

LSE Online Public Events – Audio and Video Reference Guide*

This guide is intended to assist speakers and chairs who appear at an LSE online public event by optimising their audio-visual device. A speaker who is clear both visually and aurally will boost user experience as well as audience engagement and interactivity.

Top tips:

- Connect your device to Wi-Fi for best audio and video results.
- Using a laptop gives the best video and sound.
- If using a phone or tablet, think about how to correctly prop it up.
- Wired or Bluetooth headphones with an in-built microphone helps sound quality.

Location, Lighting, and Background

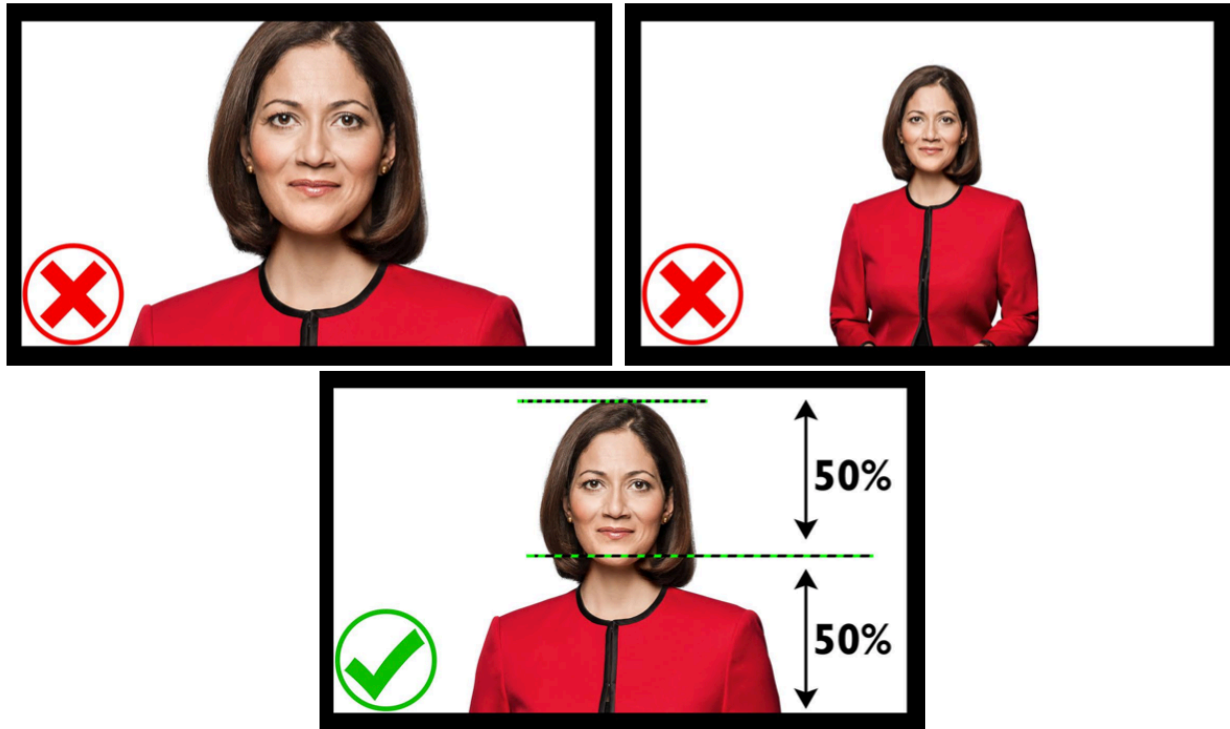
- Find a **quiet space** where you are unlikely to be disturbed and where there is no background noise (e.g. traffic passing, washing machine etc.).
- Ensure that the **space is well lit**. A north facing room is ideal as the light will always be soft and diffuse.
 - Try to position your computer so that the window/light is coming from behind the computer and lighting your face. If the light source is behind you and facing the computer, any camera will struggle to expose the scene correctly and you will likely appear in silhouette.
- If possible, try to position yourself in front of a **background with depth and interest**, rather than simply a plain background.



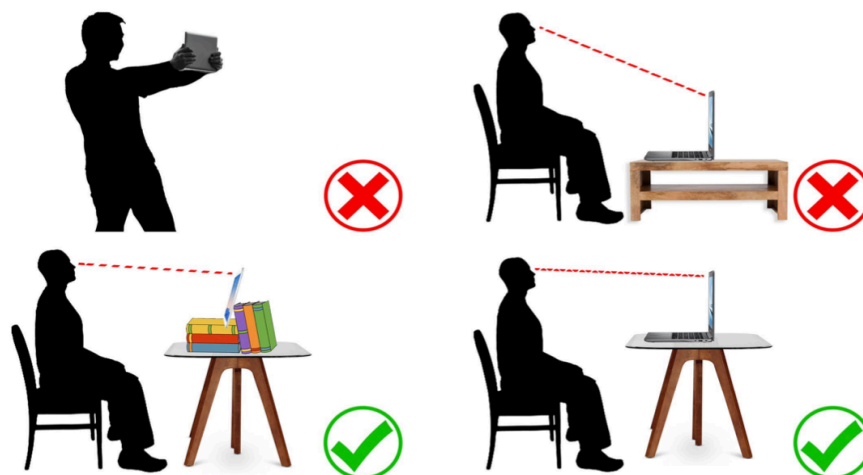
* All images taken from the BBC News Device & Webcam Guest Reference Guide

Framing and Position

- Do not place yourself too close to the camera as your image will be cropped.
- Do not place yourself too far away from the camera as this creates large areas of dead space around your image.
- Adjust yourself in the frame of the camera so that you are **visible from just above the elbows to the top of the head**, with your chin approximately halfway from the top and bottom of the screen.



- If you are using a built-in webcam, position yourself so that your **webcam is either in line with or slightly higher than your eye-line**.
- Many webcams will include a tally light to indicate when the webcam is active. This is usually located next to the camera itself and so is a good place to look when speaking; it will appear to your audience that you are addressing them directly.



- If using a phone/tablet, make sure your device is in **landscape mode**, rather than portrait mode.



Audio Quality

- Ensuring good audio quality is very important. Audio that sounds ‘okay’ on playback may be fine over short periods but will be fatiguing over longer recordings.
- The in-built microphone on a laptop or webcam will capture other sounds from your environment. Bluetooth headphones and commercial headphones are likely to be the same.
- The below options can improve audio quality.
 - Use a **wired USB headset with a noise/echo cancelling microphone** (any wired headset, e.g. those from Logitech, Plantronics or Jabra).
 - Use a **wireless headset ONLY if it comes with a dedicated USB receiver** and NOT Bluetooth (again, e.g. headsets by Logitech, Plantronics or Jabra).

Audio Tips

- During an event, **try not to touch the microphone** as handling noise will be captured and heard by the audience. **Be careful of any loose clothing or long hair** that may come into contact with the microphone. Also **be aware of any paper notes that you might be using near the microphone**, as the rustling will be picked up and heard by the audience.
- When speaking, **be close enough to your microphone** to capture a good clear audio signal, **but not so close that you overload the microphone**. Plosives (such as the phrase “peas popping”) and sibilants (as in the phrase “sizzling sausages”) are most likely to cause problems as they create sudden jumps in volume.
- Before you join the event, **consider your environment and any noise there might be** (nearby building works, air conditioning, traffic noise, TV, washing machine etc.).