

Conferencing - the Hot Topic of the Moment

Dear all,

This information can also be found on the intranet home page.

If you need a particular service (conference recording, screen sharing, chat room) then for the moment please contact the GCLAW IT team to arrange something that will best suit you. In time I'll add further details of which platform supports which features.

Video Conferencing

Jitsi - <https://meet.jit.si/>

This is free and open source. No account needed.

Couldn't be simpler, go to the webpage, type in the name of your meeting and give the URL to others for them to join you. Perfect for quickly contacting others. If you're using a mobile device you will be required to download a small app. You can use this as and when you please and anyone can host a meeting at any time.

Skype

Skype is not the same as Skype for Business. It's a completely different platform. Best used for simply talking to others who are also using Skype and is relatively basic. If you have a Microsoft Account then it is free to sign up for one in order to get Skype. If you have Hotmail email address or have a Microsoft Office subscription then you already have a Microsoft Account.

Skype For Business

Generally this is only compatible with others who use Skype for Business. It can be bought as a separate subscription for about £4 per month and can call other platforms, but is essentially only for those businesses with an Office365 Subscription. This does not include Chambers and nor will it for the foreseeable future due to the high cost. Skype for Business is currently being rebranded under Microsoft Teams.

Goldseal

Goldseal is not available to single users, but Chambers has rooms available. It allows users from any platform (even Skype for Business or just a telephone) to conference in (up to 40 people). On certain devices you will be required to download the app.

Zoom.us - <https://zoom.us/>

Anyone can sign up for a free Zoom account. It will allow up to a 40 minute call and has many good features. If you are going to use it for long periods, then for £11.99 for a Pro

account will allow you to host unlimited length calls and adds many features, such as breakout rooms. People/organisations using Skype for Business are able to join these meetings. An app download is required for the best possible call quality.

Chambers also has a Zoom subscription if the free account will not fulfil your needs. Please contact the IT Team to schedule the meeting for you.

Teleconferencing

Not all platforms support this, but our reception have a series of numbers that you can use to teleconference. It is also possible to have your conference recorded. Please contact our reception team to book.

Over the last few days of testing, it is clear that the quality of calls varies over all of these services and depends on a lot of factors such as the quality of camera/microphone in the devices being used and the bandwidth of each person's connection. There isn't a service with the "best" video or audio quality. Pick one for having the features you need, or which you find easiest for you (and/or the call participants) to use.

Understandably the demand for Chambers resources on conferencing is high. We ask that if you book a conference call, that it is kept to the time it is booked for.

This isn't meant to be an exhaustive list of services, there may well be others, but this should cover the ones that people are most familiar with.

Regards,

I.T Support