Communication Protocol

Federation University Australia (FedUni) is committed to open, informative, transparent and timely communication between all staff, students and potential students.

We are committed to respectful, measured and amicable communication to promote a collegiate atmosphere. We respect the learning partnership between all staff and students, and collectively aim to improve educational outcomes for all. This protocol serves as a guide for communication between FedUni students and staff.

Academic/Teaching staff responsibilities
in communicating with students

1. Academics/teachers will communicate with students in a courteous and constructive manner.
2. A teacher/academic's response to an enrolled student's enquiry by email or Moodle should be prompt and usually within two business days. In the case of very urgent matters, telephone contact may be most appropriate, and the academic/teacher will respond as soon as possible.
3. The preferred method of communication, (e.g. email, Moodle, office hours for face-to-face meetings and Moodle office hours for on-line forums etc.) will be documented in the Course Description/Outline or Higher Degrees by Research Student Handbook. All email will be from a FedUni email address.
4. Academics/teachers will maintain accurate and thorough records of student progress and student correspondence, typically in fdlGrades and/or Moodle.
5. All assessed work will be returned in a timely manner, usually two business weeks after submission, or as is consistent with information provided in the Course Description/Outline or Higher Degrees by Research Student Handbook.
6. Academics/teachers should provide constructive feedback on all work.
7. If an academic/teacher is out of contact for more than two business days, it is expected that an 'out of office' message is provided for both voicemail and email. It is anticipated that this notice will include expected date of return, and where possible an alternate contact.
8. If the matter is in need of further discussion or resolution, the assistance of the Program Coordinator/Education Manager or the School Leadership Team will be sought. Student HQ, and the Student Senate/Academic Board are also available to offer advice on communication issues and responsibilities.

Professional staff responsibilities
in communicating with students

1. Professional staff will communicate with students in a courteous and constructive manner.
2. A professional staff member's response to a student's enquiry should be prompt, usually within two business days, and returned from a FedUni email address.
3. In the case of very urgent matters, telephone contact may be most appropriate way to enable the professional staff member to respond as soon as possible.
4. Enquiries can reasonably be expected to be resolved within five business days, unless otherwise required by a University-published policy or procedure, or where complexity or extenuating circumstances apply. Where such circumstances arise, this should be communicated to the student within five working days of their enquiry, together with an expected timeframe, wherever possible.
5. A professional staff member's response to a student's enquiry via voicemail should be prompt with calls usually returned on the same day.
6. Professional staff must maintain consistent, accurate and thorough records of their dealings with students in an appropriate, University endorsed system consistent with the business process documentation for their work area (examples include but are not limited to CRM, fdlGrades, InPlace, ECM and shared network drives).
7. If a professional staff member is out of contact for more than two business days, it is expected that an 'out of office' message is provided for both voicemail and email. It is anticipated that this notice will include expected date of return, and where possible an alternate contact.
8. If the matter is in need of further discussion or resolution, guidance and advice may be sought from Student HQ, the relevant School Leadership Team, the Student Senate and/or Academic Board.

Student responsibilities
in communicating with the University and staff

1. Students will communicate with staff members in a courteous and constructive manner.
2. All students will use their FedUni email address as the primary source of communication with the University. Students may utilise the auto forward features of their FedUni email account, but they must ensure that the FedUni email is regularly monitored.
3. Students will regularly check the Moodle shell for all courses in which they are enrolled to ensure they are aware of the most up to date course information.
4. When a concern or query arises, students will communicate with the course coordinator, lecturer/teacher, or tutor via the communication channels documented in the Course Description/Outline.
5. When students receive direct and targeted emails from academics/teachers leading courses in which they are enrolled, or from professional staff in relation to their academic progress, they will endeavour to respond within two business days.
6. Students will take personal responsibility for monitoring general student communications and publications such as important dates and essential information.
7. If a matter is in need of further resolution, the advice of the Program Coordinator/Education Manager, Student Connect, or Student HQ will be sought.

   Student Connect includes student advisory, who can assist with grievances, whereas Student HQ will deal primarily with course enrolment etc.
8. Where appropriate, students may elevate a matter to the notice of the Executive, Student Senate, Academic Board or University Registrar.

Note on global communications: In some circumstances where there is a need to communicate with a broader group of staff or students FedUni News may be appropriately utilised. For direct communication with a specific cohort of FedUni members, the following guidance is provided:

1. **For staff to student communication at a course level**, the Moodle Forum or direct email is appropriate, in line with the 'FedUni Writing Style Guide for Communicating with Students'.
2. **For staff to student communication at the program level,** communication is managed through Student HQ. Staff should lodge a 'communication request form'.
3. **For student group to student group,** the Student Senate and/or Student HQ should be contacted for guidance.