



### SPAM FILTERING

'Spam', or unsolicited bulk email, is a problem many email users encounter. Niagara College is no exception. Some estimates report that the volume of spam doubles every four to eight months.

#### What Niagara College does to combat spam

Incoming and outgoing email is searched and filtered by a product called **Sophos Email Protection**. This solution will eliminate a large proportion of spam.

#### Block Lists and Filtering

The most common method of blocking spam are lists maintained by organizations such as Spamhaus. These lists contain details on senders and servers that send out spam email. Generally, these lists are updated several times a day.

In addition to industry standard block lists, Niagara College maintains a secondary list of blocked senders and message sources based on the type of mail the college receives. Other filtering options add to the likelihood that a message is spam.

These two spam blocking mechanisms block the majority of unwanted messages. It's not likely that a legitimate email will be blocked, but if this were to happen, Niagara College employees can easily release and/or approve list senders from a convenient web interface. Furthermore, daily notifications will let users know that a message was identified as spam.

#### Spam vs Unwanted Email

It's important to understand that there's a difference between spam and unwanted email. Spam email is generally unsolicited, similar to flyers that appear in your mailbox. They generally offer quick ways to instant wealth, discount pharmaceuticals, and offers far too good to be true. Unwanted email – that is, newsletters, RSS feeds and product offers – that you signed up for are not considered spam. Recent Canadian anti-spam legislation states that companies must have an 'unsubscribe' option and most reputable companies will offer this option. Users are encouraged to be mindful of signing up for such services and if not needed, unsubscribe from that particular sender. For example, if you receive email from a company like Best Buy or Amazon, you can easily remove yourself from their lists.

**Important:** Employees are responsible for checking and managing their quarantine list for messages that may have been incorrectly identified as spam. Users have the ability to approve or block senders and also the ability to disable spam filtering altogether. **NOTE:** ITS does not recommend this option, but it is available to meet the requirement that some areas may have



to never miss an email despite the possibility it might be spam. However, messages identified as viruses cannot be released nor omitted from scanning as this can pose a significant security risk to the college.

### Phishing, Scam and Virus Emails

Niagara College now has multiple levels of protection from viruses and the vast majority of email viruses will be purged. However, in the event that you receive a suspicious attachment or mail from a suspicious sender, **do not open the attachment!** Please contact the ITS Helpdesk right away and report the message. Some examples of scam and phishing emails include:

- Impersonation Scams
- Email Support/Account Verification, Maintenance, or Upgrade Scams
- "Your Order from [company name] Has Shipped!" and Delivery Scams
- "I'm Stuck in [foreign country]" Scams
- Nigerian (and other) Fund Transfer Scams
- Governmental or "Official" Scams
- "Mystery Shopper" and Job Posting Scams
- "Winner!" Scams

Niagara College ITS staff will never ask for your account and email information in an email or through a web link. Furthermore, banks and official governmental agencies will not contact you through email unless you have contacted them by phone first. Another indication that an email is a scam or a phishing attempt is to look at the language of the email. Broken English, poor spelling and grammar and punctuation are key indicators the message should be treated with caution.

### Managing your Sophos Quarantine

Browse to <https://sophosnc.niagaracollege.ca> and enter your Niagara College username and password.

A screenshot of a web browser showing the login page for the Sophos Email Appliance. The browser's address bar displays the URL "https://sophosnc.niagaracollege.ca". Below the address bar, there are navigation tabs for "Most Visited", "Getting Started", and "Latest Headl...". The main content area features a green envelope icon followed by the text "Email Appliance". Below this, it says "Enter your login and password to log in." There are two input fields: "Login:" with the text "JSmith" and "Password:" with a masked password of seven black dots. A "Login" button is positioned below the password field.

Figure 1

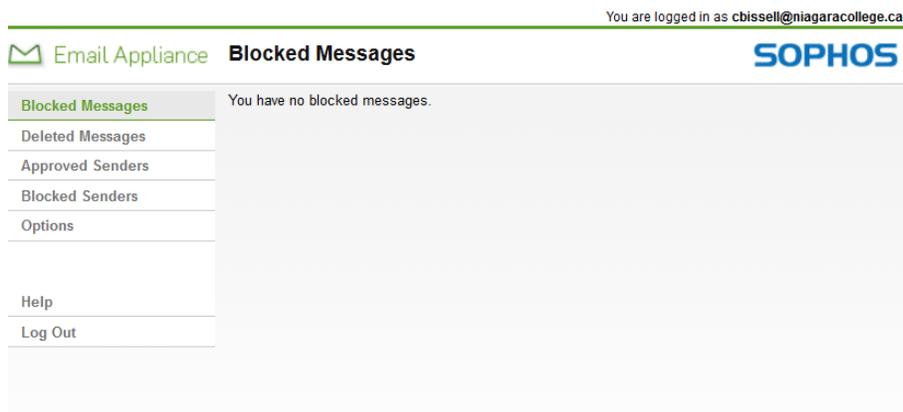


Figure 2

There are 7 functions within this page:

**Blocked Messages** – The Blocked Messages screen displays all of the e-mail messages that the Sophos anti-spam application has prevented from being delivered to the user. These are messages that have been blocked (held in a special holding area called the quarantine). Messages can be blocked either by the rules established by Niagara College or by rules established by the user. The Blocked Messages screen allows the user not only the ability to see the blocked messages but also allows the user to manage the blocked messages. Messages are held in the quarantine area for 14 days.

The Blocked Messages page allows you to manage the email blocked by the Email Appliance. The following actions are available:

- View a Blocked Message
- Deliver a Message
- Delete a Message (and send it to Deleted Messages)
- Deliver and Approve a Sender
- Delete All Messages

You can sort blocked messages by the following criteria:

- the message's **Type**
  - The  icon appears when a medium-level spam message is blocked
  - The  icon appears when a high-level spam message is blocked
  - The  icon appears when a bulk message is blocked
- the message's **From** header
- the message's **Subject**
- the **Date** of the message's delivery



### *View a Blocked Message*

1. On the sidebar, click **Blocked Messages**. The Blocked Messages page is displayed.
2. On the Blocked Messages page, click the subject of the message you want to view. The message opens in a new browser window.
3. To close the message, close the browser window.

### *Deliver a Message*

1. On the sidebar, click **Blocked Messages**. The Blocked Messages page is displayed.
2. On the Blocked Messages page, select the check box beside each message you want delivered to your mailbox.
3. Click **Deliver Message**. The selected messages are released and delivered to your mailbox.

### *Delete a Message*

1. On the sidebar, click **Blocked Messages**. The Blocked Messages page is displayed.
2. On the Blocked Messages page, select the check box beside each message you want to delete.
3. Click **Delete Message**. The selected messages are removed from the Blocked Messages page and sent to the Deleted Messages page.

### *Deliver and Approve a Sender*

1. On the sidebar, click **Blocked Messages**. The Blocked Messages page is displayed.
2. On the Blocked Messages page, select the check box beside each message that you want to be delivered to your inbox.
3. Click the **Deliver and Approve Sender** button. The Approved Senders page is displayed.
4. On the Approved Senders page, select if you want to only **Approve** the sender or to **Approve all email from** the sender's domain.
5. Click **Approve**. The selected messages are released and delivered to your inbox. The selected senders are added to your Approved Senders list.

### *Delete All Messages*

1. On the sidebar, click **Blocked Messages**. The Blocked Messages page is displayed.
2. On the Blocked Messages page, select the check box to the left of the **Type** column heading. All of the check boxes are selected.
3. Click **Delete Message**. All messages are removed from the Blocked Messages page and sent to the Deleted Messages page.



**Deleted Messages** – The Deleted Messages screen displays all messages that have been “deleted” by the user from the Blocked Messages screen. Messages are displayed on the Deleted Messages screen until the messages are physically purged from the system after the retention period has expired. The Delete Messages screen is merely a “parking place” for Blocked Messages the user has previously reviewed and no longer wishes to see on the Block Messages screen. Except for keeping the list of messages short to reflect only new e-mail messages on the Blocked Message screen there is no other benefit derived from using the Deleted Messages screen.

**Approved Senders** – The Approved Senders screen maintains a list of senders that the user does not want to be blocked by the rules established by the Sophos anti-spam software or the rules established by Niagara College. The Approved Senders screen allows the user to override the anti-spam blocking rules and allow the e-mail to be delivered unimpeded.

### *Add an Approved Sender*

1. On the sidebar, click **Approved Senders**. The Approved Senders page is displayed.
2. On the Approved Senders page, in the **Add address** text box, enter the email address of the sender you wish to approve.

**Note:** Valid email addresses must use the following format: `user@host.domain` (for example, `name@example.com`).

3. Click **Add Sender**. The Approved Senders List page is displayed with the approved sender added.

### *Delete an Approved Sender*

1. On the sidebar, click **Approved Senders**. The Approved Senders page is displayed.
2. On the list of Approved Senders, select the check box beside each sender you want to remove from the list.
3. Click **Delete Sender**. The Approved Senders page is displayed with the selected senders removed

**Blocked Senders** – The Block Senders screen maintains a list of senders that the user does not want to receive e-mail from. This screen is used when the user does not want to receive email from a specific sender although the e-mail does not meet the criteria that the Sophos anti-spam application and Niagara College have established for Spam e-mail. Adding senders to this list blocks all e-mail from the sender.

### *Add a Blocked Sender*

1. On the sidebar, click **Blocked Senders**. The Blocked Senders page is displayed.



2. On the Blocked Senders page, in the **Add address** text box, enter the email address of the sender you wish to block.

**Note:** Valid email addresses must use the following format: `user@host.domain` (for example, `name@example.com`).

3. Click **Block Sender**. The Blocked Senders List page is displayed with the blocked sender added.

### *Delete a Blocked Sender*

1. On the sidebar, click **Blocked Senders**. The Blocked Senders page is displayed.
2. On the list of Blocked Senders, select the check box beside each sender you want to remove from the list.
3. Click **Delete Sender**. The Blocked Senders page is displayed with the selected senders removed.

**Options** – The Options screens allows for the customization of several parameters that affect the general processing of the Sophos anti-spam application against the user's e-mail. Here is where users can disable all spam and bulk email filtering.

### *Disable all Spam and Offensive Content Blocking for my Messages*

1. On the sidebar, click **Options**. The Options page is displayed.
2. On the Options page, under **Mail-Filtering Preferences**, select the **Disable all spam and offensive content blocking for my messages** check box.
3. Click **Save**.

### *Disable all 'Bulk Message' Blocking for my Messages*

1. On the sidebar, click **Options**. The Options page is displayed.
2. On the Options page, under **Mail-Filtering Preferences**, select the **Disable all 'bulk message' blocking for my messages** check box.
3. Click **Save**.

### *Notify me Periodically of Messages that Have been Blocked*

1. On the sidebar, click **Options**. The Options page is displayed.
2. On the Options page, under **Mail Filtering Preferences**, select the **Notify me periodically of messages that have been blocked** check box.
3. Click **Save**.



**HELP** – The Help screens provides the user with additional instructions and information for managing their spam.

**LOGOUT** – The logout screen ends the user’s session.

**If you have any questions or require assistance with managing your spam please contact the ITS Helpdesk at ext 7642 or [itshelpdesk@niagaracollege.ca](mailto:itshelpdesk@niagaracollege.ca)**