



Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

# Criminal Hearings

Information Guide for  
Procurators Fiscal & Defence Agents



## Criminal Trial Virtual Hearings- WebEx Meetings

This guide provides information and step-by-step instructions for Procurators Fiscal and Defence Agents who participate in criminal trial virtual hearings within SCTS courts.

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# Checking Connectivity: Pre-trial requirements

## 1. Browser Information:

SCTS schedule the trial using the Cisco WebEx meeting platform. The minimum web browser and operating system requirement to allow Attendees to join a WebEx virtual hearing can be found online, using the below link:

<https://help.webex.com/en-us/nki3xrq/Webex-Meetings-Suite-System-Requirements>

- **PF** – When a link and password for a Meeting is received from [messenger@webex.com](mailto:messenger@webex.com), said link should be accessed from the ‘purple screen’, as opposed to trying to access from VDI.

## 2. Pre-trial Checks:

The PF/Defence agent should log in at least 30 minutes prior to the trial start time and check the following –

1. That the equipment that you are using such as a laptop, mobile phone, tablet etc. is in working order and that WebEx can be accessed on it;
2. That the internet connection being used is a secured and/or wired connection. The use of “Personal“ or “Open Hotspots” (e.g. BT Open Zone) **must** be avoided;
3. That there is sufficient charge in the device and a charging socket available if necessary;
4. That evidence will be given in an environment where there will be no risk of disturbance affecting the giving of evidence or the running of the trial;
5. That you are positioned in such a way as to be seen clearly on the screen (i.e. ensuring that you are not too close to the camera so that your face is dominating the screen).
6. If you are joining via Google Chrome for the first time, then you will be prompted to download and install the Cisco WebEx Meetings Google Chrome extension. If you are unable to do this, there is also the option to “**Run a temporary application**” which can be selected.
7. All attendees are required to join via **WebEx Meetings Desktop App**.

## 3. Productions:

All documentary productions **must** be lodged with the court in electronic format, no later than 24 hours *prior* to the trial starting – preferably in PDF format.

(For example - if you are lodging documentary evidence, you must **also** lodge an electronic copy of said evidence).

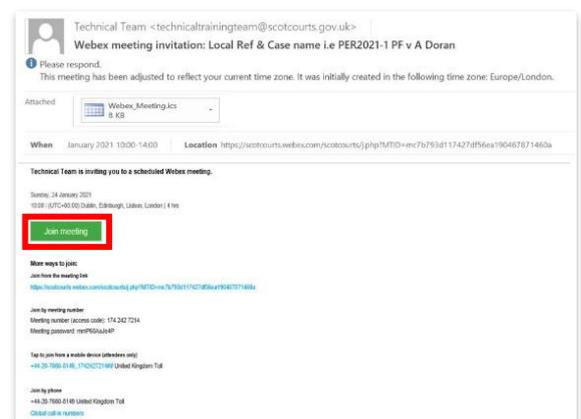
#### 4. Email Invitation

Once a WebEx Meeting Summary Trial has been set-up by SCTS, Attendees will receive an email invitation from [messenger@webex.com](mailto:messenger@webex.com).

Attendees should note that depending upon the filters set up on individual email accounts, this invitation may go to their '**Spam**' folder. If the email is not received then the spam folder should always be checked *prior* to contacting the court.

This invitation will contain the following information:

- Join Meeting button
- Meeting name
- Meeting date and start time
- Meeting number (access code for dial-in)
- Meeting password
- Attendee link to join Meeting
- Attendee password
- Dial-in details



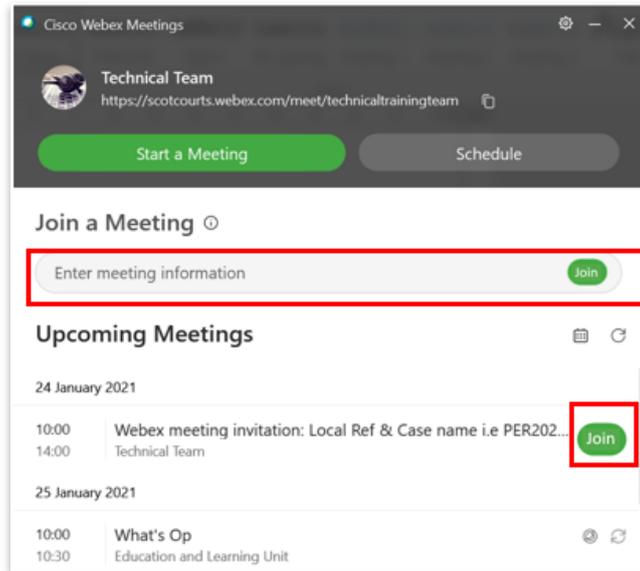
#### 5. Joining the Meeting

Ensure you have the “**Cisco WebEx Desktop App**” downloaded. If not, the first time you join a Cisco WebEx Meeting by clicking on the **green 'Join Meeting'** button within the email invitation, the “WebEx Meeting Desktop Installer” will download. When installation has completed, click on the “**Installer**” to join the meeting.

Once you have left that meeting, the “WebEx Meeting Desktop App” is available on your desktop.

- Click to open the App and select “**Join as Guest**”.
- Enter your **name, designation** and **email address** and then click **Continue**.  
(**NOTE:** When entering your name, it is beneficial to enter it in the following way:
  - *James Smith, PF Jack Brown, Solicitor.*
  - *This enables all parties within the virtual trial to identify each Attendee's role.*
- Users can change their display name or email address using the **Edit** (pencil icon) function
- Thereafter, any Meetings which are scheduled via Microsoft Outlook will be automatically added to your Webex Desktop App.

Any future meetings can be joined directly using the WebEx Desktop App, either by entering the “**Meeting Link**” or “**Meeting Number**” into the App and clicking on the “**Join**” button or by clicking onto the “**Join**” button within the scheduled Outlook Meetings.



Helpful guidance is available on YouTube [here](#).

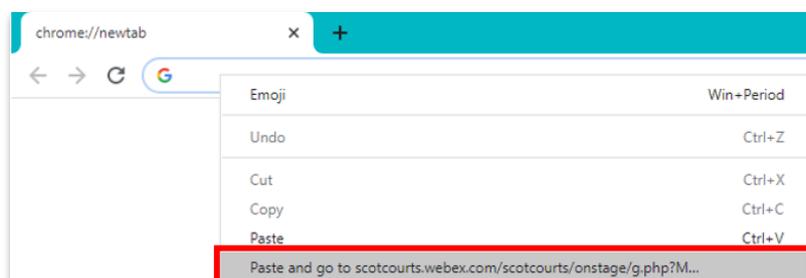
## 6. Connection Issues

If for any reason, the ‘*Join Meeting*’ button does not work, you **must** contact the clerk of court *immediately* to advise them that you are having a problem connecting.

An alternative way to join the Meeting is to right click on the ‘**Join Meeting**’ button, and then select ‘**Copy hyperlink**’, as shown below.



Next step is to open a new browser tab (i.e. Chrome), then **right click** on the address line and select “**paste and go to the added hyperlink address**”.



If access to the Meeting still cannot be gained using the above method, the PF/Defence Agent **must** contact the clerk of Court *as soon as possible* to request that a copy of the Meeting hyperlink and password be emailed to them.

## 7. Joining via telephone

If for any reason it is not possible to join WebEx Meeting via an internet connection, it is still possible to join by telephone. However, it should be noted that you will **not** be able to see Attendees via this method, although you will still be able to interact.

You should contact the clerk of court *as soon as possible* to obtain the “**Case Access Code**”. Once you have the Case Access Code, please follow the steps below:

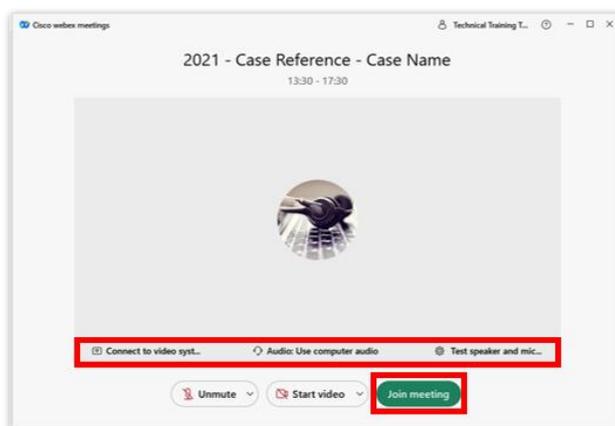
- Call (United Kingdom Toll) +44-20-7660-8149;
- Using your phone keypad, enter the **Case Access Code**;
- When prompted, **press #** to join.

Once connected, the line will remain silent until the trial begins and then the sound will activate automatically.

**NOTE:** By calling into the meeting, this may incur additional costs and you should check with your phone service provider.

## 8. Entering the Meeting

The Meeting entry session will then be launched, which will present buttons to enable the microphone audio and the video camera. The selected settings for each can be found above the icons as shown in the screenshot below.



Once you are ready to join the Meeting, click the green ‘**Join Meeting**’ button. (Note: once you have the “**WebEx Desktop App**” installed, you will be able to join all Meetings via this method directly when you click on the “**Join Meeting**” button).

## 9. Entering the 'Breakout Session'

All Attendees preferably **must** join the meeting using either the WebEx Desktop or Mobile App to enable participation within a Breakout Session.

When you first enter the Meeting, a private session started by the clerk of court, known as a '**Breakout Session**', will be instigated. This allows visual and audio tests, pre-court discussions etc., to be completed *prior* to the court commencing.

The clerk of court will have shared a Holding card advising all Attendees that the trial has not yet commenced. Once the Breakout Session is instigated, the clerk of court will assign only specifically selected Attendees to a Breakout Session.

Breakout Sessions may also be instigated during the course of a live trial for any adjournment requested, objections raised, private discussions with accused etc.

## 10. Audio and Video Controls

Upon entering and exiting a '**Breakout Session**', the audio microphone may be **muted** and you will require to manually activate your microphone audio within the Breakout Session.

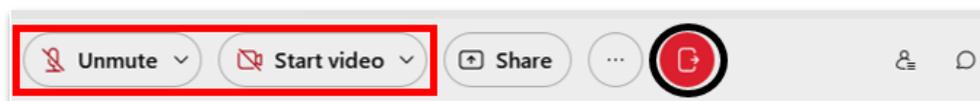
There is a **Taskbar Menu** at the bottom of the screen showing a series of buttons (shown below).

The Audio icon is first from the left, shows a microphone symbol and the word '**Unmute**', this is the one to click to mute or unmute the audio microphone. The symbol will be shown in **red** when audio is muted and **green** when unmuted. Click the button once to toggle between muted and unmuted.

The Video icon is second from the left, shows a video camera symbol and the words '**Start video**', this is the one to click to start or stop the video. The symbol will be shown in **red** then the video is switched off, and **green** when it is switched on. Click the button to toggle between starting and stopping the video.

Should you require to leave the breakout session to return to the main meeting, click on the red button with the exit symbol.

Taskbar Menu



When entering the Meeting, the video display will automatically default to the '**Grid**' view. This is where the display shows all Attendees and the Host in a tiled layout.

## 11. Positioning your Camera

Remember you **must** ensure that you are positioned in such a way as to be seen clearly on the screen with you:

- Centred on the screen
- Suitably distanced from the screen – i.e. not too close to the camera that your face is dominating the screen.



## 12. Accused and Witnesses

**Accused:** Where the accused has been authorised to appear from the Defence Agent's office, via the WebEx Desktop App, the responsibility for all aspects of External IT requirements (i.e. ensuring there is access to a separate computer/laptop with webcam, speakers, mic, broadband/wired connection) lies with the Defence Agent. SCTS **cannot** provide IT equipment or broadband support for the accused in these instances.

**Witnesses:** The PF/Defence agent must liaise with their witnesses to ensure that they are in the relevant venues and have access to the necessary systems for their attendance, so that this information can be passed to the Clerk during the Breakout session (**They will liaise with the Court/Police Liaison Officer via telephone in respect of civilian witnesses and the police station via telephone in respect of police witnesses**);

- **Crown & Defence Witnesses:** PF/Defence Agent **must** advise the clerk of court which witness they wish to call. The PF/Defence Agent, when instructed by the court, will then contact the court /police liaison officer using contact details provided and inform them that the identified witness should now join the Meeting using the Attendee link within the email intimation as and when each is required;
- **Objections:** The PF/Defence agent can raise an objection during the Meeting by simply stating aloud that they have an objection. The witness will be asked to leave the Meeting entirely *prior* to any submissions being made. The court/police liaison officer will be responsible for disconnecting them. At the conclusion of the Objection Hearing, the PF/Defence Agent will contact the court/police liaison officer to require the witness to re-join the meeting, *prior* to the case continuing.

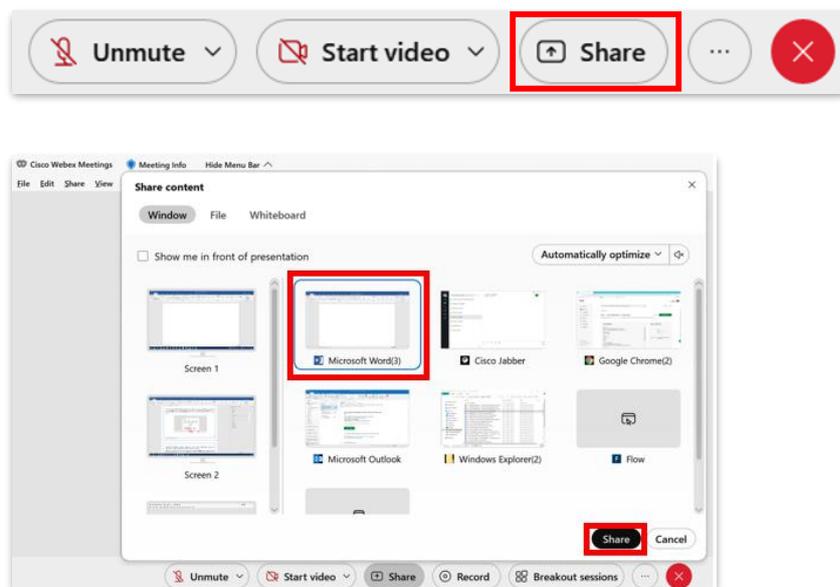
### 13. Sharing a screen during an Meeting

Whilst a Meeting is live, only those with “Presenter” permissions can share their evidence on screen so that it can be seen by all parties. The clerk of court will promote the PF/Defence agent to a Presenter when required.

**Reminder:** It is advisable to **mute** all notifications, close any personal or sensitive documents and have the relevant evidence/documents open on your device desktop *prior* to presenting evidence.

To share evidence, click on the “**Share**” button on the menu bar at the bottom of the WebEx screen. This will open a new window showing all open documents and available screens, simply select the relevant application window, before clicking “**Share**”, as shown below -

**NOTE:** it is advisable to have the documents required during the hearing open in the background in advance of starting the hearing. This allows the above step to be completed in a more streamlined way.



#### Share File Option

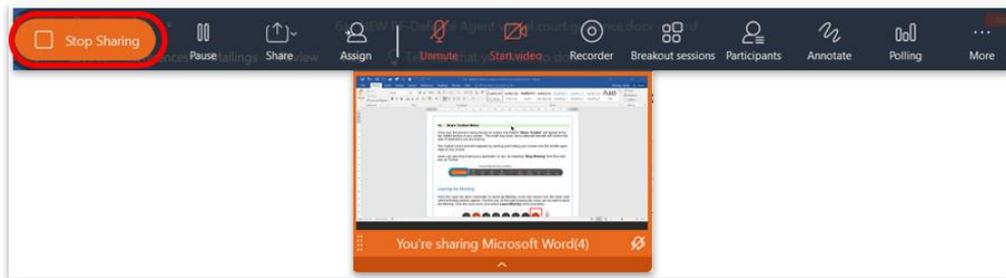
If you select this option which is located at the top left of the screen, your Drive folders will be shown in a separate pop-up box to enable you to locate the file you wish to share. Once located, select the “**Open**” button to proceed.

### 14. Share Toolbar Menu

Once your document is being shared on screen, the WebEx “**Share Toolbar**” will appear across the top, middle section of your screen. A small drop-down menu is also attached beneath the Toolbar, which will confirm the type of application you are sharing.

This Toolbar hovers briefly at the top of the screen, before disappearing and will reappear by pointing and holding your mouse over the middle upper edge of your screen.

Users can also **stop** sharing any application or document, by selecting “**Stop Sharing**” icon from the main Pop-up Toolbar.

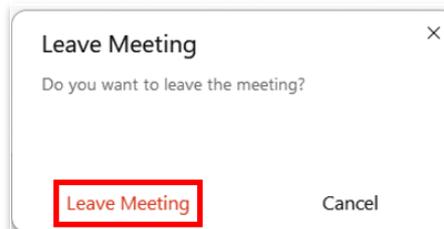


## 15. Leaving the Meeting

Once the case has concluded, to leave a Meeting locate the ‘**End Meeting**’ icon (Red X) from the WebEx Toolbar at the bottom of the screen.



WebEx will provide a pop-up box asking for confirmation that you wish to leave the Meeting. Click on the “**Leave Meeting**” option at the bottom left of the pop-up box to terminate your participation.



## 16. Support

Attendees seeking support on technical issues encountered before or during a Meeting should notify the Clerk **as soon as possible**. The Clerk can then notify the designated CDi support member of the issue to have this rectified as quickly as possible. **IMPORTANT: SCTS Change and Digital Innovation Unit (CDi) cannot provide IT equipment nor broadband support.**

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