

Reference Email Policy – January 2009

Questions submitted to the Reference email (reference@highpoint.edu) will be answered within 24 hours of being received. The Reference email is checked by Reference staff 5-6 times a day during weekday hours. The weekend (Saturday) reference librarian will respond to emails received on Saturday and Sunday.

Given the parameters of the email format (compared to the interactive nature of in-person reference assistance), these guidelines will be followed in responding to email reference questions:

- Broad, general, questions from patrons just beginning the research process (“I need information about business ethics”) should be answered with suggestions for search strategies, strategies for narrowing a topic, and recommended sources.
- More specific questions and topics, or those from students further along in the research process (“I have three articles on the marketing strategies of Starbucks and need one more that talks about branding...” or “I can’t find the full text of this article”) may be answered with links or attachments to appropriate sources.
- All responses to email reference questions will include an invitation for in-person reference assistance and the offer of further email assistance.
- When a question cannot be answered within the usual time frame of 24 hours, an initial email will be sent to the patron informing them of the additional time required.
- Every question will receive a response; priority will be given to HPU students, faculty, and staff. Questions from those not associated with the university will be answered as time allows.