G.C.E. O/L Grade 11 ICT · Lesson 3

3.2 Internet Communication: E-mail, CC and BCC, Instant Messaging, Video Calls and Social Media

Syllabus 12.2. You send an e-mail to a teacher, chat with friends on WhatsApp, join a Zoom class and share photos on social media. In this note you will learn how an **e-mail address** is built, how to use **To, CC, BCC, Subject, attachments, Reply, Reply All and Forward**, good manners online (**netiquette**), how to spot **spam and phishing**, and how to use **instant messaging**, **video calls** and **social media** safely as a good **digital citizen**, including **2FA** and Sri Lanka's **Personal Data Protection Act**.

1. E-mail accounts and addresses

E-mail (electronic mail) sends messages and files to a person's mailbox on a mail server. First you create an **account** with a provider such as Gmail or Outlook, or your school. An e-mail address has the form **user@domain**: a **user name**, the **@** sign and the **domain** of the mail server. Example: **nimal.perera@gmail.com**. There are **no spaces**, only **one @**, and the domain has a dot, e.g. gmail.com.

Part	Example
User name	nimal.perera
@ (at)	@
Domain	gmail.com

Address	Valid?	Why
nimal.perera@gmail.com	Yes	user@domain with a dot in the domain
kamala@school.edu.lk	Yes	user@domain with a dot in the domain
nimal.gmail.com	No	No @
nimal@@gmail.com	No	Two @ signs
nimal perera@gmail.com	No	Has a space
nimal@gmail	No	Domain has no dot or ending

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2. Sending an e-mail

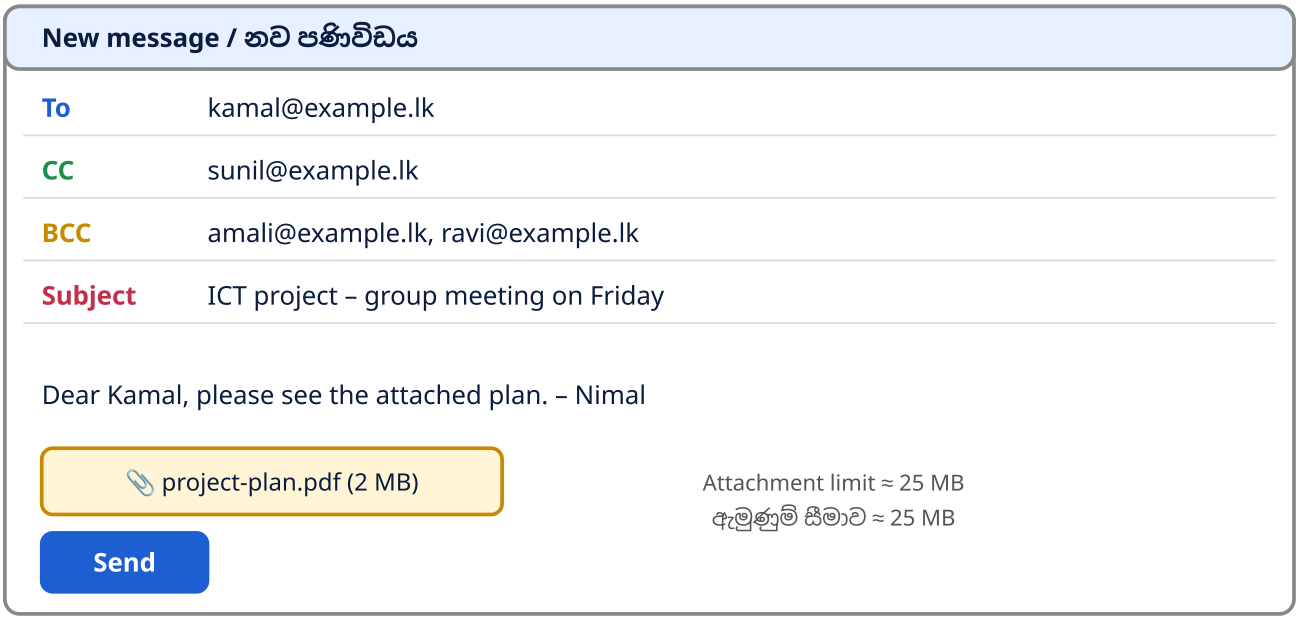


Figure 3.4 – A mock e-mail compose window.

Field	Use
From	Your address (filled in for you)
To	Main receivers
CC	Copy – others who should know; everyone can see these addresses
BCC	Blind copy – hidden; nobody else sees these addresses
Subject	A short title so the reader knows what it is about
Attachment	A file sent with the mail (Gmail limit 25 MB)

CC means “carbon copy”: send a copy to people who should know, and **everyone can see** who was CC’d. **BCC** means “blind carbon copy”: the addresses are **hidden**. Use BCC when you write to many people who do not know each other, such as all parents, to protect their **privacy**.

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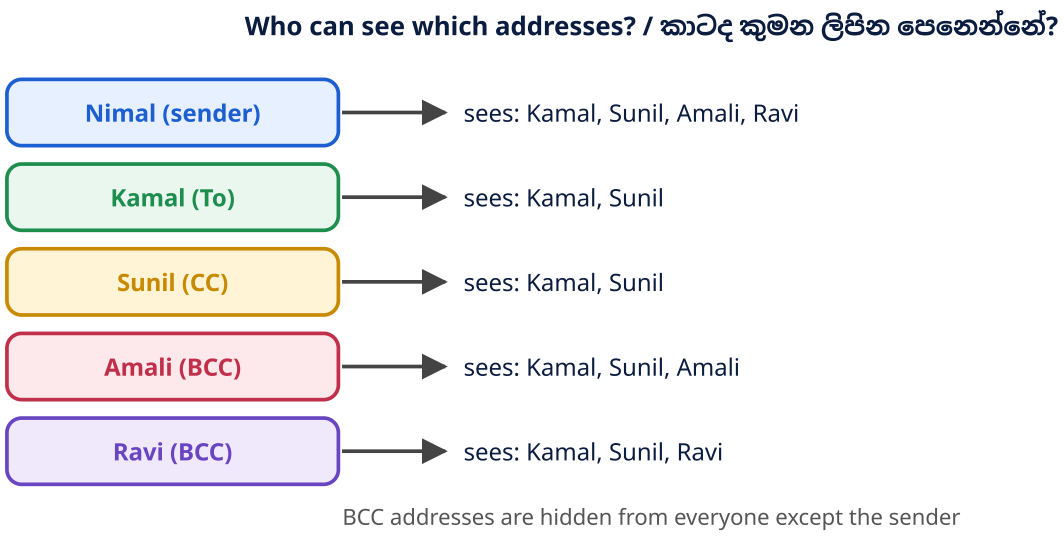


Figure 3.5 – Who can see which addresses when Nimal uses To, CC and BCC.

Button	Sends to
Reply	Only to the sender
Reply All	To the sender and everyone in To and CC (not BCC)
Forward	Send the mail (and attachments) on to someone new

> 💡 Big files? Gmail allows about **25 MB** of attachments. For bigger files, upload to Google Drive or OneDrive and send a **share link**.

3. Netiquette – good manners online

- Write a clear **subject** and greet the reader.
- Do not write in ALL CAPITALS – it looks like shouting.
- Be polite and short; check spelling before you send.
- Use Reply All only when everyone needs your answer.
- Do not forward chain messages or other people's private mail.

4. Spam and phishing

Spam is unwanted bulk mail, such as adverts. **Phishing** is a fake message that pretends to be a bank, school or company to steal your **password, PIN or OTP**. Signs of phishing:

- Urgent or scary words: "Your account will be closed today!"
- The sender address does not match the real organisation (e.g. bank-lk-secure@gmail.com).
- Asks for a password, PIN or OTP – real banks never ask.
- A link whose real address is different from the text (hover to check).
- Prizes you never entered, spelling mistakes, unexpected attachments.

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> 💡 Never click the link. Open the real website yourself, and tell a teacher or parent. Report the mail as spam.

5. Instant messaging and video communication

Instant messaging
ක්ෂණික පණිවිඩ

Video calls
වීඩියෝ ඇමතුම්

E-learning
e-learning

Sri Lankan schools use WhatsApp groups for class notices and Zoom or Teams for online lessons, especially since 2020. Video calls need a good connection; turn the camera off if the signal is weak, mute your microphone when you are not speaking and do not share meeting links publicly.

6. Social media – benefits and risks

Benefits	Risks
Keep in touch with family and friends	Privacy loss – strangers see your posts
Learn from educational videos (YouTube)	Cyberbullying – hurtful messages
Share your talents and work (LinkedIn for careers)	Fake news spreads fast
Quick news and community help	Digital footprint – posts stay forever
Business and small online shops	Too much screen time, less sleep

Popular platforms are **Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, Instagram and LinkedIn**. Set your account to **private**, accept only people you know, think before you post, check news on two reliable sources before sharing, and tell a trusted adult about bullying. Use screen-time limits on your phone.

7. Digital citizenship, PDPA and 2FA

A **digital citizen** uses technology safely, respectfully and responsibly: respect others, do not copy work without credit, protect your own and others' data. Sri Lanka's **Personal Data Protection Act, No. 9 of 2022 (PDPA)** says organisations must collect personal data fairly, use it only for its purpose and keep it safe. **Two-factor authentication (2FA)** adds a second check, usually a code sent to your phone, so a stolen password alone cannot open your account.

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Figure 3.6 – Two-factor authentication needs a password and a code.

> NEW 2026 **2026:** Turn on **2FA** for Gmail, WhatsApp (two-step verification) and social media. Scammers now use **AI-made voice and video (deepfakes)** and fake WhatsApp messages asking for OTP codes – never share an OTP, even with a "friend". Many apps offer **passkeys**, which replace passwords with your phone's fingerprint or face lock.

Key Words

E-mail address – An address in the form user@domain.	**CC** – Carbon copy – a copy whose address everyone can see.
BCC – Blind carbon copy – a hidden copy.	**Attachment** – A file sent with an e-mail.
Reply All – Reply to the sender and everyone in To and CC.	**Forward** – Send a received mail on to someone new.
Netiquette – Good manners when communicating online.	**Phishing** – A fake message that tries to steal passwords or OTPs.
Instant messaging – Real-time chat, e.g. WhatsApp.	**Digital footprint** – The record of everything you do online.
Cyberbullying – Hurting or threatening someone online.	**2FA** – Two-factor authentication: password plus a code.

Sample Q&A

1. What is the structure of an e-mail address?

> **Answer:** user name @ domain, e.g. nimal.perera@gmail.com.

2. What is the difference between CC and BCC?

> **Answer:** CC addresses are seen by everyone; BCC addresses are hidden.

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3. When should you use BCC?

> **Answer:** When writing to many people who do not know each other, to protect privacy.

4. Give two signs of a phishing e-mail.

> **Answer:** Urgent threats, asks for a password or OTP, wrong sender address, strange link.

5. Name two video-call tools.

> **Answer:** Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet.

6. What does 2FA add to a password?

> **Answer:** A second check, such as a code sent to your phone.

MCQ

1. Which is a valid e-mail address?

A. nimal@@gmail.com
B. nimal.perera@gmail.com
C. nimal perera@gmail.com
D. nimal.gmail.com

2. Why is “nimal@gmail” not a valid e-mail address?

A. It has a space
B. It has no @
C. It has two @ signs
D. The domain has no dot and ending

3. In nimal.perera@gmail.com, “gmail.com” is the…

A. domain
B. user name
C. subject
D. protocol

4. Nimal sends a mail To Kamal, CC Sunil and BCC Amali. Who can see that Amali got it?

A. Nobody, not even Nimal
B. Only Nimal and Amali
C. Kamal and Sunil
D. Everyone

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5. In the same mail, can Kamal (To) see Sunil's CC address?

A. Yes – CC is visible to all
B. Only if Kamal replies
C. No – CC is hidden
D. Only Nimal sees CC

6. If Kamal clicks Reply All, who gets his reply?

A. Nimal, Sunil and Amali
B. Only Amali
C. Nimal and Sunil
D. Only Nimal

7. To send a teacher a mail you received, use…

A. Forward
B. Reply
C. Spam
D. BCC

8. A file sent with an e-mail is called…

A. a subject
B. a signature
C. a domain
D. an attachment

9. Writing an e-mail in ALL CAPITALS is bad netiquette because it…

A. uses more memory
B. looks like shouting
C. removes attachments
D. cannot be sent

10. A mail says "Your bank account is blocked – send your OTP now". This is most likely…

A. phishing
B. a BCC copy
C. netiquette
D. streaming

11. Which is an instant messaging app?

A. FTP
B. Excel
C. WhatsApp
D. Google Drive

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12. Which tool is mainly used for online video classes?

A. Notepad
B. DNS
C. Zoom
D. Spotify

13. Your digital footprint is…

A. a type of virus
B. the record of what you do online
C. your shoe size
D. your IP address only

14. Sri Lanka's law that protects personal data is the…

A. Motor Traffic Act
B. Education Ordinance
C. Copyright Act of 1990
D. Personal Data Protection Act, No. 9 of 2022

15. Two-factor authentication means logging in with…

A. a friend's OTP
B. only your user name
C. a password and a code on your phone
D. two passwords typed twice

Structured Questions

1. (i) Write the structure of an e-mail address. (1 mark)
(ii) State whether each is valid and give a reason: nimal.gmail.com, kamala@school.edu.lk, nimal perera@gmail.com (3 marks) *(4 marks)*

> (i) user name@domain (1). (ii) nimal.gmail.com – invalid, no @ (1); kamala@school.edu.lk – valid (1); nimal perera@gmail.com – invalid, has a space (1).

2. Nimal sends a mail To Kamal, CC Sunil, BCC Amali and Ravi. (i) Which addresses does Amali see? (ii) Which addresses does Sunil see? (iii) Why did Nimal use BCC? (4 marks) *(4 marks)*

> (i) Kamal, Sunil and her own address – not Ravi (2). (ii) Kamal and Sunil only (1). (iii) To hide their addresses and protect privacy (1).

3. Explain the difference between Reply, Reply All and Forward. (3 marks) *(3 marks)*

> Reply – only to the sender (1); Reply All – to the sender and everyone in To and CC (1); Forward – sends the mail to a new person (1).

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4. (i) Give three signs of a phishing message. (3 marks)
(ii) What should a student do on receiving one? (1 mark) *(4 marks)*

> (i) Urgent or scary words; asks for password/PIN/OTP; sender does not match the organisation; strange link; spelling mistakes (any three, 3). (ii) Do not click; report as spam and tell an adult (1).

5. (i) Give two benefits and two risks of social media for students. (4 marks)
(ii) How does 2FA protect an account? (1 mark) *(5 marks)*

> (i) Benefits: keep in touch, learn from videos, share work, quick news (any two, 2). Risks: privacy loss, cyberbullying, fake news, digital footprint, screen time (any two, 2). (ii) A code on the phone is also needed, so a stolen password alone is not enough (1).

Summary

- E-mail address = user@domain; one @, no spaces.
- To = main; CC = visible copy; BCC = hidden copy.
- Reply = sender; Reply All = sender + To + CC; Forward = someone new.
- Attachments ≈ 25 MB; bigger files → share a cloud link.
- Netiquette: clear subject, polite, no ALL CAPS.
- Phishing asks for passwords/OTP – never share.
- IM: WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram; video: Zoom, Teams, Meet.
- Social media: private settings, think before posting; PDPA 2022; turn on 2FA.

MCQ answer key – 3.2

1. **B** – One @, no spaces, domain with a dot.
2. **D** – It should be like gmail.com.
3. **A** – After the @.
4. **B** – BCC is hidden from others.
5. **A** – CC is a visible copy.
6. **C** – BCC people are not included.
7. **A** – Forward sends it to someone new.
8. **D** – 📎 Attach.
9. **B** – Be polite online.
10. **A** – Banks never ask for an OTP.
11. **C** – Real-time chat.
12. **C** – Also Teams and Meet.
13. **B** – Posts can stay forever.
14. **D** – PDPA 2022.
15. **C** – Something you know + something you have.

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