

As of the 01 October 2017, NHSL returned to using Royal Mail for all external mail. We currently receive special rates on second class mail for presented envelopes in sizes DL and C5.

## 1. Presentation of Mail

The correct presentation of mail is essential to ensure an efficient and cost effective delivery service. All staff using the mail service should be aware of, and comply with, the guidance contained in this document. Further information is contained in the [Royal Mail's Guidance for Correct Mail Presentation](#).

Staff should ensure that:

- Letters and envelopes are presented clearly typed, ideally in a minimum of 12pt
- Where possible window envelopes are used, or the position the address on the envelope is where the window would otherwise appear
- Postcodes are presented on a separate line at the base of the address in the standard format (with space), e.g. EH1 3EG. Postcodes can be found at [www.royalmail.co.uk/postcodefinder](http://www.royalmail.co.uk/postcodefinder)
- When using a windowed envelope, the letter containing the address must not slip. Addresses and postcodes must be visible - C5 envelopes have fewer problems with slipping than DL envelopes as you only need to fold an A4 sheet of paper once
- envelopes are properly sealed - if the flap is loose the envelope may be damaged when being mechanically processed
- A return address on the envelope is not used for external mail as this effects machine-read mail
- All returned mail is be opened by mailroom staff in a secure, confidential environment and, where possible, returned to the originator.
- They are aware of local collection times from their department - if your mail is collected at 1.00pm, mail placed after this time will not be collected until the following day
- Mailing lists are regularly updated.

## 2. Patient Appointment Letters

Patient appointment letters should be sent out 2nd class, using a C5 or DL sized envelope, no more than 5mm in thickness and 100g in weight. The address should be clearly visible on the front, as above. Letters must not be sent in envelopes which are any larger than required as this attracts an additional charge to the monthly invoice.

Information on the 'Pricing in Proportion' guidance which covers envelope size and thickness can be found here: [Parcels, letters, envelopes, weight and size guide \(royalmail.com\)](https://www.royalmail.com/parcels-letters-envelopes-weight-and-size-guide).

Letters and packages which require any mail service more expensive than 2nd class (including services such as recorded delivery or guaranteed 9am delivery) will be recorded and recharged to the departments. First class post should not be used; alternative methods of communication should be used where the communication is time sensitive.

Taxis/couriers should not be used to deliver letters to patients.

Further guidance regarding the [sending of letters for scheduled care](#) is available on the NHS intranet.

### 3. Enveloping

Mail should always be sent using the most suitable envelopes for the purpose, as using larger envelopes than required will attract additional charges.

**Envelopes for standard letters should normally be DL or C5 size and if possible, no bigger than 24cm in length, 5mm in thickness, 16.5cm in width and 100g in weight.**

Packages which are above this size that have not been agreed with Facilities will be recorded and charged back to the originating department.

PECOS Codes for C5 or DL sized envelopes can be found here: <https://nhsscot.pecosipm.com>. Please log in to PECOS and search for 'envelope C5' or 'envelope DL'.

#### **Envelope Size guide**

**DL envelope dimensions 110x220 - Suitable for A5 folded once, A4 folded into thirds.**

**C5 envelope dimensions 162x229 – Suitable for A5, A4 folded once.**

### 4. Further information

Further details regarding [Mail Services](#) are available on the Logistics pages of the NHS Lothian intranet. For local information follow the links below (available on the NHS Lothian intranet):

- [Astley Ainslie Hospital](#)
- [Liberton Hospital](#)
- [East Lothian Community Hospital](#)
- [Royal Edinburgh Hospital](#)
- [Edinburgh Royal Infirmary](#)
- [Royal Victoria Hospital](#)
- [St John's Hospital](#)
- [Waverley Gate](#)
- [Western General Hospital](#)

Further information is also contained within the [NHS Lothian Postal Services Policy](#).