

Email Etiquette and Intranet/Internet Protocols (including Social Media)



These protocols are to be read in conjunction with the *Electronic Communications Policy* (2012) and the

Communications Policy (2013). All computer users are personally responsible for following these protocols.

1. Electronic communications and information transmission are significant components of communication by the College.
2. Access to the College's Information Communication Technology resources is provided for legitimate work-related (in the course of employment with the College) and education-related purposes.
3. Computers and the computer systems, including the email and intranet/internet facilities remain the College's property, even where access is gained from a personal or home computer.
4. Bandwidth and storage capacities are finite resources and therefore need to be used prudently.

Appropriate use of Email

1. Users must accept responsibility for their own accounts and are not to share their accounts with other Users
2. Users are expected to manage their email account, which includes timely archiving or deleting of email
3. Limited and occasional personal use of the College's email and internet is acceptable. However, it must not interfere with the user's work obligations or impact negatively on the College's reputation

Email Etiquette

Email is a significant component of communication by the College. Professionally written email has the following attributes:

1. It presents an appropriate image of the College
2. It is efficient and gets to the point
3. It shows respect to others

First Question

Is an email the most appropriate way of dealing with the matter to be communicated?

Or should there be more personal communication e.g. face-to-face conversation, a telephone call?

Or should the matter be published as an announcement on AveSpace?

Manners

Use basic good manners.

Use a salutation and formal titles if you do not know the person (e.g. Dear Ms ...). Remember to use 'please' and to thank someone when you have received assistance. Only send copy (CC) to people who need to have the information you are sending.

Tone

Be aware of the impression your email can create. Be professional and friendly, but not familiar.

Avoid being aggressive and demanding.

If a third party were to read your email aloud, what impression would it create?

Concise communication

Use the subject line to be clear what the email is about. Draft your email carefully. Ensure the content is composed of only essential information.

Professional style

Use formal English. Avoid slang, emoticons, acronyms.

Spelling and grammar

Before you send the email, check the spelling and grammar.

Sending attachments

Some email programs will not accept attachments because of the size of the attachments, or that they might harbor viruses. Check with the recipient if it is acceptable to send an attachment.

Addressing the email

To avoid the possibility of sending the email before you have finished it, the address should be the last thing you insert.

References

"Email Etiquette" <http://unilife.curtin.edu.au/ProSkills.htm>
(Accessed 4 March 2013)

"Email Etiquette" <http://uqconnect.net/?page=27780.htm>
(accessed 4 March 2013)

Users of the College's email system must not use it in any of the following ways (the list is indicative, not exhaustive):

1. In a way that may be considered offensive, defamatory, obscene, pornographic, discriminatory, insulting or disruptive to any other person
2. To access, view, download, print or send messages or attachments (including to your home/private email address) which include: language inappropriate to the workplace; sexually explicit language; offensive or inappropriate jokes or cartoons; unwelcome propositions; ethnic or racial slurs; or material which contains disrespectful comments about people with disabilities
3. To access other people's email accounts
4. To distribute copyright material of third parties
5. For personal advertising or personal profit making
6. For disclosing or distributing the College's confidential information
7. For responding to external requests for information or complaints through email unless it is the computer user's specific responsibility to do so

Appropriate use of the intranet/internet

1. Users require appropriate authorization and an individual password which is not to be shared with others
2. Passwords are to be changed quarterly
3. Downloaded material must be properly referenced. Contact the Education Resource Centre (ERC) for advice
4. Users are expected to provide links to educational sites, rather than to download information. Contact the Education Resource Centre (ERC) for advice
5. Users are expected to manage electronic files in accordance with the College's requirements (e.g. to archive such documents as required by law, to delete

- superseded coursework and superseded teaching materials)
6. Computer viruses are not to be intentionally disseminated. Caution is to be exercised prior to opening and/or downloading attachments

Social Media

Definition 'Social media may be defined as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations ... that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content". Social media, therefore, are a group of online media that allow social communication, as a superset beyond more conventional notions of social communication.'¹

1. Laws that apply in the 'real world' also apply in cyberspace (In addition to Acts listed as informing College Policy, Acts that may be associated with the use of social media include *Telecommunications Act 1997* (as Amended). This list is not exhaustive.

Appropriate use of Social Media

Staff are

1. personally responsible for what they write on social networks
2. required to have approval from the relevant line manager to use social media in an official capacity
3. required to declare their purpose and their position as a representative of the College, using an official staff account
4. required to protect information entrusted to the College, from distribution into the public domain
5. Required to keep confidential all information which is confidential to the College
6. expected to be aware of their social media responsibilities, whatever the online forum and to ensure they uphold appropriate professional conduct and do not bring the school's reputation into disrepute

Some Alerts

Staff are

1. reminded to be aware of their professional responsibilities
2. alerted to the fact that communication via social media and email is virtually indelible
3. advised to exercise caution when contemplating engaging students on any social networking site or platform
4. advised to exercise caution when contemplating engaging parents of students on any social networking site or platform
5. alerted to the fact that views expressed by an individual staff member can be perceived by the College community and general public as being the views of the school

Ratified by: College Executive

Date: 23 May 2013

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¹ Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia [Social Media Policy Guidelines](#), April 2012, p.3