Use of Electronic Mail Procedure

1 Purpose

To define the framework and acceptable use criteria that applies to the use of electronic mail (hereafter referred to as 'email') within the University.

2 Scope

This procedure applies to all University Members who use the University provided email system.

3 Procedure Overview

This procedure relates to the University's approach to email which is a critical enabler for communications between Employees, Students, and the wider community, with information included in emails often traversing public untrusted/uncontrolled networks such as the internet. The University will ensure that information included in emails is appropriately protected or does not adversely impact the risk profile of the University by:

- ensuring Employees have clear procedures regarding the use of email for sensitive or security classified information
- ensuring that passwords are used on email systems
- prohibiting the use of scanned signatures
- acknowledging that email communication is not private
- ensuring that email systems are backed-up and maintained
- ensuring that evidentiary value of electronic message transactions, and the general reliability and availability of the electronic messaging system is maintained.

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the Acceptable use of ICT Resources Policy.

4 Procedures

4.1 A standard environment for email

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The University will provide email to Employees, Students, and approved University Members to enable and enhance communication in administration, teaching and learning, research and innovation, and engage with the wider University community.

4.2 Use of email services

4.2.1 Users

4.2.1.1 University Members

Each University Member may be authorised to access an email account on one of the University's computer systems under the following conditions:

- An email account may be established when an approved University Member first becomes a registered user of one of the University's computer systems.
- Employee email accounts will be cancelled once their employment at the University terminates.
- Any approved University Member may have their email account terminated or suspended for any breach of the terms of this procedure or related policies, as determined jointly by the Executive Director, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Services and the University Member's supervisor.

4.2.1.2 Students

The Student Communication Policy establishes the framework for all University Member communications with Students.

4.2.2 Acceptable use procedures

The following procedures must be applied at all times:

1. University Members sending email communications to a University email distribution list/group must refer to the Acceptable Use of ICT Resources Policy and the Code of Conduct Policy and be aware of potential disciplinary action or penalties that can arise if the frequency or content of these messages is deemed unacceptable within the University environment.
2. Email communications should be used to inform the target audience about activities, events or policies that relate to the University's educational services and business. Email communications targeted at Students should be managed in accordance with the Student Communication Policy. All campus email distribution lists/groups are maintained as a means of facilitating electronic communication within the University community.

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3. Division/Department email groups are established by ICT Services at the request of the Division/Department leader. It is the responsibility of the requesting Employee to ensure that the list remains current. Specific offices and individuals will be authorised to post to these groups (See Electronic Mail Distribution List and Group Schedule).

4. University email distribution lists are not available to non-University entities.

5. Material sent to distribution lists must be relevant to the group being mailed and must pertain to University business. The distribution lists are not intended to be used for personal or commercial gain, except for '# UniSQ Community Noticeboard' which is available for subscribed Employees to use for buy/sell and community notices.

6. Employees must not replicate the '# University Communications' mailing list by any method to circumvent gaining approval from the official authorised Employees.

7. Each message should contain a meaningful subject line.

8. Emails should use 'rich text' format. The complex use of colours, photos and graphics affects file size and load time and should be avoided.

9. Attachments should be avoided. As good practice, Employees wishing to share a document or complex graphics should make the material available via a common website and include a summary only and the URL in the email message. The sender is responsible for all replies, responses, and complaints. Employees are advised to use Division and Department SharePoint information sites and OneDrive for the storage and reference of material.

10. Messages should be brief and to the point.

11. University Members are encouraged to create personal distribution lists using their Outlook Contacts address book.

12. The University owns the email accounts and uses them as an official method of communication with University Members and Students. Employees and Students are responsible for reading official information shared via email.

4.2.2.1 Bulk email distribution

The University's email system is not to be used to send bulk or group emails to Students. Bulk or group emails to Students must be sent through the University's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System in accordance with the Student Communication Policy.

All requests for one-off distribution to University, specific campus, all professional Employees or all academic Employees lists must be forwarded to the relevant List Owner outlining:

- name of required distribution list;

- relevance to members of the list;
- University department sponsoring the message;
- name of contact person or email alias to be included for replies;
- subject line for email;
- URL for attachments/further information, if applicable; and
- Email text.

If approved, an authorised Employee will then distribute the message on behalf of the person making the request.

All requests for ongoing distribution to University, specific campus, all professional Employees or all academic Employee lists must be forwarded to the relevant List Owner (refer to Electronic Mail Distribution List and Group Schedule - Table 1) in the first instance outlining:

- name of required distribution list;
- relevance to members of the list;
- expected frequency of email notifications;
- the nature of the communication; and
- URL for attachments/further information, if applicable.

If approved, the establishment of an appropriate email alias and associated sending rights may be created to facilitate this process.

4.2.2.2 Campus-specific email distribution lists

Email primarily of interest to a specific campus should use the individual campus Organisational Email Distribution List.

4.2.2.3 Access to Organisational Distribution Lists

Email distribution will take a tiered approach whereby Division/Department leader will have broadcasting rights and responsibilities for the area over which they have authority. For example, a Head of School may send to the School but not to the whole Department; a Division Executive may send to the Division but not to the whole University unless authorized to do by the List Owner.

Division/Department leaders will have responsibility to:

- approve and broadcast to the unit over which they have responsibility
- delegate broadcasting rights for their area to other Employees
- request broadcast in another, or broader, area
- grant to another area one-off or blanket broadcasting rights to their own area for a designated purpose.

4.3 Records management

Email messages, sent or received by Employees in the performance of their duties, are considered records for the purposes of the *Public Records Act 2023,* the *Right to Information Act 2009* and the *Information Privacy Act 2009* and must be managed in accordance with the University's Records and Information Management Policy. Under Section 9 of the *Public Records Act 2023* ownership of email messages rests with the University not the individual Employee.

All Employees using email as a means of communication have a responsibility to capture and retain messages relating to University business activities so that they are accessible as records to meet business and evidential needs. The Records and Information Management Policy provides that business emails should be captured, managed, and retained in the University's electronic recordkeeping system or other appropriate business system for the required period specified in the retention and disposal schedules, as approved by the Queensland State Archivist. Further information is available on the Enterprise Information Management Services website (refer to link below). Failure to comply with this legislative requirement may result in imposition of financial penalties on an individual.

Email messages may be released to third parties as a result of legal discovery processes, including access applications under the *Information Privacy Act 2009* and *Right to Information Act 2009.*

Any issues regarding records management should be referred to the Senior Manager (Enterprise Information Management) for consideration.

4.4 Contacting the University

The University provides email contact addresses through which the community transacts with it. When individuals send emails to the University using one of the provided email links, the University can collect personal information such as the person's name, email address and other personal information which may be contained within the body of the email. The University is required to comply with the *Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)* Schedule 3, Information Privacy Principle 2 in its management of email contact addresses.

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4.5 Representation

Employee communications using the University Employee email system may be construed to be representative of the University's position.

Where the Employee does not have the authority or is not aware of the University's position, or where an Employee's personal view may vary from that of the University, the communication must clearly state that the opinion expressed is that of the writer, and not necessarily that of the University, or words to that effect.

Where the Employee is representing the views of the University, a notation must be appended to the communication identifying the individual and the position held within the University.

4.6 Electronic mail directories

A directory of University Members' email addresses and telephone numbers will be maintained on the University Email Global Address List.

4.7 Confidentiality

Due to email system limitations, email confidentiality cannot be maintained, and emails can be redistributed. University Members must be aware of the potential for confidentiality not to be maintained when transmitting confidential information by email.

4.8 Standard disclaimers - email

The following disclaimer is automatically included at the end of the signature block of email messages sent outside the University:

'This Email (including any attached files) is confidential and is for the intended recipient(s) only. If you received this Email by mistake, please, as a courtesy, tell the sender, and then delete this Email.

The views and opinions are the originator's and do not necessarily reflect those of the University of Southern Queensland. Although all reasonable precautions were taken to ensure that this Email contained no viruses at the time it was sent, we accept no liability for any losses arising from its receipt.

The University of Southern Queensland is a registered provider of education with the Australian Government (CRICOS Provider No: 00244B QLD; 02225M NSW; TEQSA PRV 12081)'.

4.9 University email distribution lists and broadcast messages

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Email distribution lists are used to facilitate resource sharing, communication, and research. The overuse of University-wide emails can reduce effective communication. The University encourages consideration of the use of other forms of electronic communication. The University has developed:

- a range of tools, procedures, and guidance to outline the electronic resources available to reach University Members
- the principles and procedures relating to their use
- the mechanisms that apply to their access.

These are outlined in the Electronic Mail Distribution List and Group Schedule.

5 References

Nil.

6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Procedure Information

Accountable Officer	Chief Digital Information Officer
Responsible Officer	Chief Digital Information Officer
Policy Type	University Procedure
Policy Suite	Acceptable use of ICT Resources Policy
Subordinate Schedules	Electronic Mail Distribution List and Group Schedule
Approved Date	19/9/2024
Effective Date	19/9/2024
Review Date	17/10/2028
Relevant Legislation	*Information Privacy Act 2009* *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010* (Qld)

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	Public Records Act 2023 Records Governance Policy *Right to Information Act 2009*
Policy Exceptions	Policy Exceptions Register
Related Policies	Code of Conduct Policy Records and Information Management Policy Student Communication Policy
Related Procedures	Student Communication Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	Disposal of UniSQ Records
Definitions	**Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary**
	Council Council means the governing body, the University of Southern Queensland Council. Employee A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University. Student A person who is enrolled in a UniSQ Upskill Course or who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled. University The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland. University Members

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Persons who include: Employees of the University whose conditions of employment are covered by the UniSQ Enterprise Agreement whether full time or fractional, continuing, fixed-term or casual, including senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University; members of the University Council and University Committees; visiting, honorary and adjunct appointees; volunteers who contribute to University activities or who act on behalf of the University; and individuals who are granted access to University facilities or who are engaged in providing services to the University, such as contractors or consultants, where applicable.

Definitions that relate to this procedure only

Email Distribution List

An email distribution list is a collection of contacts. It provides an easy way to send e-mail messages to a group of people. There are several types of distribution lists:

- **Organisational email distribution list**

  ICT Services is responsible for the implementation management and support of organisational email distribution lists. These lists are based on organisational units or groupings of University Members and are maintained using information from the Human Resources system via the Identity Management system. Employees are unable to opt out of organisational lists.

- **Self-subscription email distribution list**

  Email distribution lists that Employees may subscribe to according to individual need or interest. Employees may add or remove themselves from the Employee self-subscribe lists.

- **Other email distribution groups**

  The purpose of the group must pertain to University business. Groups with the same membership should not be duplicated. Groups are not open to external University Member subscribers. It is the Group Owner's responsibility to manage the group's subscribers. A group may not be used under any circumstances to participate in or promote activities that are illegal or violate the University's Code of Conduct Policy or the ICT Information Management and Security Policy.

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	List/Group Owner A Nominated position responsible for authorising the sending of email correspondence to a nominated Email distribution List/Group and responsible for authorising other positions/roles to send to a nominated Email Distribution List/Group.
Keywords	
Record No	14/1237PL

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