

ICT

Chapter 8

Communicating using ICT

Section A Exchanging information safely

1	Electronic mail	2
2	New messages	2
3	The main parts of an email message	3
4	Email client mailboxes	4
5	File attachments	4
6	Email etiquette (some simple email do's and don'ts)	5
7	Storing email messages and contact details	6
8	Instant messaging	6
9	Web logs and forums	7

Picture Credits

The publisher would like to thank the following for their kind permission to reproduce their photographs:
Action Plus Images 6

Every effort has been made to trace the copyright holders and we apologise in advance for any unintentional omissions. We would be pleased to insert the appropriate acknowledgement in any subsequent edition of this electronic product.

ICT

Keith Jeram, Alan Meechan and Alison Meechan

Chapter 8: Communicating using ICT

- Chapter 1:** Using ICT systems
- Chapter 2:** Safety and security
- Chapter 3:** Find and select information
- Chapter 4:** Using ICT-based information
- Chapter 5:** Entering, developing and combining information (Part A)
- Chapter 6:** Entering, developing and combining information (Part B)
- Chapter 7:** Presenting information
- Chapter 8:** Communicating using ICT
- Chapter 9:** Test preparation and progress track

How to use the Functional ICT materials

These materials have been developed to help you learn the skills that are listed in the Functional Skills Standards for ICT, which the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) produced in 2007.

How have these materials been structured?

The chapters follow the standards, and each chapter is divided into sections that cover the individual standards in sequence. You will find the standards at the start of each chapter, although we have adapted the language slightly to make it clear what you are expected to learn.

Just because the materials follow the standards in this way, it does not mean that your teacher will necessarily teach them in this order. They will organise your learning sessions to suit your individual needs.

Who are these materials aimed at?

These materials are for learners working at both Level 1 and Level 2. The content and activities have been written to be accessible to learners at both levels. Your teacher will know which activities are most suitable for you.

In functional skills, the difference between levels is more to do with what you produce than with the activities you are asked to do. The differences are measured by the **complexity** of the activities, your **familiarity** with the context you are working in and the task you've been asked to perform, how **technically demanding** the task is and how good you are at working **independently**. The materials, and their activities, have been developed with this in mind.


We hope that the materials will engage you in the learning


process, and give you the opportunity to discuss what you have learned and to see how other learners approach the same tasks.

What will you find in each chapter?

The chapters follow the standards and are divided into sections that cover what is laid out in the standards. Within each section you are asked to 'Learn the skill', which gives you information and facts for discussion and exploration; and you are asked to 'Develop the skill', with activities that let you practise the skills, test your understanding and take your knowledge further.

You will also find two other features on the pages that are designed to increase your understanding. These are electronic resources in the form of 'skills demonstrations' and 'assets'.

 Skills demonstrations are screen-based demonstrations of points made in the text, which you can click on for instruction or information.

 Assets are files of information provided or stored digitally, which may include photographs, sound clips, databases, spreadsheets, etc. These may also include material you will need to perform the activities (e.g. tables to complete).

We hope you find it easy to learn from these materials and that you enjoy using them.

Published by Pearson Education, Edinburgh Gate, Harlow CM20 2JE © Pearson Education 2008

This material may be used only within the Edexcel pilot centre that has retrieved it. It may be desk printed and/or photocopied for use by learners within that institution. All rights are otherwise reserved and no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanic, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the Publishers or a licence permitting restricted copying in the United Kingdom issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency Ltd, Saffron House, 6–10 Kirby Street, London EC1N 8TS.

First published 2008.

Typeset by Oxford Designers & Illustrators, Oxford

8 Communicating using ICT

By the end of this chapter you should be able to:

➤ communicate and exchange information safely using ICT

You will learn:

- to create an email
- to respond to emails
- to send an attachment
- to use a contacts list
- about web logs and forums

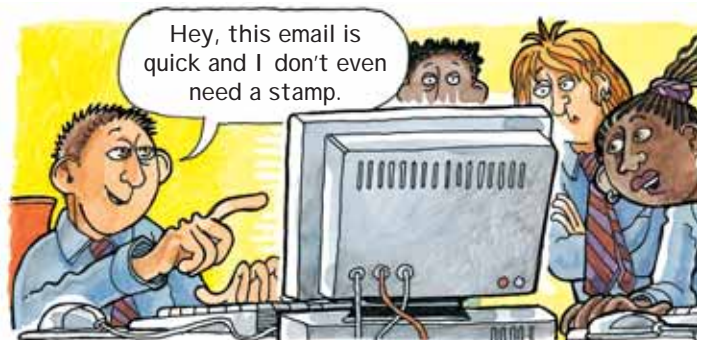
A Exchanging information safely

Learn the skill

Electronic mail

The term 'electronic mail' was shortened to 'e-mail', and now 'email'. Email is a method of sending text messages over the internet from one computer to another.

To use the email system, an *email client* is needed. This is an application that can create, send, receive, store and view email.



New messages

There are three ways of creating a new email message:

- *Create a New message* – A message to a person with all new content.
- *Reply to a message in the Inbox* – A message back to the sender of a message. The new content is added to the beginning of the existing content. A chain of replies can be built up, keeping all the content of all the messages.
- *Forward a message* – A message from the Inbox (usually) sent on to another person. New content may be added to the existing message.

Look through these skill demonstrations:

- Receive an email
- Send an email to an individual
- Send an email to a group
- Send an attachment
- Send an email with carbon copies
- Reply to an individual
- Reply to all
- Use an email address book
- Communicate with team members

The email client will have menus for New, Reply and Forward.

The main parts of an email message

An email message must be created before it can be sent. The message is created in a dialog box. Here is one example of an email (not all emails will look like this), with labels identifying the parts of the message.

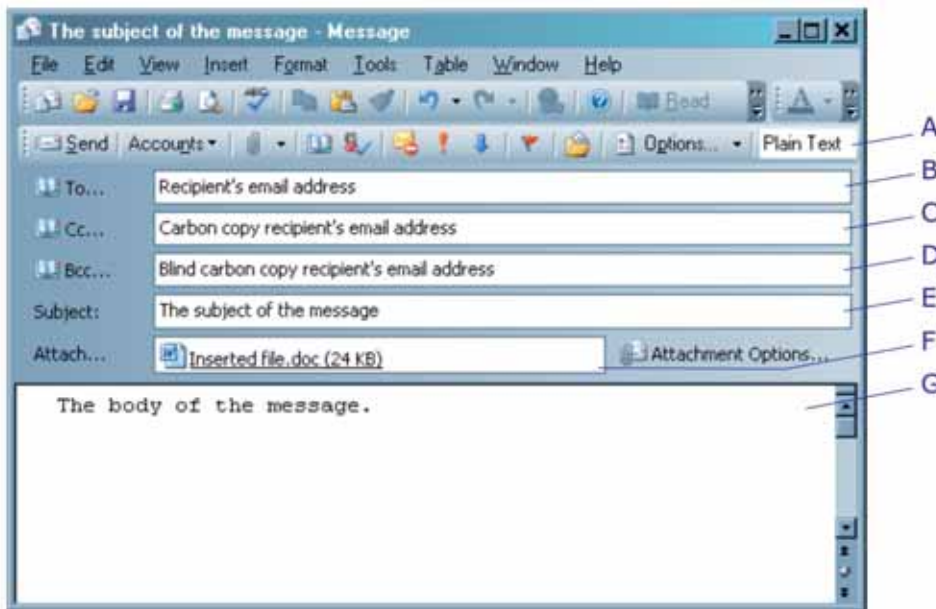
A *This drop-down list allows the format of the message to be selected. The options are: plain text, rich text or html. Rich text or html are used when the message needs to include images or formatted text.*

B *The 'To...' (or recipient) field*

Contains the email address of the person to whom the message is sent. More than one address can be entered here.

C *The 'Cc...' (or carbon-copy) field*

Contains the email address of the person (or people) who will receive a copy of the message. The receiver of the message will be able to see who has been sent a copy.



D *The 'Bcc...' (or blind carbon-copy) field*

Also contains the email address of the person (or people) who will receive a copy of the message. But the receiver of the message will not be able to see who has been sent a blind copy.

E *The subject line field*

Contains a short heading that describes the message. This will be displayed in the email client's list of messages when the message is received.

F *The file attachment field*

Contains the name of any file attached to the message.

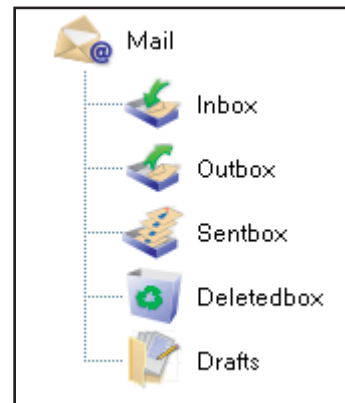
G *The body of the message*

Whatever the sender enters into this field will be seen by those who receive it.

Email client mailboxes

An email client organises emails in several mail folders, like this.

- Inbox** holds messages received
- Outbox** holds new messages that are yet to be sent
- Sent box** holds messages that have been sent to others
- Deleted box** holds messages that have been deleted, from any of the other mail boxes
- Drafts** holds part-completed messages



Here is a view of a few messages in the Inbox folder. One message is selected; the body of the selected message appears in the lower section, with other message details. This message has a file attached.

Clicking on a message in the list opens the message and displays the message content.

Messages shown with the received time in bold have yet to be read. The message displaying ! is a message sent with high priority – the sender decides on the priority, not the receiver.

File attachments

The paper-clip symbol (📎) shows that a message has a file attached. Email messages in plain text can only contain text. A common way to send additional information is as one or more files to be attached to the message. To actually send this information the email client program must convert the information in an attached file to text and embed it in the message.

When the message is received the email client extracts the file information from the email and restores the file. The file attached to this message (*Car travel costs.xls*) is saved in a temporary files folder.

A file attached to an email can be used in the following ways:

- 1 Double-click the file icon in the message. This will open the file from the temporary files folder. Use the Save As menu option to save the file elsewhere.
- 2 Right-click the file icon in the message to open a context menu. Use the Save As menu option to save the file elsewhere.

A screenshot of an email client interface. The top part shows a list of messages in a table with columns: From, Subject, Received, and Size. The second message is selected and highlighted. Below the list, the details of the selected message are shown, including the sender (Lucie Attwell), recipient (Visitor centre manager), subject (Getting to the visitor centre), and an attachment (Car travel costs.xls (14 KB)). The body of the message is displayed below the details.

!	📎	From	Subject	Received	Size
!	📎	Peter Jones	Big explosion	11/4/2008 9:00 AM	1698
	📎	Lucie Attwell	Getting to the...	11/4/2008 9:00 AM	2064
	📎	Eric Harding	Brochure	11/4/2008 9:00 AM	2226
	📎	Andrew Smythe	Letter to L. WIL.	11/4/2008 9:00 AM	2778

From: Lucie Attwell **To:** Visitor centre manager
Subject: Getting to the visitor centre
Attachment: 📎 Car travel costs.xls (14 KB)

I have booked a visit to you for later this year.
Could you please send me a map showing where you are.
The attached file is an estimate of my travel costs.
Regards
Lucie Attwell

Email etiquette (some simple email dos and don'ts)

Use names

Use the name of the person you are mailing and make sure your name appears at the end.

Don't use email to discuss confidential information

Once your email has been sent, you have no control over it.

Use a meaningful subject

The subject line is meant to tell the recipient what the email is about. It should be brief but clear.

Don't forward circulars or chain letters, or any email from a source you don't recognise

Sometimes these contain viruses! Just delete these emails as soon as you receive them, and don't open them.

Answer your emails as soon as you can

Email is immediate, so people expect a quick reply.

Do not attach large or unnecessary files

Large files can take a long time to send and receive.

Use emoticons and abbreviations carefully

Emoticons (smileys) and abbreviations may not be understood by everyone. Avoid smileys in any formal email.

Don't overuse 'Reply to all'

Not everyone on a list needs to see your reply. Avoid sending needless emails; it's a bit like spam.

Try not to write in capitals

It sounds like you are SHOUTING.

Don't send or forward emails containing offensive, racist or obscene remarks

If you send on anything of this nature, it becomes your message and you could be liable.

Always read the email before you send it

This is the best way to pick up any mistakes. Don't forget to run a spellchecker on it.

Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation

It will give a bad impression if you don't, and you may be misunderstood.

Storing email messages and contact details

Over time a large number of messages can build in an email client's Inbox. Many email client programs have an archive facility that will remove old emails from the Inbox and save them to another location. Archiving can be set to happen automatically every few days or weeks.

Unwanted emails, including spam (messages you didn't want to receive) and messages of no importance at all, should be deleted as soon as they are received. It is not a good idea to delete other messages, as there is the possibility you may need to refer to them some time later.

Deleting unwanted messages reduces the size of your Inbox and keeps it 'clean'.

Address book

An address book is a database of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of a person's contacts, stored by the email client program. When a new email is created, typing a contact name into the To, Cc or Bcc field of an email will automatically enter the email address, if the contact is in the address book.

Using the address book, you can add new contacts, edit the details of existing contacts and delete contacts.

Contacts groups

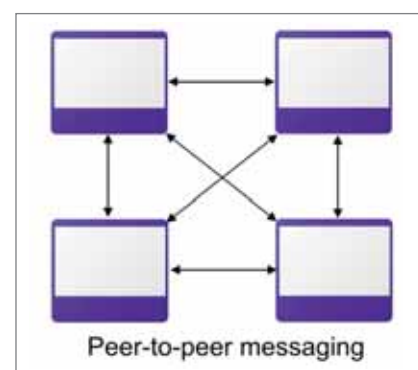
A selection of contacts that have something in common (all members of the same club, for example) can be saved as a named group. When you want to email these people, all you need to do is select the group by name to send your email to everyone in the group.



Instant messaging

Instant messaging software tells the user when friends are online and enables them to exchange text messages (chat) in real time.

Instant messaging is based on peer-to-peer technology. This connects two computers together over the internet and avoids the need for a server. A common use of peer-to-peer networking is to exchange files. The technology has a bad name in some quarters, because it allows files to be shared illegally.



Web logs and forums

A web log (or blog) is an online journal or diary with entries in reverse order of date and time (the most recent entry is at the bottom). Entries can often be made into a text box which is then published to the web page. Some web logs allow anyone to blog (make an entry to the web log).

Online forums use the format of a web log and enable a written discussion to take place between users. These forums are also known as 'message boards' or 'discussion boards'.

Develop the skill

You will need access to an email client program and a personal email address for these tasks.

A1 Send yourself an email. Sending an email on a round-trip is a good way of testing your email system.

- In your email client program, create a new email. In the 'To' field enter your personal address. Enter something suitable into the subject field and the body of the email – it only needs to be a few words.
- Send the email. To send the message, click Send/Receive in the email client.
- Wait for your message to be received. This may happen automatically, or you may need to click Send/Receive to check for new messages. The time taken to round-trip your message may be very short, or it may take some time.
- Repeat the task:
 - a This time attach a small text file to the email.
 - b Open the attachment in the received email.
- Repeat the task again:
 - a This time set the format of the email to html and insert a picture into the body.
 - b Is the picture present in the received email?

A2 Delete the emails that you sent in the previous task. Then empty the Deleted Items folder.

Hint In some email clients, sending is a two-stage process: clicking Send in the New dialog sends the message to the Outbox.

Hint Use the right-click context menu.