

## Zoom Mediation Guidance

You can use desktop, laptop, phone or tablet providing they have a camera.

You do not need any software (unless using a mobile phone or a tablet) when you will need to download the free Zoom App from whichever App Store your device supports). However before using either type of device, please read the Technical section below.

I host the meeting. All that you need to do is to click on the link highlighted in blue) in the invitation email that I will send to you where it says:

“Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/5871805462>” (this is just an example link and will not be the number that you will see)

Nothing will happen if you click on it prior to the time set for the meeting, but if you click on it on, or after, the time, you will join the meeting.

You will then be prompted to put in the passcode details that feature just below that “Join Zoom meeting” text. This is also highlighted in blue.

That is all that you need to do as regards getting into the meeting.

If you join and cannot see or hear (or be seen or heard), go to the icons at the bottom left of the screen - a microphone and a video camera. If they have red lines through them, click on them and that will remove the red lines. If that does not work click on the small “up” arrows next to the microphone icon and click on “join computer audio” or go into the settings options that will appear and check the various parameters on your device for audio and video.

Failing that ring me on 07714 522025 and we can discuss how to resolve the issues.

In advance of the meeting, I will have set up various “breakout rooms” for groups of people to meet in online over the course of the day. The main one for you will be for you and any of the other

people in your team (solicitors, barristers, experts etc). That group is private and neither I nor any other participant can see or hear you. I will join your group from time to time during the day, but will either phone or text your lead representative to warn them that I am about to do so.

There will also be the facility for us all to be in the same “room” for any joint meetings – such as the initial presentation.

When you join the meeting you will need to accept Zoom’s terms and conditions, and you will be prompted to put in a name. This is what appears on my screen under your video so please make sure that you use your full name.

When you first join, you should be put in the Waiting Room function. You should not be able to hear or see any other people on screen. If for any reason you can see other people you can turn off your mic or video or both.

I will then let you into the meeting and assign you to your various rooms. When you receive it, accept the invitation to join the assigned room. There you will be able to see and speak to those who are with you for the day.

I control who is in each room. Other parties cannot join you unless I allow it and so what you say is confidential between your attendees only – unless of course I am also in the room!

I might suggest meetings between individuals from each party during the day. If this is agreed to, I can move the people concerned into a separate room.

After everyone has joined the Mediation, I will lock it down to prevent any unauthorized attempts at access.

If you need to leave the Mediation or if you suffer a technical glitch which causes the connection to crash, I will need to unlock the meeting to allow you to rejoin. Please text me to ask me to do so and I will deal with it as soon as I can.

My mobile number for texting, or any other technical issues is 07714 522025.

## Technical

You will need a broadband or 4G/5G connection.

Remember that if you connect by 4G/5G rather than broadband you may be charged based upon your data package with your provider. Some broadband users may also have data limits beyond which you will be charged.

To get the best out of the video facility, I would suggest that you use a device with as large a screen as possible – preferably a desktop or laptop (plugged in to maintain charge). This will allow you to see all the other people in your room at the same time.

Tablets or phones work (with the free app downloaded), but if there are a number of people in the Mediation, seeing all of them on a small screen is less easy. To see everyone (rather than just the person who is speaking), click on “Gallery View” which should appear as an option if you put your mouse at the top right of your screen.

Also make sure that whatever device you are using to join the meeting is plugged in to a charging facility. You do not want to run out of battery during the Mediation. A standard phone charger will **not** be enough to keep pace with all day video use on a phone, so try and use the more powerful tablet chargers (both on phone and tablet) if you can.

It is possible to connect via Polycom/Cisco or other large room video conferencing devices – particularly where clients are attending your offices but the mediation itself is online. These work, but the video quality and image size is often poor. A much better option is for each person to use their own tablet or laptop and connect independently as regards video.

If more than one person is in the same room, and each person is using a separate device to access the meeting (as above), this produces an “echo” effect and the various devices compete with each other over the audio. It is not an acceptable way of working over the software and thought needs to be given as to whether it is necessary to work that way at all, to use the central room microphone for all audio (which does work very successfully), or whether to be in separate rooms on separate devices.

When Zoom is on and you are connected, there will be icons at the bottom of your screen. In the bottom left for example as I mentioned earlier, you will see a microphone icon and a video camera icon. You can turn off your camera or microphone (or both) and when you do, both the camera will stop and you will be muted as far as everyone else is concerned.

You can also use the arrows to the right of each of those icons to test and/or vary some of the settings for sound and video, and to test your microphone and video.

Thought needs to be given to how a settlement agreement can be produced if an agreement is reached. Do those who need to sign it have printers and scanners? If so they can print off and sign the agreement. If not, can they sign electronically? Can a party's solicitor sign on their behalf? The settlement agreement should be drafted accordingly. The question then is how to get a signed copy of the signature sheet back to the others in the mediation who need to see it. The best answer to that is a scanner preferably, but not necessarily, with a sheet feed facility. If push comes to shove, photographing the signed signature page on a mobile phone and sending that by email or text will work, as will one of the various scanning apps now available for phones.

### **Tips for the day.**

This is not the same as a face to face meeting. There will be other distractions during the day.

Whilst you and your team can and should discuss things amongst yourselves as regards the mediation, there will be occasions when you want/need to do other stuff.

To make the process work, all that I ask is that you are always somewhere close to your device/screen and that you can be contacted by text or phone call if needed.

I would ask that when we are in a meeting together, mobiles are switched to silent – except for whoever the “lead” is in each room – who I may have to text from time to time during the day.

Also, please do not use the device you are using for the meeting (or any other device), to deal with any other business or social matters during any meeting – whether with me or with others. It is very distracting and likely to annoy others taking part in the meeting. There will be ample time when I am with the other party/ies for that to be done.

Try not to interrupt others when they are talking. The system can deal with it, but sometimes it causes audio glitches and what is being said cannot be heard.

One of the most time consuming issues in online mediation seems to be the settlement agreement. Please try to agree with your opponent the basic framework for a draft settlement agreement, if at all possible. If not, then have your own available on the day. It will seriously save several hours if you can do this, especially if you can agree the draft with the other side.

Consider any taxation issues or issues requiring specialist advice as regards the settlement, and either have the advice available on the day or be in a position to phone someone to get it during the mediation - which might involve needing to speak to them at any time during the day or evening.