

Internal Communications Policy

OVERVIEW

1. This policy sets out the expectations of how staff, students and alumni ("College members") use communication channels. The policy safeguards the interests of College members and the reputation of the College, both of which are potentially affected by improper use of these communications channels. The policy also informs our approach to taking appropriate action where these expectations are not met.
2. The policy covers:
 - 2.1. Principles of communication.
 - 2.2. Communication channels.
 - 2.3. Approval process for group communications.
3. Benefits of coordinated communication include:
 - 3.1. Reducing numbers of communications meaning that College members are more likely to engage with individual pieces of communication.
 - 3.2. Building trust and respect through transparent communication.
 - 3.3. Ensuring appropriately focused, delivered, coordinated, consistent, and relevant communication to build upon the staff and student experience.
4. This policy is applicable to all alumni, students and staff of the College when they are communicating with members of College in respect of College activities.
5. This policy should be read in conjunction with the [Bullying and Harassment Policy](#), [Acceptable Use Policy for Students](#), [Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech](#), and the [Staff and Student Relationship Policy](#).
6. The College may address continuous or serious breaches of this policy, with reference to:
 - Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures
 - Staff Disciplinary Procedures

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION

7. The College is committed to:
 - 7.1. Providing the channels to facilitate communication within its community to enable learning, research, effective operation, wellbeing support and community engagement.
 - 7.2. Using channels appropriately and professionally to provide relevant and necessary messages to its respective audiences.
 - 7.3. Preventing inappropriate or spam content being directed to individual or group student and staff emails.
 - 7.4. Preserving the credibility of those communications channels that are designated predominantly for official communications.
8. In all communications College members are reminded of their responsibility to the College, their colleagues and peers to ensure appropriate content at all times. College members are required to communicate in a way that is appropriate, respectful, courteous, and inclusive and accessible to all.
9. College members are reminded that all communications carried out on College platforms remain the property of the College and are retrievable. They may be accessed as evidence for complaints, grievances, conduct and disciplinarys, GDPR (including Subject Access Requests), and legal matters. Informal communications, such as Google Hangouts etc. are retrievable and disclosable in specific cases.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

10. This policy covers the use of College platforms. Some of these channels can be accessed by any College member, while others are managed by specific roles and/or departments.
 - 10.1. Email - individual and group emails
 - 10.2. Centralised texting services
 - 10.3. Newsletters
 - 10.4. College created sites on Social media and networking platforms to communicate about College events (College doesn't own the platform but uses it to communicate with a College audience)

EMAIL

11. Individual College email addresses of all members are accessible to the College community, using the email directory. This means that anyone using an individual email address (e.g. jane.smith@nchlondon.ac.uk) can email any other individual email address.
12. Emails should be College-related, appropriately directed, purposeful, clear and concise.
13. Email addresses of staff are also published on the College website, and may be provided to external callers (unless suspected to be phishing calls).

14. Students are provided with an individual email address when they join the College and all email correspondence relating to the College should be sent via this email address. Student email addresses are only available internally, they are not published on the College website and will not be provided to external callers.
15. Students holding Student Union Officer roles and society roles are provided with officer email addresses and those addresses are published on the College's website.
16. Alumni will continue to receive select communications to their College email address, as a lifelong member of the College. The Careers department manages the Alumni email group and personal email addresses are provided where students opt-in.
17. The College also uses group email addresses (see below)

EMAIL GROUP DEFINITIONS

18. The College creates email groups to facilitate communication. There are some email addresses that can be emailed by everyone
 - 18.1. External Facing email addresses are accessible to all email users internally and externally. These include:
 - Info@nchlondon.ac.uk
 - Press@nchlondon.ac.uk
19. Student Facing Professional Staff Groups are accessible to all students and staff. These groups include:
 - Registry
 - Student Support & Development
20. The ability to send email communication to group email addresses is restricted to support the principles of communication set out above and these groups can be emailed by specific individuals whose role or position requires the need to email these groups.
21. The Canvas virtual learning environment also enables staff to send group emails to students enrolled on their specific course pages
22. The table below sets out the categories of email groups and who can email these groups; where new groups are created that do not fit into these categories or where a special approach is needed this permission will be decided by Exco.

Categories of recipients	Specific email / text groups	Ability to email (includes members of groups below as individuals)
Staff	Staff - all current	Internal comms, Human Resources (HR), Facilities, Finance, Exco

Categories of recipients	Specific email / text groups	Ability to email (includes members of groups below as individuals)
	Staff - all faculty or sub groups	Internal comms, HR, Facilities, Exco, Head of Faculty
	Staff - professional staff or sub groups	Internal comms, HR, Facilities, Exco, SMT
Students	Students (save apprentices) - all current	Internal Comms, Registry, SS&D, SU and Exco
	Students -(save apprentices) by year group	Internal Comms, Registry, SS&D, SU and Exco, Careers
	Students - (save apprentices)by major & year	Faculty teaching, Internal Comms, Registry, SS&D, SU, Head of Faculty and Exco
	Students - (save apprentices)by minor & year	Faculty teaching, Internal Comms, Registry, SS&D, SU, Head of Faculty and Exco
	Students (save apprentices) by programme	Faculty teaching, Internal Comms, Careers, Registry, SS&D, SU, Head of Faculty, Programme Directors and Exco,
	Students by society or committee	Chair, Secretary of the society/committee, SU, Internal Comms, Exco
	Apprentices - all current	EDGE, Registry, SS&D, SU, ExCo
	Apprentices - by programme and year	EDGE, Registry, SS&D, SU, ExCo
Committees	Exco	Chair, Secretary of the committee, NCHNL Board, Exco
	Academic Board	Chair, Secretary of the committee, NCHNL Board, Exco
	Other committees	Chair, Secretary of the committee, Chair, Secretary of the committee to which the committee reports, Exco
Alumni	Alumni - all or by year	Internal Comms, Careers, Exco

23. The College's senior management will generally send formal communications from the 'Internal Communications' email address, and may send to any combination of email groups. Formal communications typically cover College-wide announcements including updates on teaching and learning, staff changes, health and safety, business changes, major events, formal staff and student surveys, consultations etc.
24. All emails from the Internal Communications email address are approved by at least one member of ExCo, and the frequency is as and when required, and are topic and stakeholder specific.
25. There may be instances where urgent matters such as disruption to building or facilities, health and safety, important timetable changes, or anything that relates to the students' experience and working environment is deemed time sensitive, important and necessary to communicate in short order. These communications from the Internal Communications email address are sent by appropriate role holders (with the express permission of their manager), and the frequency is as and when required, and are typically topic specific.

Events

26. All student organised events (e.g. SU, society, clubs, etc.) are communicated via a weekly email by the elected Student Union communications rep. Submissions for the weekly email are made using [this](#) form.
27. The Student Life team is responsible for communicating events (where a student audience is included) organised by staff or if the event is related to an Academic Programme of study. They are also responsible for communicating events for the Global Mobility Programme.
28. The frequency is no more than once a week, and they will be included in either the CruNCH Bites newsletter or the Global Mobility Programme newsletters.
29. Events are only able to be communicated once approved (where required) in accordance with the Prevent Policy, Managing External Speakers Policy and Room Booking terms and conditions policy and procedures.
30. Events are added to the central Canvas events calendar (or any superseding system), which is accessible to all College members and is managed by the Student Life team. These can include but are not limited to:
 - Formal College events (e.g. graduation, prize giving)
 - Career events
 - Wellness events
 - Prevent and quality training
 - Events throughout the year such as Black History Month
 - Professorial lectures

STUDENT UNION, SOCIETIES AND YEAR GROUP REP COMMUNICATIONS

31. Student Union Officers, Society representatives, and Year Group Representatives may appropriately communicate with the student groups only. The frequency is as and when required, and is typically topic specific and communicating events.

STAFF-ONLY EVENTS

32. Events under this category are likely to be training and workshops, all staff meetings, consultations etc. These events will be communicated to the relevant staff email groups by the appropriate role holder. The frequency is as and when required, and is typically topic specific. Calendar invites to these events are issued by the HR or Quality team using the NCH College Calendar and/or Quality Calendar.

ALUMNI COMMUNICATIONS

33. Graduates are transferred to their Alumni Year Group by the start of the next academic year. The Careers department are responsible for collating alumni's personal email addresses to include in the Alumni Year Group (along with their NCH email that they retain access to), and likewise are responsible for actioning any removal requests with the Facilities department.
34. Communications to Alumni groups are restricted to the Careers department, Academic Services, Internal Communications, and Student Life team (where appropriate). The frequency is as and when required, and is typically topic specific.
35. When communicating with the Alumni group and to protect personal email addresses from being widely visible, only BCC should be used. In calendar events, the guest list should not be visible.

GLOBAL MOBILITY COMMUNICATIONS

36. Communications for Global Mobility Programmes in London will follow the same guiding principles as NCH.

CENTRALISED TEXTING SERVICES

37. The College may use the central text messaging service to communicate with College members. It allows the College to spread important and time critical information, such as urgent changes to timetabling to avoid unnecessary travel, to reach members not reached through other channels (email, calls), to gather quick responses to health & safety matters. These communications are sent from the Resourcing department and are approved by a senior member of professional staff. The frequency is as and when required, but not to be used as a regular form of communication with College members.

NEWSLETTERS

38. The College newsletters share regular coordinated content with the Community. Sent communications are archived on Canvas under monthly communications for everyone to access. The newsletters are broken down into the following:

38. **cruNCH**

- cruNCH is a twice-a-term College newsletter sharing information and updates from staff and student communities. The Marketing department appropriately collates and distributes this newsletter using email groups.

Submission email: marketing.team@nchlondon.ac.uk

39. **cruNCH Bites**

- A weekly newsletter sent every Tuesday to enhance the student experience. The newsletter is used as a tool to share key messages such as on student wellbeing events, study tips, where to access support, student surveys, and weekly events organised by Staff.
- The Student Life team is responsible for collating content and for the weekly distribution to the community. Hyperlinks to Student Newsletters may be included in cruNCH Bites, at the request of the SU.

STUDENT NEWSLETTER

40. A weekly [student newsletter](#) sent every Monday. The newsletter is a way in which students can communicate key information with all student cohorts, this will include student led events. Content needs to be submitted via this form and approved.

PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTERS

41. Partnership newsletters - Northeastern University will communicate to the NCH community at least twice a week. The content comes from Northeastern to update on activities that are happening across all partner sites. NCH has no control over the content and timing of these communications.

COLLEGE SITES ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND NETWORKING PLATFORMS

42. The College supports and uses social media and other online communication tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok as well as College provided tools such as Canvas, Google hangouts and Zoom.
43. Conduct on social media using, or interacting with, College accounts is treated the same as any other conduct, staff and students need to adhere to the Colleges Policies and Procedures (insert relevant link).
44. When using social media sites linked to the College you must be responsible for what and how you communicate. Consider the language and comments used on photographs and videos.
45. Make sure you are factually correct in what you write and that you have the appropriate permissions when writing about another organisation.
46. Protect yourself, your privacy and the College's confidential information by being careful about what you share and the security settings that you use.
47. The College does not monitor staff and student private social media accounts but it does monitor mentions of New College of the Humanities so it can answer directly to those raising questions and concerns on the College.
48. If the College receives complaints, relating to the use of College accounts or private accounts that relate to College matters or to individuals as a result of being a member of College, such as bullying, defamatory, harassing etc or identifies activity that may breach the College standards as detailed in the Academic Handbook it may investigate and take action.
49. Staff are prohibited from direct messaging students on personal and/or social platforms, such as (but not limited to) texting, LinkedIn, Whatsapp, Instagram, Facebook etc. save where an explicit permission has been granted by a member of Exco (an example being the student ambassador scheme).

Title: Internal Communications Policy					
Approved by: Executive Committee					
Version number	Date approved	Date published	Owner	Location	Proposed next review date
1.0	September 2021	September 2021	Director of Admissions, Recruitment & Marketing	NCH Academic Handbook / Policies & Procedures / General / Operations	September 2023
Referenced documents	Bullying & Harassment Policy; Acceptable Use Policy; Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech Policy; Staff & Student Relationship Policy				
External Reference Point(s)	UK Quality Code Theme: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access				