

Student Communications and Information Policy



Purpose/objective

This purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to establish the Australasian Academy of Higher Education’s approach to communications with students.

Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to all official communications with students, including past and future students, by Australasian Academy of Higher Education (AAHE) employees. The Policy does not apply to the day-to-day communication that occurs between AAHE staff and students; nor does it restrict urgent communications that must be conveyed to students in the interests of health and safety.

Definitions

Learning Management System	A learning management system (LMS) is a software application for the content, administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, automation and delivery of courses. One of its key functions is as a means of online communication and interaction between staff and students.
SMS	SMS stands for Short Message Service. It is the most widespread and frequently used texting service that is available today.
Information	<p>For the purposes of this Policy, <i>information</i> refers to any item or collection of data in any form which may be transmitted, manipulated and stored and to which meaning has been attributed. Information may include but is not limited to a/an:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. written document 2. electronic document 3. webpage 4. email 5. spreadsheet 6. photograph 7. database 8. drawing 9. plan 10. video 11. audio recording 12. label or 13. anything on which is marked words, figures, letters or symbols that are capable of carrying a definite meaning.
Official communication	An official communication pertains to admission, enrolment, awards, graduation or any other important announcement approved by the

	relevant member of Executive Management for broadcast to the student body as a whole.
Communication channel	A communication channel is any means of communication that is used to connect with others, including but not limited to letter, email, website, SMS, social media, electronic notice boards, posters and flyers.
Social media	Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking, such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.
Push communication	A push communication is an unsolicited message delivered by a sender directly to a recipient.
Pull communication	Pull communication refers to information that can be retrieved by an audience as required and at their leisure, such as information on a website, student portal or handbook.
Student portal	A student portal is a login page where students can provide a username and password to gain access to an education provider's programs and other learning related material.
Work Integrated Learning	Work integrated learning (WIL) refers to programs that link students to a workplace related to their field of study. It aims to combine academic <i>learning</i> of a field of study with the <i>practice</i> of work.

Policy

1. Guiding principles

- 1.1 AAHE communications will be accurate, relevant and timely, and accessible through appropriate communication channels, including to students with special needs.
- 1.2 Communications to personal email, push notifications and SMS will be used sparingly and avoid unnecessary duplication.
- 1.3 Communications will be consistent with the information and communication requirements of AAHE's *Privacy Policy* and relevant legislation, including and without limitation the [Higher Education Standards Framework](#), the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Higher Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#) and the [Spam Act 2003 \(Cth\)](#).
- 1.4 Communications will be scheduled effectively, considering the academic calendar as well as any deadlines or key dates relevant to the message. If action is required, students will be given adequate time to respond.
- 1.5 Communications will enable students to manage their message preferences through the use of opt-in and opt-out features or digest options wherever possible.

2. Purpose of communications

AAHE issues communications to inform students about a range of topics, with varying levels of importance and priority. These topics include information about:

- a) courses and units of study

- b) requirements, obligations or entitlements
- c) actions that must be taken by students
- d) important events in the academic calendar such as enrolments and graduations
- e) general announcements about AAHE activities and events, promotions, initiatives and news
- f) student services, support and resources
- g) forthcoming surveys and student feedback processes
- h) matters in relation to safety and cybersecurity
- i) other matters approved by the CEO.

3. Communication channels

- 3.1 AAHE's official communication channel and primary method for communicating with individual students following their enrolment at AAHE is via email sent to their student email accounts.
- 3.2 The primary mechanisms for communicating with the student body as a whole are:
 - a) for past and prospective students, the AAHE website
 - b) for current students, the AAHE website and/or student portal.
- 3.3 Text messages to mobile devices (SMS) will be used for engagement with current students where a student opts into the service and in order to communicate critical or emergency information and key deadlines.
- 3.4 Postal mail will be used to send information to current and prospective students where required by AAHE policy or external legislation or deemed business-critical by the CEO or COO, or to send physical items.
- 3.5 Specific policies may necessitate additional forms of communication with students that go beyond the general mechanisms identified in this Policy (such as in the case of emergency evacuation procedures).
- 3.6 Where emerging technologies support the purpose of communication, they may also be deployed with the approval of the CEO or COO.

4. Authorisation

- 4.1 The COO is responsible for ensuring that the information provided to students regarding the Academy, its courses and its fees and charges, complies with [Section 7 of the Higher Education Standards](#) (Representation, Information and Information Management) and with the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#).
- 4.2 The COO is supported by the Dean in relation to academic information; by the Registrar in relation to administrative information; and by the Marketing Manager in relation to promotional materials.
- 4.3 AAHE staff wishing to communicate with the past, current or prospective student body about academic matters other than day-to-day matters related to teaching and learning must first obtain permission from the Dean.
- 4.4 AAHE staff wishing to communicate with the past, current or prospective student body about administrative matters other than day-to-day matters must first obtain the permission of the Registrar.
- 4.5 The Marketing Manager may communicate with the student body as a whole solely about matters that fall within his or her position description.
- 4.6 All other communications to the whole student body must be approved by the CEO or COO.

Related documents and relevant legislation

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021 \(S2.3.1 – 2.3.5\)](#)

[National Code of Practice for Providers of Higher Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)

[Spam Act 2003 \(Cth\)](#)

AAHE Privacy Policy and Procedures

AAHE Marketing and Promotion Guidelines

Document information

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1	Board of Directors	30/3/23	1/10/23	

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1. Email

AAHE's primary method for communicating with students is via their AAHE email accounts; however, with the relevant authorising officer's approval, communications will be sent to personal email accounts as well, in the following circumstances:

- a) when introducing new students to student email, administrative systems, policies and processes
- b) in crisis situations where a student's safety is deemed to be at risk
- c) for immediate notification of last-minute class or exam cancellations and room changes
- d) where a student's conduct or progress is unsatisfactory or their enrolment is at risk of cancellation
- e) to inform students of administrative deadlines such as census date
- f) where the student has given express consent
- g) for password management and identity verification
- h) where required by AAHE policy or external legislation, and
- i) where deemed business-critical by the CEO or COO.

2. Hard copy

Hard-copy communications require approval by the relevant member of Executive Management in accordance with clause 3.4 of the Student Communications and Information Policy.

3. SMS

Following approval by the relevant member of Executive Management, AAHE will send SMS to students in the following circumstances:

- a) in crisis situations where a student's safety is deemed to be at risk
- b) for immediate notification of last-minute class or exam cancellations and room changes
- c) where a student's enrolment is at risk of cancellation
- d) to inform students of administrative deadlines such as census date
- e) to inform students of urgent deadlines or information that relates to work integrated learning (WIL)
- f) where the student has given express consent (for example, as part of a queue management system), and
- g) where deemed business-critical by the CEO or COO.

4. Push communications

Push communications will be used to support and deliver information as follows:

- a) email to student mailing lists
- b) an official student newsletter (should one be established)
- c) an unofficial newsletter with an unsubscribe function
- d) social media.

5. Pull communications

Pull communication channels will be used to support and deliver information as follows:

- a) The student portal
- b) electronic noticeboards and screensavers located on AAHE premises, and/or
- c) noticeboards and other locations on AAHE premises where hard-copy material is posted.

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