



## Student Professionalism Information for Students

### INTRODUCTION

The Faculty is committed to preparing you for the intellectual and ethical challenges of practising in the legal profession. As future lawyers representing the interests of others, you will be subject to high standards of competency, honesty and trust. As a professional, you will be expected to work effectively and professionally with clients, colleagues, the courts, opponents and the general community. More broadly, you will also be responsible for upholding the rule of law and the interests of justice.

During your studies you must comply with the University's Student Code of Conduct (see the Academic Handbook Part 3: Discipline Regulations at [bond.edu.au/current-students/services-support/forms-policies/handbook](http://bond.edu.au/current-students/services-support/forms-policies/handbook)).

The information below expands upon the standards contained in the Student Code of Conduct.

## COLLEGIALITY

Collegiality and professionalism go hand-in-hand to ensure a constructive learning environment in which everyone can participate freely and equally. For example, you should:

- Show respect to fellow students, teachers, other University staff, guests and visitors, including those from diverse backgrounds;
- Behave professionally and courteously when attending events off campus as a Bond Law student;
- Participate constructively in class discussions and debates (as well as staff-student consultations, and Faculty, University and student events and competitions) without resorting to disruptive, overbearing, bullying, discriminatory, racist, abusive or offensive language or behaviour;
- Use courteous language in oral or written communications (including emails) when seeking assistance, asserting a right or interest, or registering a concern or complaint;
- Turn your mobile phone off or to silent mode when in class or consultations;
- Not record classes without prior approval;
- Not use laptops or other mobile devices to access social media sites (such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter), internet-based telephonic or video conferencing services (such as Skype or Facetime), or browse emails or websites not relevant to the class discussion on your laptop, iPad or other mobile device;
- Use Faculty facilities fairly – it is never acceptable to simply ‘commandeer’ a room because it is open and empty, so make sure you book the room (and if you don’t need it, please cancel the booking); and
- Leave Faculty rooms as you find them – clean, no eating or rubbish strewn about, chairs pushed in and desks in the correct configuration.

Your teachers will extend to you the same level of consideration and professional regard, although this does not preclude them from disciplining misbehaviour and speaking frankly where academic performance is unacceptably poor.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Cheating and plagiarism undermine the integrity of the Faculty’s academic programs. Under the Student Code of Conduct, the sanctions for academic misconduct are very serious, and can include a fail grade for the subject and possible suspension or expulsion from the University.

For you as law students, the consequences are even more severe – you risk your prospects of being admitted to the legal profession after completing your law studies. This is because the admitting authorities require law graduates to disclose any findings of academic misconduct in their application for admission, and may exercise their discretion to refuse admission to anyone they deem is not a ‘fit and proper person’. The authorities may also remove any lawyer from the roll of legal practitioners if they subsequently discover the lawyer failed to fully disclose academic misconduct in their admission application.

Cheating is acting in a way to achieve an unfair advantage for yourself or another in any form of assessment.

Examples of cheating include:

- Using answer guides prepared by others to tutorial or seminar questions and problems, or to other forms of assessment such as assignments or moots, in such a way as to misrepresent your answers as the product of your own thought and study;
- Producing, distributing or selling such answer guides for the purposes of assisting other students to misrepresent their answers as their own;
- Submitting work produced by an external agent or third party (ghost-writer) as your own original piece of work; and
- Using unauthorised materials or electronic devices in an examination.

Plagiarism is misrepresenting as one’s own original work another’s ideas, interpretations, words, or creative works; and / or one’s own previous ideas, interpretations, words, or creative work without acknowledging that it was used previously (i.e. self-plagiarism). These ideas, interpretations, words, or works may be found in published and unpublished documents, print and / or electronic media, designs, music, sounds, images, photographs or computer codes, or gained through working in a group.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- Submitting or copying another’s work as your own;
- Submitting work developed jointly with another without acknowledging the fact;
- Directly quoting any part of another person’s work without appropriate acknowledgment;
- Unacknowledged summaries of another person’s work without appropriate acknowledgment; and
- Using or developing unacknowledged ideas derived from another person’s work without appropriate acknowledgment.

## ENFORCEMENT

Your teachers will impose penalties on your assessments if you exceed the word limits, submit after the due date without prior approval for an extension, or reference inappropriately. They also reserve the right to deduct marks from class participation in flagrant or repeated instances of anti-collegial and unprofessional behaviour, or unacceptable use of technology.

Your teacher will refer more serious cases of misconduct to the Office of the Executive Dean for investigation and resolution. Students who witness or are victims of another student’s misconduct may write to or meet with the Associate Dean (Student Affairs and Service Quality), who will refer the matter to the Office of the Executive Dean for investigation and resolution, where warranted.

# Student Professionalism and Guidelines

## PROFESSIONAL EMAIL ETIQUETTE

Learning how to craft a professional email is an essential skill to master in your first semester of law school. A significant percentage of your communication with your teachers will be via email and it is important to remember that teachers have many emails to respond to every day. A courteous and thoughtfully constructed email is much more likely to receive the kind of response that you desire.

Set out on below is an example of a student / teacher email that includes each of the key elements of professionalism. Following the example is a brief explanation of each element. Follow these guidelines in all of your email communications with teachers and always use your Bond (rather than personal) email account. Ensure that your emails are always grammatically correct and free of spelling errors, and that you carefully proof read and reflect upon the content of your emails before sending.

### ELEMENT 1: THE SUBJECT

Ensure that your subject line includes the subject name and that the description is clear, succinct and reflective of the content of your email.

### ELEMENT 2: THE GREETING

This is where you establish that you view your relationship with your teacher as a professional one. Use 'Dear', or if that feels too formal, you can use 'Hello' or 'Good afternoon / morning'. You should use

'Hi' only if your teacher uses that greeting in his or her response. Do not use 'Hey', 'G'day', 'Howdy', 'Heya' or any other similarly informal greetings.

If you use an honorific, ensure you use the right one. The possibilities are Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor. If you are an international student who is accustomed to calling all teachers 'Professor X' (regardless of their official title), that is acceptable. While the vast majority teachers at Bond are comfortable with students addressing them by their first name, using an honorific and surname (spelt correctly) maybe safer. You can use their first name when they have given you explicit permission to do so (which most teachers will do in the first lecture) or when they sign off with their first name.

### ELEMENT 3: THE NICETY

You could include an introductory remark that recognises your common humanity. Something like 'I hope you had a pleasant weekend' is ideal. This is not an essential element

### ELEMENT 4: THE REMINDER

Explaining precisely who you are is very important, especially if it's the first time you are contacting your teacher. If you are not in his or her class, explain your desired relationship e.g. 'I am interested in enrolling in your International Trade Law subject next semester'. If you are certain the teacher will know you by name, you can leave this out.

## PROFESSIONAL EMAIL EXAMPLE

**Subject: Legal Foundations B - Content Query (Division of Powers) [1]**

**Dear Professor Smith, [2]**

**I hope you had a pleasant weekend. [3]**

**I am a student in your Legal Foundations subject. My tutorial group meets at 10am on Tuesdays. [4]**  
**I am writing to seek some clarification on a point you made in this week's tutorial regarding the 'federal balance'. You stated that the High Court is primarily responsible for the centralisation of legislative power and I am unsure as to why exactly that is the case. I have reviewed my notes on the division of powers and the Commonwealth Constitution and I think that the answer lies in the High Court's expansive interpretation of the heads of power in s 51 of the Constitution. Is this correct? If not, would you mind clarifying this point for me? If it is more convenient for you to discuss this matter in person, I am more than happy to attend your office during your consultation hours. [5]**

**I look forward to hearing from you. Regards,**  
**Pat Professional [6]**

### ELEMENT 6: THE SIGN-OFF

Common appropriate sign-offs include 'Regards', 'Kind regards', 'Thank you', 'Best', 'All the best', and 'Sincerely'. The sign-off is an expression of gratitude.

### ELEMENT 5: THE REASON

The important aspects of this element include:

- Explain the reason for your email succinctly and clearly.
- Ensure that the tone is professional and courteous throughout. Any hint of a demanding, aggressive, or impatient tone will not win you any favours with the teacher.
- Ensure that the answer to your question is not in the Subject Outline or another obvious location on iLearn.
- There is an expectation that students engage in a reasonable degree of independent inquiry before asking a question via email. Examples of a failure to engage in independent inquiry: (1) 'I noticed that the case of Black v White was cited in the footnotes. What is this case about?'; and (2) 'You used the word 'unqualified' in the lecture a number of times. What does this word mean?'
- If you can provide an anticipated answer to your own question and you are correct, that that can save time in the response.
- If you need the teacher to do something that requires more action than just answering your email, state that very clearly here.
- If you're unable to explain the reason for your email in a few sentences, consider requesting an appointment e.g. 'I would like to meet with you in person to discuss a matter relating to my interim assessment exercise. I can attend your consultation on Wednesday at 9.30am if that's suitable?'

### ELEMENT 7: THE FOLLOW-UP

Most teachers will respond to emails within 1 - 3 business days of receipt. If you have not received a response within this timeframe, it is acceptable to send a brief polite follow-up as a forward of your previous email e.g. 'Just following up on my previous email below'.