



Department of Social Sciences

Student Guidelines for Email Etiquette and use of Social Media (April, 2021)

This document provides you with an overview of guidelines when communicating using email and social media. You should also familiarise yourself with the *Student Regulations Governing the Use of Computer Resources* [<http://www.dit.ie/aadlt/ictservices/student/ictstudentregulations/>].

Courtesy

Emails to all staff in the University and on your practice placement should be courteous. It is appropriate to begin the email with 'Hi (name)', 'Dear (name)' or 'Hello (name)' not 'Hey' or 'Hiya'. This should be followed by the message and finished with an appropriate closing such as 'Regards', 'Kind regards', 'Thank you', followed by your name (give both forename and surname if the staff member is unlikely to know you and if you have the same lecturer for more than one module it could be useful to specify the module). Emails to staff members should never be given informal closings such as 'Cheers', 'Thanks a bunch' or 'Chat soon'.

Do not write anything in an email that:

- Is, or could be considered to be, defamatory, discriminatory, illegal, incites hatred or is obscene or damaging to the reputation of TU Dublin.
- Infringes another person's right to confidentiality or privacy.
- Is sent to you privately and not intended to be shared with other people.
- Is likely to make another person feel bullied or harassed.
- Is malicious and potentially harmful to others.

Subject line

It is essential that the person receiving your email knows what the email is about so make sure you always fill in the subject line. Remember that emails with 'no subject' often are treated as spam by the email system so are not received by the intended recipient. Each email should be about a single topic, which matches the subject line. Do not include additional topics, unrelated to the subject line.

Follow up emails on a topic

If you are revisiting a topic with a lecturer (perhaps weeks or even months later) use the email thread from the previous correspondence. This will provide him/her with the background to your query. Do not start a fresh email thread and assume your lecturer will remember the details of your query from months before.

Attachments

When you are sending an attachment to somebody ensure that you always include an appropriately worded message as well, rather than sending the attachment without a message and subject line. For example, if you are asked to email an assignment to a lecturer a message such as the example below is appropriate.

'Hi (name)

Please find attached my sociology essay.

Regards (name and class)'

CCing emails

Send emails directly to their target, and only put someone in cc when it is essential that he/she is aware of the communication. Do not expect someone in cc to action your email or take responsibility for your query. It is always incorrect to put someone in cc, and then address your email to that person.

Responding to emails

If you receive a group email from a lecturer that requires a reply, you should 'reply', not 'reply all' (there is no need for all other recipients to see your individual reply), unless of course the lecturer has specifically asked to you use 'reply all'.

Patience

Keep in mind that staff members receive a lot of emails so be patient while waiting for a response. When you do not receive a response immediately – wait before sending another email or emailing somebody else. Be prepared to wait at least three working days for a response. (A working day can be considered to be 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday during the academic year).

You have been provided with information in lots of places such as the University website, the student resources page of the School website, your student handbook and on your Brightspace modules. So, before you send an email stop and think whether you could find the information

you want in one of these places. Should your query be in relation to information that is available to you elsewhere the response time is likely to be longer.

Make sure that you have spelt the recipient's name correctly used the correct email address for the staff member. Staff email addresses are @tudublin.ie not @mytudublin.ie.

For suggestions about composing emails see:

<https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2015/04/16/advice-students-so-they-dont-sound-sillyemails-essay>

Use of Social Media at University

You are advised to be judicious in your use of Social Media as a TU Dublin Student. References to, and communications with, classmates and lecturers should be courteous and respectful at all times.

You should assume all of your posts are publicly available to the entire world, and write accordingly. You should assume there is no privacy online.

Your confidentiality agreement with your practice placement extends to social media. The staff and clients with whom you work on placement should not be identifiable in your posts. You should not post photos of placement agencies on any medium.

As a TU Dublin Student you have a role in maintaining and enhancing the reputation of the University and you should be mindful of this in your use of social media and in all your professional communications.