

**National standards for essential digital skills**

**Glossary**

# Glossary

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| **Word** | **Definition** |
| **Accessibility** | The ease of use of a device, an application or content by a user. |
| **Application** | A program designed for a specific purpose, such as word processing or graphic design. |
| **Attachment** | A file (or files) attached to an email or other form of electronic communication by the sender, and which can be read by the recipient. |
| **Authentication** | In the context of computer systems, authentication is a process that ensures and confirms a user’s identity. |
| **Browser** | An application used to find and display information on the World Wide Web. |
| **Cloud** | The cloud refers to software and services that run on the Internet, instead of locally on your computer. |
| **Cloud provider** | A cloud provider is a company that delivers cloud computingbased services and solutions to businesses and/or individuals. |
| **Cloud-based services** | A cloud-based service is any service made available to users on demand via the Internet from a cloud computing provider’s server, as opposed to being provided from a company’s own on-premises servers. |
| **Contacts** | Information on an individual (usually including an email address, telephone number, or similar) stored within a software application so that the person can be contacted. |
| **Collaboration tools** | Functionality in applications designed to help people involved in a common task achieve their goals e.g. shared editing of a document. |
| **Content** | A broad term for digital information, typically includes text, images and other rich media. |

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| **Word** | **Definition** |
| **Credentials** | A set of identifiers, attributes or information with which a user proves their claim to an identity/ account and enables authorised access to systems, information and services. |
| **Currency** | The fact or quality of being generally accepted or in use. |
| **Data** | A structured set of numbers, representing digitised text, images, sound, video or other information which can be processed or transmitted by a device. |
| **Device** | A piece of hardware or equipment that contains a microprocessor. Examples include PCs, laptops, smartphones, tablets and smartwatches. |
| **Digital collaboration** | Digital collaboration is an interaction between two or more people, mediated by a computer. |
| **Digital content** | Any media created, edited or viewed on a device, such as text, images, sound, video, and combinations of these (i.e. multimedia). |
| **Digital environment** | Digital devices, applications and infrastructure that people use in life and work. |
| **Digital footprint** | The (distributed) information about a person that exists on the Internet as a result of their online activity, and which can be used to identify a person. It includes the websites you visit, your search history, messages you send, and information you submit to online services. |
| **Digital media** | Digitised content that can be stored and processed in a device and transmitted over the internet or computer networks. This can include text, audio, video, and graphics. |
| **Directory** | See folder. |
| **Document** | A collection of digital content which can be created and edited on a device and stored in a file, and is often (although not always) intended for subsequent printing. |
| **External storage** | A device that stores information outside a computer. Such devices may be permanently attached to the computer or may be removable, or may be accessible over a network. |

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| **Word** | **Definition** |
| **File** | A store for data (e.g. a document, image, spreadsheet, database, etc.) which is typically stored on a hard drive or solid-state drive. |
| **File naming conventions** | A file naming convention is a way of naming files that describes or indicates the content of the file or the use it is put to, and optionally includes date and/or time information. |
| **Folder** | A folder (also called a directory) is a way to organise computer files. Files can be placed into a folder to group them together. Typically, folders can contain other folders to create a hierarchical storage system. |
| **GPS** | Global Positioning System (GPS) is a satellite navigation system used to determine the ground position of an object. |
| **Graphic** | Visual representation of information in the form of diagrams, graphs and pictures. |
| **Hierarchy** | A hierarchy is an arrangement of items in which the items are represented as being "above", "below", or "at the same level as" one another. |
| **HTTP** | HyperText Transfer Protocol. HTTP is the underlying protocol used by the World Wide Web to transmit messages between browsers and web servers. |
| **HTTPS** | HTTPS stands for Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure. It is the protocol where encrypted HTTP data is transferred over a secure connection. |
| **Information** | Information is data that has meaning and is understood by a human being. |
| **Layout** | The organisation of certain elements within a page. The 'elements' are usually images, text and perhaps active components such as video or animations. Layouts are usually for a purpose and audience – for example, a technical report for managers demands a different layout to a flyer for customers. |
| **Local storage** | A hard drive or solid-state drive directly attached to the device being referenced. |

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| **Word** | **Definition** |
| **Messaging** | Transferring content or information (text, images, voice) from one person or device to another, by using any medium of digital communication. |
| **Metadata** | Metadata is data about data. It often provides information about the content of a digital item. For example, a file may have metadata indicating the size of the file, the format of the file, the creation date of the file, etc. |
| **Multifactor authentication** | Multi-factor authentication (MFA) is a security mechanism in which individuals are authenticated through more than one required security and validation procedure. |
| **Numerical data** | Data that is measurable, such as time, height, weight, amount, etc. |
| **Online communication** | A form of communication, using the various means available on the Internet to communicate and interact online to relay a message to a targeted audience, including email, instant message, text message, social media, blog, collaboration tools and services. |
| **Online content** | A broad term for digital information on the internet, typically includes text, images and other rich media. |
| **Online information service** | An online source of information provided by the relevant authority or organisation. Examples include government and local authority websites, school websites, weather services, etc. |
| **Operating system** | An operating system provides a platform on which applications can run and allows input from the user, and also manages files and directories on the data storage system. |
| **Patch** | A patch is a set of changes to a computer program designed to update, fix, or improve it. This includes fixing security vulnerabilities and other bugs. Keeping a software system up to date with the latest patches is known as keeping it “patched”. |
| **Personal data** | Personal data is information that relates to an identified or identifiable individual. |

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| **Word** | **Definition** |
| **Personal information** | See personal data. |
| **Phishing** | Describes fraudulent emails, texts or other messages designed to make the user share personal information such as login IDs, passwords and account numbers, which they may use to steal money, an individual’s identity or gain access to an individual’s device. |
| **Private communication** | An online communication to a private audience (specific individuals), e.g. a text message, direct message or email. |
| **Preferences** | Preference settings allow a user to select basic settings for an application, website or programme. It is a way of customising the application, website or programme to suit the user. |
| **Public communication** | An online communication to a public audience, e.g. a social media message or posting to an online forum. A public message is visible to anyone using a given communication channel. |
| **Reliable** | That which can be trusted. |
| **Remote storage** | A hard drive or solid-state drive which is not directly attached to a device but is accessible from that device via a network or the Internet, for instance via the Cloud. |
| **Rich media** | Typically, images, audio, videos etc. are considered rich media. |
| **Search engine** | A search engine is an online service which enables users to search for content on the web. A user enters keywords or phrases into the search engine and receives a list of results in the form of links to web pages, images, videos etc. |
| **Search engine ranking** | The position at which a particular site appears in the results of a search engine query. |
| **Sharing** | Making information accessible, by using digital technology, to specific individuals or more widely. |

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| **Word** | **Definition** |
| **Shared desktop** | Desktop sharing is a common name for technologies and products that allow remote access and remote collaboration using a person's computer desktop. |
| **Synchronisation** | The process of making two or more data storage devices or software applications or devices have the same information at a given time. |
| **Tagging** | Tagging is attaching some kind of information or label to a piece of digital content. |
| **Transactional online service** | Transactional services are online services which require the user to supply information in multiple steps, following the provided instructions at each step. Examples include central government services (e.g. applying for a passport, benefit calculators, accessing your income tax information, etc.), local government services (e.g. paying council tax online, requesting a refuse uplift (i.e. collection of household rubbish), etc.), applying for jobs, organising finances, etc. |
| **URL** | The address of a World Wide Web page. |
| **Verification check** | A check carried out (typically when creating a new online account) to ensure that the user has entered their details. Usually this will entail responding to an email sent to the email address they have entered when setting up the account. |
| **Video call** | A call between two people at remote locations, using digital devices to provide a video and audio link between the two. |
| **Video conference** | A meeting between a group of people at remote locations, enabled by using computers or other digital devices to provide a video and audio link between all group members. Video conferences also often allow individuals to present information to the group, with all attendees seeing the same information at the same time. |

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