

Brunel University Global Emails: Policy and Guidelines

Version 3 | April 2013

Purpose

This Policy outlines a structure and set of guidelines, agreed by the Brunel Senior Management Group, that define the purpose and appropriate usage of the University's global email service. The Policy aims to improve the effectiveness of both the service itself, as well as other internal communications channels.

Rationale

During surveys and consultations, Brunel staff regularly express concern about the use of global emails: firstly, the number of global emails received is considered a nuisance; and secondly, the content is often considered irrelevant and/or not important enough to warrant a global audience. The consensus is that global emails can become a form of 'internal spam' – more of an inconvenience than a useful communications tool – and as a result willingness to read and absorb important messages sent by global email is reduced significantly.

This policy encourages a controlled, considered and strategic use of the global email service, by:

- reducing the level of unnecessary and irrelevant global emails, as well as the number of people who can distribute them;
- improving the effectiveness of the global email service by reserving its use for prestigious, high-importance or high-relevance messages;
- providing clear guidance and support to the individuals who distribute global emails;
- improving the visibility and content of other communication channels within Brunel.

Procedures

The authority to distribute global emails is limited to a few key people. The distributors are restricted to sending out messages only on the subjects on which they have been given clearance and will reject requests for global emails that either:

- fall outside their permissions; or
- do not fit the criteria for a global email (see below).

Where possible, distributors are requested to co-ordinate the sending of planned emails with the Communications team, to avoid multiple messages going out on the same day.

The following staff hold global email permission:

Distributor	Role	Distribution Permissions
Annabel Czajka (In case of absence: Andrea Masters)	PA to the Vice-Chancellor	VC and SMG messages; major university events; legal statutory obligations and consultation relating to equality and diversity; occasional miscellaneous, but important, news announcements; major research announcements that are relevant to a majority of the academic body
Colette Belza (In case of absence: Yasmin Kassam, Iain Liddell)	PA to Director of the Computer Centre / Computer Centre Policy, Development and Quality Manager	Essential computer services and network announcements
Mandy Valentine	Communications Manager, Estates	Essential Estates announcements
Jill Langsman	Customer Services Manager, Operations	Essential Operations announcements
Jacqueline Chesterman (In case of absence: Jenny Morrish)	Programme Manager, Staff Development / Administrator, Staff Development	Staff Development course bulletins
Tina Ramkalawan / Diane Smith	Graduate School Tutor / PA to Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)	Specific communications for research staff relating to training/development and communications required by the UKRC (research staff only)
Teresa Waller	Head of RSDO	Essential/major RSDO news and notices (research staff only)

If other members of staff consider that there is a case where a global email might be considered an appropriate avenue for communication (for example an obituary notice) please contact Annabel Czajka in the first instance. These requests will be passed on to the Director of External Affairs (Andrew Kershaw).

Global Email Criteria

Only a few subjects are acceptable for distribution via global email. These are:

- Key messages from the **Vice-Chancellor** and **Pro-Vice-Chancellors**
- Essential/emergency announcements from the **Computer Centre, Estates** and **Operations**
- Occasional notifications of other **key events and activities**, such as Graduation and One World Week
- **Staff Development** course bulletins
- Essential information for research staff only from the **Graduate School**
- Essential **equality and diversity** communication to meet statutory and consultation requirements

Some content may be considered appropriate to be sent to certain groups within the University, such as just academic staff. For example, major research announcements or multi-disciplinary symposia (ie a research-related announcement that can be clearly demonstrated to have relevance for the entire academic body, and **not** just a possible passing interest), may be viable to be sent as an academic global email, and will not be sent to, for example, administrative staff. These announcements will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Other Available Communication Channels

IntraBrunel

IntraBrunel is the most appropriate channel for general staff communications. The site is divided into News, Notices, and Events listings.

Submitting a News item or Notice

News items and Notices are handled by the Communications team. Please use the submission forms on the IntraBrunel News homepage, or contact communications@brunel.ac.uk.

Submitting an Events item

The Events team handle all events listings. Please use the submission form on the IntraBrunel Events homepage, or contact events@brunel.ac.uk.

Express Magazine

The University magazine, *Express*, is distributed quarterly. It includes both features and general news content and thus may be an appropriate channel for your communications. Please email relevant content to the Communications team at communications@brunel.ac.uk for consideration.

This publication has a long lead-time so please allow plenty of notice.

Mass-mailing to Brunel Alumni

The Alumni Office does not recommend mass-mailing to alumni for marketing or promotional purposes. Should any School or department see the need to communicate with alumni they should first speak to the Alumni Office to try and work this into the existing communications schedule or come to an alternative arrangement.

The practice of sending mass-mailings to alumni without the Alumni Office's permission is strongly discouraged. This approach has been approved by Council.

Ensuring High Quality Global Emails

Where global emails have been deemed appropriate, it is important to ensure the content (the quality and accuracy of the text, layout, etc) has been fully considered. Global emails are a valuable source of information so they should be produced with the same care as a printed publication.

Please adhere to the Brunel House Style wherever possible:
www.brunel.ac.uk/services/publications/house-style.

The following basic guidelines ensure that global emails are of an acceptable quality.

Fonts and Text

We advise you to keep all emails as clean, simple and as uncluttered as possible.

Use the Arial or Calibri fonts wherever possible (Times New Roman is an acceptable alternative). Try not to use more than one font in the same email.

Limit the text size where possible to approx 12px – avoid large headings and paragraphs, an excessive range of sizes, or coloured text.

Avoid excessive use of CAPITALS, *italics*, ***bold italics*** and exclamations.

Attachments

Attachments such as images and documents must not be included – they can freeze the University's email system when sent alongside global emails. If a document needs to be attached, it can be loaded onto the web and a link included within the email.

Background images and colours are not permitted under any circumstances.

Proofreading

Please proofread the email carefully before submitting it for distribution. If factual errors are made (such as incorrect dates), you will not necessarily be granted a second global email to correct the error.

Typographical House Style Guidelines

A few simple guidelines will help you stick to Brunel's House Style (www.brunel.ac.uk/services/publications/house-style). Three of the most common issues are:

- **Dates** Format as **12 January 2009** (not January 12th, for example).
- **Titles** Titles should be hyphenated as follows: Vice-Chancellor; Pro-Vice-Chancellor.
- **Email and Web** Spell 'email' without a hyphen and keep email addresses all in lower case. Use 'website', not 'web-site' or 'web site'.

Content

When putting together your email, think carefully about your audience and consider what information is important to them. This will ensure that the most relevant information is the most visible and is easy to read.

Try to keep emails as short and snappy as possible, but ensure you've included all the necessary information (such as contact details, web addresses, dates, times and locations).

Keep paragraphs short (approx four lines, rather than one very long one). This makes the text much easier to read.

Notes for Global Email Distributors

Ensure it is clear to whom replies should be addressed by putting the correct name/email address at the top of the email. (ie **Message sent on behalf of Joe Bloggs**).

If you receive a legitimate global email but it is written or laid out poorly, please return to the sender, so that they are aware that it is their role to improve the quality and legibility.

If emails are sent to individuals not within the main global email groups, please make sure they are BCCd.