

Student Communication Policy

Approving authority	Academic Committee
Approval date	18 September 2014 (4/2014 meeting)
Advisor	Academic Registrar, Academic Administration academic-registrar@griffith.edu.au (07) 373 57334
Next scheduled review	2018
Document URL	http://policies.griffith.edu.au/pdf/Student Communication Policy.pdf
TRIM document	2016/0000165
Description	These guidelines outline principles and practices for reliable, timely, effective and efficient communication between the University, its future and current students and its graduates.

Related documents

[Griffith University Code of Conduct](#)
[Griffith University Privacy Plan](#)
[Griffith University Social Media Guidelines](#)
[Student Charter](#)
[SMS for Current Students Guidelines](#)
[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
[Records Management Policy](#)
[Emergency Management Plan](#)
[Crisis Management Plan](#)
[International Student Critical Incident Management and Policy](#)
[Use of University Information Technology Resources Code of Practice](#)
[Student Misconduct](#)
[Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#)
[Academic Misconduct Policy - Higher Degree Research Candidates](#)
[Spam Act 2003](#)
[Corporate Identity Manual and Style Guide](#)
[Students with Disabilities Policy](#)
[Inclusive Practices for People with Disabilities Policy](#)

[\[Principles\]](#) [\[Scope\]](#) [\[Communication Principles and Content\]](#) [\[Audiences and Approving Authorities\]](#)
[\[Communication Channels\]](#) [\[Records Management\]](#)

1. PRINCIPLES

The University is committed to ensuring that communication between the University and students is reliable, timely, efficient and effective. Communication between the University and students should enhance the student experience and be two way. Communications may be oral or written and utilise telephone, digital and hardcopy channels or be face-to-face depending on the nature, timeliness, location, speed of delivery and audience for the communication.

2. SCOPE

These guidelines apply to all forms of administrative communication between the University and its future and current students and graduates.

These guidelines do not apply to materials designed and used for teaching purposes.

3. COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES AND CONTENT

All communications should include the University's Corporate Identity and be:

- Audience specific and appropriately segmented;
- Personalised, as the communication channel allows;
- Timely, based on content immediacy and point in the student lifecycle;
- Clear, concise, and limited in length, if written;
- Aware of other communications students may receive; and
- Sent via the most appropriate communication channel acknowledging the principles above.

Graphics or multimedia may be used to enhance written communications where appropriate, and with appropriate copyright.

It is the responsibility of the relevant owner author of the written communication to ensure that:

- The language used is simple, student friendly, and jargon free;
- The information included is accurate, professional and respectful;
- Accessibility requirements are met;
- The message provides a clear 'call to action', so that the student is aware of their responsibilities or obligations (where appropriate) and the appropriate person(s) to respond to;
- Appropriate feedback and measures are in place to effectively act on the feedback;
- The communication complies with University policies and procedures, including but not limited to, the Griffith University Privacy Plan, Student Charter, Equal Opportunity Policy, University's Use of Information Technology Resources Code of Practice, the Griffith University Code of Conduct, the Corporate Style Guide and the Griffith University Social Media Strategy; and
- The communication complies with Commonwealth or State law or a policy or regulation, including privacy and spam legislation and third party provider codes of conduct such as with Queensland Tertiary Admission Centre (QTAC), University Admission Centre (UAC) and the Graduate Australian Medical School Admissions Test (GAMSAT).

Examples of acceptable purposes for these communications may include, but not be limited to:

- Academic (non-teaching) – including organisational and/or administrative information about courses, programs, professional events, Academic Group events/activities and relevant milestones to current students;
- Administrative (academic and general)– including information about offers, enrolment, fees, examinations and timetabling, academic standing, academic integrity, graduation, and general health and safety. These may require acknowledgement of receipt or recipient action;
- Emergency, critical incidents and security – including matters covered in the Crisis Management Plan, Emergency Management Plan and International Student Critical Incident Management Policy and Procedure, Information Technology Security;
- Service and support – including information about service changes and outages, development opportunities, research participation, elections, committees, clubs and services and updates concerning the University's facilities;
- Social and general information – including information about events and activities on and off campus.

- Marketing and promotion – including materials used for recruitment activities specifically targeted at future students and alumni
- Surveys and feedback – including external and internal surveys, and research studies participation.

4. AUDIENCES AND APPROVING AUTHORITIES FOR BROADCAST COMMUNICATIONS

Approval delegations for broadcast communications to identified audiences are outlined below. Broadcast communication channels include e-mail; SMS; Student Portal announcements; Griffith website; Learning Management System; social media.

Broadcast communication is information passed from one University staff member, business unit or student to a large group of students. *Broadcast communication* is distinguished from communication via other means by scale, and includes communications to the entire student body, or large cohorts of the student body.

Audience	Relevant Senior Approving Officer	Delegated Approving Officer	Nature of Communication
Future students – defined as any prospective student up to the point of offer.	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Engagement)	Director, Marketing and Communications	Social and general information Marketing and promotion Surveys and feedback
Current Students – defined as any student from point of offer until graduation, voluntary discontinuation, cancellation or exclusion. Includes students deferred or on approved Leave of Absence (LOA).	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor (for HDR students)	Academic Registrar Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School (for HDR students)	Administrative (academic and general) Service and support Social and general information Marketing and promotion Surveys and feedback
	Vice President Corporate Services	Director Campus Life	Emergency, critical incidents and security Service and Support Social and General
	Vice President (Global)	Director , Griffith International	Emergency, critical incidents and security - specifically International Student Critical Incidents

	Pro-Vice Chancellor (Information Services)	Chief Technology Officer	Service and support Emergency, critical incidents and security – specifically Information Technology Security
Graduated or former students – defined as students graduated, voluntarily discontinued, cancelled or excluded.	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Engagement)	Director, Development and Alumni	Social and general information Marketing and promotion Surveys and feedback

4.1 Personalisation and segmentation

Effective communications are personalised, clear and concise and targeted to defined audiences. The use of generic broadcast communication should be limited and where possible confined to emergency and critical incident communications, surveys and/or feedback.

Audience segmentation is a process of dividing people into subgroups based upon defined criterion and characteristics, such as:

- Demographic information – for example location, gender, age;
- Student lifecycle stage – for example enrolment; graduation;
- Career level and program – for example undergraduate/postgraduate or Higher Degree Research;
- Student profile and personas – for example late or early engagers as defined in the Retention Strategy; and
- Self-identified interest areas – for example sporting club members.

4.2 Spam and identified interests

The Spam Act 2003 outlines requirements and responsibilities for institutions regarding sending of unsolicited commercial electronic messages. For the University this particularly pertains to marketing and promotional communications with future students. While communications with current, graduated and former students are exempted from regulation under the Act, the University will provide students with the opportunity to:

- Self-identify interest areas;
- Opt in or out of communications that are **not** Academic or Administrative in nature; and
- Unsubscribe from electronic communications relating to Service and support, Social and general information, and Marketing and promotion.

5. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

The University communicates with students through a range of channels, including but not limited to:

- Email;
- SMS (see **SMS for current students Guidelines**);
- Student Portal announcements;

- The University Website;
- Events Management Systems;
- Customer Relationship Management System;
- Learning Management System;
- Social media;
- Online chat;
- Telephone;
- Print materials; and
- Face to face.

Selection of communication channels should include consideration of:

- Fitness for purpose, timeliness and content;
- The highest level of personalisation, segmentation and measures of effectiveness;
- Audience feedback and response; and
- Efficiency, cost effectiveness and minimisation of duplication.

Staff should refer to **Appendix 1: General Communication Principles**

Where a Commonwealth or State law or a policy or regulation of the University prescribes the manner in which certain correspondence must be sent, for example by letter, such a prescription is to take precedence over the provisions of this policy.

Preferred or prescribed communication channels:

Communication type	Communication Channel
Academic (non-teaching)	Primarily the Learning Management System and/or email to the student email account. Supported by other channels as appropriate.
Administrative (academic and general)	Primarily via the Student Information System or CRM, to the student's University email account, and supported where appropriate by other channels. Hardcopy written communication will be prescribed in certain circumstances, for example student misconduct and academic standing. These processes may be supported where appropriate by other channels.
Emergency and critical incident	Appropriate mix of channels
Service and support	Appropriate mix of channels.
Social and general information	Appropriate mix of channels.
Marketing and promotion	Appropriate mix of channels.
Surveys and feedback	Appropriate mix of channels

Students' responsibilities regarding communication with the University are outlined in the Student Charter.

5.1 Communication channel approving authorities

The following table indicates the person or business unit authorised to approve the use of various communication channels set out in these guidelines:

Communication Item	Authorised by
Printed mail	Business unit responsible for preparing the communication
Print-based publications	Business unit responsible for preparing the publication
Email – one to one	Business unit responsible for authoring the communication
Email – by segmented list	Business owner of the list.
Email – broadcast	See 3. Audiences and approving authorities
SMS – Future Students and Alumni	See 3. Audiences and approving authorities
SMS – Current Students – Emergency and critical incidents	Vice President (Corporate Services)
SMS – Current Students - Notices of Changes and Cancellations	Academic Registrar or Director, Student Administration
SMS – Current Students - Reminders	Academic Registrar or Director, Student Administration
SMS – Current Students - Interventions	Relevant Group Dean (Learning and Teaching)
SMS – Current Students - Service issues	Vice President (Corporate Services) and Pro Vice Chancellor (Information Services)
Student Portal announcements	Academic Registrar
Social Media	Business unit responsible for preparing the newsletter
University website	Site owner/Content Coordinator for the specific part of the web site

6. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Griffith University is obliged to comply with record management legislation. All staff are personally accountable for the correct management of documents and records (including electronic records) generated in the course of their duties or under their direct control. Staff and business units involved in communicating with students are responsible for complying with the University's Records Management policy.