



Royal Conservatoire
of Scotland

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Email Guidelines

Document Revision History

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RCS Email Guidelines

When using e-mail, please adopt these simple points of good practice and etiquette.

Remember the laws of the land relating to written communication apply equally to email, including laws on defamation, copyright, obscenity, fraud, discrimination and data protection.

Remember that the Internet is an open world - treat the security of email messages you send off-campus about the same as a postcard i.e. anyone along the chain of distribution might see what you have written. Even for within-campus messages, think carefully before sending sensitive or confidential information by e-mail.

Make a good impression - your email may be seen by persons who don't know you or the Conservatoire, so ensure that what you write and how you write it gives the reader the right impression.

Be polite - adhere to the same standards as you would when writing a letter. If you TYPE LIKE THIS, for example, people will think you are shouting. Swear-words are a complete 'no no', even if you might use such words in conversation with the person to whom you are sending the e-mail.

Use humour and sarcasm with care - not everyone will appreciate it and without voice inflection and body language, mail messages can be easily misinterpreted. It sometimes helps to use 'emoticons' such as a smiley face e.g. :-) but use them sparingly.

Keep it simple - e-mail is good for factual information, but not for matters that require tact and diplomacy. People are busy - don't add to their information overload.

Identify yourself - you can use a signature file to put your name at the end of your email automatically (but it's good netiquette to keep it short).

Ensure your email is going to the right destination - it can be easy to use the wrong email address by mistake and your message may be delivered to the wrong person or group. If you do find a message has been misdelivered, send an apology to the person or to the group.

Check your reply settings - it is easy to use "Reply-All" by mistake, and this could be very embarrassing for you and very annoying to others.

Use a meaningful 'subject' field - don't leave it blank: this is very irritating.

Clear out your mailbox regularly - there is limited space in your mailbox. Old mail will be moved aside if you go over quota. Move messages you want to keep into mail folders.

Don't send an attachment unless you need to - attachments, such as Word documents, are much larger than the corresponding text and they can be awkward to handle if the recipient doesn't have the corresponding application. If the

formatting is not necessary, insert the text into the body of your e-mail message instead of using an attachment.

Take care with the size of your message - they slow down mail system performance and some Internet mail systems will reject large messages or delay delivery. Large messages are usually caused by including a very large attachment or multiple attachments. A good rule of thumb is to keep the message size below 50KB. Split your attachments across more than one message, if all together they will exceed this size.

When replying to a message, think carefully whether to reproduce the original message in your response - If it's not necessary, don't do it. If you need to refer to it, be selective in the parts that you include in your response.

Do not send large numbers of mails with attachments (no matter how small) to large groups of external users – It takes a long time for these to be scanned as they leave our systems and can have an adverse effect for all Conservatoire Users. Mail shots of this type should never be sent out without first seeking advice from the IT Department on the best way to send this mail. A rough guideline is that you must send out of hours, to small subsections of the list and provide a link to the file rather than sending out an attachment.

If you need to send mail regularly to a long list of people, create a mailing list - this avoids long lists of recipients at the top of everyone's copy.

Don't send anonymous mail or 'spooof' your address - in 99% of cases, your email can be traced back to its source; disciplinary action may then follow.

Don't 'Spam' - i.e. don't send electronic garbage. Sending junk email, such as advertisements or other unsolicited material, to mailing lists, newsgroups, list servers or to anyone you don't know is considered 'spamming'.

Don't reply to chain-letters - these are an absolute 'no-no' on all networks.

And finally.....please read and comply with the Conservatoire's ICT Acceptable Use Policy.