

Good practice guide to using your Northumbria Student email



This guide provides an outline of the best practices to follow when sending email from your Northumbria email account. You should use your Northumbria email account for all correspondence with your lecturers and University staff, which means that certain practices should be followed when sending messages.

For help with the general points for using your account, please see our various [Student Email](#) guides or search in [KnowHow](#).

Getting your message right

Addressing

Make sure you have the right email address - it is all too easy to send a message to the wrong recipient. If sending to someone within the University use the **Find Someone** field and address book to choose the correct person.

Add external contacts to your personal contacts list directly from the email they have sent you – this way you will have the correct address and can easily select it the next time you need to send a message.

Composing your message

- Include a descriptive Subject line. This helps recipients to use the subject field to manage the messages they receive.
- Try to keep your message brief and concise - avoid using graphics or pictures especially if sending your message to a large group.
- Include your signature at the bottom of messages. This should be brief but it can be useful to include your department, telephone number and email address.
- Avoid plagiarism (*extracting and using text from someone else's messages without acknowledgement*).
- Be polite just as you would in person. It can seem like SHOUTING if you use CAPITALS or BOLD TYPE.
- Be cautious when using sarcasm and humour. Without facial expressions and tone of voice, they do not translate easily by email even if you add 'friendly' characters e.g. :-)
- Remember your email is like a postcard – its contents may be read by anyone along the chain of distribution which is potentially anyone on the Internet.
- Use the CC field to keep others informed who will not need to take any action.

Before you send your message

- Check the wording and spelling of your message carefully before sending – use the spell checker for important messages.
- Check your reply settings - using 'Reply All' by mistake can be embarrassing for you and annoying to others.

Email Signatures

- You can create your own email signature that can be added to the end of your messages. You can display your name, email address and contact telephone number automatically at the bottom of every message you send – this can alert lecturers to other ways of contacting you.
- Search in IT KnowHow for details on how to do this.

What Not To Do

- Don't pretend you are someone else when sending email.
- Don't use someone else's account to send messages.
- Don't lend your account to anyone else.
- Don't leave your email account open when you leave your computer. Anyone could sit down at your keyboard and send out any libellous, offensive or embarrassing message under your name.
- Don't send anything that might bring discredit or embarrassment to the University. Don't send abusive, harassing or threatening messages, apart from being discourteous or offensive they may break the law.
- Don't send attachments to large groups of people - put the information on your web site or in a public folder, and email your distribution list with the location.

Please read and comply with the University Regulations for the Use of Library and Computing Facilities which cover use of email. You can find a copy online at: www.northumbria.ac.uk/it/regs

IT Support – open 24 hours, 365 days a year

Email: it.help@northumbria.ac.uk

Phone: 0191 227 4242

Online Search: northumbria.ac.uk/knowhow