



Email guidance and etiquette

Email signatures

Your email signature should include:

your name

your job title

your telephone number

your email address

your working pattern

School and college

your postal address, including room number, University charity details (The University of Glasgow, charity number SC004401) and the School Athena SWAN Bronze logo, available below.

To increase access for British Sign Language (BSL) users, add the following statement (including the hyperlink to this service, which is <https://contactscotland-bsl.org/>) to your external email signature: "British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact me direct by using:

<https://contactscotland-bsl.org/>".



General guidance

- **Do have a clear subject line**
This alerts the recipient to the subject and helps if searching for emails in future. It is helpful not to amend the subject line.
- **Do proofread your message** - make sure you carefully proofread your emails, not only for typos, but for tone.
Do add your signature
The recipient will not have to waste time looking up your address or phone number. Ensure you include at least your phone number if you have a different signature for replying to emails.
- **Do not assume staff/students look at emails outside of their normal working hours**
If people choose to open work emails in the evening or at the weekend, there is no expectation

or pressure that they respond until they have returned to work. You may wish to add a statement to your email signature to make it clear that an immediate response is not expected, for example: *"I sometimes send emails outside of my normal office hours for my convenience, but do not expect you to respond outside of your usual working hours"*

- **Do not assume you can text someone on their mobile**
If you have contacted someone by email and their 'Out of Office' is on, you should not text or phone them on their personal mobile number.
- **Do not assume the recipient knows what you are talking about**
Include the subject and any references to previous emails or conversations. It can be frustrating and time consuming to have to look back through a conversation chain.
- **Do not 'Reply All'** (unless you really mean to)
- **Do not 'Send' to large email groups** (unless you really mean to)
- **Do not type in CAPS because it means you are SHOUTING** (unless you really mean to (see below))
- **Do not 'Send' in anger**
Never send an angry email, or give a quick, flippant response. Save in Drafts, leave overnight, and read again before sending.
- **Do not!!! overuse exclamation points**
- **Do increase accessibility for British Sign Language (BSL) users**
University of Glasgow is trying to increase access for British Sign Language (BSL) users and one of the easiest ways is for staff to highlight within their external email signature that anyone who uses BSL can use the Scottish Government's 'contactSCOTLAND-BSL' service. This allows a BSL user to contact a public service via a trained BSL interpreter who will speak to a staff member on their behalf. All that's required is to add the following statement (including the hyperlink to this service, which is <https://contactscotland-bsl.org/>) to your external email signature: "British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact me direct by using contactScotland-BSL".

Tips for managing your mailbox

Set aside time to read and respond to email

- Consider not leaving your email open all day long as alerts and beeps from incoming messages can interrupt your workflow.
- Consider scheduling specific blocks of time throughout the day for checking your email. You might even try marking your calendar and setting your availability to "busy."
- You might want to consider an automatic reply if away from office or out of email contact.
- When checking your emails, it is suggested that you browse the inbox for ones that can be immediately deleted such as spam or promotional emails. Then select messages that do not require a response and delete or archive them. Once you have pared down the number of messages in your inbox, you will be able to better evaluate which ones are the most critical.
- If you are unable to respond immediately to an urgent / important email, it is suggested that you communicate to the sender that you received the message and will be in touch shortly.

Organise an inbox with labels, folders and categories

- Prioritise, group, sort and file messages to keep your inbox organised. The better your filing system, the easier it will be to locate specific emails when you need them. Create parent categories for broad subjects e.g. projects and finances. Then use subcategories to file emails

related to specific projects. Before you file a message, ensure the subject line is search-friendly. If it doesn't accurately describe the content of the email, edit the subject line before it's categorized and archived.

Unsubscribe from unwanted promotional emails

Newsletters and advertisements can overwhelm your inbox and bury important messages. Clean out the clutter and unsubscribe where possible.

Etiquette for contacting staff on leave

The following is the advice for PIs, line managers and colleagues of staff who are on leave. This could be a short leave or long leave including maternity, shared parental leave, sick leave or annual leave for example:

Please use common sense when unsure about contacting staff on leave

Where possible (planned leave), keeping in contact should be discussed with each staff member before commencing their leave. There is flexibility to create local arrangements that suit individual staff members, including other forms of communication. Keep in mind that staff may change their mind depending on their leave and circumstances.

It is better to include staff on leave in email communication, but crucial not to expect a reply

Staff on a leave should not feel in any way obliged to check their email or reply to their email. However, if not included in email communication, staff may feel that they have missed out on valuable information. This may include both social activities or work related emails.

Examples of when not including staff on leave is disadvantageous

- **Grant applications**
Being involved in a grant application that is not accepted but gets submitted later elsewhere, and the person is then missed out from the new application.
- **Grant extensions**
Ethical approval application Project requires new ethical application - staff on leave would have liked to be included in the restructuring of the project but are missed out
- **Vacancies**
- **Fellowship offers**
- **Publishing papers**

It is OK to include staff in group emails

Suggested wording in an email could be: "For anyone included in the list who is on leave, there is no obligation for you to reply or do anything while on leave"

Emails and sustainability

Many millions of unnecessary emails are sent in the UK every day. Not only are these clogging up our mailboxes and potentially distracting us from more important tasks, they are also damaging the environment. Typing uses up electricity, as does the network through which we send our messages and the cloud/data centre where our messages are stored.

Instead of sending "thank you" emails as a matter of course, please consider adding "Thank you in advance" to the end of your message.

Please also regularly clear out your inbox, your sent items mailbox AND your deleted Items folder, saving only what you anticipate needing to refer to again.