

Policy for use of Zoom Video Conferencing tool

Executive Summary

The key principles of this policy document are to provide guidance to University Staff and Associates on the appropriate use of the Zoom Video Conferencing platform; clarify use cases based on business need; provide the rationale for restrictions and limited user support. This guidance has been developed in collaboration with relevant Professional Services areas following research and engagement with teaching staff. Further information about Digital Tools available for university activity is available on the Teach Learn website <https://teachlearn.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/>

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Owner	IT Services
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A PDF copy of the final approved version should be forwarded to governance@leedsbeckett.ac.uk for inclusion in the policy register and consideration to the Publication Scheme. The original master copy should be retained on file by the policy owner.

Policy Document

Introduction/Background

1. In response to the rapid transition to online teaching and learning in 2020, the university established a Digital Tools Working Group (DTWG) incorporating colleagues from the Centre for Learning and Teaching, Distance Learning, IT Services and Libraries and Learning Innovation. The group worked to review existing online tools and identify any new requirements for teaching and learning tools and products. An output of the group was establishing that Blackboard Collaborate and Microsoft Teams sufficiently provide a core feature set that enables colleagues to deliver online learning and work remotely and collaboratively. Guidance was made available for colleagues to help choose the best tool based on their needs. As part of the requirements gathering process, a small number of colleagues requested that the Zoom Video Conferencing Platform was made available. Through research and testing, it was identified that the broad feature set of Zoom does not offer improved functionality or performance above Collaborate and Teams. The DTWG identified some subject areas where it was deemed necessary to explore whether Zoom would meet their needs better than other tools. The exploration found that Zoom fulfilled their subject specific requirements to a better standard in terms of the stereo audio quality provided. It was agreed that a small number of licenses would be made available to academic colleagues who required this enhanced level of stereo audio quality whilst delivering online teaching. This policy has been developed in order to support the restricted use of the tool by a small number of colleagues. Approved users have been identified where stereo audio quality provision is essential to the delivery their course.

Purpose and Scope

2. This policy document is intended as guidance on how university employees and associates should make use of the Zoom platform for official university business. This document includes assessment criteria on appropriate university use but does not serve as a product usage guide.

This policy document provides guidance for staff and associates using '**Purchased Licenses**' of Zoom to host sessions for conducting university business.

University staff and associates are not permitted to use '**Free Licenses**' of Zoom to conduct university business. In particular staff and associates should never use their Leeds Beckett University credentials (email account) to register for a free Zoom account. Colleagues wishing to sign-up for a free Zoom account for personal usage should sign up with a personal email address.

Responsibilities and/or Duties

3. All University Staff and Associates are responsible for adhering to this policy. Usage of the Zoom platform must conform with university IT Security policies. This document is not intended to supersede or otherwise replace any advice provided in existing IT Security policies which can be found on IT Services webpages: <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/staffsite/services/it-services/it-help/it-security/it-security-policies/>

Agreed Criteria for Use

The university has undertaken assessment of the Zoom platform, by analysing benefits it may bring for which existing university solutions are unable to meet business requirements. This assessment has been undertaken with representation from key academic colleagues and the Digital Tools Working group. This group was commissioned for assessment of digital tools by the university executive.

Zoom should be recognised as a market leading provider in the online session space, but one for which the university already has equally successful market leading solutions. When purchasing any IT service, assessment of a services privacy and security is also taken into consideration.

Business Requirement for which Purchased Licenses are Approved

- The requirement to teach university courses for which the learning process necessitates, as defined by the course director, the use of stereo audio. Zoom has an advantage over existing university solutions in respect of an “optional” feature to enable stereo audio. This feature provides significant benefit to those courses for which analysis of audio is key to the learning process.
- Stereo audio should generally be understood as creating the appearance of multi-directional audio. It would be inaccurate to infer that this is better, only that it is more suitable for audio analysis. Standard voice for example is often best delivered in mono, which is the Zoom default setting.
- Any other purpose for which the Digital Tools Working group, deems appropriate following assessment of requirements and existing tools. Such acceptance will result in this document being updated.

Attending a Meeting on Zoom

Recognising the widespread use of Zoom by other organisations, colleagues are not prohibited from attending sessions hosted by others on official university business.

Generally, there is no need to sign up for a Zoom account to attend a Zoom meeting and colleagues should not do so. Instead colleagues attending meetings hosted by other organisations should attend as a guest.

University staff and associates attending a Zoom meeting as a guest should join using the Zoom web client. Similarly. There is no need to attend a meeting using the Zoom desktop client, instead colleagues can usually undertake all they need using the Zoom web client. The web client is compatible with Chrome, Firefox and Microsoft Edge (Chromium version). Should a colleague require the Zoom desktop client to be installed in order to attend a meeting then they can only be offered limited support. For further information on the differences between the different Zoom clients please refer to this support article.

https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360027397692#h_55349dd9-5106-477c-b7fc-a261f90b924c

In summary colleagues attending a meeting held by other organisations should endeavour to do so as a guest using the web version.

Definitions

4. The usage of Zoom for hosting sessions at Leeds Beckett University for university business should be considered under two different criteria, **free licenses** and **purchased licenses**.

Free Licenses

Zoom enables colleagues to sign up for free accounts using a university email address. University colleagues should **not host** sessions on Zoom using one of these accounts. This is prohibited as communicated to all staff by the university executive team. These accounts are limited in terms of their technical functionality and assurances they provide to the university in respect of their terms of use. They are therefore deemed unfit for official university use to host meetings. The university reserves the right to take control of accounts registered in its name and assess their usage. As such should colleagues have signed up for a Zoom account for *personal usage only*, they should change that account to one that is linked with a personal email address.

Purchased Licenses

A Zoom account for which the university has paid for a license, **is authorised** to host sessions to conduct official university business, expressly for the purpose for which it has been approved. Requests for the purchase of Zoom accounts will be authorised in line with assessment that the business requirement meets the current **agreed criteria for use***.

Colleagues should note that university purchasing regulations state that the purchase of IT equipment, on company purchase cards, is strictly prohibited and that purchase of IT related items must always be conducted through ITS procurement services. Resultantly the purchase of Zoom licenses using unofficial channels will not have been assessed against the agreed criteria and therefore are not inherently approved for use.

Usage of paid license accounts does not guarantee that the Zoom platform is completely safe for use for any specific purpose. Use of the platform should be undertaken in line with best practice guidelines as produced by Zoom and in agreement within departmental line management.

Colleagues should not use this platform to purposefully transfer personal data as classified in the Data Protection Act 2018. However, all colleagues and participants using this service should note that other session attendees are likely to see their name and business email address.

The purchase of Zoom licenses requires the approval of a local budget holder and are not funded centrally by the university.

Policy Statements

5. Further Guidance on Zoom
 1. Official university support channels are currently only able to offer limited support for usage of Zoom.
 2. When conducting online teaching sessions, for which express use of Zoom is not required, colleagues should consider using a standard university solution. Colleagues should not use Zoom for general staff purpose, such as team meetings.

3. When signing up for a Zoom account colleagues should choose a password that is in line with the universities password policy. Ensuring that it is complex and not shared with anyone else.
4. When using a Zoom “purchased license” account for university business the account must be created using your university email address. It must never be renamed or altered to a personal email address and remains the property of the university.
5. When using Zoom purchased licenses for university business colleagues should take careful note to follow guidance on how to safely and securely conduct a session / meeting. These reference links may help you in preparing for that.
 - <https://blog.zoom.us/best-practices-for-securing-your-virtual-classroom/>
 - <https://zoom.us/docs/doc/Securing%20Your%20Zoom%20Meetings.pdf>

Installation and maintenance of the installable Zoom application on university equipment is controlled by IT Services under standard guidelines. Installation of the Zoom application on personal equipment, using a purchased license is approved but comes with limited support. Stereo audio requires the use of the Zoom application and therefore colleagues using the system should expect to need the app.

References and Associated Documentation (Legislation, Other Policies)

6. Relevant legislation and policies:

Choosing a Digital Classroom

<https://teachlearn.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/guides/mybeckett-and-digital-learning-guides/collaborate-ultra/choosing-a-digital-classroom-tool/>

IT Security Policies

<https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/staffsite/services/it-services/it-help/it-security/it-security-policies/>

Dissemination

7. The policy shall be published on the Teach Learn staff internet pages. The policy will be shared with front line IT support services staff and shared with wider university staff and associates on a request basis.

<https://teachlearn.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/>

Monitoring and Compliance

8. IT Services will monitor the usage of Zoom and report any inappropriate use via Senior Leadership colleagues in Schools and Services. Record keeping and usage will be

monitored via the Zoom dashboards accessible to IT Services and approved Schools' local IT support.

Appendices

Appendix A -

Appendix B -

Appendix C -