speak with the teacher
about this. You should be aware that some Australians will not consider religious beliefs as an adequate reason for discrimination.

Some sexist behaviour is difficult to define. The following types of behaviour are considered sexual harassment and are not acceptable:

- unwanted sexual touching of another person
- repeated requests for outings, meals or “dates”
- requests for sex and other intimate acts
- telling sexually explicit jokes or stories or displaying sexually explicit pictures
- verbal insults relating to gender, appearance or sexuality.

If any of these things happen to you or you are accused of doing any of these things please call the ISU for help.

**Spitting**

In Australia it is not acceptable to spit in the street, into sinks or in a public place. If you need to spit, spit into a paper tissue and place the tissue in a garbage bin. The PriceLine store next to the entrance of RMIT Business sells a range of toiletry items including paper tissues.

**Smoking**

You may not smoke in any RMIT buildings. If you are caught smoking in any RMIT building you may face disciplinary action, which includes suspension or expulsion from RMIT. If you do smoke the best place to do so is on the 4th floor plaza. You should not smoke outside the front of the RMIT Business building. It blocks the doorway and makes it unpleasant for people entering and leaving the building.

You should observe posted non-smoking signs in public places, particularly restaurants, cinemas, buses, trams, trains, underground train stations and shopping centres. The legal age for buying cigarettes is 18 years in Victoria.