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# Press Notice

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## Guidance issued for tweeting the twists and turns of Supreme Court cases

The Supreme Court has today published guidance on its practice relating to the use of “live text based communications”, in the context of ongoing public and professional debate on the issue.

Because cases before the Supreme Court do not involve interaction with witnesses or jurors, and because there is rarely any reason why what is said in court should not be placed immediately in the public domain, the Justices of the Supreme Court are content with legal teams, journalists and members of the public communicating to the outside world what is happening in the courtroom.

Important exceptions include cases where there are formal reporting restrictions in place, family cases involving the welfare of a child, and cases where publication of proceedings might prejudice a pending jury trial. Those attending such cases will be informed by notices placed at the doors of the courtroom that restrictions are in place.

Lord Phillips, President of the Supreme Court, comments: “The rapid development of communications technology brings with it both opportunities and challenges for the justice system. An undoubted benefit is that regular updates can be shared with many people outside the court, in real time, which can enhance public interest in the progress of a case and keep those who are interested better informed.

“We are fortunate that, by the time a case reaches the Supreme Court there is very seldom any reason for any degree of confidentiality, so that questions about what should and should not be shared with those outside the courtroom do not usually arise. This means that we can offer a green light to tweeting and other forms of communication, as long as this does not disrupt the smooth running of the court.”

Today’s guidance is limited to the Supreme Court because of its unique role as the highest appeal court in the land. Different considerations apply to other courts, for a range of legal reasons.

**The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom**

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The Supreme Court policy on the use of live text-based communications can be found on its website, here: <http://www.supremecourt.gov.uk/docs/live-text-based-comms.pdf>

**Ends**

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