

Do you already know all about email?

This document will help you make the best use of email *at the University*, by highlighting the most important features.

Why use your University email service?

Most people already have an email address before they arrive at the University (@hotmail, or @gmail for example). Of course you can continue to use such addresses, but ...

... you **MUST** use your email account “@newcastle.ac.uk” for your University business!

Your University email address is the only one that the University will use for official email because of:

- **Reliability**
- **Security**
- **Traceability**
- **Address look-up** – that is, we can all easily find each other’s ncl.ac.uk addresses in the **University Directory** (see below).
- **Identity:** your University email address identifies you as a member of the University.

For these reasons, University Schools are expected to use no other address for email communications.

@newcastle.ac.uk or @ncl.ac.uk?

“newcastle” and “ncl” are interchangeable, **except:**

- If you subscribe to a service which asks you to provide your email address as an identifier, you should use the long form, for example *J.O.Smith@newcastle.ac.uk*

Email services provided


See overleaf.

Responsible Use

There are various Rules and policies governing the use of University facilities: see www.ncl.ac.uk/iss/rules/

ISS publish advice on the use – and the abuse – of email: *Dealing with email*, available at ISS Help desks, or on the web at www.ncl.ac.uk/iss/docs/

The University Directory (CAMA)

The University Directory is accessed from the  button at the *top right* of the University Home Page, www.ncl.ac.uk

The direct web address is <https://cama.ncl.ac.uk/>

CAMA is more than just an email directory: click **Your Details** in the top menu (**Login** to CAMA first, if you’re off-campus when doing this.)

Mailstore quotas

At present the mailbox quotas for students are: **120Mb** (*first alert*), **150MB** (*No Send* limit), and **200MB** (*No Receive* = maximum). For staff and for postgraduate research students the quotas are **500MB – 600MB – 1000MB**.

You cannot send mail when you pass the second limit, and reaching your maximum limit **will stop delivery of mail to you**.

Remember: your **Sent Items** and **Deleted Items** folders use up your quota as well: you need to empty these folders regularly.

Attachments

Mail quotas are usually filled up by **attachments** (pictures, movies, documents, etc.).

Remember: attachments that **you send**, and also those you **delete** will take up storage until you **empty** your **Sent** and **Deleted** folders!

If you wish to keep an attachment, **Save** it into your filestore (Drive H): **do not keep it in your mailstore**. You may then wish to move it from your filestore to a disk or another location, depending on how large, or how important, the file is.

Outlook Exchange (but *not* OWA) can remove an attachment, leaving only the message: often desirable. *Right-click* on the attachment and choose **Remove** (having first saved the attachment elsewhere if you need it).

Maximum size of attachments

Most mail attachments are under 1MB in size, and these never cause problems. However the larger an attachment gets, the more problems it may create; many email services will **reject** attachments greater than **20MB**.

(20MB is actually a *very* large size for any file: if you wish to send a file that large then you ought to consider *why* it is that size. Seek advice from ISS if you have a problem here.)

Digital cameras

The main cause of **excessive file sizes** is the digital camera. A single JPG photo from a digital camera can easily be 2MB or more in size (videos are of course much larger). Opening such a file in a simple graphics program and then saving it again (without explicitly changing it) can cut the size to half or less.

Microsoft Photo Editor is in **All programs – Microft Office – MS Office Tools** *very nice and simple.*

IrfanView is in **All programs – Graphics Programs** *much more powerful, but curious to use.*

Adobe Photoshop is in **All programs – Graphics Programs** on some clusters only, or is available via RAS; *the most powerful, but difficult and clumsy to use.*

Use such a program to crop a photo and to save it at a size **appropriate for the required use**. For example if you wish to send photos of your new flat to your family, these can be cut to 1/20th

(or more) of the original filesize with **no loss to the purpose required**, by scaling, and/or by cutting the “**quality**” of the JPG file — which will still be excellent on the screen of a computer.

In fact, the latest version of Outlook (but not OWA) offers to reduce picture sizes for you — which demonstrates that Microsoft themselves have recognized this problem.

The original digital images can be saved to a good quality CD or other media, in case they need to be used as a source in the future. These images are normally only needed if they are to be sent to a commercial printer for publication at the highest quality.

“Rich Text” and html format

Another cause of mail quotas being exceeded is the use of “**rich text**” instead of plain text. That is, the use of **bold**, **italic**, colours, special fonts, etc. Rich text may sometimes look nice, but it rarely adds anything to your email except **disk requirements!**

A worse variation is **html-format**, where a message appears to be merely rich-text, but is actually **html** (i.e. the code which produces web pages). Thus an email message becomes a web-page, which gives the content much more **power**; for this reason html-format is loved by commercial companies ... and also by **spammers** and **hackers** (see the last section).

A **plain text** message will usually be **much less than half the size** of a rich-text or html-format message, and it **cannot cause complications** for either senders or recipients.

ISS recommends exclusive use of plain text for email.

Email services at Newcastle

Outlook Web Access (OWA)

Exchange 2007 provides the service, but **OWA** is the “client” i.e. the program used. OWA is provided for all students on taught courses. The service is at <https://owa.ncl.ac.uk>

ISS publish a yellow ISS document EMO7, *Getting the best from OWA*. Available from ISS locations, and also online at: www.ncl.ac.uk/iss/docs/

Outlook Exchange

“Full Exchange” is provided for members of staff and research postgraduates (PhD students). This has functions for calendaring, shared folders, diary, meetings, etc.

Unix POP / IMAP email

This is an option for staff or PhD students who have a specific reason for wishing to use it: please request this service at ISS Registration.

ISS assume that users requesting a POP / IMAP mailbox will not require advisory support.

Dealing with SPAM

“Spam” – that is, junk email – is a universal problem.

ISS rejects most incoming spam before delivery; of the email which is delivered, *suspected* spam is “tagged” by adding “**SP?**” to the **Subject:** field of the message.

If you wish, you can choose not to have spam rejected from your own mailbox: see www.ncl.ac.uk/iss/support/security/spam/

Basic points about spam

- ISS’s mail scanning software cannot identify **all** spam: you will still receive junk messages, some of them untagged. Don’t be offended and don’t be annoyed – follow the standard advice:
 - (1) **Delete** and **forget** spam messages.
 - (2) In particular, **DO NOT OPEN unexpected attachments!**
- Most of the spam messages that you see have the label “**SP?**” in the Subject header. As stated above, this has been put there **by ISS** (not by the spammers!). You can use this to sort and/or filter such messages – perhaps straight into your **Deleted Items** folder.
- *Why is it called “spam”?* See the ISS Tip www.ncl.ac.uk/iss/support/tip/what-is-spam

Threats from email

- **NEVER click on web addresses in suspect messages.**
- **NEVER type logins and passwords into email messages.** Any message requesting you to do this is malicious spam.
- Threats come from friends as well as strangers: your friend’s email address may be used by criminals; or your friend may unknowingly send you an attachment which contains a virus.
- If you receive an unexpected, or strange-looking message, *especially if it has an attachment*, **DELETE** it, do *not* open it!
- You should virus-scan any file which has been sent you to (on an ISS PC, *right-click* the filename in Windows Explorer, and select Scan for Viruses.)
- On your own computer: do not use free “anti-virus” packages. Some of these are known to be threats in themselves.
- On your own computer, **never** use it as “**Administrator**” unless actually performing system maintenance.
- University email accounts (@ncl.ac.uk) have more protection against threats than do external email accounts; however no anti-virus protection can ever be complete.
- **Do not forward “Virus Warnings”!** These are almost always malicious hoaxes (see below). If you are worried, check the anti-virus sites. For example McAfee’s site at <http://vil.nai.com/vil/hoaxes.aspx>
- **Hoaxes:** it is common for criminals to try and persuade users to give them personal details by using various tricks. For advice on how to identify such activities see www.ncl.ac.uk/iss/support/security/email/