

Developing Online Courtesy

Developing appropriate online behaviour is essential for successful interactions. It ensures that members of the group do not offend one another and that postings are thoughtful and considerate.

Some Tips:

❖ **Agree on clear guidelines at the start of the course. Common guidelines include:**

- ◆ Be polite.
- ◆ Don't use CAPITALS: readers might think you are shouting.
- ◆ Discuss and criticise ideas, not individuals.
- ◆ Keep questions and comments brief, but relevant to the focus of the discussion.
- ◆ Remember discussion boards are public to all. Use private communication when more appropriate, e.g., email, phone.
- ◆ Minimise misunderstandings through careful communication- see BOB sheet "Saying It Clearly Online".

❖ **Encourage students to follow the guidelines.**

- ◆ Discuss the guidelines with the group in a preliminary activity.
- ◆ Model appropriate tone and structure of postings in your communication with the group.

❖ **Deal with inappropriate and/or offensive postings promptly by:**

- ◆ Sending a private individual email to the offender.
- ◆ Referring the offender to the group's guidelines for online courtesy.
- ◆ Referring to the ECU Statute 22 outlining student obligations not to disrupt others' learning and the consequences should they continue to do so.