



School of Chemistry

EDI 20-1 Right to disconnect Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to make clear that members of the School are not expected to read or reply to email outside of normal working hours (except in exceptional circumstances). This policy is intended to promote recovery time and wellbeing and with other policies such as Meeting Hours Policy to support the participation in the life of the University by staff with other responsibilities and contribute to a healthy work-life balance.

Context

An important aspect of creating an environment which encourages work-life balance is to create a culture that allows people to be able to switch off. This requires them to not feel pressured to either work late or extra hours or that inflexibility does not allow them to take care of their other responsibilities.

Commitment

The School of Chemistry recognises the right for people to disconnect from their job. Email, in particular, can be sent at any time and this can create an expectation that people should be responding. Emails can continue to be sent at any time but all stakeholders should be aware that the School encourages a good work life balance and that there is no obligation on the receiver to view, respond to, or do any work associated with, out of hours email until normal working hours.

Implementation

All academic, technical and administrative staff are actively encouraged to add a line to their email signature reflecting the commitment of the School to the right to disconnect. E.g.

The School of Chemistry recognises the right to disconnect and there is no obligation to respond to (or read) out of hours emails until normal working hours.

The School of Chemistry recognises the right to disconnect and there is no obligation to respond to (or read) out of hours emails until normal working hours





Complaints.

Any person feeling under pressure to respond outside of normal working hours should first discuss with the email originator. If this does not resolve the issue or the person feels unable to discuss with the email originator they should contact their line manager, the chair of the EDI committee or the Head of School.

Version History

Version	Date	Description	Author
1.0	June 2020		Graeme Watson
	29 th September	Discussion at School Committee	Graeme Watson
	1 st December	Approved at School Exec	Graeme Watson

Impact

The impact is two fold.

- 1) Is the policy generally known and understood (change in environment)
- 2) Is it felt that there is no expectation to respond to out of hours emails?

How to measure impact

Survey questions

- 1) Are you aware of the School of Chemistry's policy on the right to disconnect and that no one should feel the need to respond to, or perform work originating from, out of hours email until normal working hours.
- 2) Do you think the policy has reduced the number of out of hours emails you receive?
- 3) Do you think the policy has reduced the expectations you feel when receiving out of hours emails. (Initial question to measure impact without previous data).
- 4) With regard to out of hours emails
 - a. I never look at my email out of hours.
 - b. I look at my email out of hours but I do not receive out of hours emails from School of Chemistry stakeholders.
 - c. I look at my email out of hours, I do receive out of ours emails but I feel no pressure to respond,
 - d. I look at my email out of hours, I receive out of ours emails and I feel pressure to respond