

2022

International Migration and Refugee Law Moot Court Competition

Rules

Annex: Virtual Oral Pleadings

Migration Law Research Group

Ghent University



FRAGOMEN

Annex: Virtual Oral Pleadings

The 2022 International Migration and Refugee Law Moot Court Competition will take place in person, at Ghent University, as an educational activity. However, a last-minute inability to travel due to new covid restrictions/variants or positive tests is unfortunately a reality we cannot ignore during this competition's preparation.

This **covid-annex to the Rules** outlines how the pleadings will take place in case a team (member) has to participate in an online format, this annex is applicable for all oral pleadings (from preliminary rounds to final) if a team (member) is participating online. Note that given the different location of the Moot Court's Final, other particularities may be communicated in case one of the finalists' team members (that is pleading) participates virtually.

1.1 Duty to inform: as soon as possible

Team Representatives have the obligation to inform the organizers of the Moot Court Competition as soon as they are informed if one or multiple team members will not be able to participate to the pleading competition in person. The communication has to happen at the latest when the teams starts their journey to Ghent, Belgium, or – in the event of a later positive test – as soon as possible

This duty to inform is required to ensure that all practical arrangements (as outlined below) can be made by the Moot Court Organizers.

1.2 Online Platform: Teams

For the online session, the platform "Teams" will be used. The Team Representative will receive the link for the virtual meeting and must ensure that relevant team members receive the link.

If one of the two teams, or one or more of their members, who are pleading cannot attend the competition in person, their online participation will be facilitated. In case both of the two team members who are requested to plead in a same session are unable to attend the pleading competition in person, they are asked to be call in from the same place, unless they are in isolation.

The team member(s) participating online will be projected on a big screen. Note that this screen will be in front of the judges. The other team members that are pleading will be seated next to the screen, and the remaining team members or other observers (if allowed under the covid-restrictions) will be accommodated on the side. Pending particularities in the pleading room, small changes might occur.

1.3 Required equipment for the student participating online abroad (Annex to Rule 6.4)

Teams can only participate with computers that have a webcam, and a good working microphone. Teams are required to ensure a stable internet connection to facilitate this.

Teams have to ensure that the desk they are using is empty, with the exception of the materials that they are allowed to use during the pleading.

1.4 Communication with team members present in the physical moot court room (Annex to Rule 6.4)

In principle it is not allowed for teams to use any electronic devices in the court rooms by the team members that are effectively pleading. An exception to this will be made in the case that one of the two

members who is pleading is participating virtually.

If from one or both teams there are team members participating online, a dedicated zoom-link will be shared for each team to communicate via the chat-function during the pleading.

The bailiff will have access to all online chats (via Teams or Zoom, depending on what is set up).

For pleadings in which the team member that is virtually participating is not pleading, no dedicated chat will be set up, as for pleadings in person contact between the two students pleading and the team member and coach (seated with the observers) is not allowed. Team members abroad will of course be able to follow the session via an online link shared in advance with the team representative.

1.5 No guests allowed in the (virtual) pleading room (Annex to Rule 6.11)

Team members that are pleading online can only be accompanied in a room by their other team members and their coach. Other attendees are not allowed.

1.6 Control of surroundings and sound prior to the start of the oral pleading

The online team (member) should call in 15 minutes prior to the start of the online pleading. The bailiff will use this time to ensure a sound check and confirm whether there are no additional people present.

Teams will be asked to give a (360) view of the room (including their desk) from where they are participating in the competition.

Prior to the start of the oral pleading, the bailiff will confirm with the team (member) participating online how many minutes they wish to allocate for each student pleading.

1.7 Additional Rules during the oral pleading

During the entire pleading round, the online team members must keep their sound on and camera on. Consequently, teams cannot mute themselves during the entire oral pleading. Exceptionally, the camera can be put off if the connection does not allow for it to remain on.

1.8 Technical difficulties

Team Representatives of teams of whom one or more members participate virtually will receive the contact details of the bailiff to contact in case of technical difficulties. Note that if technical difficulties take place during the pleading, the time will be paused for as long as the team cannot hear the opposing team's pleading or the judges' questions.

1.9 Individual feedback session between judges and teams (Annex to Rule 6.13)

To the extent possible the organizing team will foresee the possibility for the team members who have been participating online, to have a virtual feedback meeting with one or more judges. More information on that will be communicated with the teams affected.

1.10 Other Rules applicable both to in person and hybrid oral pleading sessions

Note that changes to the Rules have been kept as limited as possible, and it is important to recall that the other Rules, as outlined in the Moot Court Rules, are not affected.

