

# STUDENT EMAIL POLICY

September 2021

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# Summary

## What is this policy about?

The purpose of this Policy is to set out the conditions under which the University's email system –Google Mail – may be used.

## Who is this policy for?

It applies to all students who use a University Google Workspace for Education account (@myport.ac.uk email addresses), as well as former students (alumni) who continue to use their accounts.

The use of staff accounts (@port.ac.uk email addresses) by staff and other authorised account holders, including PhD students, is covered by the Staff Email Policy which can be found in the [policy section](#) of our website.

## How does the University check this policy is followed?

IS carry out proactive monitoring to scan for phishing emails and as part of Data Loss Prevention to prevent sensitive information being inappropriately sent outside of the organisation. Reactive monitoring may be carried out in accordance with section 2.4 of this Policy.

Students will be reminded of the need to manage their emails effectively via an annual All Students email.

## Who can you contact if you have any queries about this policy?

Any questions about this policy should be directed to the [University Records Manager](#).

# Policy

## 1. Introduction

The University provides all students with an email account in order to have one dedicated channel of communication with them. The purpose of this Policy is to set out the conditions under which the University's email system – Google Mail – may be used. It applies to all students who use a University Google Workspace for Education account, as well as alumni who may continue to use their accounts for up to 2 years from graduation.

### 1.1. Responsibilities

All users of the University's email system are responsible for the security of their mailboxes and must not disclose their passwords to others. They are also responsible for all activities that occur within their accounts. If a user becomes aware that any unauthorised access has taken place, he/she should notify the [IS Service Desk](#) immediately.

Any emails sent by the University to students will be delivered to their Google Mail addresses and students must ensure that they check their accounts regularly. Any member of staff, who is enrolled as a student, must not use their student email account to conduct University business. Their staff email account should be used for this purpose, as required by the Staff Email Policy.

Responsibility for reviewing and updating this Policy lies with the University Records Manager, authorised by the Executive Director of Corporate Governance. All account holders are expected to comply with the Policy, and staff with responsibilities for students should be aware of its requirements.

### 1.2. Ownership

The University provides all students with Google Workspace for Education accounts for the duration of their studies. They are also permitted to continue to use the account for up to 2 years after they have left the institution. After this time the email address will be retired from use.

Students should be aware that every email address and associated account – whether used by a current or former student – is the property of the University. It is therefore important that students and alumni remove all their personal emails and any items of a personal nature that they wish to retain from their Google account in advance of it being closed. It is also highly inadvisable to link any personal devices or personal logins to their @myport.ac.uk account in a way which would prohibit their use of that personal device or login when their account is closed.

### 1.3. Personal data

Google Mail and its related applications (e.g. Google Drive, Google Calendar, Google Chat) are hosted in the cloud. Google handles all personal data in line with its [Privacy Policy](#). The University is signed up to the JANET contract with Google, which addresses the requirements of UK data protection legislation. In addition, Google has agreed not to use the personal information of students to provide customised advertising during their period of enrolment at the University; alumni may, however, receive advertisements from Google.

The University acts as the domain administrator for Google facilities and administers all email accounts in accordance with its Data Protection Policy (available in the [policy section](#) of our website).

## 1.4. Legislation

Emails and instant messages are subject to the same laws that apply to other forms of communication, including defamation, harassment, copyright and data protection. Users should ensure that they read the Appendix to this Policy, which briefly describes the main pieces of legislation that have a bearing on the use and transmission of emails and instant messages.

## 1.5. Related policies

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and guidance available in the [policy section](#) of the University Website:

- Code of Student Behaviour
- Dignity and Respect Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy

As well as the following Google policies:

- [Google Workspace for Education Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [Google Privacy Policy](#)

## 2. Acceptable use

Authorised users of the University's email system must use its facilities responsibly, complying with all relevant policies and laws.

### 2.1. Google Workspace for Education Acceptable Use Policy

Account holders must comply with the [Google Workspace for Education Acceptable Use Policy](#). At the time of writing, the Policy requires users not to:

- generate or facilitate unsolicited bulk commercial email;
- violate or encourage the violation of the legal rights of others;
- use the services for any unlawful, invasive, infringing, defamatory or fraudulent purpose;
- intentionally distribute viruses, worms, Trojan horses, corrupted files, hoaxes, or other items of a destructive or deceptive nature;
- interfere with the use of the services, or the equipment used to provide the services, by customers, authorised resellers, or other authorised users;
- alter, disable, interfere with or circumvent any aspect of the services;
- test or reverse-engineer the services in order to find limitations, vulnerabilities or evade filtering capabilities;
- grant multiple individuals access to an individual End User Account other than via the delegation features provided within the Services;
- create End User Accounts assigned to business functions rather than to human beings for the purpose of sharing files within or outside of the domain;

- resell End User Accounts or parts thereof as added into a commercial product offered to third parties;
- to record audio or video communications without consent if such consent is required by applicable laws and regulations (You are solely responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable laws and regulations in the relevant jurisdiction(s)).

Please refer to the Google Workspace for Education Acceptable Use Policy for full and current details.

## 2.2. Prohibited use

The University's email system must not be used for:

- the creation, transmission or storage of text, images and other material that is offensive, obscene, indecent, discriminatory, harassing or libellous;
- the transmission of material that infringes the intellectual property rights of another person, including copyright;
- the creation or transmission of material that brings the University into disrepute;
- the incitement of violence;
- activities that corrupt or destroy other users' data or disrupt the work of others;
- activities that violate the privacy of others or unfairly criticise or misrepresent others;
- unauthorised personal financial gain or a commercial or profit-making nature, e.g. trading on eBay.

This list is not exhaustive. Contravention of any of the above terms (listed in sections 2.1 and 2.2) may result in the suspension or termination of a user's Google facilities. The instigation of formal action under the University's disciplinary procedures may follow and, in certain circumstances, legal action may be taken.

## 2.3. Security

Students are responsible for the security of their mailboxes and must not disclose their passwords to others. In addition to a strong password, the University requires the use of multifactor authentication ([two-step verification](#)) for Google accounts.

Although emails are routinely scanned for virus content and spam, students are expected to take reasonable measures to prevent the introduction and transmission of computer viruses. These include:

- not opening attachments received from unsolicited or untrusted sources;
- not transmitting attachments known to be infected with a virus;
- ensuring that antivirus/anti-spyware software is installed and maintained on any computer used to gain access to the University's IT facilities.

The unauthorised interception of, or access to, the messages of others is illegal.

The IS Service Desk should be informed immediately if a suspected virus is received or a user becomes aware that someone has gained unauthorised access to his/her account.

Google Mail will identify most spam and suspicious emails and will automatically remove the vast majority of these. The process is not perfect and some legitimate emails may end up in your Spam folder. It is worth checking this folder from time to time, just in case a legitimate email has been trapped. Google will automatically delete emails in your Spam folder after 30 days.

Finally, some spam makes it through all security filters and controls and will arrive in your inbox, hence the need to always be vigilant and to challenge any emails that appear suspicious. When this happens, students can teach Google Mail to recognise spam by highlighting emails in your inbox and clicking the “Report Spam” button. This will send the email to your Spam folder and remove it from your inbox, and Google Mail will continue to do the same if you receive future emails from that sender. If you make a mistake and do not want the message to be in Spam, click the “Not Spam” button to move it back into your inbox.

## 2.4. Monitoring

Account activities (e.g. storage usage, number of log-ins etc) are monitored by Google and all messages are routinely scanned (for viruses, spam and other security threats) to assist with the effective operation of the email system. In addition, *alumni* should be aware that Google automatically may scan the content of emails to add context sensitive advertisements to them, but assures users that the process is completely automated and ‘no humans will read the content’ of emails. The use of all personal information by Google is governed by its [Privacy Policy](#) and other applicable specific privacy policies.

In addition to Google’s monitoring, the University will also carry out monitoring to guard against cyber attacks. This routine monitoring may be carried out by the University, or by a third party on behalf of the University. In the event of an identified cyber attack, human intervention and access to emails may be required.

The University, as the domain administrator for Google’s facilities, may use analytical tools to monitor the University’s use of Google and have access to information held in an email account. The University reserves the right to access this information in the following circumstances:

- to investigate a complaint, where relevant;
- to investigate a reasonable suspicion of abuse of computer facilities;
- to cooperate in the investigation of a crime;
- in an emergency situation, including as a response to a potential cyber incident.

Otherwise, the University will respect the privacy of all email account holders.

## 2.5. Authorised Research

Research is part of the core business of the University. From time to time students will be contacted on their University email address for the purpose of voluntary recruitment into studies that have received a favourable opinion from a research ethics committee. Such contact will only come from within the University of Portsmouth.

## 2.6. Storage Limits

Forthcoming changes to the University’s contract with Google will necessitate the implementation of storage limits for all Google accounts. Once established, all students and alumni will be informed of these storage limits, which will subsequently be incorporated into this policy at the next revision.



## 3. Managing email accounts

### 3.1. Email addresses

Each student will be provided with an email account at the time of enrolment. The address for the account will be based on the individual's student number (e.g. UP123456@myport.ac.uk).

In some cases, additional addresses may be allocated to students, based on data held within the University's central record systems (e.g. cam12345@port.ac.uk, studentref@jupiter.port.ac.uk). Any messages directed to these addresses will automatically appear in the relevant MyPort email inbox.

### 3.2. Managing accounts

Messages that users still require, but wish to remove from their inbox, can be archived, while messages that are no longer needed should be moved to the 'Bin' area. Users should be aware that all items placed in the 'Bin' will be automatically deleted after thirty days and cannot be recovered. For further guidance on managing emails, please see the Google [Help pages](#).

All emails sent by the University to students will be delivered to their MyPort email addresses, and it is important that the accounts are checked regularly. Students may choose to forward Moodle email to their MyPort email address.

Although Google Workspace for Education may be used by students for collaborative purposes, any group project work that needs to be assessed and marked must be transferred to Moodle so that it will be accessible to tutors.

### 3.3. Further information

For further information about Google Mail accounts, please contact the IS Service Desk:

- Email: <mailto:servicedesk@port.ac.uk>
- Telephone: 023 9284 7777
- [IS MyPort Article Hub](#)

For guidance on using Google Mail, please visit the Google [help pages](#).

# Appendix

## Legislation

### 1. Copyright

Email messages and attachments are subject to copyright laws, including the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Care must be taken therefore not to circulate or store material that would infringe the intellectual property rights of a third party. For further guidance, please consult the University's Copyright Code Policy (available in the [policy section](#) of our website).

### 2. Data protection

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 between them regulate the use of personal data by organisations – in particular, data must be processed fairly and lawfully, be accurate and kept up-to-date, and held securely. The legislation also grants individuals certain rights, such as the right to request access to their personal information. Further details about data protection can be found on our [website](#).

This legislation is supported by the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR), which give people specific rights around marketing preferences, use of cookies and other tracking. More information about these rights can be found on the [Information Commissioner's website](#).

### 3. Defamation

Email is a form of publication and therefore the laws of defamation and libel apply. Material transmitted via the email system should not contain anything that could be considered insulting or damaging to the personal or professional reputation of an individual or group of people.

### 4. Discrimination

Comments must not be made within emails that could be considered discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010.

### 5. Hacking

Hacking activities are offences under the Computer Misuse Act 1990 (as amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006). Under the terms of this legislation, it is an offence to gain unauthorised access to any program or data held in a computer, and to impair the operation of programs or the reliability of data.

### 6. Harassment

Messages must be free from any content that could be considered harassing, threatening, abusive or insulting. Content of this type is an offence under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, as well as the Malicious Communications Act 1998. For further details about harassment, please see the University's Dignity and Respect Policy (available in the [policy section](#) of our website).

## 7. Obscenity

It is a criminal offence to publish any material that is pornographic, excessively violent or that comes under the provisions of the Obscene Publications Act 1959. Similarly, the Protection of Children Act 1978 makes it an offence to publish or distribute obscene material of a child.

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