

Student Lifecycle Communication

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1.0 Purpose

This Policy outlines the principles and governance that apply to student lifecycle communications and engagement at Griffith.

2.0 Scope

This Policy applies to all University-wide, cohort and/or segmented audience communications, between the University and all prospective and current students, domestic and international, Higher Degree by Research candidates, graduates and alumni.

This Policy does not apply to one-to-one enquiry or transactional communications. These are the responsibility of individual business units or elements (including course-related communications between course convenors and their students). This includes, but is not limited to, advising:

- the outcome of an assessment application
- when a grade has been changed
- the outcome of a concern relating to academic integrity or issues of academic performance
- about exclusion and student misconduct.

Additional alumni communications activity is governed by the *Alumni Engagement Procedure*.

Additional communications to Higher Degrees by Research candidates is managed by the Griffith Graduate Research School.

3.0 Policy statement

Griffith is committed to ensuring that communication between the University and students at all stages of their lifecycle is reliable, relevant, timely, efficient and effective. Communications from the University enhance the student experience – enable successful transmission of information, reduce duplication, overwhelm and minimise email where possible.

The University's communication strategy relies on collaboration and forward planning across all areas to ensure:

- clear, engaging and accurate content, through appropriate approval processes and application of the *Visual Identity Guidelines*, the *Writing and Editing Guidelines* and the resources available on the *Brand Hub* to ensure brand consistency (i.e. language, tone, look and feel) while taking appropriate account of diverse audiences;
- recognition of the stages of the student lifecycle, and that student engagement and identity is primarily centred around program and University;

- deliver communications that are received when (timely) and where (channel) they are needed using targeted (segmented) and planned distribution, through the use of primary channels, supplemented where appropriate by secondary channels suitable for message type and urgency (for example, for current students the primary channels for communications are the *Learning at Griffith* for academic and myGriffith for administrative). Section 3 outlines how this must be applied to various audience segments, including Alumni and Higher Degree by Research candidates);
- using inclusive language and taking into account accessible and equitable access (see *Accessibility Principles*);
- adherence to the *Spam Act 2003* including opt in or out provisions and unsubscribe options for all non-compliance (update style/news) related communications. Refer to Section 3 and the *Direct Marketing Procedure* for application by channel;
- ensuring core databases remain intact for critical service-based communication, for example removal of unsubscribe links for bulk communications that are service based and/or inform of product information for current students or Higher Degree by Research candidates. Refer to the *Section 3* for detail on application by channel;
- that once a reasonable effort has been made to contact a student via their Griffith email or designated email, the University will assume the correspondence has been received;
- continued improvement through measurement and review.

Content included in this Policy is not an exhaustive list of channels of communication. Any other channels or technology not mentioned remain susceptible to the Student Lifecycle Communications Policy.

Communications may be oral or written and utilise telephone, digital and hardcopy channels or be face-to-face depending on the nature, timeliness, location, speed of delivery and audience for the communication.

3.1 SMS

SMS communication is limited to enhance engagement with critical information, and to safeguard the privacy of students, future students and alumni who have entrusted the University with their phone numbers. It should be used to supplement electronic and paper-based communications only for the following cases:

- Emergency notices: notify affected students of an emergency situation on campus, public health outbreaks, or safety risks.
- Notices of program-based changes and cancellations: to notify affected students when classes have been moved or cancelled or a change to exam venue/timetable has occurred.
- Reminders for critical administrative services: notify students of administrative deadlines including enrolments, graduation, assessment deadlines including assessment items, and matters to which the student needs to attend in relation to enrolment, examination and graduation.
- Intervention: for example, advise students of their failure to attend an appointment with a support service, failure to submit assessment.
- Notices of academic performance: notify students of final grades, academic progress status and GPA.
- Service issues: notify affected students of service outages and facility shut downs along with timelines for when the services are likely to return to use.

The University will not use SMS for general advertisement of campus-based services or events or advertising of third-party activity, unless there has been an opt-in for this activity by the recipient. Where an Opt-In has been obtained, an unsubscribe option must be included in the SMS text.

3.1.1 SMS Principles

- **Just in time:** messages are to be sent no more than 48 hours before the action or activity affecting the student.
- **Relevant:** information within the message is to be directly related to the student or their studies.
- **Unambiguous:** the message is to clearly state either the action (if any) that the student is required to undertake or how the information affects the student.
- **Authoritative:** messages are to be sent only by those with the authority to do so (see section 4) and to be clear about what action to take next.
- **Limited:** the number of messages received by a student within a week should not exceed a reasonable number and the information able to be conveyed clearly with the designated character limit of an SMS text message (usually 160 characters, including spaces and links).

SMS accounts are issued by Digital Solutions with approval from Head of Student Communications and Engagement. Operational advice is available in the *Internal Communications Community of Practice*.

3.2 Broadcast Email

Broadcast emails are defined as those emails which are sent in bulk to all students, or cohorts/ segments of students, as electronic direct mail (EDM), and transactional emails triggered automatically via systems or platforms. It does not apply to enquiry responses or one to one communications.

The Student Communications and Engagement team in Marketing and Communications must be consulted and agree to broadcast email content, platform for delivery and dates to minimise clashes and duplication. All bulk communications must have approval by the senior delegated officer of that area. Bulk EDM requests can be directed to the Student Communications and Engagement Team.

For all broadcast email sent to alumni the designated approver and contact point is Advancement.

For all broadcast email sent to Higher Degree by Research candidates the designated approver and contact point is Griffith Graduate Research School.

3.2.1 Broadcast Email Principles

- Email should be minimised, prioritising non-email communication channels such as myGriffith and Learning at Griffith for current students;
- The University will use the student's Griffith domain email address for compliance-based emails, or the preferred email address as designated in Peoplesoft by the student (or Raisers Edge for alumni) where appropriate;
- Enterprise core systems should be used over secondary or tertiary, non-enterprise systems;
- Where the system or platform generates automatically triggered email notifications these should be minimised or disengaged where possible and appropriate. An opt out facility should be utilised on non-service automated emails if possible; and
- Correct use of unsubscribe and opt in must be considered under the Spam Act 2003. Critical service-based email is permitted under the Spam Act 2003. Unsubscribe should not be automatically included as, if used, this may unsubscribe the recipient from all service-based

email. If in doubt refer to operational advice in the *Internal Communications Community of Practice*.

3.3 myOrientation

myOrientation serves as the University's principal method for student onboarding, providing personalised content within a prioritised task timeline. Its purpose is to optimise the student experience, alleviate overwhelm, and ensure timely, clear, and reliable delivery of critical information necessary for commencing studies at Griffith. Additionally, myOrientation integrates with the Orientation Planner, which serves as the definitive resource for all University orientation activities.

myOrientation is centrally curated, advised by experts across the institution, monitored and managed by Student Success, Student Life. Operational advice can be found in the *Internal Communications Community of Practice*.

3.3.1 myOrientation Principles

- Engage students in the University community;
- Inform students of vital information that will help prepare them to commence at the University and within their program;
- Guide students through logical and clear steps that enable their initial transition;
- Provide consistent, time sensitive and easily located content in a personalised and concise manner;
- Enable the University to monitor the progress of students through the early transition stage;
- Where possible reference existing online content curated by the subject matter expert and aligned with the Content Management System (CMS) workflows; and
- Be nested within myGriffith, the University's personalised student portal to provide seamless transition from commencement to continuing student status.

3.4 myGriffith

myGriffith serves as a portal with an announcement feature accessible to all students. It is the principal method for delivering administrative and promotional messages relevant to students' experiences at Griffith. Additionally, myGriffith messages can be targeted to various student cohorts and direct them to different systems and locations within the Griffith environment, ensuring efficiency and relevance of the content a student needs to consume.

myGriffith is centrally curated and monitored for effectiveness by Student Business Services. Operational advice can be found in the *Internal Communications Community of Practice*.

3.4.1 myGriffith Principles

- Guide students to and through processes throughout the student lifecycle in a time sensitive way, making use of platform functionality such as timed tiles and alerts over emails;
- Provide consistent and easily located content in a personalised and concise manner, reducing duplication;
- Act as a primary two-way communication channel, and include mechanisms for student feedback; and
- Where possible reference existing online content curated by the subject matter expert and aligned with the Content Management System (CMS) workflows.

3.5 Digital Screens

Digital screens offer outdoor digital signage opportunities visible to two primary audiences: students and staff. Griffith ensures that these audiences are shielded from irrelevant promotional noise unrelated to study or work to prioritise the delivery of critical or value-added information.

Digital screens must have approval from either the Head of Staff Communications or Head of Student Communications and Engagement, Internal Communications and Engagement.

3.5.1 Relevance to Both Audiences

- The content displayed on screens must be relevant to both staff and students.
- Staff-only messages are not posted on these screens.

3.5.2 Third-Party Advertising

- Third-party advertising is strictly prohibited unless it directly benefits students or staff.

3.5.3 News Items and Dwell Time

- News items are not promoted on these screens due to their low dwell time.
- These screens should be treated similarly to outdoor advertising media, such as billboards.

3.5.4 Appropriateness and Broad Reach

- Highly niche content is not suitable for this medium. Screens should prioritise broad-reaching information.

Operational advice is available in the *Internal Communications Community of Practice*.

3.6 Griffith App

The content available on the Griffith App caters to both staff and student audiences. It is essential to recognise that both of these groups are represented on this platform.

While subject matter may originate from various areas within Griffith, the Internal Communications and Engagement team (Marketing and Communications) must be consulted and agree to any content published or integrated into the App.

3.6.1 Functionality and Programming

- Technical aspects related to content functionality and programming fall under the purview of Digital Solutions.
- Seamless operation and user experience is a shared responsibility.

3.6.2 Push Notifications

- Governance for push notifications is overseen by the Internal Communications team (Marketing and Communications).
- Timely and relevant notifications enhance user engagement and/or student success.

3.6.3 Third-Party Advertising

- Third-party advertising is strictly prohibited unless it directly benefits students or staff.
- Any exceptions must align with the App's purpose and user needs.

3.7 Learning@Griffith (Canvas)

Content distributed within Learning at Griffith should maintain an academic focus, directly related to a student's enrolled course or program of study. While administrative messages can be communicated through Canvas, these messages will primarily reside in MyGriffith. This approach ensures that students can concentrate predominantly on their academic requirements while using the Canvas platform.

Program specialists and subject matter experts are responsible for curation and publishing of content created in Canvas and content must be informed and agreed by Learning Futures (Office of the Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Education)).

Pages, banners and pop-up alerts in Canvas must be informed and agreed by Learning Futures (Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education)).

Third-Party advertising is strictly prohibited unless it directly benefits students or staff. This must be approved by the Student Communications and Engagement team (Marketing and Communications).

4.0 Roles, responsibilities and delegations

As the University's strategy is for planned communications with minimal impromptu instances and overlaps, approvals should generally be sought and granted at the communications planning stage.

- Emergency, crisis and student critical communications are covered by the following, related documents:
 - [Emergency Management Plan](#)
 - [Crisis and Incident Response Plan](#)
 - [Student Critical Incident Management Policy](#)
- Various elements, departments and areas of Griffith will communicate with students over the duration of their study period. All bulk communications must have approval by the senior delegated officer of that area.
- The Student Communications and Engagement team in Marketing and Communications must be consulted and agree to any broad or bulk communications to ensure the principles of the *Student Lifecycle Communications Policy* and the Communications Strategy are being delivered.
 - Advancement is the delegated approver of bulk communications to Alumni;
 - Griffith Graduate Research School is the delegated approver of bulk communications to Higher Degree by Research candidates.

5.0 Definitions

Alumni refers to former students no longer active or studying who have completed at least 40 credit points.

Bulk communications: means any communications that are sent to a targeted or segmented group of recipients larger than one, for a non-transactional purpose.

Channel of communication: means a system or method used for interacting with other people.

Enterprise systems:

Enterprise core systems	Oracle CX the Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) The Broadcast Email System (BES) Learning@Griffith Salesforce Marketing Cloud
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Enterprise secondary systems	CareerBoard Cvent Microsoft office suite including Outlook
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Non-enterprise systems	Such as, but not limited to: Survey Monkey Vision6
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Student: refers to an individual who has accepted an offer to study at Griffith University including all who are actively enrolled, commencing and Higher Degree by Research candidates. It includes all with Active Enrolment Status, including those who are not 'carrying load' and students on approved Leave of Absence, Deferment or between enrolment periods.

6.0 Information

Title	Student Lifecycle Communication Policy
Document number	2024/0000057
Purpose	This Policy outlines the principles and governance that apply to student communications and engagement at Griffith.
Audience	Students
Category	Academic
Subcategory	Student Services
UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	This document aligns with Sustainable Development Goal/s: 4: Quality Education 10: Reduced Inequalities 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
Approval date	18 July 2024

Effective date 18 July 2024

Review date 2029

Policy advisor Vice President (Marketing and Communication)

Approving authority Academic Committee

7.0 Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Legislation

- Spam Act 2003
- Spam Regulations 2021
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- National Code of Practice
- Higher Education Provider Amendment (Support for Students Policy) Guidelines 2023

Policy

- Code of Conduct
- Information Security Policy
- Technology Code of Practice
- Student Charter Framework
- Support for Students Policy
- Equity, Diversity, and inclusion Policy
- Surveying of Griffith Students and Staff Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Information Management Policy
- Student Conduct, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Student General Code of Conduct
- Student Academic Integrity Policy
- Students with Disabilities Policy
- Student Critical Incident Management Policy

Procedure

- Accessibility and inclusion: best practice examples
- Learning at Griffith
- Thrive online
- Visual identity guidelines

Writing and editing guidelines
Alumni Engagement Procedure
Emergency Management Plan
Crisis and Incident Response Plan
Direct Marketing Procedure

Local Protocol

Internal Communications Community of Practice

Form

Internal communications request form
