Glossary of Terms

There are a lot of terms to get to grips with when dealing with structured data. Below is a list of the most common words and phrases you will come across. There is space next to each one to add your own notes. I recommend you print off the glossary and keep it with you are you work through the course.

Schema/Schema.org Schema, or Schema markup as it is often called, is a form of microdata defined on schema.org. This microdata gives properties and values to a range of "things" found on your web pages. Schema.org is the site set up by the main search engines to catalogue and define these things. When you add schema to your web page, it offers the search engines more information about your web page that it can use in creative ways to enhance your search engine listing. **JSON-LD** JavaScript Object Notation for Linked Data, or JSON-LD to its friends, is a programming language that we can use to encode schema to be included in a web page. Google and other search engines understand JSON-LD so can make sense of the schema it contains. We use the schema from schema.org and encode it in JSON-LD. **Microdata, RDFa and JSON-LD** These are the three most common ways of presenting the schema in our web pages. Think of them as three ways of implementing structured data. In this course we will only use JSON-LD, but microdata and RDFa are two alternatives that are still used today. Think of all three of these as programming languages that help us give the search engines more information about our web pages. **Structured data** Simply refers to information (data) that is presented in an organized (structured) way. In terms of web pages, structured data is the extra information that we include in our web pages, defined by schema.org and implemented in JSON-LD, to help the search engines fully understand what our web page is about, and what features they might like to highlight in the search listings. Structured data is the system of pairing a property with a value for a "thing". **Type** Schema.org is a taxonomy (classification) of things that can be found on and related to a web page. Each thing has a "type". Each type has its own set of properties and values which define that type. On schema.org, there are currently 598 types, with	

862 properties (correct on 24th September 2018). Each type in Schema.org can be a thing in its own right, as well as a property for another type. E.G. Book is a type which uses the properties "publisher" and "author". Both publisher and author are types as well, which have their own properties. A book will be published by an Organization, which is also a type and has it's own properties related to being an organization. These types are organized into a hierarchy on schema.org. Collectively, all of the types on schema.org are organized into what schema.org call a "vocabulary.

Property

A property is a defining feature of a type. E.g. The type "article" will have the property of "author", "editor", etc. Author and editor are also types. See type above.

Taxonomy/Vocabulary

A taxonomy simply refers to a scheme of classification. In terms of structured data, we are using schema.org as our taxonomy. Schema.org classifies all things into types which have properties. The classification system (taxonomy) gives us the vocabulary we need to use to correctly markup our web pages.