

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE BIRMINGHAM

E-MAIL POLICY

1. Scope

This policy covers:

- All e-mail systems and services provided by the University
- All users, holders, and uses of University e-mail services
- All University e-mail records held on University MIS/IT systems

2. University e-mail

The University actively encourages the use of e-mail by both staff and students. The University does not routinely monitor or inspect this without good reason. The University does however reserve the right to inspect, monitor, or disclose e-mail when it feels that a user has breached the 'UCB Internet Access Policy' that is signed prior to receiving e-mail privileges. Anyone breaching these guidelines may lose access rights and will be subject to the University's Disciplinary Procedure.

3. General Provisions

The purpose of the University e-mail service is to encourage its use by staff and students in the furtherance of their teaching, learning and in the promotion of the University.

E-mail, and all its component parts, is considered the property of the University. This includes the e-mail address and account associated with the University containing 'bcftcs.ac.uk' or 'ucb.ac.uk'. E-mail addresses and accounts can only be issued by the IT Support Unit.

E-mail users are expected to use e-mail responsibly, that is complying with these guidelines and policies. E-mail services are a privilege that can be wholly or partly withdrawn by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Corporate Services) without prior notice, should the user be in breach of University guidelines.

The University, prior to disclosure of the e-mail records, will seek e-mail user consent. Disclosure will only be required in the event of a serious breach of University guidelines. Breaches include, but are not restricted to, the unauthorised entry, use, transfer, and tampering with e-mail accounts, files or records.

The University receives its Internet/e-mail services via JANET (The UK's Academic & Research Network), and has to adhere to JANET's Acceptable Use Policy (<https://community.ja.net/library/acceptable-use-policy>). Please take time to read this document and be fully aware of its contents and implications.

4. E-Mail User Guidance

Users need to be aware that e-mail *is not* as secure or as private as may be perceived. E-mail, due to its very nature, is easily distributed due to the forwarding facilities within the e-mail software. A message sent to one person can quite easily be forwarded to an unlimited number of people or could even be posted onto an electronic bulletin board or 'List Server', even though it was only intended to be seen by the original recipient. Even when a user deletes their copy of the e-mail, it may still exist on a backup tape, on the recipient's system or elsewhere on the Internet. The University has no means of protecting against such eventualities.

E-mail created or stored on University systems may be subject to disclosure during legal proceedings. The University will not routinely disclose e-mail without good reason. Users are therefore cautioned against using e-mail to make any statements which they may not wish to be disclosed in the case of a dispute at a later date.

The University expects users to use the same personal and professional courtesies and considerations in e-mail as they would in any form of communication. The University cannot 'authenticate' the origin of all e-mail unless it is sent using an authorised e-mail service. The University requires users not to make any attempt in disguising the origin of their e-mail. Any e-mail that has been forwarded can be modified to hide its source; this again is against University policy.

Please follow these basic procedures for using e-mail:

- Always fill in the subject line, so the recipient knows what to expect from the e-mail
- Messages should be concise and to the point
- Always double check your e-mail before sending it
- If a spell checker is available, use it
- E-mail can be an efficient and fast method to ensure everyone gets precise information

Do Not

- Use the University e-mail for mass, junk or chain e-mailing
- Read any unsolicited e-mail. Delete it without reading it
- Attach files to e-mail unless you have to, you can always cut and paste plain text into an e-mail
- Leave your e-mail address on a web site, you could end up receiving junk e-mail
- Misrepresent individuals or the University within an e-mail