

COLLEGE POLICY

POLICY TYPE:	Administrative
POLICY TITLE:	Internal Communications
POLICY NO.:	ADMIN-220
RESPONSIBILITY:	Executive Director, Communications and Marketing Chief Administrative Officer
APPROVED BY:	Durham College Leadership Team (DCLT)
EFFECTIVE DATE:	September 2017
REVISED DATE(S):	
REVIEW DATE:	September 2020

1. Introduction

Effective internal communication is critical to the success of any organization. The Communications and Marketing (C+M) department collaborates with Internal stakeholders to reinforce the institutional mission, vision and values; connect employees and Students to the business; foster process improvement; facilitate change; and drive business results by influencing employee and Student behaviour.

2. Purpose

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to:

- 2.1.1. Provide the framework upon which a solid Internal communications strategy can be built.
- 2.1.2. Ensure that the Internal communications function at Durham College (DC) is well co-ordinated, effectively managed and responsive to the information needs of employees and Students.
- 2.1.3. Provide clear, regular and timely guidelines for communication to employees and Students and invite feedback on strategic priorities and issues.
- 2.1.4. Articulate that all communication by members of the College community should reflect the mission, vision and values of DC.

3. Definitions

3.1. Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation

Federal legislation that is, in part, intended to prevent the receipt of unwanted commercial electronic communication such as promotional emails, text messages, images or sounds.

3.2. Commercial Electronic Message

A commercial electronic message is a message that, having regard to the content of the message, the hyperlinks in the message to content on a website or other database, or the contract information contained in the message, it would be reasonable to conclude has as its purpose, or one of its purposes, to encourage participation in a commercial activity, including an electronic message that:

- a) offers to purchase, sell, barter or lease a product, goods, as service, land or an interest or right in land;
- b) offers to provide a business, investment or gaming opportunity;
- c) advertises or promotes anything referred to in paragraph (a) or (b); or
- d) promotes a person including the public image of a person as being a person who does anything referred to in any of paragraphs (a) to (c), or who intends to do so.¹

3.3. Internal stakeholder(s)

Refers to students, employees, and Board of Governors.

3.4. Internal communication(s)

Messaging distributed internally to all Internal stakeholders as appropriate.

3.5. Information Centre for Employees (ICE)

Refers to DC's employee Intranet, Information Centre for Employees (ICE), which provides a convenient and efficient method of communication and collaboration for employees. This self-service hub enables employees to access information and is a strong pillar of the College's internal communications strategy.

¹ <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/E-1.6/page-1.html#h-2>

3.6. Brand

A Brand is the unique visual, verbal and written attributes, or a combination of these, employed by an organization. Our Brand is the promise of what DC delivers and reflects the College's mission, vision and values and is the foundation upon which business is conducted.

Brands have three primary functions: to help consumers choose from an array of options; to communicate the intrinsic quality of a product or service and reassure customers that they have made the right decision; and to use distinctive imagery, language and associations to encourage customers to identify with the Brand.

3.7. Student(s)

Full-time, part-time, all programs (post-secondary, continuing education, apprenticeship, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program). Full-time student refers to a student who is registered in more than 70 per cent of the credit hours or 66.6 per cent of the courses in a program in a semester.

4. Policy statements

- 4.1. All Internal communications are guided by DC's mission, vision, values and Brand and policies.
- 4.2. Clear, concise, accurate and timely communication is a strategic necessity.
- 4.3. Timely communication refers to the period of time determined in order for information to be useful and effective. Time-sensitive or urgent information that could impact health and safety, security or business continuity should be disseminated as soon as an individual is made aware of a situation. For all other issues, within one business day is recommended.
- 4.4. DC champions two-way communications by providing regular opportunities for feedback. This includes three feedback methods designed specifically for employees and Students under the title DC cares. Methods include email, online and paper-based options that can be used to ask questions and provide feedback.
- 4.5. A critical component to the internal communication process is communication between managers and their direct reports. Unless this information is confidential, managers are expected to keep their direct reports informed and up-to-date on college information through direct communication and indirectly by encouraging employees to monitor ICE on a daily basis.
- 4.6. All internal commercial electronic messages must comply with the requirements of CASL.

4.7. The types of communication disseminated internally cover a range of topics and include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Campus promotional and event information
- Campus status changes and security alerts
- Death of a colleague, Student or retiree
- DC media releases
- Health and safety information
- Holiday closures
- Job postings
- Launch or decommission of program(s) or system(s)
- Notice of service disruption
- Notification of new policies and procedures and updates to existing policies and procedures
- Opportunities to participate in the Board of Governors internal elections
- Organizational and departmental changes
- Physical moves/relocations of individuals and teams
- Related news and information
- Retirements, promotions and new employee hires
- Success stories and accomplishments of employees and Students
- Updates to the strategic and business plan

5. Accessibility and AODA considerations

- 5.1. DC's commitment to accessibility and AODA standards has been considered in the development of this policy, which adheres to the principles outlined in the AODA standards and the Durham College Accessibility Policy (ADMIN-203).
- 5.2. C+M is responsible for ensuring that ICE is accessible to employees and meets the current AODA standards. Where ICE is not compliant, alternate formats will be made available upon request.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1. Communications is a shared responsibility involving all Students and employees. All groups are accountable for regularly accessing communication vehicles for messaging pertaining to them.
- 6.2. The Executive Director, Communications and Marketing is responsible for overseeing the strategic development and execution of all DC Internal communications that require broad institutional messaging.
- 6.3. Managers are responsible for communicating changes in policies, processes and procedures to appropriate Internal stakeholders and incorporating communication planning into their teams' work plans.

- 6.4. The overarching accountability for Student communications is the Office of the Vice-President, Academic for academic matters and the Office of the Vice-President, Student Affairs for non-academic matters. C+M works closely with these offices on the development and execution of communication and related procedures.
- 6.5. The Durham College Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of CASL for internal commercial electronic messages sent within their respective areas of responsibility.
- 6.6. The corporate secretary is responsible for monitoring the impact of CASL on the College sector, for acting as a resource with respect to compliance with CASL, and for recommending CASL-related revisions to this policy and relevant procedures.

7. Non-compliance implications

Building and maintaining a positive reputation is integral to the success of DC's brand. Misinformation, rumours or lack of communication may result in costly errors, reduced productivity and negative public image. Failure to comply with applicable legislation may lead to legal costs arising from potential lawsuits.

8. Communications plan

An announcement will be posted on ICE to notify employees when new or revised policies and procedures are approved by the DCLT. An announcement will be posted on MyCampus when relevant new or revised policies and procedures are approved by DCLT.

9. Related policies, procedures and directives

- Durham College Acceptable Use of Information Technology policy ADMIN-206
- Durham College Accessibility policy ADMIN-203
- Durham College Alumni Relations procedure ADMIN-219.1
- Durham College Communicating with Employees procedure ADMIN-220.5
- Durham College Community Outreach procedure ADMIN-219.6
- Durham College Death of a Colleague procedure ADMIN-220.1
- Durham College Death of a Retiree procedure ADMIN-220.3
- Durham College Death of a Student procedure ADMIN-220.2
- Durham College Digital signage usage procedure ADMIN 220.9
- Durham College Emergency Communications procedure ADMIN-220.7
- Durham College Emergency Preparedness policy ADMIN-211
- Durham College Events Management procedure ADMIN-219.7
- Durham College External Communications policy ADMIN-219
- Durham College Feedback procedure ADMIN-220.8
- Durham College Flags – Usage procedure ADMIN-220.4
- Durham College Harassment and Discrimination policy ADMIN-202
- Durham College Marketing and Advertising procedure ADMIN-219.2
- Durham College Media Relations procedure ADMIN-219.3

- Durham College Photography and Videography procedure ADMIN-219.4
- Durham College Poster procedure ADMIN-220.6
- Durham College Social Media procedure ADMIN-219.X
- Durham College Student Conduct ADMIN-248
- Durham College Website procedure ADMIN-219.5
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act