Choosing a Team Type

When creating a new team, you will be presented with four team type options – Class, Professional Learning Community, Staff or Other.

Which team type you select will define some initial configurations and future capabilities of your team. It is recommended that you choose either the “Staff” or “Other” team type. See Types of MS Teams for additional information.

At this time MS Teams has not been approved for classwork or collaboration with students.

Team Creation Options

Set restrictions on joining a team. This does not affect the visibility of your team to non-members.

- Private – Only owners can add team members
- Public – Anyone in our Office 365 system can join the team

It is recommended that teams be marked private unless you expect to let anyone join.

Have an existing group? You can create teams from existing O365 groups if you have one created already, through Planner or OneDrive for example. There will be an option to connect your team to an existing group after you choose a team type in the creation process.

Creating a team from an existing Office 365 group

Naming your Team

Be specific when naming your team to avoid duplication and confusion across teams and departments. Some names may be reserved for central departments for this reason. Adding a prefix or suffix related to your department or finding another pattern to help differentiate your team is recommended. Ex: ITS-Comm and Marketing

All teams will automatically have a “-GRP” extension in their name; this cannot be changed. Additionally, if you have a business use for a restricted word in your team name, contact the ITS Support Center to request use.

Best Practices

- Designate at least two team owners. If one of the owners becomes inactive, please assign a new owner in their place.
- Remove any team members who are no longer active staff or faculty from your teams. If the team as a whole is no longer active, it can be archived or deleted.
- Review the information on Team Owner and Team Member Roles.
- Create a new channel instead of a new team if you are working with the same group of people.
- Use links or ‘join codes’ for larger teams. This makes adding initial team members easier. Learn more about using join codes.
- Microsoft provides additional MS Teams best practices.

Team Settings

To manage team settings, click the dots by your team name and select the option to “Manage team”.

Once the team is created, manage members and configure permissions, channels, and more from within the team. More from Microsoft’s Go-to guide for team owners.

Add Team Members

Within the Manage team section, under the Members tab, select the Add Member option to
add other Mason employees to your team. The addition of guests (non-Mason users) is not currently supported.

Select “Add” to add them to the team. All users are added as Members first. Once they are added, you may change them to an owner.

Group Chat vs Teams

Not sure if you really need a team? MS Teams also provides one-to-one or group chats. In some cases, Chats may provide an alternative to creating teams. Chats share many of the same collaboration features found within teams:

- Audio/video calls
- Meetings
  - Scheduling & invitations
  - Recording of calls with 3+ people
  - Screen sharing
- File sharing
  - Files shared within Chats (vs Teams) are stored in the OneDrive space of the person who shared the file unless those files originated from elsewhere in OneDrive.
  - Files are shared with direct access edit rights to those in the group chat at the time.
- Any member of the group chat may leave or add/remove others from the group chat.
- Ability to name a group chat so you can link it to a specific topic or purpose for easy access; you can even have multiple group chats with the same people.

Organizing your communication within teams adds additional structure and persistence to these capabilities with:

- A group file repository, which is tied to the group versus an individual's OneDrive space.

- Channels
  - Channels allow for focused, threaded communication. Channel posts are not necessarily meant for real-time communication and may not automatically notify users as they would in a 1:1 or group chat.
  - Permission levels such as owners and members come with additional controls.
  - Connectors to other O365 apps like Planner.

More Help

Microsoft Training Videos

Video Tutorials and additional training are provided by Microsoft on the MS Teams Video Training Page. Videos are typically less than 5 minutes long and include topics such as:

- Quick Start
- Intro to Microsoft Teams
- Setting up and Customizing your Teams
- Collaborating in Teams and Channels
- And more...

Mason’s MS Teams Community of Practice

In addition to the general training provided by Microsoft, Mason has created an MS Teams Community of Practice. The Community of Practice is a team for interested Mason users, which provides a space for a crowd-sourced forum and communication of Teams updates and resources.

Request Access

Please visit the Microsoft Teams entry within the ITS Service Catalog for additional information, eligibility, and to request access. There will be a link at the top-right to request MS Teams.

Two-Factor Authentication using Duo must be enabled for an Office 365 account in order for it to be licensed for MS Teams.

MS Teams is a self-service application. Training and support provided by ITS is limited to account access questions.