Advice for writing e-mails to academic staff

THE BASIC RULES

• Don’t use an unprofessional email address
  - princessfairy@hotmail.com
  - superherodave@yahoo.com
  - john.smith@top.edu.au
  - johnsmith@gmail.com

• Start with a new e-mail. Avoid replying to an old-email thread, especially when addressing a new issue.

• Include an appropriate subject heading. It should highlight the main focus of the e-mail.
  - “Booking a consultation time”
  - “Absence from class”
  - Leave it blank
  - “Hi”

• Write a salutation. Address academic staff appropriately and politely. Be formal and avoid familiarity.
  - Dear / Hello Kate
  - Dear / Hello Dr/ Professor / Mr / Ms Smith
  - Dear / Hello Miss / Mrs
  - Hey / Yo!

• Write well! Try to use more formal language in the e-mail (definitely avoid slang and abbreviations)
  - TTYL / cuz / lol / wanna / dunno / gotta / i / u

• Provide context and background information. Lecturers teach many students, you need to be helpful and remind them what you are talking
about. Do not assume they remember a previous conversation you may have had or your assignment amongst the dozens sitting on their desk!

- **Write a clear and concise message.** Avoid lengthy explanations; get to the point. The following format is advised:
  - State the problem by being specific and detailed
  - Include the question relevant to the problem
  - Justify why an answer is needed
  - If a response is required, politely ask for one

- **Sign your name.** You need to say who you are, especially if your email address does not include it. If the name you go by is not your official name, include both! This will ensure the lecturer knows who you are and can also search for any records that are stored using your official name. **It is also good to add your student number.**

- **Proofread the e-mail.** Never click send before proof-reading.

- **Allow adequate time for a reply.** Do not expect an immediate response!