

Writing Emails to Teachers

Knowing how to communicate appropriately by email is an essential skill. This guide explains the correct communicative strategies and structures for students to use when emailing teachers.

Email Rules

1. Have a clear and informative subject line.

An informative subject line tells your recipient what your email is about. Make yours clear and direct. If your email pertains to a class, include the class number and section in the subject line.

Example subject lines:

ENGH 101G Final Paper Questions
SPAN 102A Appointment

2. Address the recipient appropriately.

Start your email with “Dear” or “Hello” and **always include their name**. Unless the person has said they prefer to be called by their first name, always address them using their surname. If your teacher holds a PhD, include “Dr.” in your greeting.

Examples of appropriate salutations:

Dear Mr. Woods,
Hello Ms. Franklin,
Dear Dr. Olsen,

Examples of salutations that are too informal.

Hey professor
Hi
Hi how are you?

3. Include a clear introduction of yourself.

Introduce yourself to your recipient if you have not met them or if you think they may not remember you. Provide some specific and clear context about yourself.

Dear Mr. Woods,

I am a student in your Anthropology 101A class.

4. Be clear and polite.

You always want to be polite when writing to a teacher or administrator, but you also need to get to your point quickly. If you have any questions, ask them in a courteous way.

Dear Mr. Woods,

I am a student in your Anthropology 101A class. I have found a few scholarly articles for the research assignment, but I would like to confirm with you if they are usable. Please let me know when you are available to verify my sources.

5. Close the message.

End your message with a professional closing like “Sincerely,” or “Best,” followed by your first and last name. You can also include your student number.

Sincerely,

Debra Maya
2945071791

Below is an example of an email from a student to their teacher:

Appropriate and informative subject line

Italian 101B Speaking Assignment Question

teacher@coquitlamcollege.com

Italian 101B Speaking Assignment Question

Formal greeting

Dear Mr. Thompson,

Asking question politely

I am a student in your Italian 101B class. For the upcoming speaking assignment, is there a rubric available showing how students will be evaluated? I have tried looking for one online, but I cannot find one.

Formal closing

I appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

Kevin Cooper
462938161

Clear introduction

Make sure when you ask a question that the information is not already available elsewhere

Polite closure



Key tip: Always re-read your email before sending it. Emails with spelling errors demonstrate a lack of care and professionalism. Most importantly, make sure that you have spelled your recipient's name correctly.

Formatting your email

It is important that your email is formatted correctly for professionalism and readability. Use the below template as a guide when composing emails to teachers.

Subject: (Include a Subject Line)

Dear (Mr. / Ms. / Dr. Last Name),

I am a student in your (class name and section) class. (Here, write what the purpose of the email is). (If you have a question, ask it here).

I appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

(First Name Last Name)
(Student number)

Here is an example of how to email the Writing Centre using the template:

Thesis Statement Help for ENGL 101B Research Essay

writingcentre@coquitlamcollege.com

Thesis Statement Help for ENGL 101B Research Essay

Dear Writing Centre,

I am currently writing a research essay for ENGL 101B, and I am having difficulty with writing a thesis statement. I have attached the assignment sheet and my draft in this email. Can you please advise on how I can improve my thesis statement?

I appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

Sarah Springfield
284608375

ENGL 101B Research Essay Guidelines.docx (13K) x

ENGL 101B Research Essay Draft.docx (15K) x

Sans Serif | Bold | Italic | Underline | Text Color | Paragraph | Bulleted List | Numbered List | Indent | Outdent

Send | Text Color | Link | Emoji | Image | Video | Attach

Include a space between the salutation, each paragraph, and closure.

When attaching files, make sure the files are named clearly.

Polite vs. Impolite Emails

When asking questions in professional emails, it is important to avoid coming across as rude or inappropriate. Consider the two examples below. Both are asking for the same thing but in entirely different ways.

Polite	Impolite
I am a student from your class PSYC 101A. Whenever you have some time, could you please confirm my grade for this assignment?	You didn't give me my grade.
Since this quiz was difficult for me, I would like to arrange an appointment with you to discuss the areas I did not do well in. Can you please let me know when you are available?	I had a problem with the quiz. You need to give me another chance. I will be very grateful to you.



Key tip: When writing emails, try to avoid using “you” language. Notice in the impolite column that the tone is quite accusatory and aggressive compared to the polite, formal tone of the questions in the left column. For example, instead of saying “You didn’t send this to me”, you can say, “Can you please send this to me when you have some time?”

 **Example of an impolite email:**

midterm

teacher@coquitlamcollege.com

midterm

This email does not include the correct formatting and contains emotional language.

Hi, I am Emily and my student no. is 986947521. I got an F in my midterm. This grade is too low. I am worried and depressed about this grade. I gave my best. Please help me, can you pass me in this midterm. I'm international student and I do not have enough money to pay again. Please teacher, understand and help me. I shall be very thankful to you.



 **The polite version:**

ARTH 102C - Question about Midterm Grade

teacher@coquitlamcollege.com

ARTH 102C - Question about Midterm Grade

Dear Mr. Ford,

I am a student in your ARTH 102C class. After receiving my final grade for the midterm, I would like to discuss with you how I can improve my grade in future assignments.

Please let me know when you are available for an appointment.

Sincerely,

Connor Dobson
5240861285

This email uses the correct formatting and a professional tone.

Email Checklist

	Yes	No
The email contains an informative and clear subject line.		
The recipient's name is spelled correctly and addressed appropriately (Dr., Mr., Ms., etc).		
I have introduced myself clearly so the recipient knows who I am.		
If a question has been asked, it has been asked politely.		
The email includes a polite closure and salutation.		