

Email and Electronic Messaging Policy 2025

Sample image only





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About this document

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Part 1 Purpose and application

1.1 Purpose

- (1) This Policy:
 - (a) explains what information we can send through bulk electronic messages;
 - (b) describes how we create, approve and send these messages;
 - (c) supports legislative compliance; and
 - (d) makes it easier to access and use information by limiting bulk messaging.

1.2 Start date

- (1) This Policy commences on [commencement date]

1.3 Application

- (1) This Policy applies to any user of University email or electronic messaging systems.
 - (a) This includes staff, affiliates and students.



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Part 2 Broadcast emails and messages

2.1 Using broadcast emails

- (1) In this part, a reference to broadcast email includes broadcast message.
- (2) We use broadcast emails:
 - (a) to share information with University community members and others;
 - (b) for teaching, learning, research, community engagement and administrative purposes.
- (3) Our broadcast email channels may only be used for University purposes.
- (4) Emails should directly relate to and support University activities.
- (5) Only authorised staff can send broadcast emails.
- (6) The Internal Communications team manages all-staff and all-student broadcast email.

Note: Other types of broadcast emails are generally managed at a local level (e.g. within a portfolio, faculty, etc).
- (7) Staff and students:
 - (a) should read broadcast emails;
 - (b) must regularly check their official (UniKey) University email accounts; and
 - (c) cannot opt out of receiving broadcast emails.

2.2 Types of broadcast emails

- (1) We use the following types of broadcast email.

Types	Purpose
(a) Staff News	Used to share information for all staff, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • news • operational information • events • announcements and invitations • staff achievements • senior staff appointments (at level of University Executive member)
(b) All-staff emails	Used for high-priority leadership messages and time-sensitive messages.



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Types	Purpose
(c) Emergency staff or student emails	Used for messages containing critical or emergency notifications. Note: See the University's emergency procedures website .
(d) Emails to broad groups or targeted staff	Used for University messages that are only relevant to a particular group of staff e.g. staff in a specific faculty; users of a specific hardware/software.
(e) Managers' News	A monthly newsletter sent to all staff who have at least one direct report.
(f) Student News	Used to share information with all students, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • news • operational information • events • announcements and invitations
(g) All-student emails	Used to share information relevant to all students, with approval from Internal Communications and one of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Vice-Chancellor; • Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education); or • Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
(h) HDR News	A regular newsletter for higher degree by research students.
(i) Emails to broad groups of students e.g. all postgraduate students, all Pharmacy students, all third-year students.	Used for messages related to normal University business or formal information from the student unions, with approval of one of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education); • Academic Registrar; • Dean; • Head of School; • Faculty General Manager; or • a person authorised by one of the above to do so.



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2.3 Creating and managing emails

- (1) Content owners must:
 - (a) create the content for broadcast emails;
 - (b) ensure the content is accurate;
 - (c) obtain approval; and
 - (d) provide approved drafts to Internal Communications.
- (2) The Internal Communications team will review proposed content for:
 - (a) appropriateness;
 - (b) relevance;
 - (c) readability;
 - (d) accessibility;
 - (e) grammar; and
 - (f) presentation.
- (3) The Internal Communications team may:
 - (a) change the content of any emails submitted; or
 - (i) If significant changes are required, they must consult with the content owner before sending the email.
 - (b) decide not to send emails that they consider:
 - (i) to be inappropriate; or
 - (ii) to contain information that would be better communicated in a different way.
- (4) We will not permit broadcast emails for:
 - (a) non-University-related activities;
 - (b) personal use; or
 - (c) distributing restricted material.

Note: See the [Acceptable Use of ICT Resources Policy](#) for information about restricted material.
- (5) Content owners will manage responses to broadcast emails.
 - (a) They should provide the Internal Communications team with details of contact methods for queries, to be included in relevant emails
- (6) Except in exceptional circumstances, no more than one all-staff email and one all-student email may be sent per day.



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- (7) All broadcast emails must comply with:
- (a) applicable laws and regulations:
 - (i) including those relating to intellectual property; and
 - (b) applicable [University policies and procedures](#).

2.4 Approvals

- (1) All-staff and all-student broadcast emails must be:
- (a) endorsed by Internal Communications; and
 - (b) approved by:
 - (i) the Vice-Chancellor; or
 - (ii) a person authorised by the Vice-Chancellor to do so.
- (2) Items for Staff, Student, Managers' and HDR News must be approved by Internal Communications.

2.5 Recordkeeping

- (1) Content owners must keep records of all broadcast emails distributed on their behalf, consistently with the [Recordkeeping Policy](#).



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Part 3 Bulk emails and messages

3.1 Using bulk emails

- (1) In this part, a reference to bulk email includes bulk message.
- (2) Bulk emails should be minimised, particularly if they are unsolicited.
- (3) When sending bulk emails, University community members should:
 - (a) send only to a relevant audience;
 - (b) clearly explain to the recipient why they are receiving the message;
 - (c) embed only web links from the University and other reputable and recognisable locations (e.g. state and federal government); and
 - (d) focus on high-priority topics.
- (4) Bulk emails must comply with the [*Acceptable Use of ICT Resources Policy*](#).
 - (a) They must not be used for:
 - (i) junk mail;
 - (ii) for-profit messages;
 - (iii) commercial purposes;
 - (iv) chain mail; or
 - (v) material that contravenes the [*Spam Act 2003*](#).
- (5) University community members may send unsolicited bulk emails if:
 - (a) they relate to the sender's position at the University and the sender has an appropriate work relationship with the recipients;
 - (i) For example, Heads of School emailing their staff, academics emailing their classes, financial administrators emailing all those with financial delegations;
 - (b) they directly relate to University activities;
 - (c) the recipients can be identified as very likely to have a particular interest in the subject matter; or
 - (i) for example, they have subscribed to a particular distribution list;
 - (d) they are sent by union office holders and delegates to University community members about their industrial interests.
- (6) University community members should not use bulk emails to send:
 - (a) personal communications unrelated to the sender's capacity as University staff or student; or
 - (b) communications about a special interest topic to recipients who have not expressed interest in receiving communications on that topic.



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- (i) This includes political, social or recreational information.
- (7) University community members must not send bulk emails in ways that bully or harass other users.
- (8) If a recipient indicates that they do not wish to receive further messages on a topic, or from a particular sender or group, further messages may only be sent if they relate to University activities.
- (9) Communications which do not directly relate to University activities (e.g. about a special interest topic) should provide an option to opt in to, or out of, future communications at will.
- (10) When sending any bulk emails, University community members must:
 - (a) take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and that of others.
 - (i) This includes avoiding material that may be distressing e.g. details of violence, sexual assault and self-harm;
 - (b) uphold our values of excellence, trust, and accountability;
 - (c) act consistently with our ethical framework and the [*Charter of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom*](#); and
 - (d) comply with relevant laws, University policies, procedures and guidelines.
 - (i) These include requirements relating to health and safety, copyright, privacy, defamation, harassment, and discrimination.

3.2 Distribution lists

- (1) We provide lists of email addresses for use in University-related activities.
- (2) University community members must not:
 - (a) give external organisations or individuals copies of email lists greater than what is available on the internet; or
 - (b) assist external organisations or individuals to use University email lists to send commercial emails.
- (3) University community members may create distribution lists to communicate with particular groups.
 - (a) Each such list must:
 - (i) have a title which clearly conveys the purpose of the distribution list;
 - (ii) not use a title which could imply that the sender represents all or part of the University; and

Note: The University's name may be used if it is clear from the context that the communication is not an official communication from the University. For example, a student club including the University's name in their distribution list title.



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- (iii) not use a title which could imply that the distribution list is limited to University community members if that is not the case.
 - (4) The Internal Communications team may direct an account holder or sender to amend the title of a distribution list if they consider the title to be inappropriate.
 - (a) They may also amend the title itself if they consider this to be necessary.
- Note:** See the [Social Media and Public Comment Policy](#).
- (5) Special interest groups may communicate with interested University community members using distribution lists.
 - (a) These groups must issue invitations to join the distribution list and may only include groups or individuals who accept the invitation.
 - (b) The distribution list must provide an option to opt in to, or out of, future communications at will.
 - (6) Distribution lists must not include external email addresses unless:
 - (a) reasonably necessary for an educational or institutional purpose; and
 - (b) approved by the Vice-Chancellor or other relevant member of the University Executive.

3.3 Limits on access or use

- (1) The [Acceptable Use of ICT Resources Policy](#) applies to bulk emails and messages.
- (2) In addition to any steps available under that policy, the Vice-Chancellor or other relevant member of the University Executive may direct that:
 - (a) a conversation conducted by bulk email be moved to another platform e.g. Viva Engage; or
 - (b) the distribution list for further emails or messages be changed.



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Part 4 Breaches of this Policy

4.1 What is a breach

- (1) A breach of this Policy may constitute:
 - (a) a breach of the:
 - (i) [Student Charter](#);
 - (ii) [Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct](#);
 - (iii) [Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy](#); or
 - (iv) [Work Health and Safety Policy](#).
 - (b) misconduct under the:
 - (i) [University of Sydney Enterprise Agreement 2023 – 2026](#); or
 - (ii) [University of Sydney \(Student Discipline\) Rule](#).
- (2) A person will have acted in breach of this Policy if they have:
 - (a) personally breached the Policy;
 - (b) materially assisted or encouraged another person to breach the Policy; or
 - (c) publicised conduct in breach of this Policy on social media or elsewhere.

4.2 Breach outcomes

- (1) The consequences of a breach of this Policy will depend on its type and severity.
- (2) Breaches may result in any of:
 - (a) access to ICT resources being limited or discontinued;
 - (b) disciplinary action by the University; and
 - (c) in the case of serious breaches, civil or criminal proceedings.



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Part 5 Roles and responsibilities

5.1 University community members

- (1) send bulk emails and messages:
 - (a) under certain circumstances;
 - (b) using carefully managed distribution lists; and
 - (c) consistently with [Acceptable Use of ICT Resources Policy](#) and this Policy.

5.2 Staff and students

- (1) monitor and read emails to their University email account.

5.3 Content owners

- (1) generate, and ensure the accuracy of, broadcast email and message content;
- (2) respond to any queries and replies; and
- (3) keep records of their broadcast emails and messages.

5.4 Internal Communications

- (1) manage all-staff and all-student broadcast emails and messages.

5.5 Vice-Chancellor

- (1) approves all-staff and all-student emails and messages.



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Part 6 Definitions

(1) In this Policy a reference to 'we', 'our' or 'us' means the University.

broadcast email

an official email sent by the University to broad groups of University community members.

This includes:

- all-faculty and all-portfolio emails; and
- newsletters approved by a member of the University Executive.

broadcast message

an official electronic message sent by the University to broad groups of University community members.

This includes messages sent using:

- text messaging services; or
- online applications such as the Student Portal, Canvas, Microsoft Teams or Zoom.

bulk email

an email sent by a user to multiple recipients at once, using a distribution list.

It does not include broadcast emails.

bulk message

an electronic message sent by a user to multiple recipients at once.

This includes messages sent using:

- text messaging services; or
- online applications such as the Student Portal, Canvas, Microsoft Teams or Zoom.

It does not include broadcast messages.

commercial email

as set out in the [*Acceptable Use of ICT Resources Policy*](#):

an email offering, promoting, or marketing a good or service.

distribution list

a collection of email addresses or mobile telephone numbers used to send multiple copies of an email or message.

This includes:

- official staff directory email lists (e.g. faculty email lists); and
 - email distribution lists created by University community members.
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ethical framework

the requirements and expectations established in, and through the interaction of:

- the [Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct](#);
- the [Student Charter](#);
- the [Research Code of Conduct](#);
- the [Academic Integrity Policy](#); and
- the [Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy](#).

personal communications

communications which:

- are of a personal nature; or
- do not relate to the user’s capacity as University staff, affiliate or student.

Residential College

any of:

- Mandelbaum House;
- Sancta Sophia College;
- St Andrew’s College;
- St John’s College;
- St Paul’s College;
- Wesley College;
- Women’s College.

staff

includes all University employees and affiliates.

student

as set out in the [University of Sydney \(Student Discipline\) Rule](#):

A person who is:

- currently admitted to candidature in an award course at the University; or
- a non-award student, exchange student or study abroad student.

University community

University staff, affiliates and students.

University email

any email with the @sydney.edu.au domain.

University Executive

as set out in the [University of Sydney \(Delegations of Authority\) Rule](#):

the senior management committee of that name convened by the Vice-Chancellor.



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University-related conduct

any conduct connected to the University.

This includes conduct that:

- refers or relates to the University or its activities;
- refers or relates to individuals in their capacities as University staff, affiliates or students;
- occurs on, or in connection with, University lands or other property owned by the University;
- occurs at, or in connection with, a Residential College;
- occurs at, or in connection with, University owned or affiliated student accommodation;
- uses, or is facilitated by, University ICT resources or other University equipment;
- occurs during, or relates to, the performance of duties for the University;
- occurs during, or in connection to, any University related function or event (whether or not approved or organised by the University);
- occurs when representing the University in any capacity;
- occurs during, or in connection to, any event run by or affiliated with student representative organisations, student clubs or student societies (whether or not approved or organised by the University);
- occurs during, or in connection to, a clinical, practicum, internship or work experience placement; or
- occurs while a student is participating in an overseas exchange, study abroad or other approved program.

user

a person or entity that uses the University's ICT resources.



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Part 7 Notes

Revisions and replacements

This document replaces the following, which are rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document:

- (1) *University Staff and Student Broadcast Email Policy*, which commenced in May 2009.

Email and Electronic Messaging Policy 2025

Date adopted [date]

Date commenced [date]

Date amended [date]

Approver: Vice-Chancellor and President

Owner: Vice-President (Operations)

Review date: [date]

Rescinded documents *University Staff and Student Broadcast Email Policy*

Related documents

[*Spam Act 2003 \(Cth\)*](#)

[*University of Sydney \(Delegations of Authority\) Rule*](#)

[*University of Sydney \(Student Discipline\) Rule*](#)

[*Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct*](#)

[*Student Charter*](#)

[*Acceptable Use of ICT Resources Policy*](#)

[*Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy*](#)

[*Charter of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom*](#)

[*Privacy Policy*](#)

[*Recordkeeping Policy*](#)

[*Social Media and Public Comment Policy*](#)

[*Cyber Security Policy*](#)

[*Work Health and Safety Policy*](#)



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Register Version	Approved by	Clause	Amendment	Commenced