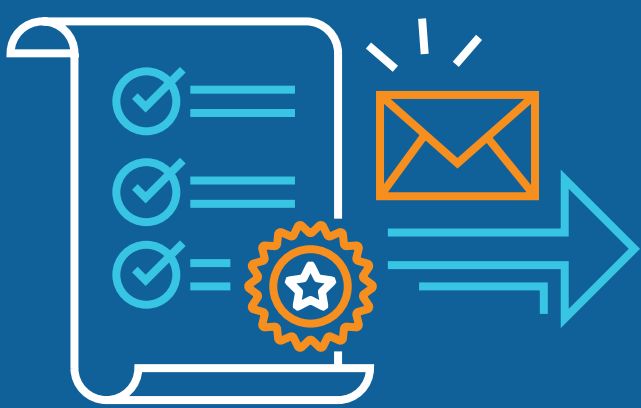# Managing your emails

We're often overwhelmed by emails – and the hours we spend sending them can create even more work for colleagues. Share these effective ways to get your inbox under control.

1 DO YOU REALLY NEED TO SEND THAT EMAIL?

Would a phone call or face-to-face conversation be better?

Avoid email when you need an urgent (<24 hours) response

2 AGREE AN 'EMAIL CHARTER' WITH COLLEAGUES

Keep emails short, use clear subject lines and always indicate the urgency

Use the patient's name and two identifiers in the subject line of clinical emails

Add NNTR (no need to reply) to any emails for information only

Minimise the number of 'cc' and 'reply all' emails you send

Include enough information for the recipient to respond without needing to open an electronic patient record or other system
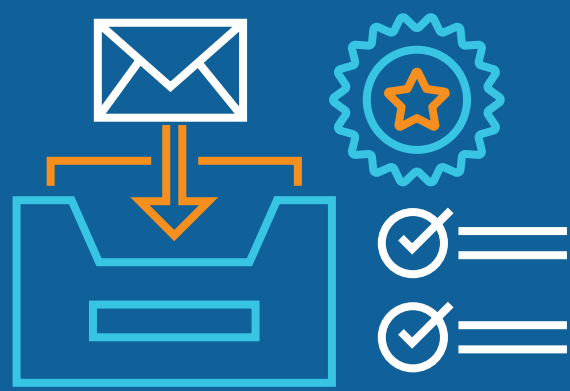
3 LIMIT THE NUMBER OF EMAILS YOU RECEIVE

Ask to be removed from group emails that don't apply to you or use the 'Ignore' button in Outlook

Unsubscribe from unwanted mailing lists
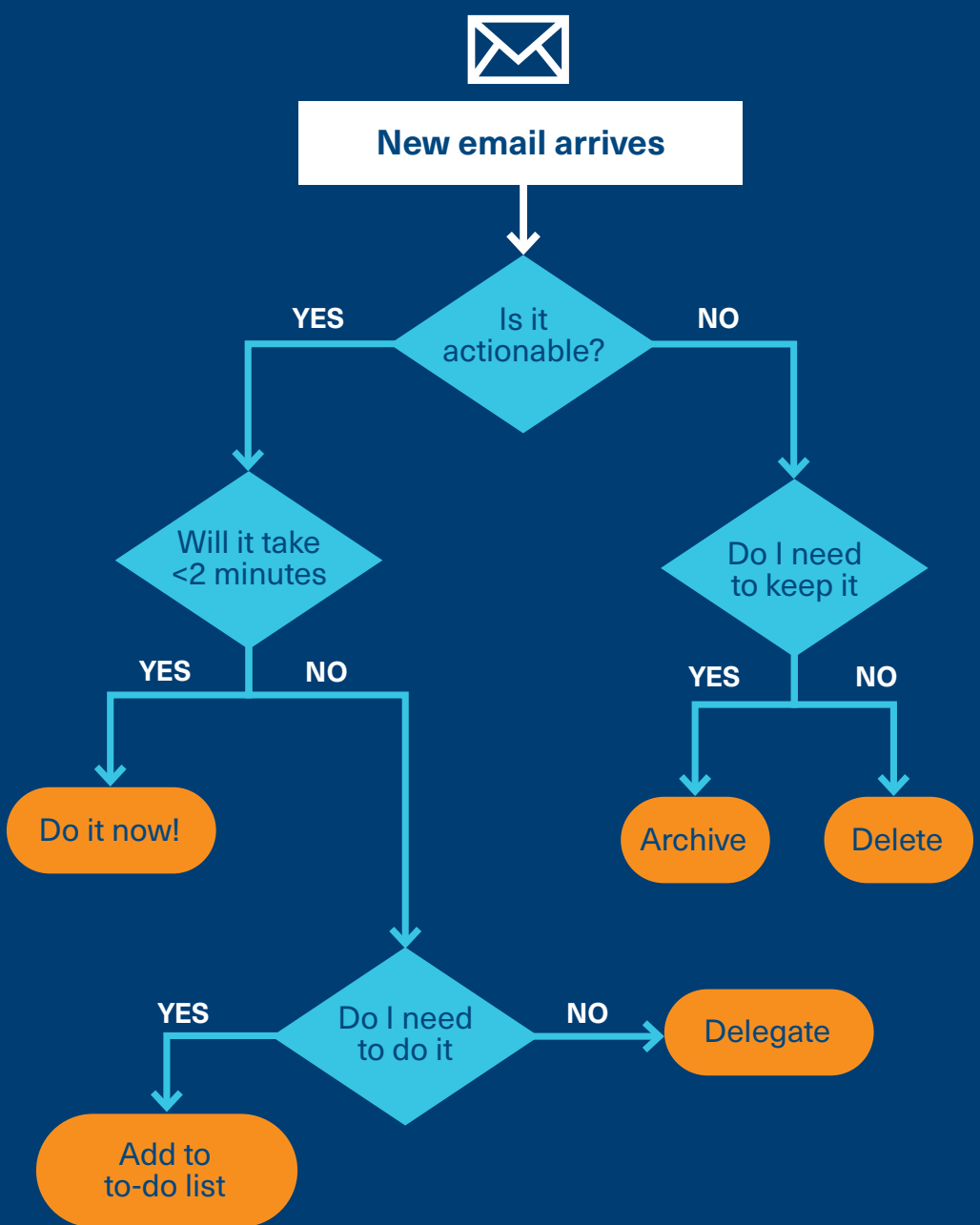
Click 'report spam' on junk emails

4 PROCESS YOUR EMAILS

Have a method of effectively managing each email and take immediate action (see flowchart)

Create email folders and set rules in your inbox to organise emails straightaway

Use apps such as Todoist, Microsoft To Do, Omnifocus or Tick Tick to manage your tasks

New email arrives

Is it actionable?

YES — Will it take <2 minutes
- YES — Do it now!
- NO — Do I need to do it
  - YES — Add to to-do list
  - NO — Delegate

NO — Do I need to keep it
- YES — Archive
- NO — Delete

5 KNOW WHEN TO DISCONNECT

Allocate set times to process emails and stick to these

Silence notifications when you are working on something that requires your attention

Make a commitment to email-free time, particularly at weekends and during leave

Don't send work emails outside of work hours (use the delay function)

Use a clear out of office message on days you are not at work

If you like these tips, make sure to reference them in your email signature and help spread the word!

RCR
The Royal College of Radiologists