FALMOUTH
UNIVERSITY

STUDENT CONTACT POLICY

This document sets out the policy for students, academic and technical staff, aiming to provide clear guidance to ensure clear articulation of our institutional expectations when communicating with our learners.

Organisation: Falmouth University

Applies to: Staff & students

Policy owned by: Quality Assurance & Enhancement (QAE)

Required consultees: Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Services) Head Of Communications, Head Of Legal & Compliance

Approved by: Learning, Teaching & Quality Committee

Date approved: 23 July 2025

Review date: 26 July 2028

STUDENT CONTACT POLICY

1   PURPOSE

1.1   This document sets out the contact policy for students, academic and technical staff, aiming to provide clear guidance to ensure clear articulation of our institutional expectations when communicating with our learners. This policy and its associated linked guidance are intended to help establish clear behavioural boundaries in the interests of learning community wellbeing and to aid our commitment to offering an excellent student experience.

2   SCOPE

2.1   This policy covers communication between:

- **Academic Staff** - covers both academic and technical staff as a part of the direct student learning experience
- **Students** – covers all enrolled students, both online and on-campus

3   RELATED INFORMATION

3.1   This policy should be read alongside of the following related policies, guidance and procedures:

Audience	Links to guidance
Students	• Regulations, Policies & Procedures for Students
Staff	• Social Media Policy • Compassionate Communications Style Guide

4   KEY DEFINITIONS

4.1   Integral to this policy is the understanding of what is meant by formal, informal, and social communication in a university context, related to learner communications. This is defined as follows for the purpose of this policy:

- **Formal –** communication directly related to the academic progress of a student, forms a part of a formal record of communication and is typically time bound. It should be backed by an institutional procedure to be able to progress and will provide an official document of record.

- **Informal –** communication unrelated to academic progress and typically is an enhancement of the learning experience such as questions about events that are running, etc. and is not deemed part of the official document of record

- **Social –** anything outside of the direct academic experience

5 STUDENT CONTACT PRINCIPLES

5.1 Falmouth University is committed to ensuring all students benefit from an excellent student experience and feel part of a supportive community throughout their studies and beyond. Part of aiding this experience is through having clearly defined communication channels for agreed purposes.

5.2 Institutionally, we remain flexible to engage with other supported communication route(s) in service of enhancing our learners' experience but are clear that we have one preferred and clearly structured set of expectations when using email as the formal communication route.

5.3 University accounts will be used to communicate in all cases i.e., University email account, your online account for use in MS Teams etc.

5.4 The principle of "less is more" should be adopted, with communications carefully thought through for both content and tone, and the appropriate communication channel used.

5.5 All academic staff and students should be encouraged to check their email on a regular basis and respond in a timely manner where necessary.

5.6 Both parties commit to answering and addressing any questions asked as fully as possible to aid learning and understanding.

5.7 Staff are not permitted to collect and/or use other personal email accounts for correspondence as covered in this policy.

5.8 In recognition that some of our learners might require slight adjustments if they are online students, the principles of this policy remain the same.

6 STUDENT CONTACT METHODS

6.1 Our primary method of communication is **email** for all formal correspondence between staff and students.

6.2 Other University supported communication channels will be deemed informal correspondence and will not be subject to the expected response times as stated in this policy.

6.3 The University does not promote the use of any social media for formal or informal communications as a part of the learner experience.

7 RESPONSE TIMES

7.1 Academic staff are expected to normally respond to queries made *via* email within 3 working days (72 hours) between Monday to Friday, with no expectation of reply at the weekend or outside of work hours.

7.2 If academic staff know in advance that they will be unavailable to respond to student emails within the next 72 hours, they are expected to set up an "out of office" reply to indicate their anticipated period of absence, their anticipated date of return and who to contact in their absence.

7.3 Informal communications have no agreed set response time, but staff and students should endeavour to respond in a timely manner.

8 CONTACT INFORMATION

8.1 All staff should clearly state their work pattern (including days and hours if part time) as a part of their email signature.

8.2 Out of office automatic responses should be set when staff are out of the office with a clear indications of expected return date and an alternative contact.

8.3 Students should ensure that their contact information is kept up to date on [MyFalmouth](#).

8.4 See detailed staff guidance in [Modern Office Guidance documentation](#).

9 CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

9.1 Quality Assurance & Enhancement (QAE) at QAE@falmouth.ac.uk.