Video Conferencing Good Practice Guidelines for Formal College Meetings (including department/school/team meetings)

RNCM
ROYAL NORTHERN
COLLEGE of MUSIC

Overview

Due to COVID-19, the RNCM is utilising communications platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams for online meetings. It is important for staff to continue to adhere to College policy and exercise good practice in their online activities.

It has been reported in the media that 'malicious cyber actors are hijacking online meetings that are not secured' (National Cyber Security Centre). These guidelines are intended to protect you and the College from inappropriate activity and malicious cyber-attacks.

1. **College Regulation**
Normal college regulations, including Data Protection, apply to all communications, including, but not limited to, email, chat functions and video platforms. Access to all data stored in the system can be requested under the Freedom of Information Act and Subject Access. A list of College data usage policies is appended to this document.

Please remember that in working remotely, additional physical barriers to data-protection breaches will be required, such as securing access to sensitive College data with passwords. If sharing a computer, you must log-out of RNCM systems when they are not in use by you.

2. **Practise good online etiquette**

2.1   Video conferencing technology can cause people to disassociate from the content of the meeting. Treat each other with the usual courtesy and respect expected from colleagues.

2.2   Be aware of your surroundings and how you appear visually.

- o   Ensure location lighting does not limit your visibility (e.g., avoid backlighting from windows or lamps) so that you are easier to see on video.

- o   Be mindful of what your colleagues can see behind you. A neutral backdrop is best, so people don't get distracted. Where this is not possible, you may blur the background under Video Settings.

2.3   Be aware of others around you (e.g. family members/housemates) and consider the sensitivity of the matters you and your colleagues are discussing.

2.4   Position the webcam at eye level and make sure that you are 'in view' and call from a quiet location.

2.5   Be aware of your behaviour, remember that you are on a video conference and people can see what you are doing at all times.

2.6   Ensure you can recognise when you are sending sound, to avoid unwittingly sending distracting noises:

- o   Ensure you know how to mute and unmute your microphone.

- o   Zoom draws a yellow line beneath, or box around whichever participants are speaking/making noise

- o   Microsoft Teams highlights a participant's name in bold when they are speaking/making noise

- o   If you're typing, mute your keyboard (or your microphone) so other people don't hear clicking.

2.7   Do not multitask unless it relates the meeting. It is surprisingly obvious if you are doing other tasks on your computer or phone during a meeting and can be distracting as well as disrespectful to the other meeting participants.

2.8   Take a cautious approach when 'chatting' using any such functionality in conference calls. Chat logs in Teams/ Zoom are stored and they are as relevant as email to subject access requests.

2.9   Phishing risks: 'live chat features' can be used by malicious people to spread phishing messages. Be vigilant. Don't click on links or attachments you were not expecting or from meeting attendees you do not recognise.

3. **General Privacy and Safety on Zoom**

There is a new phenomenon of 'zoombombing' which sees uninvited guests join Zoom video conferences, usually to shout abuse. It is therefore good practice to follow these good practice tips:

3.1   Never use your Zoom personal meeting ID (PMI), instead allow Zoom to create a random number for each meeting, for example, ensure that security is set so that Personal Meeting Rooms are not used.

3.2 Do not share a link to a meeting, or the meeting ID, on an unrestricted publicly available social media post or public platforms. If you share photos of the meeting make sure the ID is not visible

3.3 Invite attendees and provide the link directly to specific people.

3.4 Add a meeting password, or, use the waiting room feature and control the admittance of guests

3.5 Manage screensharing options, depending on the type of meeting.

- o Change screensharing to "Host Only."
- o disable "join before host"
- o disable "allow removed participants to rejoin" unless using the 'waiting room' function.

3.6 Formal College Meetings should not be recorded. If there is a good reason to record the meeting, all attendees must be aware and agree.

4. Setting up Meetings

4.2 Be deliberate about why you are having the meeting. Is it necessary, or could the result be achieved more effectively by different means?

4.3 Be selective about who you invite. When you have a collection of 50 postage-stamp-sized faces on the screen, it can be difficult to feel connected.

4.4 RNCM Committee Meeting Protocol sets out the role of committee participants and provides a starting point for behaviours that enhance meeting participation.

4.5 Have a meeting facilitator (host/ secretary) who invites attendees and provides access to the meeting.

4.6 Provide participants with an agenda or include an overview of topics to be covered/ outcomes. This will allow attendees to be prepared.

4.7 Appoint a meeting Chair, who may or may not be the facilitator. The Chair is responsible for:

- o Moving the meeting along and keeping to purpose
- o Engaging participants and establishing the visual or verbal cues, such as raising a hand, to indicate when someone wants to actively contribute verbally to the meeting.
- o Limiting "side conversations" and multitasking or ensure all participants are made aware of content
- o Follow good chairing protocols, avoid one person hijacking the call. The Facilitator/ Chair should be firm about who speaks, and for how long.

4.8 Ensure that all participants can see and hear all other participants, as appropriate.

4.9 Make sure all participants have equal access to content by sharing all content within the video conferencing connection and using online tools (e.g. Zoom/ Office 365) whenever possible.

4.10 Clarify when the text chat option will be utilised by the meeting and how to access the text.

5. Video Conferencing Technical Good Practice
Tips to improve a video conferencing meeting if you are remote.

5.1 Familiarise yourself the video conferencing software the host has chosen. Online application training facilities are usually available. Hold a trial call with a colleague beforehand to familiarise yourself with it and be sure to connect to the meeting in plenty of time.

5.2 As with all software, accept any prompts to update your software.

5.3 If appropriate, connect via a wired broadband connector to prevent WiFi dropouts and speed issues.

5.4 If connecting from a laptop for long periods of time, it may be worth plugging the laptop into wall power.

5.5 Ensure that you have a camera, microphone, and headphones or speakers available. Earbuds or headphones are preferable to avoid audio feedback and echo. Most modern laptops and all-in-one desktops have a headphone jack, microphone, and speakers built in.

5.6 Test the connection before the call: if you use Zoom, go to the Zoom site to test your audio connection or test your video connection.

5.7 Follow all instructions in the video conferencing invitation and note important supplemental information, such as a backup contact details in case you are disconnected.

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Appendices

RNCM Data Policies

1.1   **Data Protection**

1.2   **General Data Protection Regulation**

1.3   **Information security policy**

1.4   **IT policy**

1.5   **Social Media**

References

- **Tips for defending against online meeting hijacking** (Source: FBI March 30, 2020 press release, *FBI Warns of Teleconferencing and Online Classroom Hijacking During COVID-19 Pandemic*):

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