**Email Etiquette: Your Advisor’s Top Tips**

We get it- you know how to write an email!

However, it seems there’s a little bit of uncertainty around some of the formalities that should be used when emailing your lecturers, university staff or staff at the Students’ Union (SU). To help, here are a few basic tips for crafting that A+ email:

**Who am I emailing?**

Think carefully about who truly needs to receive your email and its content, as reading and responding to emails takes time (and affects the environment too)!

Staff inboxes are often overflowing, sometimes with messages that could have been handled in a brief conversation. Could your email be addressed with a quick chat after a lecture? Or maybe a visit to the SU to speak directly with the person you intended to email? Conversations often lead to faster responses!

**CC (Carbon Copy) and Reply All:** If there are multiple recipients, ask yourself if everyone needs to see your reply. You might only need to respond to a few people from the original thread—or perhaps none at all. Adjust your settings to avoid 'Reply to all' being your default option.

CC is generally used to keep interested parties in the loop without requiring their direct response. Before CC’ing someone, consider whether they really need the information.

**Starting strong**

Hiya! Hey hey! Yo! S’up!

Casual greetings might feel natural when you're chatting with friends outside the SU or in the Hangar, right? However, they are not the best choice when emailing your lecturer or a member or SU staff. Instead, maybe try a more formal opening, such as 'Dear' or 'Good morning/afternoon/evening.' Once you have a reply, take note of how they address you—if they start with ‘Hi [Your Name],’ it's fine to use a similar greeting in future responses.

**Formality**

**Language:** Politeness is not optional.

If you wish to request something, then it's polite to either use the word ‘please’ and/or form your request as a question rather than a command (e.g. write "Can I have an extension" rather than "I want an extension" or "Give me an extension").

Swear words should never be included in any email to staff at the university or union. It’s not polite, it’s not formal and it’s not cool!

**Tone:** Email isn’t a perfect communication tool, largely because it’s difficult to convey tone as you would in person or even over the phone. Without intonation, body language, and other cues, your message can easily be misinterpreted. While your recipients might eventually figure out your intended tone, it’s more considerate to be mindful of it from the start.

Choose your words carefully to avoid any ambiguity. This means avoiding irony and sarcasm, even if you’re tempted to use a clever remark. It also involves softening phrases that could come across as harsh or indifferent.

WE KNOW IT CAN BE TEMPTING TO USE ALL CAPS TO EMPHASISE A POINT, but doing so often comes across as shouting and is generally seen as unprofessional

**Grammar:** Please use proper grammar. Remember you're at university. If you include slang, SMS language (e.g. btw or tmrw) or acronyms, chances are that most people reading your email won’t understand them—including us! We’re not expecting perfect Queen’s English, but some basic sentence structure would be greatly appreciated.

**Emoji’s/Gifs/ Dog Pictures:** We all enjoy a good gif, but it has its moments. Sharing one on Twitter or Insta? Absolutely, show off your gif skills! Requesting a meeting with your lecturer or SU staff member to discuss an issue? That's not the ideal time to send a gif of someone banging their head on a desk.

**Be Clear**

Staff are here to help you, but they need more guidance than just ‘I don’t know what to do for my essay’ or ‘I want to buy a buy an event ticket.' To ensure you get the right support, consider these three tips:

**Use your subject line effectively:** Including the module code or title and/or the assignment title when emailing lecturers might seem straightforward, but it helps your lecturer recognise the email as a priority and quickly understand the nature of your query. If you want to buy a ticket for an SU event but are struggling, including the event name and your name/ student number will help the team resolve issues more quickly.

**Provide detailed information, concisely:** Let the person you’re emailing know what you've already attempted, what’s going wrong or where you are struggling. The more specific you are about where you're struggling, the quicker you'll receive the help you need. No-one wants to receive a dissertation length email but usually staff need more than one sentence of information to help you out.

**Requests:** If you need something, be specific about what you are asking for. For example, instead of saying "Can I meet with you?", say "Could I schedule a Teams meeting during your office hours to discuss my paper?"