The University of Sydney

Policy: University staff and student broadcast email policy

Last updated: May 2009 Owner: Internal Communications

Overview

Broadcast email is one of the methods used to communicate University information to broad groups of staff and/or students for teaching, learning, research, community engagement and administrative purposes.

This policy outlines the type of information that may be distributed via broadcast email and sets out the processes for message generation, authorisation and distribution. The purpose of the policy is to:

- minimise the number of broadcast emails to prevent overload,
- maintain the quality and appropriateness of messages,
- filter information so it is easier for staff to access and use, and
- ensure distribution lists are current and accurate.

Scope

Broadcast email messages are defined as messages sent to broad groups of staff through the University's broadcast email system. They will generally be sent from the University Communications mailbox university.communications@usyd.edu.au or the VC Contact mailbox vccontact@usyd.edu.au which are owned and managed by Internal Communications.

This policy covers messages to the following groups:

- All University staff
- All current University students
- Broad groups of University staff or students e.g. all academic staff, Heads of…, all female staff, all postgraduate students, all international students
- Groups of managers eg all Heads Of, all supervisors

While the general principles and guidelines outlined in this policy also apply to group emails sent by authorised representatives of faculties/units, the authorisation, contact lists and distribution procedures are specific to broadcast email messages.

Related Documents

1. Delegations of Authority
2. Email: Information Security Policy
3. Information and Communication Technology Resources: Use of University Information and Communication Technology Resources (ICT Resources): Policy

Policy

This policy is to be implemented in a way that ensures compliance with relevant legislative requirements and standards of best-practice communications.

Types of broadcast emails

1. Emails sent to large groups of University staff outside of a single faculty or portfolio,(as a guideline any groups comprising over approximately 40% of staff) eg all female staff, all Exchange users, are considered Broadcast emails.

   The following types of broadcast email are available at the University:

Type	**Purpose**
Weekly staff bulletin	The main broadcast email channel designed for a range of information for all staff including: • News • Operational information • Events • Announcements and invitations • Staff achievements • Senior appointments (DVC, dean or equivalent)
Emails to all staff from the Vice-Chancellor or Deputy Vice-Chancellors	Messages signed by the Vice-Chancellor, or one of the Deputy Vice-Chancellors, e.g. strategic and leadership messages, updates on key University projects.
All staff emails	Used for messages containing critical or emergency notifications as determined by Internal Communications.
Emails to broad groups of cross-faculty/ cross-divisional staff eg academic staff, all general staff, all female staff	For messages related to normal University business as determined by Head, Internal Communications
All student emails	For messages containing information relevant to **all** students as determined by the Deputy Registrar.
Emails to broad groups of students eg all postgraduate students, all Pharmacy students, all third year students	For messages related to normal university business or formal information from the student unions as determined by the Student Communications Manager.

General principles

2. Current University of Sydney staff and students are required to read broadcast emails and are not able to opt out of receiving them.

3. It is the responsibility of staff and students to regularly check their official (UniKey) University email accounts for broadcast email messages.

4. Only authorised representatives of the University may submit content for broadcast emails.

5. The University's Internal Communications team is responsible for managing the University's broadcast email channels.

6. Content for broadcast emails is to be generated by the relevant area and forwarded to the Internal Communications team. It is the responsibility of the author to ensure the content is factually correct. The Internal Communications team will review all content for appropriateness, relevance, readability, grammatical accuracy and layout.

7. The content owner is responsible for responding appropriately to any replies received to a broadcast email. Depending on the type of message, contact methods for queries and/or more information are to be provided by the author to the Internal Communications team for inclusion in the email.

8. The Internal Communications team may edit or change the content of any emails submitted and will obtain sign-off from the author for any changes before distributing the information.

9. The Internal Communications team reserves the right not to send emails that are inappropriate or contain information that may be better communicated through a different channel.

10. The University's broadcast email channels may only be used for University purposes and should directly support or relate to University activities.

11. Information submitted for distribution should enhance the effective functioning of the University or cover issues, policies, events or decisions with a direct connection to the work of the University and its key organisational units.

12. Generally a maximum of one all staff email per day, regardless of sender, will be permitted.

13. All emails covered by this policy must:
    a. Comply with existing University policies and procedures.
    b. Abide by copyright laws concerning electronic information in all its forms.

14. Broadcast University emails may not be used for:
    a. Non-University related activities.
    b. Personal use.
    c. Other restricted material as defined in the Information and Communications Technology Resources: Use of University Information and Communication Technology Resources (ICT Resources) Policy.

Authorisation

15. Broadcast email messages for staff or student groups are to be reviewed and approved by Internal Communications and authorised by the approving authority (see below).

16. All-staff email messages need to be authorised by the Vice-Chancellor and carry the signature of; the Vice-Chancellor, a Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the General Counsel, the Director of Human Resources, the Head of Internal Communications or an agreed spokesperson.

17. All-student email messages need to be authorised by the Deputy Registrar.

18. Items for the weekly staff bulletin need to be reviewed and approved by Internal Communications and then approved by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor.

Distribution list	**Approving authority**
All staff	Vice-Chancellor/Deputy Vice-Chancellor
All academic staff	Internal Communications
All general staff	Internal Communications
All staff by campus	Internal Communications
All staff by faculty	Dean of relevant faculty
All staff by building	Internal Communications/Director OHS/Director CIS
All female staff	Internal Communications/Director, HR
All staff level HEO10 and above or level D&E and above	Internal Communications
Other *on request* staff lists	Internal Communications
All students	Deputy Registrar
All undergraduate students	Deputy Registrar
All postgraduate students	Deputy Registrar
All students by faculty	Dean of Relevant Faculty
All Masters students	Deputy Registrar
All International students	Deputy Registrar/International Office
Other on request student lists	Deputy Registrar

Contact Lists

19. To ensure accuracy, staff and student email distribution lists, lists may only be generated from Talent 2 (staff) or FlexSiS (students).

20. Lists are generated each time an email is sent to ensure currency and accuracy.

21. Lists are created when there is a demonstrated need as determined by Internal Communications or the VC's Office.

22. All requests for distribution lists are to be directed to Internal Communications who will approve and facilitate the generation of the list.

23. Staff lists contain all University staff with a UniKey email address. Student lists include all currently enrolled students.

24. The following staff and student lists have been set up and are available for immediate use:

    a. All staff
    b. All academic staff
    c. All general staff
    d. All staff by campus
    e. Senior staff (level HEO10 & above & level D&E & above)
    f. All students
    g. All undergraduate students
    h. All postgraduate students
    i. All students by faculty
    j. All masters students
    k. All international students.

Distribution

25. Broadcast emails are allocated a priority according to their timeliness and level of urgency as determined by the approving authority and Internal Communications. Distribution speed is determined by the capability of the IT system.

Priority	Description	Distribution speed
Emergency	Accidents or situations such as chemical spills, bomb threats, gas leaks	Five emails per second
Urgent	Same day requests	One email per second
Normal	Default priority	One email every two seconds
Low	Long or non-fixed lead time	- One email every two seconds - Emails are sent out between 7pm and 7am
Scheduled	Emails to be sent out after a certain date/time	One email every two seconds

26. A record of all broadcast emails distributed is maintained by Internal Communications.

Departmental email addresses

27. Departmental email addresses can be used by different areas of the University eg SydneyPeople, Records Management, Academic Board to send broadcast emails to small, defined groups of staff when the message relates to the specific area sending the message.

28. Areas sending broadcast email messages from departmental accounts are responsible for receiving and responding to any replies to their broadcast email.

29. If you wish to send a broadcast email from your departmental address, you must seek approval from Internal Communications.

Administration

1. Background/context

This policy was created to manage the distribution of broadcast University emails.

2. Authority/consultation

This document was developed by Internal Communications

3. Management Responsibility

Internal Communications

4. Implementation Responsibility

Internal Communications

5. Dates

Approval (version 1)	
Effect	
Review	
Approval (version 2)	
Effect	

6. Approval

Current Version	Marian Theobald DVC, External Relations (Acting)

7. Signatures

Approved by:

Name

Marian Theobald

Position

DVC, External Relations (Acting)

Date

Signature

1. Signatures

Approved by:

Name

Chris Coffey

Position

Director, Vice-Chancellor's Office

Date

Signature

The University of Sydney

Guidelines & Procedures: University staff and student broadcast email policy

Last updated: May 2009 Owner: Internal Communications

Guidelines

Planning your communication
Before drafting a broadcast University email message or weekly staff bulletin item the following questions should be answered by the author:

- What is the purpose of the email?
- Who is the audience and why?
- What are the key messages that need to be contained in the email?
- Is there enough information for someone reading about the subject matter for the first time?
- Is the content of interest and relevant to the audience?
- What should the audience do when they read the email?
- How should the audience to think and feel when they read the email?
- Is the timing of the email important and why?

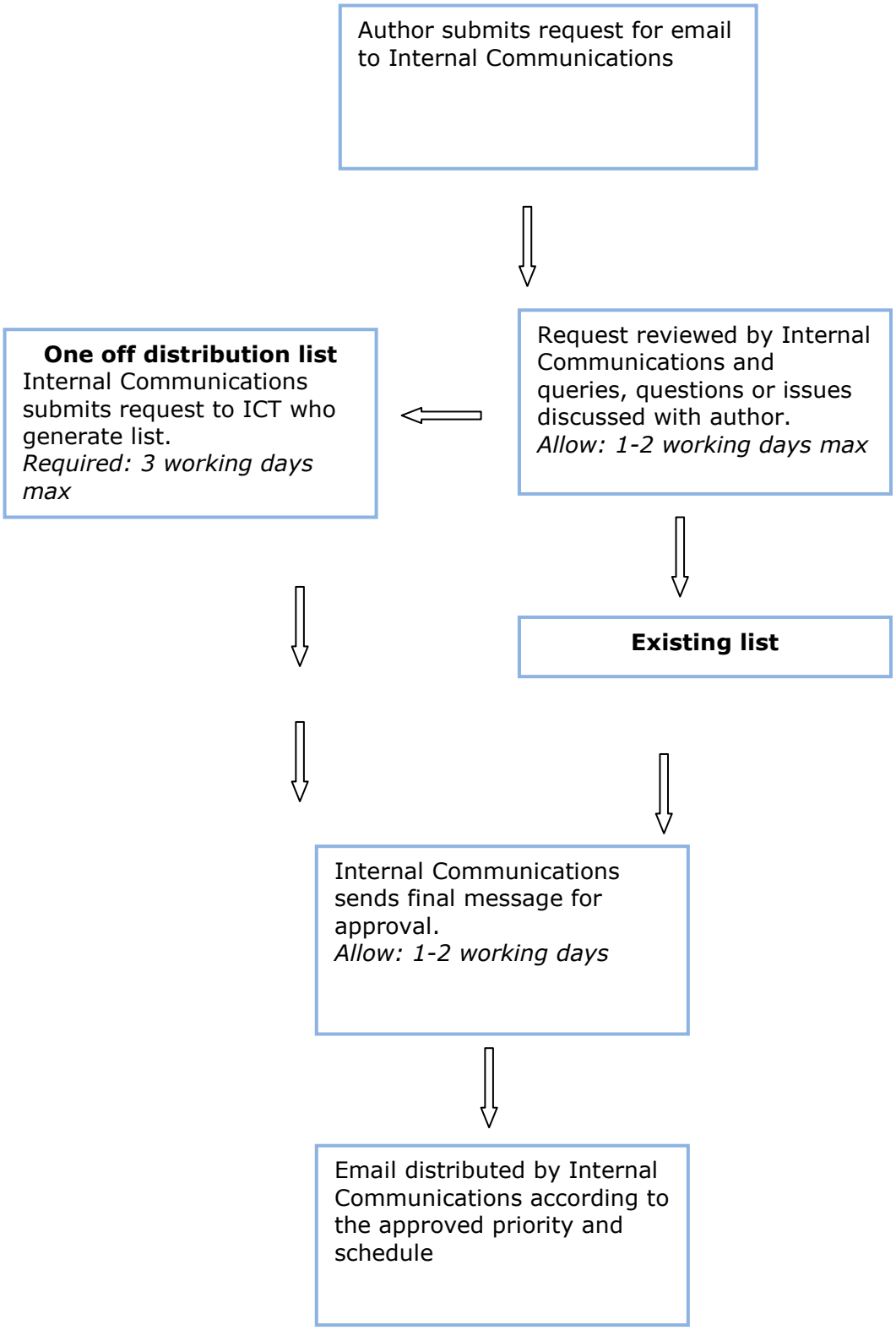
Internal Communications can assist you with this process and can advise whether email is the best medium for your message.

Writing your email
University emails and weekly staff bulletin items should contain:

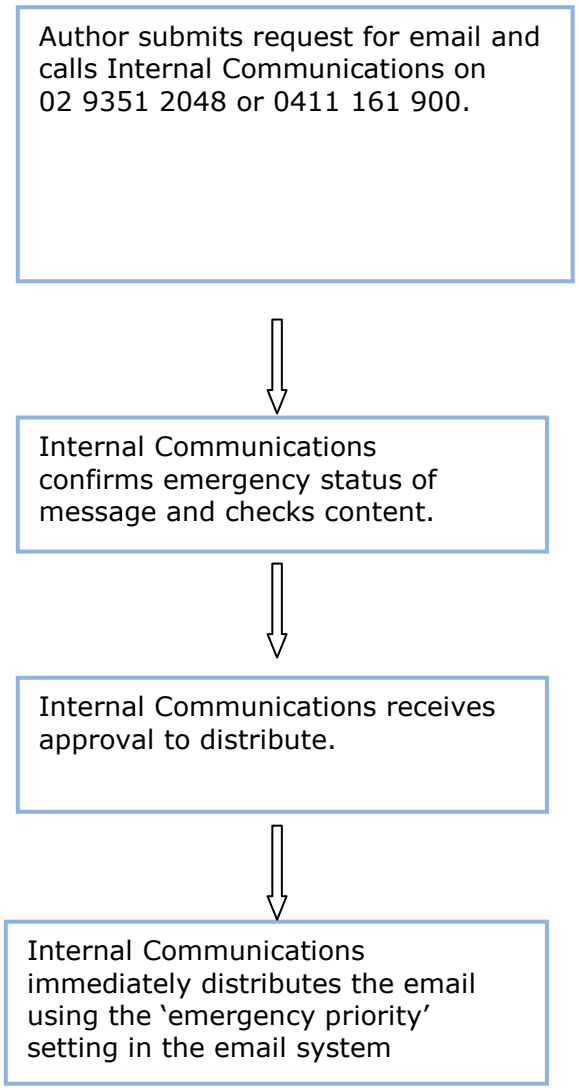
- No more than two to three paragraphs (200 words).
- A simple, easy to read layout.
- URL links to further information rather than large attachments or lengthy content.
- Contact details for further information.
- A sender and a reply email address.
- The author's name, position and faculty/unit at the end of the message.
- Be no more than 20MB per message in size including attachments.

Procedures

A Standard messages

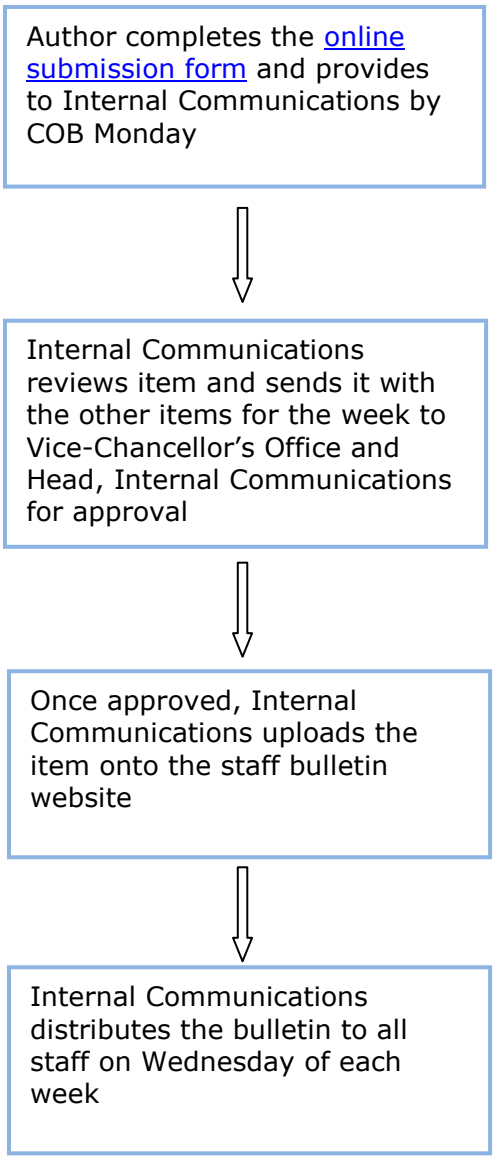


B. Emergency messages



All emergency messages will be given priority and processed and handled as quickly as possible.

C. Weekly Staff Bulletin items



Staff Bulletin Checklist

- Items need to be received by close of business on the Monday of the week the item needs to appear.
- Items may be edited for length and readability and may be returned to the author if not complete.
- Repeat items needs to contain new information.
- Event items need to include:
    - Event name and description including speakers
    - Date and time
    - Location name and address (including room) of the venue and a map or map reference if appropriate
    - Cost of the event (if applicable) and whether tickets should be purchased in advance or at the door
    - RSVP if necessary, including closing date and contact details.

Full details and a submission form are available on the staff bulletin site