

Intermediaries are communication specialists who can assist the defendant with two way communication to enable them to effectively participate in criminal proceedings. Also see our YJLC Intermediary Step by Step guide.

1. [Communicourt](#), [Triangle](#) and [Intermediaries for Justice](#) provide intermediaries.
2. The Ministry of Justice operates a “registered intermediaries” scheme for witnesses. Referrals can be made by the police, Crown Prosecution Service or defence solicitors to socwitnessint@nca.x.gsi.gov.uk¹ In the case of [R \(on the Application of OP\) v the Secretary of State for Justice \[2014\] EWHC 1944 \(Admin\)](#) the Secretary of State was ordered to reconsider his decision to refuse a young defendant access to a registered intermediary scheme on the basis that the intermediary would only be required to assist the defendant in giving evidence.
3. There is no statutory definition of ‘intermediary’, therefore it may be possible to use any individual who has the necessary skill. The court will need to approve that individual. Crown Court Bench Book has this definition:

“All intermediaries are speech and language specialists. Most are speech and language therapists, with many years of practical experience. Their role is independent, and their primary duty is to assist the court with two way communication...”

Such a person can be:

- (1) A registered intermediary registered by the Intermediaries Registration Board and chosen for skill in facilitating communication with vulnerable people and who have completed an approved assessed training course on the role of intermediaries in criminal proceedings;
- (2) An unregistered intermediary, but who is someone who is a recognised professional in two way communication such as a speech therapist;
- (3) In an appropriate and rare case, a carer or family member, who can overcome particular problems with a witness and a person who knows the witness well. In such a case, a registered intermediary should have positively evaluated the ability of the carer or family member to facilitate communication.” ([Crown Court Bench Book, March 2010, Chapter 6\(3\)\(4\), pages 103-106](#)).

¹ The Ministry of Justice’s Witness Intermediary Scheme (WIS) is now provided by the National Crime Agency who run a matching service providing Registered Intermediaries.