



Fitness to Practise

**Information for applicants:
giving evidence at a meeting**

This information is provided for education practitioners – ‘applicants’- preparing for a Suitability Committee meeting of the Education Workforce Council (‘the EWC’).

Please note: these meeting are now held remotely.

Do I have to attend the meeting?

The EWC strongly advises you talk to your union or other representative for advice and support.

You can decide not to come to the meeting. The EWC cannot force you to attend but strongly encourages it since this is your application for registration. A Suitability Committee would expect to hear about an applicant’s declaration first-hand Your attendance will also allow the Committee to ask questions where it is not clear on what you have said.

If you do not attend, the Committee can continue with the meeting and reach a decision in your absence.

If you do not have a representative, the following information may help you reach a decision about attending.

There are other reasons I don’t want to attend.

There may be specific reasons why you do not want to, or feel you cannot attend.

For example, you may have a disability, illness or a condition, such as a depression or anxiety, a learning difficulty, a physical disability, or you experience difficulty in social situations. Or you may feel intimidated because of your age, gender, race, cultural background or sexuality.

However, the EWC may be able to suggest adjustments to the way in which you give evidence, for example, by arranging help if you are hearing or visually impaired, or have mobility difficulties.

It is important the EWC is aware of your needs so it can ensure help is in place.

I’m not sure if I want to give evidence at the meeting. What should I do?

Again, the EWC strongly suggests you contact your union or other representative which will help in making decisions you are comfortable with.

The EWC cannot force you to give evidence, but again, **this is your application for registration.**

Is this a public meeting? Who will be there?

No, this is a **private** meeting.

The only people at the meeting are EWC staff, the Committee, which is made up of registered persons and lay people in the main, and an independent solicitor who can give legal advice to the Committee.

Can I bring someone with me to the meeting?

You may bring a union official or other representative with you.

Observers cannot attend as meetings of this nature are private.
Neither the EWC nor the applicant can call witnesses to the meeting.

Will I receive the bundle of papers before the meetings?

Yes. This will be sent to you 10 days before the meeting. A copy will also be sent to your union or other representative.

It is possible the Committee will ask you to look at certain documents in the bundle if it wants to ask you questions. You should take your time to read each document carefully before answering.

What happens at the meeting?

On the day of the meeting, you should aim to arrive at the EWC's offices by 9:30am. Meetings usually start at 10am. The Clerk will make sure you are comfortable by showing you the meeting room, and taking you to a waiting room.

Arriving in good time means your union official or representative has time to talk to you about what is to follow. If you are not supported, an EWC officer and the EWC's legal adviser will come and talk to you before the meeting starts to explain what will happen.

The layout of the meeting room (attached) shows where you will be sitting when the meeting starts.

If you have sent in a statement to the EWC before the meeting, you may decide, with the advice of your representative, to read this out to the Committee. This may well be a nerve-wracking experience. It is important therefore that, when asked, you take your time and read slowly which should help. No one will rush you. Your representative, if you have one, might ask you questions as you read, or after you have finished reading.

The Committee will then ask you questions if it has any.

What questions will I be asked?

You should only be asked questions about your evidence and suitability for registration.

The Committee will be aware questions should not be confrontational or inappropriate.

The meeting may well be taking place some time after the events which led to it. If you find you have forgotten any details or fact, do not feel afraid to say so.

What happens if I need a break?

The Committee will be keen to make sure you are comfortable when giving evidence. If you want a break at any time, for whatever reason, please say so. The Committee might also decide it is time to take a break if you have been giving evidence for a while.

Can I give evidence in Welsh?

Yes. You will need to give the EWC 21 days' notice.

The EWC will have sent you all the information you need 4 weeks before the meeting. Within this information is a form called 'Applicant Attendance'. You can use this form to let the EWC know you would like to give your evidence in Welsh.

Is there anything else I need to know or consider?

Make sure you have all the information you need before the day of the meeting. In particular, check that you know where the meeting venue is and how to get there – a map will be provided to you in good time.

In addition, please note:

- Smart work attire is the expected dress code for meetings.
- Meetings are recorded.

I have had to travel to the meeting. Can I claim expenses?

No. The EWC is unable to reimburse you for any costs.

Key contact

Address **Fitness to Practise Team**, Education Workforce Council, 9th floor, 35-43 Eastgate House, Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0AB

Telephone 029 2046 0099

Email fitnesstopractise@ewc.wales

Applicants subject to these proceedings may submit forms, documents and make written representations to the EWC, in English or Welsh.