

NAFAS Zoom Guidelines

Hints and Tips for NAFAS Demonstrators, Teachers, Speakers and meeting organisers



Document History

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Distribution List

NAFAS National Chairman, National President, CEO and Trustees
 Area Chairmen for cascade to Club Chairmen and Contacts
 NAFAS Standing Committee Chairmen for cascade to Area representatives

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Summary and Purpose

This document is to provide guidance for NAFAS users of Zoom. It has been put together by a group of people that have been using Zoom successfully since March 2020 and aims to share the benefit of their experience.

It is not meant to replace the vast quantity of detailed information that is available from Zoom/on the internet, it does not claim to be 100% accurate or exhaustive, nor is it aimed at first time users.

We have tried to give examples of what has worked for us throughout, as well as what did not work well, all discovered by trial and error! If in doubt, give it a go.

The recent news of a vaccine being developed is fantastic but we anticipate that we are going to be using online meetings for some time to come and need to make them as accessible and professionally managed/presented as we can.

Background

Since the outbreak of Covid-19 and the implementation of lockdown and other precautionary measures, we have found ourselves confined to our homes for far longer than normal and have seen our beloved Flower clubs close, hopefully temporarily. Whilst some clubs and groups have been able to find and use COVID-secure venues, face to face meetings are largely on hold.

Several innovative people and clubs/areas have gone online to provide demonstrations, talks, workshops, videos and meetings. These can be accessed via Facebook, YouTube, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, WhatsApp, Zoom, and others! However, we would NOT recommend using Microsoft Teams or Google Meet – as these are free services they are simply not of the same quality as Zoom and are much harder to use and unintuitive. Many flower club members have gone online in order to keep in touch with their friends and families and so have become familiar with online apps such as Facetime and Skype, so using Zoom is an easy transition. We have been greatly encouraged by the number and ages of members that have participated in Zoom events, many for the first time.

Zoom is the preferred option (of the authors) when trying to replicate face to face meetings, hence this guide.

Benefits

- Enabling members to attend flower club and area meetings to enjoy social interaction and the joy of flowers
- Enabling members to attend workshops remotely to continue their artistic development and be creative
- Recruiting new members – there is a whole new world of potential recruits that can attend meetings virtually and we have already seen clubs gain new members
- Generate income for presenters, clubs and areas
- Potential for a new type of flower club, the virtual club where members unable to attend in person can join in online, or even an online only club that has members from near and far
- Enables 'retired' presenters who no longer wish to travel to clubs to reignite their careers whilst working from home
- Enables events from physically distanced presenters with no travel costs
- Reduced costs to stage events – travel costs, venue hire and refreshments no longer have to be provided

Zoom Basics

Zoom is an online meeting tool. It enables people to meet face to face in an inexpensive and easy to use way.

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Anyone can set up a free Zoom account and make use of face to face meetings.

Zoom Personal Meeting is free and a great way to see if it suits you and your club.

Zoom Pro can be paid for monthly or annually by payment card. Please note that prices quoted do not include VAT and are set up as a recurring payment so will automatically renew.

ZOOM PLANS (source: Zoom plans)

- Personal Meeting
 - Free
 - Host up to 100 participants
 - 40-minute maximum group meetings
 - Unlimited 1:1 Meetings
- PRO
 - Great for Small Teams
 - £119.90 /year/licence + VAT; £11.99 / month/licence + VAT
 - Host up to 100 participants
 - Unlimited group meetings
 - Social Media Streaming
 - 1 GB Cloud Recording (per licence)

A Zoom account is owned by the person that set it up and whilst in theory the account can be shared by disclosing username and password, this is entirely at the discretion of the account holder.

Zoom can be accessed in a number of ways, each slightly different.

Using a computer gives access to all functionality but gives poorer quality video (depending on the device camera); using via the app on a mobile device such as iPad, tablet or smartphone doesn't have access to all the functionality, but enables the use of the mobile devices superior camera.

The account holder sets up a meeting and sends an invite to attendees. There is a copy facility that easily allows the info to be cut and pasted into an email/WhatsApp/messenger/document etc. Attendees can click on the provided link or can access using their own account and the meeting code and password provided. N.B. It is important to stress that the invitation details are not to be shared, especially via social media as this may result in uninvited/disruptive guests.

Settings are at two levels, account and meeting, and need to be customised by the account holder. There are a lot of settings! You can auto record chat, the in meeting messaging function; you can be sent an email when someone accesses your meeting early; you can chose to have a sound played when someone arrives or leaves a meeting. And so on. We recommend having a look and experimenting to find out what suits you best.

You will need an internet connection to use Zoom and to watch online events, preferably one that is reliable and of good quality. It is worth getting feedback from attendees at your first few meetings on whether your sound or video had issues as you may not be aware of this during your presentation.

Online Meetings

General information

The following are applicable to all types of meetings, including demonstrations, talks and workshops:

Meeting Set up

This very much depends on the type of meeting and the personal preferences of both the host and the meeting organisers and should be agreed up front.

Options include but are not limited to: allow entry before host; mute all on entry; automatically record and save Chat.

Attendees and Invites

Consider the number of attendees – if there are topics to be discussed it is very difficult to do this in an efficient and calm manner if there are too many people trying to speak at once, and there is invariably someone who will make the most noise and become the active speaker!

With a large meeting it is not always possible to see all attendees on one screen – on my laptop I can see a maximum of 25 people so taking screenshots as a record of attendees requires multiple attempts. On an iPad the user can see 9 people at once and will need to swipe sideways to see everyone. We have found it useful to ask participants to use chat to tell us their name (and flower club) on entry to the meeting – this serves two purposes: 1. Provides a list of attendees; 2. Enables users who haven't used chat before to be 'trained' in-situ. For our council meeting, the chat file was then sent to the secretary after the meeting for inclusion in the minutes.

Invitations are easily copied electronically into whatever method of communication you choose – we tend to use emails. Remember to set your meeting location to UK to generate the UK dial in numbers. It is advisable to make the 'link turn blue' (by putting a space at the end) to ensure less experienced users can just click and go.

It is important to stress that the invitation details are not to be shared, especially via social media as this may result in uninvited/disruptive guests.

Rehearsal

With an experienced host it may not be necessary to have a rehearsal but it always helps to clarify who is doing what and when.

For Demonstrators it is good to check the staging and camera position is OK and that the microphone and lighting levels are set correctly.

For Speakers, check your camera position and that launching your presentation is working as expected.

For club and area meetings, we have found it useful for the host to act as facilitator in order to free up key attendees to do their job without the worry of running the meeting as well. A quick run through of the set up and agreeing who is going to do what before the meeting is very useful.

Running order/agenda

As for any meeting it's important to agree a running order and/or agenda and the roles and responsibilities in advance. This can be agreed and confirmed during the rehearsal. It doesn't have to be anything formal, just a clear and concise outline of what is going to happen. E.G. a running order for each demonstration, specifying actions for all participants in the meeting including host, demonstrator, Chairman and Vote of Thanks.

The Host

It is imperative that the host is a competent Zoom user. Without this being the case it reflects badly on the organiser, the presenters and the attendees and will put people off attending future events. As in any type of meeting, a good host makes the meeting enjoyable and fun for all participants.

The host can make a participant a co-host if required. The co-host can then manage the waiting room and help the host with spotlighting speakers, dealing with chat questions and muting/unmuting users. NB the co-host does not have all the functions available to the host e.g. breakout rooms.

Lighting and setting

The main participants need to be well lit from the front so their faces are visible, particularly when a room has low lighting. Beware of powerful ceiling lights that will 'dazzle' the camera, and badly placed lighting causing a halo effect or strong reflections. See additional information about stage set up below.

The camera needs to be positioned at head height with head and shoulders visible when possible and to avoid looking up a participant's nose!

Consideration needs to be given by all attendees to what they are showing the meeting of themselves and their homes – no one wants to see dirty dishes/ laundry or PJ's/underwear/nudity!

Similarly beware of unexpected intrusions from family members and pets.

Zoom enables registered users to add a Virtual background to their profile – this can be one of the ones provided or one of their own that the user has uploaded. However, these are entirely optional and may cause visual anomalies where the presenter can partially merge into the background which is most distracting. We have used one for our Area online events as it enables participants to easily identify the host.

Meeting Management

Start time – allow time for users to join the meeting and for the host to assist if required. Beware of allowing too long! 15 minutes seems to be a happy medium. Meetings can always be started before the scheduled time if required. Allowing users to chat before the start is great for social interaction but users do need to be reminded that everyone can hear them! See also Breakout rooms

Waiting room – the organiser can allow participants to enter the waiting room/meeting ahead of the host when setting up the meeting. This is not recommended as inexperienced users tend to arrive very early (sometimes by several days), and the host is not able to stop any unwanted guests should they appear.

Zoom meeting protocols – these are especially important for novice users and need to be decided in advance by the meeting organiser, perhaps with advice from the host.

This should include information about how the meeting will be managed, how muting/unmuting will be managed, use of chat, how to ask questions, taking screenshots etc. At my flower club leadership meetings we do not mute but have developed the use of a physical hand raising gesture to indicate when we wish to speak. For larger meetings we have preferred that the host mutes all and asks individuals to unmute as required.

Recordings – if you are recording any part of the meeting (including chat) you must inform all participants and explain clearly why the recording is being made, how long it will be kept for, and who will have access to it. We would advise including this in the invitation information but it must also be reiterated at the start of the meeting and allow anyone who wishes to do so to leave before recording starts. It is worth noting/stating that Chat recordings include Private Messages between users! **N.B. This is a LEGAL data protection requirement**

Spotlight – this is used to highlight the person speaking so that participants can readily see them without the need to switch to active speaker view

Interaction/audience reaction/applause – this is tricky to achieve other than via Chat and the Reactions provided. Once users become familiar with the controls on their own device they rapidly become adept at using them.

Questions & feedback during the meeting

Chat – this is the Zoom text messaging feature; users can message everyone or specified individuals. It works well for people who are able to type relatively quickly and can also be used as a precursor for asking someone to unmute to ask their question in person

Unmute – asking everyone to unmute can result in chaos but has worked successfully at the end of a meeting to allow users to shout their farewells. Note that depending on a user's personal settings they will most likely need to be asked to unmute as the host is unable to do so unless they have given permission. Works well with smaller groups of people. One option is to leave a few trusted attendees unmuted so they can interact during the presentation

Use the Host/Facilitator to collate questions and ask them at an appropriate time

Breakout rooms – the host can assign a subset of users to a breakout room for a group chat. This has proved useful for many reasons, not least for members to socialise between designs at a demonstration, for council attendees to be able to have a natter at the end of the meeting, and for workshops where the teacher can interact one to one or with small groups of people rather than with the whole group. N.B. breakout rooms have to be switched on in account settings.

Slideshows and video – screen sharing enables the host or co-host to share their screen and thus operate slideshows and videos to be viewed by the audience. This can be used between designs in a demonstration, to show diagrams and accounts etc at meetings, by speakers to display their visual aids, and enable a teacher to reuse teaching aids. Opening a PowerPoint presentation at the right place isn't as straightforward as it could be – more information is available on request, but the key is that before going live with a real audience - Practice! Practice! Practice!

Feedback after the meeting – there is a feedback function available to allow participants to click a limited range of icons to show their feedback, thumb up, thumb down, smiley face etc. These are rather limited and unless attendees are familiar with Emoji's may or may not work for you. We have chosen to ask people to send emails as this allows us to share the feedback with the presenter and use as testimonials on our Facebook and website

Telephone only - for members unable to use a computer, there is the option to dial in and hear the meeting over their telephone.

Club and Area meetings

Minutes – if meetings are recorded in order to write minutes up after the event, the recording should be deleted securely at the earliest opportunity.

Voting – the hand raise in the participants list can be used for Voting. If all attendees can be seen at once then a simple raise of the hand can suffice.

Controlling who speaks – it is important that the host manages the meeting well and controls who can speak and when in order to have an orderly meeting.

Reports - Our area and club have asked that all reports are circulated and read prior to the meeting so that people reporting need simply to answer any questions.

Information for Demonstrators, Speakers and Teachers

Blue forms - it is advisable to request a new Blue Form is issued should an existing booking be moved to a Zoom event. For new bookings, a covering letter should be attached so that it is clear that it will be delivered by Zoom, along with any agreement made e.g. with regard to disposal of demonstration flowers (see below).

Flower allowance and duration of demonstration – designs will be smaller to fit the more intimate viewing that is provided by Zoom and potentially use fewer flowers. Similarly the attention span

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online is shorter than when sitting in front of a demonstrator so online events tend to be shorter than in person ones. Adjust your fees accordingly!

Flowers – if the demonstrator is local the club can arrange collection and distribution of the designs/flowers. Otherwise the organiser and demonstrator must agree what is to happen to the finished designs - we have chosen to donate to the demonstrators club members as a gift from our club/area to theirs.

Payment - organisers preferably need to be able to make payment by online banking/BACS as agreed when the meeting was arranged.

Equipment – sound carries and every little noise is picked up by the microphone so consideration needs to be given to placement of equipment (scissors, knives, pens etc) and containers/visual aids on hard surfaces, other members of the household moving around/banging doors, traffic noise, air conditioning/heating etc. Similarly, light reflects off containers, equipment and spectacles. The key is to practice, practice, practice until your set up is as perfect as can be. Rattling jewellery is not good!

Techniques – online video is surprisingly intimate with all attendees feeling like they are in the front row or in the room with you. Consequently details can be seen that wouldn't be from a stage, so take due care and attention to designs and adjust them if necessary. The intimacy also gives you the opportunity to show details to the viewer that they would not usually get to see and by holding items close to the camera. Remember to hold steady and for long enough.

Stage set up

Work bench for demonstrating - needs to be big enough to show the design and presenter but small enough to allow the presenter to reach toward the camera to show detail and reach the Zoom controls. A towel on the work surface will deaden noise, and good lighting can improve reflections.

Camera/s and Microphone – smartphones and tablets/iPad are easy to use and have access to the Zoom app with a camera and microphone of suitable quality for live video. Use of an external camera and/or microphone requires a more technical set up but is doable if the presenter has experience or technical support. Webcams and laptop cameras are generally not of sufficiently high quality unless purchased specifically for the purpose.

Lighting - there are a lot of tripods available which incorporate a light, a mount for phone/iPad and USB connections to power the device. Separate studio lighting can be used if preferred.

Display of finished designs – if space is available, it is a good idea to have a separate area where completed designs can be displayed to full advantage. Otherwise it is advisable to have arranged for the demonstrator to photograph the designs and share with the group after the event. This must take into account whether the demonstrator has given permission for their designs to be shared on social media/websites. However, be aware that there is nothing you can do to stop users taking screenshots during the event (see Zoom protocols). Be careful when moving the camera as it will show all your set up if you forget to turn off video before doing so! Always practice both the final layout and the transition from workbench to display beforehand.

Backdrop – as with lighting, it is important for the presenter to have a plain backdrop so as not to distract the viewer, although seeing into people's homes can be great fun. Similarly, a wall is better than curtains as it won't move around/have gaps. For demonstrations we have found that pale coloured backdrops work best.

Zoom specific events – it is advisable to have a brand new presentation tailored especially for Zoom. This will ensure that when face to face meetings return you will be able to return to previous presentations and you will know exactly which designs/information has been 'Zoomed' and thus

potentially in the public domain. It is worth reiterating that there is no control available to stop people taking screenshots during your presentation and sharing them.

Money making events

Remember that the cost of your Zoom licence is a business expense

Sell tickets and take bookings – this can be done by clubs, areas and presenters. There are a variety of online ticket agents that can manage ticket sales for you such as EventBrite. Websites can be set up as commerce sites and take online payments – check with your website manager/supplier. For small events we have asked attendees to make bank transfers and this has worked well where there is an online account to check them. For our club event we have allowed people to pay by cash via an envelope through the door!

Ticket prices and no of attendees – estimate your audience and amend your fee accordingly. Zoom is limited to 100 attendees per meeting but this is far more than would normally attend a club event.

Insurance - think about this from both the presenter and the organiser point of view:

- Is a club covered if there is a meeting failure or cancellation? Especially important if tickets have been sold.
- Does the presenter have cover for accidental damage to property on their house insurance?
- Do they have personal accident cover?
- Have they declared they are running a business from home?

Internet reliability – we recognise that not all areas of the UK have a strong and reliable internet connection but this is a necessity for the host and presenter to minimise loss of connection during an event. A weak internet connection can result in screen freezes and loss of audio which results in an unsatisfactory user experience.

Music –Zoom is classed as public broadcasting so you will need a licence if you are going to use music during your presentation. Check the GOV.UK website www.gov.uk/licence-to-play-live-or-recorded-music for more information and details of how to get a licence.

Recordings – you must agree with the organiser in advance if your presentation is to be recorded and shared on Facebook, YouTube etc. and adjust your fee accordingly. Try and agree how long it will be available for – a week, a month, permanently – and try and establish how and when it will be removed and by whom. Bear in mind that once a video is in the public domain there is little to no control over who can view it and share it.

Help is available!

If you need more information, any help or would like to try out some of the Zoom features, please contact us and we will do what we can to get you going, but please bear in mind we are only one step ahead of you and are still learning!

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