Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
Ollscoil Átha Cliath | The University of Dublin

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Title:	School of Medicine Email Policy	
Version Number:	1	
Effective Date:	11.03.25	
Document Number:	SOM-SOP-QA-0042	

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1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for responsible email use within Trinity College School of Medicine hereinafter referred to as SoM. The policy aims to enhance communication efficiency, reduce email overload, and ensure professional and respectful email practices while promoting deep work and strategic engagement.

2.0 SCOPE

2.1 This policy applies to all faculty, staff, and students using the SoM email system. It governs email etiquette, appropriate usage, and strategies for minimizing email-related distractions.

3.0 REFERENCES

3.1 Trinity College School of Medicine IT Usage Policy

3.2 Microsoft 365 Email Insights Tool

3.3 Institutional Communication Guidelines

4.0 PROCEDURE

4.1 **Consideration in Copying Recipients**

- Emails should be sent only to individuals directly involved in the discussion.
- CC (carbon copy) and BCC (blind carbon copy) should be used selectively to minimize unnecessary email traffic.
- Group emails should be kept to a minimum, and internal mailing lists should be reviewed regularly.
- When seeking feedback, specify who should reply to avoid unnecessary group responses.

4.2 **No-Friday Email Policy**

- Emails particularly no CC emails should be sent on Fridays unless in urgent cases or by prior agreement between parties.
- Urgent matters should be preferentially communicated via direct calls, scheduled meetings, or in-person discussions.

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- Time-sensitive emails that must be sent on a Friday should include 'Urgent' in the subject line only when necessary.

4.3 Email Brevity and Content

- Emails should be concise and to the point.
- Lengthy information should be attached as a Word document or PDF instead of being included in the email body.
- Bullet points or numbered lists should be used for clarity.
- Subject lines should clearly indicate the topic and urgency of the email.

4.4 Respectful and Time-Appropriate Emailing

- Emails should be professional, respectful, and collegial.
- Emails should not be sent outside regular working hours (8:00 AM - 6:00 PM).
- Email scheduling tools should be used to ensure emails are delivered during working hours, even if written outside these hours.
- If urgent attention is required outside working hours, an alternative communication method (e.g., phone call) should be used.
- Employees are encouraged to use email signatures that clarify their email etiquette, e.g., "To improve efficiency, I do not reply to all unless necessary and may use reactions as responses."

4.5 Email is Not a Replacement for Group Communication

- Email should not be used for widespread group discussions or complex decision-making.
- Important discussions should be conducted in meetings, either in person or via video conferencing.
- Email should primarily be used for:
  - Sharing brief updates
  - Flagging information for relevant recipients
  - Arranging meetings
  - Distributing documents for review

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4.6 **Managing Email During Holidays**

- Employees should schedule important emails to be sent after their return from leave if possible.
- Out-of-office replies should inform senders of the absence and suggest an alternative contact if necessary.
- Recipients are encouraged to respect out-of-office replies and avoid resending emails unless critical.

4.7   **Email Monitoring and Review**

- Email traffic will be monitored using Microsoft 365 Insights to assess policy effectiveness.
- A review will be conducted after the first month of implementation to gather feedback.
- The policy will be evaluated annually for potential improvements.

5.0 ATTACHMENTS

5.1 Email Signature Etiquette Statement

5.2 Out-of-Office Email Best Practices

6.0   SIGN OFF

Prepared by:	
Signature:	**Date:**
Reviewed by:	
Signature:	**Date:**
Approved by:	
Signature:	**Date:**

7.0   VERSION HISORY

Version	Description of Change	Revised By
1.0	New SOP	Prof. Colin P. Doherty

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8.0   ATTACHMENT ONE: EMAIL SIGNATURE ETIQUETTE STATEMENT

To help improve communication efficiency and reduce unnecessary email traffic, I have adopted the following email practices:

- I do not use "Reply All" unless it is essential for all recipients to see my response.
- Where possible, I acknowledge emails using reactions instead of replies.
- I may send emails outside of standard working hours, but I do not expect an immediate response.
- If you receive an email from me outside of working hours, please feel free to respond at a time that suits you.

Thank you for helping us foster a more effective and respectful email culture.

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9.0   ATTACHMENT TWO: OUT-OF-OFFICE EMAIL BEST PRACTICES

When setting up an out-of-office (OOO) email response, consider the following best practices:

1. **Keep it Professional and Clear:** Ensure your OOO message includes the dates you are unavailable and alternative contacts if needed.
2. **Set Expectations:** Let the sender know when they can expect a response or whether they should follow up upon your return.
3. **Provide an Alternative Contact:** If urgent matters need immediate attention, direct them to a colleague who can assist.
4. **Avoid Overpromising:** If you are unsure when you will be able to reply, it is better to set a broad timeline rather than commit to an unrealistic response time.
5. **Use Automated Scheduling:** For important emails, schedule them to be sent after your return instead of asking senders to resend their message.

Example Out-of-Office Message:

Subject: Out of Office

Thank you for your email. I am currently out of the office from [Start Date] to [End Date] and will not be checking emails during this time.

For urgent matters, please contact [Alternative Contact Name] at [Email Address].

Otherwise, I will respond to your message upon my return.