Department of Social Sciences

Netiquette Guidelines for Students (15.09.2020)

As you know etiquette refers to guidelines for polite behaviour. Netiquette refers to guidelines for polite behaviour in an online environment, whether this be in a live (synchronous) setting or in an asynchronous setting such as a discussion board or online forum.

This document provides you with an overview of netiquette guidelines for using the online environment as a student in the Department of Social Sciences in TU Dublin.

Discussion Boards

As lecturers may use the discussion board in Brightspace as a way of communicating throughout a module some guidelines for communicating are given below so that this is a safe space where everyone feels comfortable making contributions.

Discussion board overview

Make your posts in the right discussion boards. Modules may have a module discussion board for general discussion and queries and also other discussion boards for addressing specific activities.

When you start a new discussion, create a subject line that helps readers understand the topic quickly. Guidance to using the discussion boards in Brightspace can be found at:
https://brightspace.tudublin.ie/d2l/le/content/114803/viewContent/694807/View

If replying to a particular person in a forum, you can refer to them by name.

If you do well in an assignment, it's natural to want to share this. However, remember that another student may not have done so well and could be upset. So please do not discuss assignment results online.

Courtesy and confidentiality

Please treat your fellow students and your lecturer with courtesy and respect in all your communications. You can of course disagree with another person's ideas but do this in a way that in not offensive or hurtful. Write in a way that makes it clear that it is the idea not the person you are disagreeing with. For example "while that is an interesting point I think that….."

Obviously you do not write anything that:

- Is or could considered to be defamatory, discriminatory, illegal, incites hatred or is obscene or damaging to the reputation of TU Dublin.
- Infringes another person's right to confidentiality or privacy.
- Is sent to you privately and not intended to be shared with other people.
- Is likely to make another person feel bullied or harassed.
- Is malicious and potentially harmful to others.

Material posted on discussion boards is for the use of students within a class group only and is not to be shared in any format with anyone else.

Plagiarism

Avoid committing or supporting plagiarism. Never discuss answers to work or share work that is counted for assessment. Of course, work that is not counted for assessment can be discussed freely.

Messages

Be brief. Several short posts have more impact than one long message. Write in a natural and informal style (this is a message not an essay!) but take time to check grammar and spelling. Remember you want your message to be understood not misinterpreted by others.

Online messages are sometimes misunderstood because the other person's facial expression can't be seen. It can help to use emoticons but don't overuse them as they can distract from the content of the message.

When you reply to a message you can set the scene by quoting part of the original message. Make it easy for readers to see that you have done this by putting quoted text into quotation marks.

If you quote from an external source always credit the original author as you would in other academic writing.

If you quote from another student's post acknowledge this by using quotation marks, the student's name and date of post.

It's fine to use standard abbreviations but do not write whole messages using the abbreviations used in texting. Again make sure your message is clear.

Don't write in capital letters because it can look as though you are SHOUTING and is harder to read.

Module lecturers will remove any post that they consider inappropriate.

Breaches of TU Dublin computing and Brightspace guidelines may result in further disciplinary action. Links to these are given at the end of this document.

Live classroom/meetings

Recording

While lecturers may record live classroom sessions and publish these recordings within the Brightspace module **students must abide** by the *Policy on the Recording of Lectures* (available on this page**:** http://www.dit.ie/llss/resources/socialsciences/). Briefly the policy states that permission must be obtained prior to the recording of lectures from the lecturer, will not

necessarily be granted and must not be shared with anyone. Any recordings published by the lecturer on Brightspace **must not be shared with other people in any format as they are for the use of students registered on the module only. This also applies to pre-recorded classes that lecturers make available to you.**

Arriving in the classroom

Be on time. This means that you should be ready to begin when the class or meeting begins so make sure you know where to join the class or meeting and have completed your audio/video check about five minutes before class/meeting begins. Make sure that when you enter the room your microphone is muted.

If you are late due to any connectivity problems don't announce your arrival noisily and distract everyone else. In the same way those already present should not announce latecomers' arrivals noisily either.

Video and audio

Follow the guidance of the lecturer/facilitator with regard to the use of your video camera.

Keep your microphone on mute until you need to speak. Remember your microphone will pick up on any background noise, which is distracting for everyone.

Communicating

When you want to speak use the raise hand function rather than interrupting.

The chat box should be used for making contributions to the topic being discussed, making comments on other people's contribution or asking questions only.

As you would indicate your agreement with or support to a person's contribution in a face to face classroom it is appropriate to use the chat box to say 'I agree' or 'good point' to other students. Remember that your contribution to discussion during live classes is welcome and adds to the learning experience for everybody.

The chat box is not to be used for having unrelated conversations with other people. Be patient waiting for lecturers to respond to contributions in the chat box in a live class as they have a lot to concentrate on.

The same rules apply to posts in the chat box as in discussion boards – be brief, avoid the overuse of abbreviations, be supportive and courteous to everyone else. Don't worry too much about spelling as long as your message can be understood.

Preparation

Be prepared for the online class. Have comfortable headphones and a microphone. Be ready to take notes as it will help you concentrate. Keep distractions such as your 'phone or other devices in another room. Stay in the one place and don't walk around. For longer classes lecturers will provide a 'comfort break'.

A brief overview of netiquette for live classes or meetings can be found at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21cdJuV-WvQ

Remember that this document only provides you with an overview. You should also read the *Student Regulations Governing the Use of Computer Resources*, which you will find at this link:
http://www.dit.ie/aadlt/ictservices/student/ictstudentregulations/

Also the *Brightspace Usage Policy,* which you will find here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RJ8rVJFbl8KA1VI7CYjkYsJMzFxKlTeiSAjJK1_XdOg/edit. You can also access the Brightspace usage policy from the login page for Brightspace.

Sources consulted in preparation of guide: *The Open University Computing Guide for Students* and *TU Dublin City Campus LTTC Netiquette for Online Communication and Participation in the Online Classroom*