



# THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

## Office of the University CIO

TITLE	Policy on the Use of Electronic Mail	
CLASSIFICATION	Operational - Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	
Sub Class	POLICY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GUIDELINES <input type="checkbox"/> PROCEDURES <input type="checkbox"/>	
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## Contents

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1.	Introduction .....	3
1.1.	Purpose .....	3
1.2.	Scope.....	3
1.3.	Authority .....	3
1.4.	Review .....	3
1.5.	Policy Ratification and Promulgation.....	3
1.6.	Policy Monitoring .....	4
1.7.	Key Definitions.....	4
2.	Policy Statements .....	5
2.1.	Applicable Laws .....	5
2.2.	Compliance with other University Policies.....	5
2.3.	UWI Email Addresses.....	5
2.4.	General Access and Use of UWI Email .....	6
2.5.	Using Email to Conduct University Business.....	6
2.6.	Unrelated Business .....	7
2.7.	Personal Use of UWI Personal Email Accounts.....	7
2.8.	Non-Assignee Access to Email Accounts.....	8
2.9.	PROCESS - Requesting Access to Email Accounts .....	8
3.	Email Content.....	9
3.1.	Creation of Messages.....	9
3.2.	University Records .....	9
3.3.	Offensive Electronic Content.....	9
4.	Misuse of University Email System .....	9
4.1.	Penalties for Misuse.....	9
5.	Localised Policies.....	10
6.	Statement of Liability .....	10
7.	User Acceptance .....	10
7.1.	User Acceptance Clause.....	10
8.	Version Control .....	11

## 1. Introduction

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The University of the West Indies (“UWI” or “University”) is recognised as the leading Higher Education Institution resident in the English-speaking Caribbean. The UWI views electronic mail (“email”) as an important business tool which, if effectively used, improves communication, information sharing and the exchange of ideas. As such, email, which delivers information conveniently in a timely and cost-effective manner, has been adopted as an official mode of communication within the University and as an accepted form of business communication with parties outside the University.

### 1.1. Purpose

This Policy document serves to reduce the risk of harm to the University and that of its members by informing members of the UWI community (staff, student, alumni, and business partners) including visitors, of UWI’s stance, as well as the rights and obligations of UWI community members, concerning the acceptable use of the University’s email, related services, systems and facilities. The document is an update to, and replacement of, The Electronic Mail & Messaging Services Policy (2008).

### 1.2. Scope

This policy outlines the conditions for the use of UWI electronic messages (e-mail) and applies to the following:

- All electronic mail systems and services provisioned or owned by the UWI.
- All users, holders, and uses of the UWI electronic messaging services; and
- All UWI e-mail records in the possession of UWI employees or other authorized users of electronic messaging services provided by the UWI.

This policy represents the basic requirements that each campus shall meet. However, each campus retains the liberty to draft its own policy customized to its local circumstance. Where there is a conflict between this and any campus-specific policy, this policy shall supersede the campus-specific policy.

### 1.3. Authority

The Office of the University CIO, in conjunction with the University ICT group, has the authority to draft this and other University ICT policies. This Policy (as well as other ICT policies) will be ratified and promulgated as outlined in section 1.5.

### 1.4. Review

This Policy is scheduled for review 24 months after it has been ratified and accepted for promulgation.

### 1.5. Policy Ratification and Promulgation

This Policy is enacted at the University level. Implementation and monitoring of the Policy will be done at the Campus level by the respective Campus IT Services.

The promulgation process involves the following steps:

- initial draft by the Policy Sub-unit within the Office of the University CIO.
- circulating to members of the University ICT group for feedback.

- circulating to members of the wider University for feedback,
- tabling at a meeting of the ICT Steering Committee at each campus,
- tabling at a meeting of the University ICT Steering Committee for initial acceptance,
- presenting to the University Finance and General Purposes Committee for ratification. (Policy ratification at the University level is done by the University Finance and General Purposes Committee on behalf of University Council.)
- presenting to the Campus Finance and General Purposes Committee for ratification or noting

### 1.6. [Policy Monitoring](#)

Scrutinizing to ensure compliance, will be undertaken by the University ICT Steering Committee, through the Relevant IT Authorities across the University

### 1.7. [Key Definitions](#)

**Campus IT Services (CITS)** The generic description for the department, at each campus, which provides information technology and related services to the campus (and UWI affiliated units at that campus).

All centre departments, that is, departments which operate at the regional level, are affiliated with a campus and are therefore serviced by the CITS at the campus with which the department is affiliated.

CIO	Chief Information Officer
The University ICT Group	The UWI/Campus ICT Steering Committees or their designate.
Legal Discovery	A phase in a civil or criminal case where the parties involved exchange information and evidence relevant to the case.
Administrative Purposes	Functions pertaining to the operations of the University.
Relevant IT Authority	The CIO at the respective Campus or Centre (or his/her designate).
Email System	The set of components, including email addresses, servers, and related services, systems, and facilities.
Email Service Monitoring	Real-time automated observation which involves the logging and analysis of data regarding the email system's infrastructure or event-based observation involving the collection and analysis of data with regard to the email facilities in response to anomalous events.
Assignee	User assigned a UWI personal email address.
Service Account	A special type of user account intended to represent a non-human user.

## 2. Policy Statements

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### 2.1. [Applicable Laws](#)

All UWI staff shall adhere to the applicable laws, within their jurisdiction, concerning the use of email.

### 2.2. [Compliance with other University Policies](#)

In addition to this Policy, users shall also conform to the following UWI policies:

- a. Data Protection Policy (2020);
- b. The Information Security Policy (2016)
- c. Policy on Intellectual Property and Commercialisation (2015);
- d. The Acceptable Use Policy, Information and Communication Technology (2014);
- e. Revised Procedures for Handling Confidential and Highly Restricted Documents (2013);
- f. The University Archives and Records Management Policy (2012);
- g. The Code of Principles and Responsibilities for Students (2001);
- h. Statement of Principles/Code of Ethics for Academic and Senior Administrative Staff (1998);
- i. Policy on Release of Information about Students (1997).

### 2.3. [UWI Email Addresses](#)

UWI email addresses are those where the domain name (the characters to the right of the '@' sign) is a UWI domain name. UWI domain names are those domain names with ".uwi.edu", ".cavehill.uwi.edu", "open.uwi.edu" and "uwimona.edu.jm" as a part of, or the entire set of characters.

UWI email addresses may be either personal (UWI Personal) or entity (UWI Entity). A UWI Personal email address is normally given to an individual and is composed of the user's name in the form [firstname.lastname@uwidomain](#). Examples of Personal UWI email addresses:

- [john.doe@uwi.edu](mailto:john.doe@uwi.edu)
- [john.doe@cavehill.uwi.edu](mailto:john.doe@cavehill.uwi.edu) – **Cave Hill**
- [john.doe@uwimona.edu.jm](mailto:john.doe@uwimona.edu.jm) – **Mona**
- [john.doe@open.uwi.edu](mailto:john.doe@open.uwi.edu) – **Open**
- [john.doe@sta.uwi.edu](mailto:john.doe@sta.uwi.edu) – **St Augustine**

The email address will be composed of alphanumeric characters only. Where a name possesses special characters, such as hyphens, the special character will be eliminated (e.g., Joan Smith-Grey will have the email address [joan.smithgrey@uwi.edu](mailto:joan.smithgrey@uwi.edu)). Where two or more individuals share the same name, UWI Personal email addresses will have a distinctive part added (e.g., [john.doe01@cavehill.uwi.edu](mailto:john.doe01@cavehill.uwi.edu)).

UWI Entity email addresses are those given to entities recognized as being a part of the UWI community such as a faculty, a department, a project, or a service account for a particular software application. The first part of a UWI Entity email address is comprised of characters representing the entity in question and not the name of an individual within the UWI community.

Examples of UWI Entity email addresses are:

- library@cavehill.uwi.edu – **Cave Hill**
- admissions@uwimona.edu.jm – **Mona**
- cio@open.uwi.edu – **Open**
- cits@sta.uwi.edu – **St Augustine**

#### 2.4. General Access and Use of UWI Email

By accepting and using a UWI email address, each user agrees and consents that the University, through designated officers of the relevant CITS, may access the email account for administrative (i.e. verification of official communicate and/or transactions), security (i.e investigation of anomalous events) and other purposes permitted, or required, by law and/or the University's rules (statutes, ordinances, regulations, policies, and procedures). This access may require the University, or an email provider acting on UWI's behalf (where applicable), to disclose to the University or any legally authorised petitioning third party (i.e. requests consequent upon legal discovery), information stored within an email account.

For the aforementioned reasons, users of the UWI email facilities are advised not to utilize their designated UWI email for private matters involving sensitive information.

#### 2.5. Using Email to Conduct University Business

For the purposes of this Policy, 'University Business' includes emails sent to students, staff, suppliers, collaborators, or any entity or individual, or sent from a member of the University community in their capacity as an agent of the University. Examples of UWI Business emails are:

- messages to students about course work or exams.
  - messages to IT staff requesting system support.
  - messages to suppliers requesting a service/quotation on behalf of the University.
- a. Only the University provided email address (UWI Entity email address or UWI Personal email address) shall be used when conducting University Business over email. No other email addresses, i.e. non-UWI email addresses, are to be used for this purpose.
  - b. Each UWI Entity email address shall have at least one responsible person appointed to administer it. That responsible person shall comply with this Policy and shall adhere to the statements herein. Guidelines for the handling of UWI Entity email addresses are the same as those for UWI Personal email addresses.
  - c. To maintain privacy and for proper information management, emails sent to UWI Entity email addresses shall not be subject to an automated redirect to a non-UWI email address.
  - d. Staff replying on the behalf of a University entity, to an email sent to an UWI Entity email address, shall clearly state that the response is to a message sent to the UWI Entity email address. The reply shall emphasize, or the return address shall be set in such a manner, that future contacts will also be directed to a UWI Entity or UWI Personal email address.
  - e. All email shall contain the footer below referring to the confidentiality of the message.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** This email (including any attachments) may contain confidential, proprietary and/or privileged information. Any duplication, copying, distribution, dissemination, transmission, disclosure or use in any manner of this email (including any attachments) without the authorisation of the sender is strictly prohibited. If you receive this email (including any attachments) in error, please notify the sender and delete this email (including any attachments) from your system. Thank you.

A formal signature shall be appended to all outgoing email messages. The signature shall include, at a minimum, include the following:

- name and title of the sender;
- position at UWI;
- UWI address (department/unit, faculty, campus, location);
- Telephone number (including extension);
- Email address.

A more detailed sample template can be found at: <https://www.uwi.edu/brandidentity/>  
Pg 44

## 2.6. Unrelated Business

Except where authorization has been sought and obtained from the University Registrar (or designate) or the respective Campus Registrar (or designate), email resources shall not be used in connection with compensated non-University work, business unrelated to the University, or for the benefit of organizations not related to the University. The preceding sentence shall not apply to the use of email resources in connection with scholarly pursuits (such as faculty publishing activities or work for professional societies) or other strategic or community alliances.

Where authorized, use for non-University activities, as aforementioned, or any other incidental use, shall not be excessive. (See 2.7 for explanations of excessive use).

## 2.7. Personal Use of UWI Personal Email Accounts

Although provided for conducting University Business, it is generally recognized that UWI Personal email addresses will be used for private, non-University Business (different from that described in section 2.6 above). Use of UWI Personal email accounts for non-University (personal) activities does not restrict the University in its administration of these email accounts. The University reserves the right to scan all emails transmitted using a UWI Personal email address and prescribes the following for the non-university work use of UWI Personal email addresses:

- a. Use of a UWI Personal email address to undertake an employee's or a student's private matters should be on a small scale and should not impede the functions of the University. Use for commercial, or political purposes, such as private entrepreneurship or electoral advertising, for elections outside of the University, is forbidden.
- b. Use for University elections and activities of student organizations and labour unions representing UWI staff is permitted.

- c. Private email messages shall be clearly separated from messages belonging to the University. Staff shall immediately move any private messages, having arrived at the UWI Personal email address, to separate folders, the names of which shall clearly state the privacy of the messages (e.g. “private”, “personal”). This applies both to received and sent messages.
- d. No user shall use the University Email System to send chain letters or mass email to all, or an unreasonable proportion of the University community. The maximum number of participants to which emails can be sent using a UWI personal or a UWI entity email is defined by the respective CITS based on infrastructure limitations. Mass email distribution shall only be done by the respective CITS or Marketing Units and requests for mass email distribution by stakeholders of the UWI are considered on a case by case basis.

## 2.8. Non-Assignee Access to Email Accounts

The contents of any UWI personal email account may be accessed by UWI authorised personnel besides the intended recipient in circumstances that include, but not limited to:

- 2.8.1. Designated CITS administrators are authorised to investigate (access/isolate) any UWI email account that is identified, through routine email service monitoring, as anomalous and adversely affecting the performance and/or integrity of the email systems.
- 2.8.2. UWI Senior Officials (Principals, Deans and Heads of Departments etc.) may request access to specified contents of an email account for former staff and/or student, to retrieve information vital to the operations of said department providing the information cannot be retrieved by any other reasonable means.
- 2.8.3. The UWI CITS are legally bound to provide access to specified contents of an UWI email account if so petitioned through a legal request made by a law enforcement agency or other legally empowered government entity from any of its seventeen (17) contributing countries.

Excepting cases outlined in [Section 2.8.1](#), all scenarios where access to an UWI email account is being sought, by a candidate besides the assignee, must be initiated through the Request Access process outlined in [Section 2.9](#).

## 2.9. PROCESS - Requesting Access to Email Accounts

- 2.9.1. An appeal must be submitted in writing by the requesting authority i.e Principal, head of department, dean, or an external party via legal request.
- 2.9.2. The access request must include the name of the staff, student or alumni whose email is being requested, the reason for the request, the specific emails that need to be accessed and the list of people that require access.
- 2.9.3. The request must be reviewed and approved by the University/Campus' Legal Counsel and Data Protection Office.



- 2.9.4. On approval, the authorized person will be given access to the specified staff or student's email/s (the authorized person/s must only be granted access to the emails that are relevant to the request).
- 2.9.5. The authorized person/s must not disclose the contents of the emails to anyone outside the list of personnel provided in the official request.

### 3. Email Content

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The content of electronic messages qualifies as recorded material and is subject to the same rules and regulations as any other type of record created, used, or received and retained by the University throughout the course of business.

#### 3.1. [Creation of Messages](#)

The same etiquette applying to face-to-face communication or to traditional written communication, also apply to electronic communication. Messages should reflect professional and courteous drafting, particularly since they are easily forwarded to others. All users of the university email systems should assume that the contents may be read by persons beside the addressee[s].

#### 3.2. [University Records](#)

Messages sent or received on behalf of the University and which provide evidence of an activity, transaction or event must be regarded as official University records. Such records must be retained in an official repository. Their disposal must be in accordance with approved retention and disposition schedules. Records relative to matters subject to ongoing or threatened legal action or any investigation must be retained and should not be disposed of, even if the retention period has been met on the records retention schedule, except as advised by the University Legal Counsel.

#### 3.3. [Offensive Electronic Content](#)

It is strictly prohibited to send harassing, abusive, intimidating, discriminatory or other offensive electronic messages. It is a misuse of the facilities, and may in certain cases, be illegal for a user to receive, transmit, display or store such offensive material using University equipment. Such misuse may result in disciplinary or legal action being taken against those responsible.

### 4. Misuse of University Email System

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Actions which run contrary to those stipulated in 2.1 to 2.7 are deemed as misuse of the University Email System.

#### 4.1. [Penalties for Misuse](#)

Misuse of the UWI Email System constitutes a breach of this Policy. The University/Campus Registrars (or their designates), as custodians of the University's records, may restrict or prohibit the use of accounts as well as any other electronic resources when there is evidence found of misuse of an UWI email account.

Where appropriate, the Registrars or their designates may: institute disciplinary proceedings against a staff member or student; take legal action against the offending party; or request external entities to take action against offenders.

The above penalties are subject to change as University Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations and Policies as well as local laws change. Access to UWI ICT resources is conditional on the observance of this policy.

## 5. Localised Policies

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Notwithstanding the broad elements of this Policy, CITS may establish or seek to establish complementary policies, standards, guidelines or procedures that refine or extend the provisions of this Policy. All such refinements or extensions shall comply with this Policy, University statutes, ordinances, regulations, as well as national laws.

## 6. Statement of Liability

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UWI shall not be liable for any errors, omissions, loss or damage claimed or incurred due to any use that does not comply with this Policy or the policies cited herein of any University information asset.

## 7. User Acceptance

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All users of UWI's ICT resources are required to signify acceptance of UWI's ICT Policies upon login to UWI's ICT resources and data networks. UWI's Use of Electronic Mail Policy is included in the list of UWI's ICT Policies governed by the following User Acceptance Clause:

### 7.1. User Acceptance Clause

As of August 1, 2009, unless you have formally indicated your acceptance of UWI's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) policies you will not be able to login to your assigned computer or join UWI's domain using your personal computer. You can view the ICT polices at: <https://www.uwi.edu/policies>

Queries relating to the ICT policies should be directed to the Campus Registrar.