

Expectations for Accessible Communication

Any emails sent to the broader campus should meet the following guidelines.

In situations where a faculty or staff member is authoring an email that will be sent on their behalf by administrative staff, the faculty or staff member authoring the email is responsible for ensuring that the content follows these recommendations, not the administrative staff member.

1. **Make sure all key information is included in the body of the email.** This includes all text contained within embedded graphics.
2. **Add alt text to any images.** Embedded image files should have alt text. Any important text in the image should be included in the email body, not the alt text. (*What's alt text?* Alt text is very brief text that can be added to describe an image for screen readers. To add alt text, right click on the image > “Add alternate text.”)
3. **Avoid attaching PDFs and images.** It can be difficult to make PDF files accessible, so try to use other file types (e.g., docx) where ensuring accessibility is more straightforward. Image files (e.g., jpg, png) should be embedded within the body of an email rather than attached to the email. This enables the addition of alt text, which makes image content accessible to screen readers (see #2).
4. **Use descriptive link text.** All links should be linked descriptive text rather than a full URL or short, non-descriptive text like “here.” For example, [MCLA – Disability Resources](#), not <https://www.mcla.edu/student-services/disability-resources/index.php> or [click here](#).
5. **Keep text legible.** Avoid low-contrast colors, small text sizes, and fancy fonts (e.g., cursive).

If you have any questions about implementing these guidelines, see the [Accessible Communications Guide](#) “5 Steps for Email Accessibility” or reach out for support:

- Help Desk: HelpDesk@mcla.edu, (413) 662-5276
- Academic Technology: AcTech@groups.mcla.edu, (413) 662-5506