

T: 0300 244 4000  
E: [scottish.ministers@gov.scot](mailto:scottish.ministers@gov.scot)

Douglas Ross MSP  
Convener  
Education, Children and Young People  
Committee  
Scottish Parliament  
By email: [ecyp.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:ecyp.committee@parliament.scot)

17 February 2025

Dear Convener,

I am writing regarding the regulations that govern the process for placing requests for school admissions, and placing request and exclusion appeal hearings.

I wrote to your predecessor on 22 January 2024 explaining our plans for a consultation on measures to make permanent the use of remote technology in school admissions and exclusions appeals, and to give parents/carers the ability to choose an in-person or remote appeal hearing as is their preference.

The current regulations permitting remote hearings were introduced in 2020 during the Covid pandemic as a temporary measure to ensure that school admission and exclusion appeal hearings could still take place despite the social distancing rules. The intention has been since the pandemic ended to consult on retaining what are regarded as temporary measures before making them formally permanent through the implementation of new regulations. To be clear the current regulations remain in place until such time new regulations come into effect.

A consultation took place between 16 January 2024 and 12 March 2024. Although the numbers who responded were small the consultation received helpful insights into the experience of those involved in such appeals and the value participants – both appeal committee members and parents and carers - derive from the ability to hold appeal hearings remotely. The consultation responses also reinforced our view that it is important that the ability to attend an appeal hearing in-person should be retained. The analysis report of the consultation responses has been published today: [Use of remote technology in school admission and exclusion appeal hearings: Consultation Analysis - gov.scot](#)

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My intention is therefore to bring forward regulations that will make permanent the use of remote technology in appeal hearings, while also ensuring that there is an ability for appellants to choose which format of hearing (remote/in-person) will take place.

I expect to lay regulations in the spring so that they can come into force at start of the next academic year on 1 August 2025.

Your sincerely

**JENNY GILRUTH**

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