

## **EMAIL PROTOCOL FOR UKZN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING STUDENTS**

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The Mechanical Engineering degree is a professional qualification and good communication skills are a necessary part of an engineer's professional behaviour. In addition, the Engineering Council of South Africa requires that UKZN students must meet all eleven Exit Level Outcomes (ELO) in order to graduate. ELO 6 requires students to "demonstrate competence to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing". This necessitates that students use "appropriate structure, style and language for purpose and audience."

**Please note that the following communication protocol must be followed by all students when writing emails to staff, or when conducting university-related business, such as contacting outside companies for information:**

1. All emails must include a brief subject heading in the space provided, preferably including your student number.
2. All emails must begin with a formal greeting. Internal emails addressed to staff must include the staff member's title and surname, for example:

*Dear Dr. Desai, or Dear Prof. Brown, or Dear Mr. Adams,*

3. The body of the email must be written in English using proper grammar. This includes the use of capital letters at the start of sentences, appropriate punctuation and correct sentence construction.
4. Keep the body of the email brief.
5. No short-form language (sms text) or slang is permissible under any circumstances.
6. Staff will disregard emails that omit a proper heading or greeting, that begin with "hi" or that do not conform to the proper format described here.
7. The message must be concluded properly, with your name and your student number, for example:

*Regards,*

*Firstname Surname  
2012123456*

8. If the email is addressed to a person outside the university, the message should also include the institution's name in an appropriately configured electronic signature. Please note that no undergraduate student should email an outside company or institution on university-related business without first discussing the matter with a staff member.
9. Electronic signatures appended to student emails sent from UKZN addresses must conform to the following rules:
  - i. Signatures may not include inappropriate language or graphics
  - ii. Postgraduate students may include their previously awarded qualifications in their signatures, including research group affiliations
  - iii. Students registered for a PhD may include the phrase "PhD Candidate" in their signatures

- iv. No student may append an electronic signature to an email that refers to a qualification that has not yet been awarded. For example, the use of the term “*pending*” to denote the future attainment of a degree is not appropriate, neither is the use of a future year to indicate the expected degree completion date. Only qualifications that have been awarded may be listed in the signature.

An example of an appropriate electronic signature for an undergraduate student is given below:

*Regards*

***Firstname Surname***

*Student: Discipline of Mechanical Engineering*

*University of KwaZulu-Natal*

*Durban, South Africa*

*Email:*

*Cell:*

*Web: mecheng.ukzn.ac.za*

10. These rules must be followed, regardless of whether a computer or a cell phone is used to send emails.

Examples are given below to assist you in structuring your email communications properly.

**Examples of acceptable emails:**

**1. Absenteeism from a test:**

*Subject: Absent from Thermodynamics Test (2011123456)*

*Dear Dr. Jones,*

*I was unable to write the test for Thermodynamics III yesterday because of illness. I will bring a medical certificate to your office tomorrow.*

*Regards,*

*Firstname Surname*

*2011123456*

**2. Requesting assistance with a tutorial problem:**

*Subject: Fluid Mechanics tutorial (2011123456)*

*Dear Mr. Adams,*

*I am having difficulty understanding the section of Fluid Mechanics that deals with turbulence in pipes. Can I please make an appointment to discuss the tutorial with you?*

*Regards,*

*Firstname Surname*

*2011123456*

**3. To an outside company requesting a quotation, addressee name unknown:**

Subject: *Quotation: Bearing QW-357*

*Good day,*

*I am a 3<sup>rd</sup> year Mechanical Engineering student at UKZN working on the design of a suspension system for an electric vehicle. According to your company manual (MT- 2398) the model QW-357 roller bearing is correct for our application. Can you please send me a quotation for the supply of two (2) of the bearings, both of type QW-357.*

*Regards*

*Firstname Surname*

*Student: Discipline of Mechanical Engineering*

*University of KwaZulu-Natal*

*Durban, South Africa*

*Email:*

*Cell:*

*Web: [mecheng.ukzn.ac.za](http://mecheng.ukzn.ac.za)*

**Examples of unacceptable emails:**

'hi, wen will the assinnmnts b gvn back'

'Hi Sir – must we learn the section on burnoollis equation for the test?. Thanx.'