# Student communications pack for new starters

*This guidance is saved on the [document store](#).*

## Welcome to The University of Manchester

If you have a student communications responsibility as part of your role, you're an honorary member of our Communications team – welcome!

How you say something is just as important as what you say, and the interactions you have with students shape their experience during their time at Manchester. To help you with your student communications, we've rounded up some key guidance and training in this document.

## Training

- If you write for web, we recommend booking on to our [Writing for Web course](#). This includes both SEO and general writing principles, so may be of interest even if you don't manage webpages.
- We're developing a similar newsletter writing course. If you're interested in this, speak to your Faculty's Student Communications Officer.
- If you look after any University social media channels, we recommend our [social media practitioner training](#).

## Tone of voice, house style and brand

- Manchester's brand encompasses our personality and highlights our strengths and values. Visit our [StaffNet brand pages](#) for guidance on how to implement our brand narrative and further helpful resources.
- Our visual identity is how we use brand colours, our logo, photography and more to maintain a professional and consistent image. Visit our [StaffNet visual identity pages](#) for guidelines and support.
- Our tone of voice is the way we express our brand personality in writing – what we say and, more importantly, how we say it. Visit our [Tone of Voice StaffNet pages](#) for guidance and golden rules.
- Our house style guide sets out how we should use language consistently, from how to write numbers to agreed terminology and more. It also confirms how we use certain terms that could be open to interpretation. Read our [house style guide on StaffNet](#).
- Our [inclusive language guide](#) outlines how to use inclusive language to avoid biases, slang or expressions that exclude certain groups based on age, race, ethnicity, physical or mental health, gender or sexual orientation.
- Search engine optimisation, or SEO, refers to the tactics we use to ensure users can locate relevant information on our websites easily via search engines. Visit [StaffNet for SEO guidance](#).

- Finally, when writing as The University of Manchester, be approachable, clear and consistent. We recommend you use inclusive and accessible Plain English language. Plain English helps the readers to concentrate on the message being communicated rather than getting distracted by complicated words and phrases. It is faster to write and read, and translates your message in a friendlier, more accessible way. You can also use the Gunning FOG index tool to check the accessibility of your writing.

## Guide to using Spotler or Outlook emails

If you regularly send emails to students, such as newsletters, you may benefit from using Spotler, our email marketing service. Here is a guide to using Spotler or Outlook emails and how we can support you to be set up and trained.

For more advice on designing emails, and guidance around their look and feel, read the email template guidelines.

## Social media channels

Our StaffNet pages are there to support your work on social media – you'll find key information and guidance that includes:

- Top 10 FAQs – including processes for new accounts and dealing with negative comments
- Best practice guides per channel
- How to ensure your social media content is accessible
- How to keep accounts and channels secure
- Visual identity (account images, backgrounds, image and video specifications)

## Our Student Communications and Engagement Strategic Framework

Our Student Communications and Engagement Strategic Framework serves as our communications commitment to our students. Developed in collaboration with the Students' Union and a panel of students, this sets mutual responsibilities for positive, two-way communications and opportunities for engagement.

Read the Framework.

A slimmed down, 'public facing' version of this is available on our corporate website as our Student communications commitment.

## Further support

Although this document covers the basics, there's much more marketing and communications support available, depending on what you're looking to achieve. For further resources and guidance, including advice around photography, video and much more, visit the Directorate of Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment StaffNet pages.

If you have any questions or would like support, you're welcome to contact us. For Faculty-specific student communications, contact your Faculty's Student Communications Officer, otherwise you can find details of the wider team on StaffNet.