# Introduction (Basic) Guide to Microsoft Teams

Although increasing numbers of us have been using Teams over the last few months, the current situation has thrown a lot of us in the deep end. I'd like to briefly introduce some of the basics for people just getting to grips with it.

Accessing Teams can be done either online through Glow (if you're not sure of your glow login contact your IT person – all Scottish teachers should have one) or through the app you can easily download, either to your pc or your phone. I find the desktop app much easier for busy times during the day, when Teams Online can be a bit slow.

There are two main **types** of Team – class teams or professional groups, such as the SATH Team or departmental Teams. Although I plan on focusing on Class Teams here, I can't emphasise how useful these are.

Along the left hand side you'll find a quick place to access features. In the **activity feed** you'll find conversations etc you've been directly involved in. You can filter this. The **chat** function is only for staff, and can allow for chat with an individual or with a group. The **Teams** button will bring you to all the Teams you are a part of, or if you want to create a new Team, here is the place to do it. **Calendar** and **calls** allow you to, well, manage your diary and make calls if needed. The **files** button here gives you quick access to files in all of your Teams, although you'll probably find that this is easier done within individual teams.
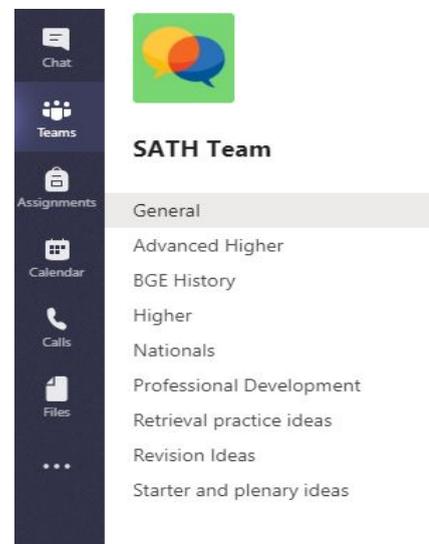
As a class teacher starting out, probably the main things you'll be using Teams for will be making posts, sharing files, and setting and marking assignments, and although Teams can do a lot more than this, I'll focus on these here.

Conversations

Under 'posts', say what you want and hit 'send'. All conversations will be organised by date, and replies are organised below – this is much more manageable than the traditional email chain, and makes it easier to follow multiple conversations. Use the @mention to get someone's attention more directly – to do this, type @ and then the first few letters of their name, and then select the person you want. This message will come up in their activity feed, or even as a phone notification if they have enabled that. You can also @mention the entire group, e.g. writing @SATH Team, @IBI History in those Teams will get everyone's attention.

+ New ∨   ↑ Upload   ⟳ Sync   ⊘ Copy link   ↓ Download   + Add cloud storage   📄 Open in SharePoint

Higher

📄 Name ∨	Modified ↓ ∨	Modified By ∨
📁 Revision	January 13	Mrs Hay
📁 Source Skills	January 6	Mrs Hay
📁 Scottish	January 6	Mrs Hay
📁 European and World	January 6	Mrs Hay
📁 Essay Skills	January 6	Mrs Hay
📁 British	January 6	Mrs Hay

You can also add files directly into conversations by selecting the 'attach' icon (that looks like a paperclip), selecting the file, and then sending. Note though, that if you want to carefully organise your files it might be better to follow the method below.

Sharing Files

Each Team has 1TB of storage – plenty of space for class materials and whatever else your Team might need. As just mentioned, you can share files in conversations, but there are a couple of easier ways of doing this. If you find the 'Files' option along the top bar within the Team you want, you can create new folders and upload materials. You can create links to any files or folders quickly here and paste them into conversations if needed. A faster option if you want to upload a lot of materials, or want to see things in a format that is a bit more similar to Dropbox, is to 'Open in Sharepoint'. In a class team there is a folder called 'class materials' which only the teacher can edit, although the pupils in that Team can access the materials.

Setting and Marking Assignments

In the 'assignments' tab if you hit 'create'

you can set assignments that suit you by setting the date, instructions, scores, and it's even possible to create that holy grail for teachers – self marking quizzes. It is up to you to decide if you will accept late hand ins or not. You can attach reference materials, such as PowerPoints or relevant websites, and it is even possible to attach documents which pupils can edit and then return to you as part of the assignment – this works really well for worksheets.

When reviewing assignments, the work will appear on the screen with a pane to the right where you can add feedback as well as a mark. By selecting the 'grades' tab in your class team you can get an overview of how a class has got on with an assignment, or look at how one pupil has progressed in more depth across a range.

This has been a basic introduction. I have not covered my favourite features of Teams, such as open collaboration on documents, using class notebook, dictate etc, but perhaps another time! Any questions, don't hesitate to email rebecca.hay@westlothian.org.uk or ask @history_hay on Twitter.