



Ask the Speaker

Thank you for your interest in taking part in the Ask the Speaker programme. Please read the important information below before applying for a session. If you have any further questions, please do get in touch:

askthespeaker@parliament.uk

Sessions - FAQs

When will our session take place?

Sessions take place on certain Monday mornings during term-time from 9:30 – 10:15am. You will be asked to join the Microsoft Teams meeting at 9:15am so that we can connect you with Mr Speaker in plenty of time and resolve any technical issues before the session begins at 9:30am.

If you are selected for an Ask the Speaker session, we will be in touch no later than three weeks in advance to confirm your availability on your allocated date. You will receive your Microsoft Teams joining link and have a test call set up the week before your session.

What technology do we need?

Ask the Speaker takes place via Microsoft Teams, which can be accessed via a browser. You will receive the joining link for your session a week in advance. Please note that if students are participating from more than one room, this link will need to be shared with the relevant teachers.

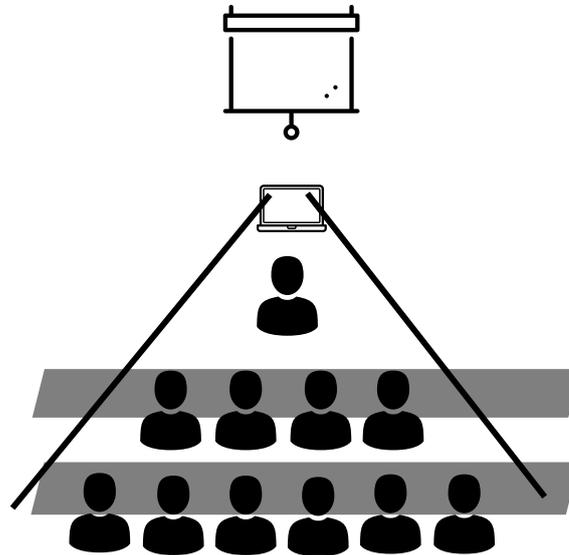
You will need a laptop or tablet with an in-built camera connected to a large screen with speakers (such as an interactive whiteboard or large projector screen). It is important that pupils can hear the session as they will be asking questions throughout. **Please ensure that you have a reliable internet connection.**

We will contact you a week in advance of your session to arrange a test Microsoft Teams meeting, using the same room and equipment that will be used on the day, at a time that is convenient for you.

If you have any IT questions, please contact us.

How do we set up the room?

The camera should face the audience in your school – this way, Mr Speaker can see both the student asking the question and the other students sitting behind. The laptop or tablet should be connected to a large screen with speakers, so that the students can see and hear Mr Speaker clearly. We recommend that individual students take it in turns to approach the laptop/tablet to ask their question. See the diagram below:



How many students can take part?

We would suggest that between 30 and 50 students take part in the session. We ask for a minimum of 20 students in one session. There is no limit on the number of students that can take part in a session, as long as all the students can see and hear Mr Speaker, and that he can see and hear the students asking the questions. Mr Speaker is keen to engage with as many students as possible and is happy to speak to a mix of ages.

Do we need to prepare?

We ask you to assist your students to prepare a minimum of 30 questions for the session. Mr Speaker hopes to be able to answer as many questions as possible. You will be sent links to resources to help you prepare in your confirmation email. You can also find links to these resources at the end of this document.

A significant part of the role of the Speaker, and Deputy Speakers, is to maintain political impartiality. **For this reason, please help your students prepare questions that focus on the role and function of UK Parliament, rather than political issues.**

What will happen on the day?

You will be asked to join the Microsoft Teams meeting at 9:15am to establish a connection with Mr Speaker ready for a 9:30am start. Mr Speaker will greet your students before inviting them to ask questions. We recommend that each student should come to the laptop/tablet in turn and ask their

question and then remain there while Mr Speaker answers so that they can engage directly with him, while still being visible to the other students via the big screen. Mr Speaker is more than happy for students to engage with him and ask any follow up questions in response to his answers.

Can we invite the media to our session?

Please **DO NOT** arrange radio or TV coverage or invite local/national press journalists to the session itself. We also ask that you do not film the session yourselves. Mr Speaker is keen than he spends his time focusing on the students, without being distracted by other questions or interruptions. You are of course welcome to invite coverage **after** the session.

In the meantime...

You may find the following resources useful in preparing for your Ask the Speaker session:

- [360 Tour of UK Parliament](#)
- [MP for a week online game](#)
- [Introduction to Parliament - video](#)
- [What is the House of Commons? Video](#)