“So, I’ve logged into my University email account… now what?”

Before using your student email account, it is important that you have read and understood the University’s Conditions for using IT facilities, available online.

When composing an email, it is also important to consider the way that it will be read by the recipient so as not to cause offence or confusion.

Email netiquette

The term “netiquette” is short for “internet etiquette”, a set of rules aimed to improve the standard of social interaction on the internet. Here are some tips to help promote good email netiquette.

Greetings

Although emails tend to be less formal than letters, always remember to have appropriate beginning (eg “Dear X”) and ending (eg “Kind Regards, Y”) in your message. Remember to use appropriate titles as “Dear Dr X”.

Brevity

Emails should be short and to the point, while remaining carefully courteous throughout.

Spellcheck

It is discourteous to be sloppy about spelling and grammar when contacting staff or acquaintances. Re-read your message and always run a spellcheck before sending it.

Punctuation

Applying proper punctuation to your emails can be as important as in formal coursework.

Tone

Be aware that a tone that will be conveyed by the words you type. Be courteous and avoid using emoticons such as the smiley face “:-)” with contacts other than your close friends.

Signature

Set up a short signature for the end of your emails with your name and other information suitable for all recipients, e.g. contact number.
Flaming
Do not reply in haste or anger. Do not send such responses until you have calmed down and thought the matter through. Reply in haste; repent at leisure.

Case Sensitivity
Avoid using all capitals for the body of your email, as this can appear discourteous as though you are shouting at the reader. It is also harder to read at a glance.

Construction
Make use of white space. Consider creating paragraphs and using bullet points or bold text where appropriate. This can make your emails much easier to read.

Clarity
Remove irrelevant information especially if you are replying to or forwarding an email. Make the key information clear to the recipient(s).

Calendar
Use the calendar facilities in OWA to request meetings with others.

Further information and help
Use MyIT to log calls with the University’s IT Service Desk
More information is available online