

How We Behave with Emails

Emails are a big part of our working lives and can have a big impact on us when behaviours in emails are poor. These top tips will support us all to send fewer, clearer, kinder and more effective emails.

The contents of your email

- Write a **clear and concise subject line**, and indicate in 'For Action' or 'For Info'
- Use the 'high priority' marker for **urgent issues only**
- Open and close emails in a **professional** and friendly/polite way
- Use bullet points, lists and paragraphs to make your emails **as clear as possible**
- Don't use words in capital letters, bold, in colour, or use exclamation marks to make a point
- Consider how your **tone** and **content** will be felt by its recipient(s)
- Avoid passive aggressive language, **be clear about your intention and feelings**
- Check all **spelling and grammar**, re-read before pressing send

Reducing email traffic:

- **Do you need to send an email?** Could you use an alternative? (Teams chat, phone call, Teams call, face-to-face conversation)
- **Only copy in those who need to see the content.** Don't 'copy up' to add in managers unnecessarily
- Invite an **alternative channel of communication** when email chains are getting long and confusing
- **Remove unnecessary recipients** when you reply to emails

Things to think about before pressing send:

- **Am I sending this when I feel emotional and upset?** If yes, wait
- **Am I trying to shame, blame or cover my back?** If yes, this needs a conversation, not an email
- **Think about your relationship with the recipient** – if this is someone I know well, I could include an emoji or light-hearted humour; if not, avoid
- Remember emails can be requested under the **Freedom of Information Act**

