

*Meetings transparency for Ministers, special advisers and permanent secretaries during the COVID-19 emergency*

Current transparency publications focus on face-to-face 'in-person' meetings. It is anticipated that such in-person meetings will have significantly reduced, in line with Government requirements from 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020 onwards to reduce social interaction.

Departments should aim as far as possible for equivalence with previous quarterly meetings declarations (in accordance with cross-government guidance). Remote formal meetings using conferencing technology are assumed to have taken the place of in-person meetings from 16<sup>th</sup> March.

Whether a remote meeting is declared on a meetings return should be decided on a case-by-case basis. Audio calls should only be recorded where they take the place of a meeting (and in line with previous guidance). As such, unsolicited or informal phone calls would not normally be included.

Departments do not need to declare how a meeting took place, nor that a particular meeting took place remotely.

Departments should add the following to the bottom of their meetings returns:

\*Meetings were conducted in line with Government requirements during the COVID-19 emergency. For larger meetings, a collective description may be applied.

The usual sections of the Ministerial or Special Advisers' codes of conduct apply.