

E-mail communication within the School of GeoSciences

Here are a few important guidelines to remember when composing e-mails to academic and support staff and to postgraduate demonstrators within the School of GeoSciences. These guidelines will ensure that your e-mail communication is conducted to the professional standards expected by the School of GeoSciences and by potential employers.

- Wherever possible, use your University e-mail account. This identifies the message as legitimate rather than spam.
- Include a meaningful subject line in order to clarify what your message is about. This may also help the recipient prioritise reading your e-mail.
- Be polite and use the same standards as you would when writing a letter. Don't make demands, don't accuse, and remember to write please and thank you.
- Don't use all capitals in an e-mail – this is regarded as SHOUTING! For emphasis, use asterisks or bold formatting to emphasise important words.
- Do use standard spelling and punctuation – you shouldn't write your email as though you are texting your friend.
- Keep messages brief and to the point. Concentrate on one subject per message whenever possible. Write clear, short paragraphs.
- Remember that e-mail isn't private and there is always a risk that e-mails can be sent to the wrong e-mail account (either by human or computer error). So avoid sending sensitive or confidential information.
- Don't use e-mail as an excuse to avoid personal contact. Many problems are best resolved through face-to-face or voice-to-voice communication, particularly if the problem is complex or has the potential to be emotionally charged.
- Don't expect an instant response to your e-mail – the recipient is unlikely to read your e-mail the instant it has been sent. This is particularly true during out-of-office hours and over weekends.