

10.1 Communication Using Email

Syllabus 2026 - 2028

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Characteristics, uses and constraints of email communication: acceptable language, employer guidelines, security, netiquette, email groups, cc, bcc, forward, attachments
- Characteristics and effects of spam email, and methods used to help prevent spam

What email is

Email (electronic mail) is a message sent from one user to one or more others over a network such as the internet. It arrives almost at once, can carry files and can be read from any device that can connect to the mailbox.

Figure 41: Parts of an email

To:	teacher@school.sz	← Main recipient
Cc:	head@school.sz	← Copy: everyone can see
Bcc:	(hidden recipients)	← Copy: others cannot see
Subject:	Homework results	← Short, clear topic
Attachment:	results.xlsx	← File sent with the email

Email features

Feature	Meaning	Use
Carbon copy (cc)	A copy sent to other people; all recipients can see who got it	Keeping others informed
Blind carbon copy (bcc)	A copy sent to people whose addresses are hidden from other recipients	Protecting privacy when writing to many people
Forward	Sending a received message on to someone else	Sharing information with a person who was not included
Attachment	A file (document, picture, spreadsheet) sent with the email	Sending files; large files may be blocked and can carry viruses
Email group	A named list of addresses that can all be reached with one address	Writing to a class or a team in one step

Characteristics, uses and constraints

- **Characteristics:** fast, cheap, can be sent at any time, leaves a written record, can reach many people at once
- **Uses:** business and school communication, sending documents, newsletters, confirmations and bookings
- **Constraints:** both parties need internet and an email account; messages can be misunderstood without tone; viruses and spam; overload from too many emails
- **Acceptable language:** use polite, professional, non-offensive wording; no abuse, threats or discrimination
- **Employer guidelines:** many organisations restrict personal use, attachment types and the content sent from work accounts, and may monitor email

- **Security:** use strong passwords, do not open unknown attachments or links, and do not send private data unencrypted

Netiquette

Netiquette is the set of rules for polite and sensible behaviour online.

- Use a clear subject line and be brief and to the point
- Do not write in CAPITAL LETTERS, which looks like shouting
- Check spelling and grammar and use a polite greeting and sign-off
- Do not use offensive language or forward chain letters
- Think before using 'Reply all', and do not share other people's email without permission

Spam email

Spam is unwanted email, usually sent in bulk, for example advertising or scams.

Effects of spam	Ways to prevent spam
Wastes time, network bandwidth and storage	Use a spam filter
Can contain viruses, phishing and scams	Do not reply, click links or open unknown attachments
Can hide important messages	Keep the email address private; do not post it publicly
Can overload the mail server	Use a separate address for online sign-ups and untick marketing boxes

Figure 42: Reducing spam email

Spam filter
blocks junk mail

Do not reply
or click links

Keep address
private

Report and
block sender

Use a second
address to sign up

EXAM TIP

For cc and bcc, always state **who can see the address**. Cc: everyone sees it. Bcc: the other recipients cannot. Use bcc when sending to many people so that their addresses stay private.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Email	A message sent electronically between users.
Cc	Carbon copy: a copy visible to all recipients.
Bcc	Blind carbon copy: a hidden copy.
Attachment	A file sent with an email.
Forward	Send a received email to someone else.
Netiquette	Rules for polite online behaviour.
Spam	Unwanted bulk email.
Email group	A list of addresses reached with one name.

Practice questions

Answer each question in full sentences. Command words used: State (give a short answer), Describe (say what it is like), Explain (give reasons), Analyse (break it down and examine it), Suggest (apply your knowledge to a situation), Compare and contrast (similarities and differences), Evaluate (weigh up and reach a judgement).

No.	Question	Marks
1	State two rules of netiquette that should be followed when writing an email.	[2]
2	Describe the difference between cc and bcc.	[3]
3	Explain why an employer might set guidelines for the use of email at work.	[3]
4	Describe two effects of spam email.	[2]
5	Suggest three ways to reduce the amount of spam a person receives.	[3]
6	Analyse the constraints of using email to communicate with customers.	[4]
7	Evaluate the use of email, compared with a phone call, to send a report to a manager.	[5]

Total: 22 marks