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Welcome

You have accessed the Developing your Skills materials for the Glow messenger pathway. These materials will help you put your understanding of Glow into context: offering suggestions for possible uses and providing information and practical help.

You can access these materials via the left-hand menu, which will always be available. Clicking on a menu item will launch the materials for that unit. You can use the 'Next page' and 'Previous page' buttons to move between pages in a unit and can access other units by clicking a different menu item. Alternatively, you can scroll through the entire document using the scroll bar to the right.

Materials can be printed using the 'Print' button on the toolbar ('File' > 'Print' through the menus).



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Introduction

Glow messenger is a method for staff using Glow to communicate with each other by text-only messages, sent and received instantly if all parties are online. Glow messenger creates a direct link between two or more people who have agreed to make contact. This communication and collaboration tool is **not** available to pupils.

You may already be aware that Glow has other communication and collaboration tools available to you– and that one of these is Glow chat. At first glance, Glow chat and Glow messenger seem to be very similar, however there are some fundamental differences between these two tools.

- Glow messenger is only available to staff using Glow, who have been given permission to use it; Glow chat is available to any Glow user, including pupils, with appropriate permission.
- Glow messenger is directly available within Glow and offers immediacy of communication to its users. In order to access a Glow chat session, a user must first be a member of a Glow group and must then navigate to the Glow chat web part within that group.



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- Users of Glow messenger may have the ability to attach electronic files such as images, audio, video and text documents, to their messages, and to exchange and manipulate these with others. This can only be achieved if they install a further application such as, MS Office Communicator 2005, Windows Messenger 5.1 or Mac:Messenger.

In addition, Glow messenger allows you to:

- communicate with online individual or multiple staff members using text messages in a more spontaneous and informal manner than online discussions or email.
- add those users with whom you communicate regularly to your contacts list for ease of access;
- view the status of your contacts – that is, whether they are online, offline, away or busy – and control who can see your Glow mail status;
- organise your contact list into groups, so that individuals are easier to identify and entire groups can be contacted with a single message;



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- share information with others using video and voice messaging as well as application sharing and shared whiteboards, in a similar way to how Glow meet can be used. You could do this through using one of the extended applications mentioned earlier. See the **Glow meet** Developing your Skills materials for more information on Glow meet.

The benefits of using Glow messenger to communicate include the following.

- Glow messenger functionality may be similar to other instant messaging applications users already have experience of and, as such, many users are familiar with the technology. It is easy to learn and easy to use.
- Glow messenger provides the opportunity for real time communication and collaboration, with instant responses from peers.
- It can help to bring together colleagues separated by distance, immediately and without the need for any extra technology.



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Glow messenger enables individual or multiple users to have discussions online and in real time. Users can ask questions or make comments to individuals and could receive immediate responses, which could be read and commented on by return.

Because it requires no additional hardware and can be accessed so easily within Glow, Glow messenger allows instant and effortless collaboration with peers. This approach to communication might be useful in a number of educational situations to develop your teaching and support your pupils' learning. Some of these are listed below.

[Confirming details of shared projects](#)

Glow messenger could be useful if you have set up a joint project with a Glow colleague – who might be in your school, elsewhere in Scotland or in another country. For example, you may have set up a shared lesson in a Glow meet session or a chat session to run an inter-school quiz.

If your colleague is online, you could use Glow messenger to discuss project arrangements with them and, prior to the activity actually taking place, to confirm that you are both ready to begin.



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In addition, should any issues occur during your shared activity you could use Glow messenger to assist you in identifying and remedying the situation as quickly as possible, without the text having to come up on screen for the pupils.

Sharing good practice

The Glow messenger tool could be used to encourage pairs or small groups of your peers to share good practice. For example, you could arrange for members of your department to be online at a specific time – either while they are at school or at another time – and could use this time to interact with one another and to share, discuss and refine knowledge and good practice.

Developing learning resources

Glow messenger is very effective for rapid and informal writing, such as generating ideas and conducting remote ideas-gathering sessions. As such, it is a useful tool for supporting colleagues in developing learning resources for lessons.



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The version of Glow messenger that is automatically present in Glow allows peers to share ideas for resources, or to suggest amendments to existing materials quickly and easily. The extended version gained by installing a further application offers the ability for you to share whiteboards and applications with peers, which you can use to offer actual work-in-progress for discussion and enhancement.

Meeting colleagues

Glow messenger offers the opportunity for organised contact between peers. You could therefore use Glow messenger to 'meet' with colleagues in other schools, or with your local authority, at pre-arranged times.

As well as being relatively easy to arrange, meetings of this sort can also save on travel time and costs for participants.

E-mentoring

Glow messenger is immediately available to staff using Glow. As such, it can be useful in enabling both pre-organised and 'as needed' contact between mentors and their charges.



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[E-mentoring \(continued\)](#)

Simply logging on to Glow messenger will allow you to see whether particular contacts are online and available to 'talk'. If they are available, you could use the tool to ask or answer questions, or to give or receive advice – just in time!



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Permissions

In order to use the Glow messenger tool, users have to have been granted the appropriate permissions. Pupils do not have this permission, and therefore will not be able to use Glow messenger.

Glow messenger etiquette

- Glow messenger is effective when used for rapid and informal writing but is less appropriate for more formal and reflective communication. Consider the objective of any conversations using Glow messenger before you begin.
- If someone does not respond immediately to your messages, wait for them to get in touch. You may contact them once more – politely – but should not bother them unnecessarily.
- Do not type anything during a Glow messenger session that you would not be happy to say face-to-face.
- USING CAPITALS means that you are shouting!



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General points

All online communications should be set within the agreed boundaries of your school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). This effectively forms a contract between the school and individual users, often requiring a countersignature. AUPs are created primarily to ensure that pupils are made aware of acceptable (and unacceptable) online behaviour. However, the contents of your school's AUP should also relate to you. Access and read your AUP to ensure that you are up-to-date with its contents.

Note: If you are directly involved in the writing or updating of your school's AUP, it might be useful for you to involve pupils in the creation of the policy documentation, to add a layer of pupil ownership. In addition, you should consider any existing documentation at your school along with any published advice from your local authority before you begin writing/amending. Further considerations are listed at the following web address: http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=tl&catcode=ss_tl_cm_hs_03&rid=9956 .

More information about developing an AUP can be found at www.itscotland.org.uk/doubleclickthinking/samplematerials/index.asp.



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- All online communications should be set within the agreed boundaries of your establishment's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). Information on developing an AUP for your school can be found at the following websites:
 - ◇ www.ltscotland.org.uk/doubleclickthinking/samplematerials/index.asp
 - ◇ http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=tl&catcode=ss_tl_cm_hs_03&rid=9956
- Find out more about Glow, including details on its background, aims and purpose, from the LTS website at www.ltscotland.org.uk and the Glow specific pages at www.glowscotland.org.uk/index.asp.
- 'A Curriculum for Excellence' is a programme central to the reform agenda of the Scottish Executive's Ambitious, Excellent Schools. It aims to provide: more freedom for teachers; greater choice and opportunity for pupils and eventually a single coherent curriculum for all young people aged 3-18. To find out more about this programme, visit: www.acurriculumforexcellencescotland.gov.uk/index.asp.



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Links disclaimer

We include links from Glow to other websites which we think will support your understanding of our web pages. Many of the links lead to sites maintained by third party organisations or individuals. Glow is not responsible for the accuracy, currency or reliability of these sites and does not necessarily endorse the views expressed within them. Listings shall not be taken as endorsement of any kind. No responsibility is assumed by Glow for the contents of these pages. Glow will not be able to deal with any queries arising from these external websites - please contact the provider of the relevant website.



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Glow groups – Glow groups allow members with common interests to share information and resources and hold online discussions using a number of different methods. Glow groups can provide instant anytime, anywhere secure access to resources and communication tools.

Glow mail – If you have access to it, this tool allows you to send emails. This is covered in more detail in the **Glow mail pathway**.

Glow meet – This tool allows members at different locations to set up 'virtual rooms' to hold online meetings. The virtual room can be configured so that participants can share information and views using text, voice and/or video, and a shared whiteboard. The whiteboard allows members to share a single document or an application and to make changes to this, as a group. This is covered in more detail in the **Glow meet pathway**.

Glow messenger – An online communication tool, available only to staff in Glow. Allows online and real-time communication between two or more individuals. Glow messenger is covered in more detail in the **Glow messenger pathway**.



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Web part – A self-contained tool or item; a unit of information that can be added or deleted from various pages.

See Glow help for more detail on each of the items listed in the glossary.

