



Writing emails at university

Email is one of the main ways of communicating at UWA India, especially with your Unit Coordinators, lecturers, and other UWA India staff.

When you are writing an email to someone at UWA India, think about who you are addressing and the purpose of your message – be clear, formal, polite and professional.

It's important to use your **UWA student email account** – this is the account UWA India staff will use to contact you. (Note: emails from personal accounts like Gmail do not identify you as a UWA India student and may be treated as spam by the server.)

If you are emailing to request information, do a quick check in your LMS and unit outline to see if the information you need is available there.

What should I put in the email?

Subject line

Your subject line acts as the 'headline' to your message, so make it short, informative and to-the-point; for example, "Request for consultation" or "Absence from class".

Greeting

Open with a greeting and address the person you are emailing with their formal title, unless you have an established relationship with them; for example, "Dear Dr Jones", "Dear Ms Lee".

Email body

Your first sentence should briefly introduce yourself, followed immediately by the purpose or request of your email. Any necessary further information or context can come in additional paragraphs.

When asking a question, show that you have done some initial work to develop your understanding by framing it narrowly and specifically. For example, instead of asking "Can you help me develop my assignment topic?" ask "For my essay topic, I'm considering [A] or [B]. Which do you think is most appropriate?"

Sign off

Express appreciation – thank the person for their time and consideration.

End your email with a polite sign off, such as "Kind regards" followed by your full name and student ID.

Example email to Unit Coordinator

The diagram shows an email template with several callout boxes pointing to specific parts of the email. The email text is as follows:

Subject: Request for UNIT1234 consultation

Dear Professor Morel,

I'm a student in your UNIT1234 unit, in the Tuesday 3pm workshop. I am writing to ask if I can make an appointment with you to discuss how I can improve my methodology for our project proposal.

If possible, do you have any availability on Monday mornings between 10 and 12, Tuesday afternoons after 2pm, or any time on Friday? If not, please let me know when you might be free, and I will try to find a common time.

Kind regards,
Edwin ARDEN
(Student ID: 222222)

The callout boxes and their corresponding text are:

- Formal address for first communication:** Points to "Dear Professor Morel,"
- Short introduction for context:** Points to the first paragraph: "I'm a student in your UNIT1234 unit, in the Tuesday 3pm workshop. I am writing to ask if I can make an appointment with you to discuss how I can improve my methodology for our project proposal."
- Indicate the range of your availability, to limit back-and-forth of emails:** Points to the second paragraph: "If possible, do you have any availability on Monday mornings between 10 and 12, Tuesday afternoons after 2pm, or any time on Friday? If not, please let me know when you might be free, and I will try to find a common time."
- Sign-off with full name and Student ID:** Points to the sign-off: "Kind regards, Edwin ARDEN (Student ID: 222222)"
- Email subject concise and informative:** Points to the subject line: "Subject: Request for UNIT1234 consultation"
- Purpose/request of email stated in first paragraph:** Points to the first sentence of the first paragraph: "I am writing to ask if I can make an appointment with you to discuss how I can improve my methodology for our project proposal."
- Show flexibility in your request:** Points to the second sentence of the second paragraph: "and I will try to find a common time."

Figure 1: Annotated example of an email

Image long description: At the top of the email is the subject line: "Request for UNIT1234 consultation." A callout explains that the email subject should be concise and informative. The email begins with the greeting "Dear Professor Morel,". A callout notes that a formal form of address should be used for the first communication. The first paragraph reads "I'm a student in your UNIT1234 unit, in the Tuesday 3pm workshop. I am writing to ask if I can make an appointment with you to discuss how I can improve my methodology for our project proposal." A callout specifies that the purpose/request of the email should be stated in the first paragraph. The second paragraph reads "If possible, do you have any availability on

Monday mornings between 10 and 12, Tuesday afternoons after 2pm, or any time on Friday? If not, please let me know when you might be free, and I will try to find a common time." A callout explains that providing a range of available times helps limit unnecessary back-and-forth emails, while another callout notes the importance of showing flexibility in the request. The email closes with "Kind regards," followed by the sender's name and student identification number. A final callout highlights the need to sign off with a full name and student ID.

Don't forget to proofread

Before hitting send, carefully proofread your email for typos, grammatical errors, and clarity. A well-written, error-free email reflects positively on your professionalism.

Following up

What if they don't reply?

Always allow **at least two business days** for your recipient to reply to your email before you send a follow-up. Remember, your deadlines are not other people's deadlines. If you are emailing about a time-sensitive matter, mention this timeline politely, but realise it does not oblige your recipient to act or respond urgently.

How to follow up politely

If you need to send a follow-up email, it's good practice to include the original text:

1. Find your initial email in your 'Sent' folder, and click 'Forward'. This will add your previous email below your new email, reminding the recipient about your original enquiry.
2. Replace the "Fwd:" text from the subject line with "Follow-up:".

Your follow-up can be very brief, directing them to your earlier request.

Things to remember when sending emails at university

- Use your UWA student email account.
- Be polite, concise, and to-the-point.
- Put your request at the start of the email.
- Use proper grammar, spelling, capitalisation and sentence structure.
- Be patient when waiting for a response.