Email Guidelines

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1. Use of Email Principles

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to provide staff guidance in the appropriate use of Unitec's email system.

1.2 Application and Scope

This guideline applies to all:

- Unitec staff, students and contractors to Unitec approved to use Unitec emails.
- Emails whether sent or received to Unitec user accounts.

1.3 Principle Statements

- These guidelines should be read in conjunction with Unitec's Electronic Devices and Systems Policy and any other Information Technology policies as may be approved from time to time.
- Emails identified as Unitec records will be managed in line with all known regulations, Standards and requirements, which include but are not limited to, the Public Records Act 2005, Privacy Act 1993.

1.4 Templates

These templates must be used.

Template	Use this to...
N/A	N/A

2. User Awareness & Protection

2.1 Purpose

Emails are a frequent source of computer viruses that can harm Unitec's computing system, especially as mail attachments infected with viruses are one of the most widely used methods for infecting PCs.

The purpose of this section is to ensure Unitec's computer systems and electronic devices remain virus free.

2.2 Guidelines

These general guidelines apply:

- Treat every attachment from an external source with suspicion.
- Do not open an attachment unless you know what the attachment is and you are expecting it.
- Be wary of hyperlinked downloads from sites you are unfamiliar with.
- Even though Unitec email uses a spam and virus filter, you must still take care when opening emails from an unknown source.
- Users of laptop computers should be particularly careful if downloading to the network to avoid the risk of spreading viruses.

3. User Profile Management

3.1 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide guidance on how to manage your user profile within Outlook 365

3.2 Guidelines

- Your email user profile includes the option to include a photograph, allowing recipients to visually identify emails received from you.

- Your Unitec staff ID photograph will be included as a default when your account is initially set up, however you will have the opportunity to replace this image for another suitable image.

- You can replace the photo that appears with your Outlook profile by selecting File > Account Information. Under Account and Social Network Settings a photograph should appear and the option to change that photo appear beneath it. Select Change and navigate to your favoured image.

- If replacing your default staff ID photo, consider the following;

  - A photograph should be a head shot that is recognizably you.

  - Do *not* use cartoons, comic or unrelated images (e.g. image of a kitten). Remember – Outlook is a Unitec business tool and as such should be used in a professional manner.

4. Using your email account

4.1 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide guidance on when to use and when not to use email as an effective method of communication

4.2 Guidelines

These general guidelines apply:

- Use the Unitec email account assigned to you for all Unitec related communication. Avoid the use of personal email accounts to convey Unitec communications as it should be clear to the recipient in what capacity you are engaging with them.
- Use a short informative email signature. Your email signature should include your name, contact details such as brief postal address, telephone and email details. It should also include the URL of the Unitec website. A Unitec template can be found on The Nest, Home > Quick Links > Resources & Info > Logos & Stationery> Email Signatures
- Wherever possible talk instead of type! It is easy to overuse email to communicate.
- Avoid emailing people in the same office/building, unless absolutely necessary. It is often quicker and more valuable to walk and talk to the individuals concerned, or to pick up the phone if they are available. However, be selective in when you choose to drop by and see a person as an email can be used to document a conversation or instruction clearly if the content/context dictates it should.
- Avoid using email for urgent matters.
- Use the phone or face-to-face conversation for anything that requires a response within three hours.
- Avoid regularly flagging messages as urgent as this leads to people feeling they must view each email as it arrives, which is inefficient for them.
- Also see (10.0) – "All Users" email.

# 5.	Managing your email

## 5.1	Purpose

The purpose of this section is to help your manage you workload, with suggestions in relation to checking email and storing them.

## 5.2	Checking emails guidelines

- Manage your emails as you check them (this includes identifying email records).
- Check your email as frequently as is required to carry out your role but try to set specific time aside to deal with email so that you can have blocks of time when you can work without interrupting your productive flow (e.g. you might choose to check your email at set times during the day).
- Consider switching off any desktop pop-ups or sound alerts when new messages arrive, so that you can gain more control over your working day.
- You can categorise emails in Outlook by colour for your personal reference, making them easier to identify and manage. Once you have opened the message and are reading it in its own window, click the Message tab, click Categorize icon, and then choose a colour/category. For unopened email, hover over an email in the message list, right-click and select Categorise and choose a colour/category. (Please note the color categorisation applies only to email in your own mailbox/archive and will not remain categorized once sent to a recipient)
- Staff must use an appropriate strategy for dealing with email if they are away for an extended period (e.g. by setting up an "Out of Office" auto reply, the email to be forwarded to another user, or by arranging another user to have proxy access to your email account).
- Managers should be careful not to encourage unhealthy expectations of staff (e.g. staff should not feel that they must respond to emails immediately, out of hours, when on holiday, etc., unless it is a requirement of their position).
- If you receive an email that contains material which may be considered by others to be obscene, defamatory or offensive, delete it immediately. If it recurs contact the IMS Helpdesk for assistance in either blocking the sender or taking other action to eliminate the problem.

## 5.3	Storing emails guidelines

A cluttered inbox risks items being overlooked, missed or forgotten. It is also stressful to open your inbox at the beginning of the day to hundreds of messages. By keeping a clear inbox you can take charge of your day and your work priorities.

Avoid storing emails in your inbox by:

- Deleting emails that are not needed or are inconsequential once read (e.g. Junk Mail, Drafts).
- Moving them into folders, but be mindful not to let your folders become too large, as these are slow to open and hard to manage.
- Utilising the network S-drive for any non-business emails you wish to retain for any length of time.

6. Using Email Effectively

6.1 Purpose

This section covers sending emails, email etiquette and ensuring your content, tone, spelling and grammar are appropriate. The purpose of this section is to help you use email effectively.

6.2 Address and subject line guidelines

These general guidelines apply:

- Ensure you are emailing the correct address! Avoid guessing email addresses and use the Unitec address book. Unitec employs a large number of people. Some staff have very similar email addresses.
- Put addressees in the "To" box rather than the "Cc" box if you expect the recipient to action something in the email.
- Where an email's content is confidential be sure to limit the recipients to only those who require access to the information i.e. review your recipients list especially before forwarding an email.
- Save time by making use of the existing 'group' distribution lists in the Unitec address book e.g. Heads of Department, rather than entering each person's name in individually, or managing and maintaining your own lists.
- When an email needs to be sent to a large number of people who may be strangers to one another, consider entering your own email address in the 'To' field and using the "Bcc" field to enter the email addresses of the recipients. This will protect the privacy of the recipients.
- Use informative subject lines, which will help:
    - Your reader decide on the email's priority for them.
    - You and your reader to find the messages at a later date.

6.3 Email etiquette guidelines

These guidelines apply:

- Avoid writing your emails all in capitals – it is considered SHOUTING. If you wish to draw attention to certain aspects of your email, use bold, italic or underline.
- Avoid using special effects as the receiver's system may be set up differently and the effects might not be displayed as you intended.
- Do not fire off a response 'in the heat of the moment'. Take the time to think what you need the intended reader to do and frame your response so you get the action or response you require.
- Only send emails of content you would be happy for a third party to read. 'When in doubt, leave it out.'

- If you wouldn't be comfortable with a third party reading an email, re- phrase the email, or use another means of communication. Email is not secure, as it is more like an electronic postcard than a sealed letter. It can be read en route to its intended recipient

- Do not send unsolicited and non-essential messages which may irritate recipients and/or unnecessarily consume network bandwidth, disk space and staff time.

- Watch your tone and avoid sarcastic, witty and tongue-in-cheek remarks if there is any chance that they may be misunderstood. Note that humour is sometimes difficult to convey in writing.

- Content, tone, spelling and grammar guidelines

- Write your email in a style that reflects its purpose. (e.g. internal emails to colleagues may be informal but professional, whereas emails with serious content of long term value or to external stakeholders should have a more formal writing style).

- Stick to one topic per email. Several short messages are usually preferable to one long message covering many separate subjects.

- Make any points of action, you require from the reader, very clear in the first few lines of the e-mail and state what is expected, and if applicable a due date.

- Check your spelling, grammar and punctuation. Poor spelling, grammar and punctuation may give a bad impression of Unitec and can sometimes distort the meaning of your message.

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7. Replying to emails

7.1 Purpose

It is important to ensure a reply goes to the right person, and that you do not copy in more people than necessary. The purpose of this section is to ensure you reply within an acceptable timeframe, and that emails are limited to the necessary people.

7.2 Guidelines

These general guidelines apply:

- Take care when replying to email lists. When you receive a message from an email list, be very careful to direct your reply to the appropriate person on the list. A common problem arises when a person should reply to an individual, but instead sends a reply to the entire list.
- Reply as soon as possible – even if it is just to say you have received their email and will act on it as soon as possible.
- You may wish to include a delivery or read receipt with any email you send. This will confirm delivery of the email to the specified account and/or whether the email has been opened. This can be a useful function, as a record can be maintained of sending an email which may be time critical.
    - To apply tracking to an email you are sending, navigate to the Options tab and you will have the option of selecting either a 'Request a Delivery Report' and/or 'Request a Read Report'.

8.   Forwarding emails

8.1   Purpose

It is easy to forward emails, but there are problems with doing this. For example, emails can become very long and sometimes sensitive information is forwarded.

The purpose of this section is to alert staff to the problems associated with forwarding emails.

8.2   Business rules

You must not:

- Forward chain letter, virus hoax messages or any inappropriate material.
- Breach confidentiality or privacy laws or Unitec's Privacy Policy

8.3   Guidelines

These general guidelines apply:

- When forwarding messages consider including a summary at the beginning. This will allow the recipient to know what you expect them to do with the email including determining the actions they need to complete.
- Never forward email chain letters or virus hoax emails.
  If you receive a message warning you of a virus that will damage your PC, it is almost certainly a hoax. Sometimes virus hoaxes actually contain viruses themselves!
  Email chain letters usually promise untold riches or ask for your support for a charitable cause. If such a message seems to be too good to be true, it probably is!
- Delete virus hoaxes and chain letter emails immediately.
- Users have a duty of care relating to emails sent to them and should respect the confidentiality of other people's communications. When forwarding emails or copying to others, do so in accordance with Unitec's Privacy Policy. The originator may have considered the email private or sensitive in some way and not want it to be more widely distributed.
- Never alter then forward any email in a way not intended by the originator of the email.

9. Email attachments

9.1 Purpose

Email attachments increase file size and can slow down an email service.

The purpose of this section is to provide some alternatives to sending attachments where appropriate.

9.2 Guidelines

These general guidelines apply:

- The maximum attachment size on Outlook365 is 25mb per message. The attachment size is displayed as part of the attachment's name. Alternatively, you may confirm the size of a file before attaching in an email by using Windows Explorer, locating the file, right clicking > Properties.
- Be selective in the sending of attachments. Is there a more efficient way of sharing the information
- Where possible, include the text of the attachment in the body of the email or save the file onto a shared drive or web space (especially when the attachment size is large) and then send your recipient the web address.
- Consider the file format of the attachment and check in advance whether the recipient can handle your attachment. Remember, not all computer users have the same software.
- Be mindful when copy and pasting print screen images into the body of the email, this may also significantly increase the size and performance of the email.

10. Emailing all staff

10.1 Purpose

It is important that Unitec has the ability to email every user account to alert staff and others to such events as a system shut down. The purpose of this section is to ensure the ability to email all users is only used where appropriate.

10.2 Business Rules

- The ability to send "All Staff" email is restricted to:
    - The Chief Executive
    - Members of the Senior Leadership Team
    - Directors
    - Heads of Departments
    - Any other person or other organisation authorised by the Chief Executive or the Executive Director, Organisational Development, and
    - Staff of Information Management Services if necessary in the course of their duties.

10.3 Guidelines

These general guidelines apply:

"All staff" emails are intended to be used only where:

- All staff need to be alerted to a particular issue e.g. safety and security
- All staff need to be alerted to an unplanned or unscheduled disruption to a key service, e.g. electricity, computing systems, transport, water, gas
- All staff need to be informed of a specific decision, event, change in policy/procedure/process; or
- The Chief Executive wishes to communicate with all staff on any matter.
- Managers of staff who do not have access to the Unitec email system must ensure that systems are in place to bring the content of "All Staff" emails to the attention of those staff.
- Departments/Faculties should apply the "All Staff" content outlined above to "All Department / All Faculty" emails.
- Personal contact/distribution groups can be created when you find you send emails to a specified group on a regular basis e.g. project teams, customer service teams. Groups can be created by selecting People >New Contact Group, then naming the group and populating the recipients.

11. Emailing all students

11.1 Purpose

It is important that Unitec has the ability to email every user account to alert students and others to such events as a system shut down. The purpose of this section is to ensure the ability email all users is only used where appropriate.

11.2 Business Rules

The ability to send "All student" email is restricted to:

- The Chief Executive
- Members of the Leadership Team
- The Corporate Communications Manager
- Staff of Information Management Services and Facilities Management if necessary in the course of their duties, and as approved by The Chief Executive, Members of the Leadership Team, the FM Director, the IMS Operations General Manager or the Corporate Communications Manager.

11.3 Guidelines

These general guidelines apply:

- Each individual working for Unitec has the authority to contact students for whom they have a direct responsibility;
    - Lecturers may email the students they teach,
    - Head of Departments may email all students in their Department
    - Faculty Deans may email all students in their Faculty.
- Staff are not authorised to contact students outside of their direct responsibility, except in the circumstances and with the authority of the people outlined above:
- "All student" emails are intended to be used only where:
    - All students need to be alerted to a particular issue e.g. safety and security
    - All students need to be alerted to an unplanned or unscheduled disruption to a key service, e.g. electricity, computing systems, transport, water, gas
    - All students need to be informed of a specific decision, event, change in policy/procedure/process
    - The Chief Executive wishes to communicate with all students on any matter: or,
    - Where communication is part of the Unitec Student Communication Strategy.

12.   Emails, record-keeping and legal obligations

12.1   Introduction

Email is often regarded as personal and private. It is not. Unitec provides email as a business tool to enable its employees to perform their duties.

While Unitec allows for some reasonable and occasional personal use of email, users must be aware that ownership of all email content and data remains with Unitec.

An email record is an email which provides the authoritative point of reference for business activity and decisions that Unitec may rely on when required. As such, email records will be managed in such a manner to ensure they meet all known legislative obligations and regulations (e.g. Public Records Act 2005, Privacy Act 1993).

Emails are covered by the Official Information Act 1982 and the Public Records Act 2005, and as such need to be managed in accordance with legislation.

12.2   Purpose

The purpose of this section is to ensure staff are aware of Unitec's and their own responsibilities relevant to legislative and business requirements.

12.3   Business Rules

Emails which serve as a record of Unitec's business activity *must* be managed in line with all approved retention and disposal rules.

12.4   Guidelines

These general guidelines apply:

- Users should be aware that emails might need to be disclosed in response to an Official Information request or pursuant to an order for discovery in legal proceedings.
- As a public organization, Unitec has an obligation under the Public Records Act (2005) to retain business records for a minimum period of time. The retention period is dependent on the content of the email and the business function or activity to which the content relates. These retention periods are set out within General Disposal Authorities (GDAs) approved by New Zealand's Chief Archivist whose authority to do so is delegated within the Public Records Act 2005. Disposal authorities cover all public entities, specific public sectors or individual public entities.
- Unauthorised destruction of business records may breach the Public Records Act (2005). Business records should only be destroyed in accordance with Unitec's authorised

GDA(s), as may be established from time to time. If in doubt contact the IMS Records Management Advisor for further advice

- Keep and file any emails that are records of business activities e.g. emails containing approval for any action you may take, evidence of actions you have taken (or not taken) or agreements you have made.

- Unitec's email system is not a recognised recordkeeping system.

- Emails that need to be saved should be saved to the appropriate networked electronic network drive or system (i.e. H-drive) alongside all other relevant documentation to provide a full record of the business activity.

- Make use of the email archiving feature to prevent your mailbox size from reaching its limit but be selective in what you retain.

- Messages no longer needed to be retained as a business record (as per Unitec's approved retention and disposal schedules) should be deleted by users to preserve server storage space, in accordance with Unitec's protocols.

- Ephemeral emails (emails that are not business records) should be deleted as soon as they are no longer of use or moved to a user's personal network drive (S-drive) e.g. meeting arrangements, social contacts, early drafts of documents, list serve feeds etc.

12.5   Archiving

- It is recommended that users move any business related email for long term retention into an appropriate network share (H-drive/S-drive). Specific non-business records, could be moved into your Outlook Archive. Please note the Outlook Archive will be subject to retention policies in line with legislative and regulatory requirements which may change from time to time with appropriate notice.

- Email in an inbox that is 2 years or older will by default move to your archive. This includes all email contained within sub-folders of the Inbox which do not already have an explicit retention policy applied.

12.6   Retention and Deletion

- Email should be managed at the point it is received. If an email is personal and not business related then the email should be tagged as personal upon receipt or moved to an appropriate repository for longer term retention e.g. S-Drive

- Outlook messages saved within shared network folders retain native functionality i.e. you can reply, forward from the network drive once you open the email.

- Unitec will apply specific retention policies to certain sub-folders in the mailbox to ensure the most efficient management of storage space. Users may override any default retention policy with their own, but this is not encouraged.

- Litigation hold – On occasion, a litigation hold preventing the deletion of email and associated metadata of a specified user's Outlook account may be implemented. Authority to apply or remove a litigation hold rests with the Unitec Legal & Contracts Advisor who will instruct IMS accordingly.

- The following mailbox retention settings have been applied as a default as part of the initial rollout of Outlook;

Email type	Retention Policy Action	Retention Policy Period (to be agreed)
User mailbox (and all non-tagged sub folders)	Move to Archive	730 days

- Specific email retention and disposal polices may be applied in future, (with appropriate user notice) to assist IMS manage Unitec email data.

13.   Appendices

13.1   Appendix 1: Definitions

Term	Definition

14. Reference Documents

14.1 Compliance with government policies and guidelines

This guideline takes into account the following government policies and guidelines:

- Archives NZ General Disposal Authority 6: Common Corporate Services Records
- Archives NZ General Disposal Authority 7: Facilitative, Transitory and Short-term Records
- ITPNZ General Disposal Authority (DA424).

14.2 Compliance with Unitec policies

Email processes and activities will be conducted in accordance with Unitec's corporate policies as well as with standards of behavior specified and/or implied by the following:

- Electronic Devices and Systems Policy
- Mobile Devices Policy
- Unitec Code of Conduct.

15.   Document Management and Control Details

15.1   Document Details

Version:	1.3	Issue Date this Version:	24/10/2014
This Version Approved by:	General Manager. Governance & External Relations & General Manager, Information Management Services	Date of Approval:	24/10/2014
Document Owner:	General Manager. Governance & External Relations	Document Sponsor:	Executive Director, Organisational Development
Date of Next Review:	October 2016		
Date first version issued:	06/05/2009	Original Approval Body:	Leadership Team

15.2   Amendment History

Version	Issue Date	Reason for Revision	Approved by
1	06/05/2009	Brand new document first edition.	Leadership Team
1.1	01/07/2010	Minor change – addition of Section 2.5.2 (Emailing "all students") and converted to new guideline template	Director, IT
1.2	17/08/2012	Minor change: reference to Information Technology Services changed to Information Management Services to reflect name change resulting from recent review of this area	Executive Director, Organisational Development
1.3	24/10/2014	Restructure, reformat and minor update of information	General Manager, Information Management Services & General Manager. Governance & External Relations