UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

Electronic Communications Procedure

UNDER REVIEW

Related Policy	Electronic Communications Policy
Responsible Officer	Chief Information Officer
Approved by	Chief Information Officer
Approved and commenced	December, 2014
Review by	December, 2017
Responsible Organisational Unit	Information Technology Services

CONTENTS

1   Objective

This procedure describes appropriate and best practice use of the University of Tasmania's Electronic Messaging Systems.

2   Scope

This procedure applies to the use of any form of Electronic Messaging operated or controlled by University and specifically: email, instant messaging (ie: via Microsoft Lync or similar), blog, wiki or social media posts and is applicable to all staff and students of the University of Tasmania.

3   Procedure

Electronic messages are often perceived as being closer to informal speech rather than formal writing, and can be sent quickly and often with little thought regarding their contents. The acceptability of a communication can sometimes be incongruous between sender and recipient, what one person may find an acceptable and appropriate communication another individual may consider offensive.

The following protocols should be applied when sending electronic messages:

- "University of Tasmania All" e-mails should not be sent other than in accordance with the Bulk Email Guidelines available via: http://www.utas.edu.au/service-desk/email/bulk-email-guidelines.

- never say anything in an e-mail, instant message, blog, wiki or social media post that you would not say to someone in person. Correspondence via these methods should not be used as an alternative to replace communicating with another member of staff in person.

- the inappropriate use of upper case in an e-mail, instant message, blog, wiki or social media post can be interpreted as undue emphasis and should be avoided.

- messages should be concise and to the point. Staff and students should not send heated messages (often referred to as "flames") impulsively or in anger.

- proof read electronic communications prior to sending them to avoid misunderstanding.

- if the content of a message upsets you, do not reply immediately - consider the most appropriate action. A response via the same communications channel may worsen the situation.

- check distribution lists prior to sending an e-mail, and target recipients according to how important the message is to them.

- the use of the carbon copy (cc) or blind carbon copy (bcc) should be sparing and appropriate. For example, it is best not to utilise this function to embarrass or harass other employees or students.

3.1 Defamation

Staff and students must not write, send, publish, copy, distribute or forward derogatory or defamatory remarks about any person or organisation (including the University) either on the Internet or by e-mail or any other information transfer system.

If a member of staff discovers potentially defamatory material, then they should report it to their line manager immediately.

If a student discovers potential defamatory material they should report it to their Programme Organiser or Head of Division.

Staff and students must not send or forward discriminatory messages, even if it is intended as a joke, as this could be regarded as harassment. Staff and students should be aware that anonymity on the internet is rare and most activity can be tracked to its source.

4 Definitions and Acronyms

Term/Acronym	Definition
Electronic Message	Any message of communication sent or originating from an Electronic Messaging System.
Electronic Messaging Systems	Any system managed or provided by the University of Tasmania to send or receive asynchronous or synchronous text messages via the Internet. For example the Microsoft Exchange email system, Confluence Wiki, Web pages, Microsoft Lync instant messaging.
Organisational Unit	College, Faculty, School, Centre, University Institute, other University Entity, Division, Section or University Business Enterprise.
Spam	SPAM is an unsolicited or unrequested email message that advertises, sells or promotes a good or service. Education is a good or service.

5 Supporting Documentation

- Electronic Communications Policy

6 Versioning

Current Version	Electronic Communications Procedure; approved December, 2014, amended in December 2016 to incorporate Colleges.