



MidKent College

Email Etiquette

General:

1. **Emails are not an excuse to avoid personal contact.** If you're sending a potentially confusing email or something that requires an urgent response, either call the person or speak with them face-to-face.
2. **Reply to all emails sent to you.** College expectation is that all staff will respond to emails within two business days, however please be mindful that this may be difficult for colleagues who work part-time. If you require an urgent response before these two days, phone the person directly or organise a face-to-face meeting.
3. **Use Cc sparingly.** Overuse clutters mailboxes. Only include people who are directly involved in the content of the email. Don't expect a reply from someone you have Cc'd – if you require a response from them, send them the message directly rather than copying them in.
4. **Nothing is confidential – so write accordingly.** Email is considered College property. Assume the email is unsecured and will be read by someone other than your intended recipient.
5. **Check over your email twice before sending it out.** Make sure it's clear with correct spelling, punctuation and grammar. You should also check to see if you have forgotten anything, have completed the subject line, are sending to the correct recipients, have included the attachments you needed to add, or have written anything that may be misinterpreted.
6. **Be careful with your tone.** Just as jokes get lost in translation, tone is easy to misconstrue without the context you'd get from vocal cues and facial expressions. It's easy to appear more abrupt than you might have intended.
7. **Let people know if you're not available.** If you're on leave, out at an event, or are involved in an activity that means you have limited access to your emails, set an out-of-office message to help colleagues understand why you may not reply on time.

Subject line, Cc and Bcc

1. **Include a clear and direct subject line.** Great examples include “Proposal ideas” or “Presentation date changed.” This is what the recipient will see in their inbox and will decide if it’s worth opening based on this line, so make it count.
2. **Don’t use Bcc (blind copy) to keep others from seeing who you copied.** It shows that you have nothing to hide when you directly Cc (courtesy copy) anyone receiving a copy. However, do use Bcc when sending to a large distribution list so recipient’s messages won’t be cluttered with a long list of names. Use both Cc and Bcc sparingly.

Greeting and Body

1. **When writing a College email, greetings such as “Dear...”, “Hi...”, “Good Morning...”, “Hello...”, etc. are appropriate.** Depending on how familiar you, the writer, are with the receiver, you may use their first name, their last name (with Mr., Ms. Mrs.) or a combination of the two.
2. **Keep messages brief and to the point, concentrating on one subject per message if possible.** No one likes to wade through clunky, wordy emails that took two paragraphs to ask one question.
3. **Do not be sloppy with grammar.** This is a big one. Don’t write all in caps, as IT LOOKS LIKE YOU’RE YELLING. Conversely, don’t write in all lower case, because that looks lazy. Use exclamation points sparingly and only to convey excitement. Overuse may indicate immaturity and over-emoting. Follow traditional grammar, spelling, and punctuation rules. You can read the College’s written style guide [here](#).
4. **Don’t use elaborate fonts and colours.** Keep the formatting simple and readable, especially as many colleagues now check email on mobile devices.

Closing

1. **When ending a College email, treat it as you would a College letter.** Use phrases such as “Sincerely”, “Yours sincerely”, “Thank you”, “Best wishes”, “Respectfully yours”, etc.
2. **In order to speed up the email writing process, use an email signature that contains your contact information.** Doing this will prevent you from having to write out all of your contact information every time you compose an email. Not only does this look professional, it gives the recipient more options to contact you as well as saves you time in writing.