(I will be using pictures of the Android version of the app to demonstrate throughout this guide; if you have an iPhone, or are using an older phone, the screens may look different, but the process is the same.)

Open the App Store (for iPhones) or the Play Store (for other phones) and search for WhatsApp. The right app will use the logo above and is usually one of the top results.

To get started, the app will ask you to agree to its terms of service (left picture above). Click “agree and continue”. Then it will ask you to give permission for it to access files (photos, videos etc) and the details of your contacts (right picture above). Click continue, then your phone will ask if you agree- click deny or allow.

You do not have to agree to this, but it will allow the app to make contact details easily available, and for you to send and receive photos and videos. (At this point,
the settings will be set to automatically download any photos and videos received to your phone’s memory; this can be turned off later if necessary).

The next step is to verify your phone number with the app. This is done to make sure that no one else can use your phone number. Enter your phone number and click next. The app will check whether you want to double check the number you have entered - if you don’t, then click okay.

WhatsApp will send an automatic text message to your phone containing a six-digit number. It may take a few minutes to arrive. Go into your messages, find the number, go back into WhatsApp, and enter the number. If you have waited a few minutes and the message has not arrived, then click the first button, which will send a new message, or the second button, which will trigger an automatic call from a computer telling you the number you need. At this point, you can also click to go back and change the number if you are not sure you have entered the correct one.
A screen will pop up checking that the code you have entered is correct. If it is not, you will be prompted to try again- just repeat the process above. If it is, click next.

You will be prompted to enter your first name and surname and, if you want to, a profile image (which can be chosen from the photo gallery on your phone, or taken with your phone camera). Once you have done, click next.

Congratulations! Your WhatsApp account has been set up.

Clicking the green button in the bottom right corner of the screen will take you to a page where you can see a list of people who are in your phone contacts who also use WhatsApp. Click one of these contacts to message them. If you want to message someone whose details are not in your phone, choose ‘new contact’ at the top and add the person’s details, then click done. If you want to contact someone who is in your contacts but does not use WhatsApp, scroll down to the bottom and click ‘invite friends’ to send a message suggesting they get the app.

When you are invited to join a group chat, such as the Edinburgh Central Meeting group, you will be sent a link to confirm your invite. Click the link, which will open WhatsApp and take you straight to the group. You will then have the option to accept the invitation at the bottom of the screen.