

Fitness to practise fact sheet

This fact sheet explains how to participate in a virtual hearing using Microsoft Teams, which is an application that allows multiple users to attend audio or video conference calls.

At the hearing

You will join the hearing by following the instructions provided in the Microsoft Teams invite. The Hearings Officer will tell you when to join, and keep you updated on the hearing's progress.

At a virtual hearing all participants take part through the Microsoft Teams application. Hearings may occasionally be hybrid, meaning that some parties attend physically in one location whilst the rest attend remotely via videoconference.

You can find a detailed explanation of the hearing process in the Information for Witnesses document and HCPTS website.

Giving evidence

When giving evidence, you are required to take an Oath or Affirmation before you start. If you are attending virtually and choose to take an Oath, you need to have a copy of the relevant holy book with you.

Questions

You will be asked questions by the HCPC presenting officer, the registrant or their representative (if present), and the panel. The purpose of the questions is to make sure your account is accurate and to test your evidence. You can refer to your witness statement and relevant exhibits in the hearing bundle. Take your time to answer any questions and you can request a short break if you need one. A legal assessor will be present and they can intervene if the line of questioning or tone is inappropriate. Once questions are finished you'll be released from your Oath or Affirmation.

Deliberation

When it needs to make a decision, the panel retires to a separate virtual room to deliberate in private. The decision will then be written up by the independent legal assessor.

Technical requirements

To participate on Microsoft Teams, please make sure you have:

- A compatible device: The device must have a camera and microphone so that live video and audio are available.
- An internet connection which allows the videoconference link to work throughout the hearing. A minimum download speed of 8mb and upload of 512kps is recommended. Variables that could impact the connection speed are others on the same network using streaming services during the hearing.
- A suitable environment which is quiet and without distractions.

Connecting to the hearing

A few days before the hearing is due to sit, the Hearings Officer will send you the invite to join the hearing via Microsoft Teams. The invitation will be sent to the email address on file for you, unless you have told us that we should use another email address.

If you would find it helpful to have a Microsoft Teams test call before the hearing, this can be arranged through the Hearings Officer.

After the hearing

The Hearings Officer can assist you with any immediate concerns or questions after the hearing. They will send the panel's written decision to the hearing participants by email. The decision is also likely to be published on the HCPTS website in accordance with the **Fitness to Practise Publication Policy**.

Jargon buster

Health and Care Professions Tribunal Service (HCPTS) The fitness to practise service responsible for arranging and conducting hearings.

Panel

Three people who consider and decide on the Allegation. Panels consist of a panel chair, registrant panelist, and lay panelist. The Panel are independent of the HCPC and HCPTS.

Panel chair

The panel member who leads the hearing.

Registrant panelist

The panel member registered with the HCPC in the same profession as the registrant about whom the fitness to practise concern has been raised.

Lay panelist

The panel member who is not part of any profession which the HCPC regulates.

Legal assessor

A lawyer who gives advice on matters of law and procedure. They are independent from the panel but may assist in drafting its decision.

Scheduling / Listings Officer

A team member who schedules HCPTS hearings

Hearings Officer

A team member who facilitates HCPTS hearings

Affirmation

A promise made before giving evidence that you will tell the truth.

Oath

A promise to tell the truth which is sworn using a holy text.

Deliberation

When the panel retires to a separate room to make a decision.

Cross-examination

The legal process whereby the opposing party asks questions of a witness

Appendix A


Guide to joining a hearing on Microsoft Teams

In order to access Microsoft Teams you will need to accept the invitation emailed to you.

- 1**

The Hearings Officer will email you a Microsoft Teams invite in advance of the hearing. When it's time to join the hearing, please open the email and click on **Join Microsoft Teams Meeting**.

When: 19 March 2020 10:00-17:00 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.
Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

[Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)  **Link to join meeting**

[Learn more about Teams](#) | [Meeting options](#)
- 2**

You are not required to have the Microsoft Teams application installed. Depending on which browser is used, you may see either of the screens shown on the right. You can either **Continue on this browser** or **Join on the web instead**.

How do you want to join your Teams meeting?

Open Microsoft Teams? (This Teams meeting can only be joined using the application.)

Continue on this browser (No download or installation required)

Download the Windows app (Use the desktop app for the best experience)

Open your Teams app (Already have it? Click to get to your meeting)

Microsoft Teams

Experience the best of Teams meetings with the desktop app

Download the Windows app

Join on the web instead

Already have the Teams app? Launch it now

Third Party Disclosure
- 3**

Select **Join on the web instead**, which will take you to Microsoft Teams in the browser.
- 4**

You will be taken to the screen shown on the right. A prompt will appear asking you to select 'Yes' so that others can see and hear you in the meeting.
- 5**

Click 'Yes' to give Microsoft Teams permission to access your camera and microphone. Select 'Yes' again if necessary.

Click **Yes** so others can see and hear you in the meeting.

For a better experience, download the desktop app

Let teams.microsoft.com use your webcam and microphone?

Yes No
- 6**

A screen will appear asking you to enter your name and to choose your video/audio settings. Please enter your full name or, if applicable, the anonymisation used for the hearing, eg. Service User A, Colleague B. Adjust your camera and microphone settings if required, then select **Join now**.

Choose your audio and video settings for **Meeting now**

Enter name **Join now**

Video ☐ Audio ☐ Devices

Other join options

Audio off Phone audio
- 7**

Once you select **Join now** you will be taken to a screen advising that "Someone in the meeting should let you in soon". Please wait in the lobby until you are let into the hearing room. Upon entry, your screen will appear as the image on the right.
- 8**

There will be a small window showing your own camera's view. The main screen will split as people join the meeting.
- 9**

When joining from a browser, the screen will show a maximum of four people, with the initials of additional participants at the bottom. Please note that only those speaking or who have recently spoken will appear on screen at any one time. The toolbar for the controls will appear at the bottom of the browser.

Search or type a command

TY

Waiting for others to join...

04:45

Tip: You can "pin" a participant. This option will allow you to keep seeing the participant you have pinned, regardless of who is talking. This affects only your personal view and won't pin that participant for others in the hearing. There is a menu next to each person's name which you can access by clicking on the ... symbol.

17:24

Shows the time and the title of the meeting when you hover over it

Enables and disables your camera

Mutes and unmutes your microphone

Share your computer screen (for hearing participants)

Allows you to access a menu of tools

Shows details / history of the meeting to the right of the screen

Shows all the individuals in the meeting

Please contact the Hearings Officer or HCPTS if you have any further queries.