

(2) Where the Judge frames any charge under clause (b) of sub-section (1), the charge shall be read and explained to the accused present either physically or through audio-video electronic means and the accused shall be asked whether he pleads guilty of the offence charged or claims to be tried.

**252.** If the accused pleads guilty, the Judge shall record the plea and may, in his discretion, convict him thereon. Conviction on plea of guilty.

**253.** If the accused refuses to plead, or does not plead, or claims to be tried or is not convicted under section 252, the Judge shall fix a date for the examination of witnesses, and may, on the application of the prosecution, issue any process for compelling the attendance of any witness or the production of any document or other thing. Date for prosecution evidence.

**254. (1)** On the date so fixed, the Judge shall proceed to take all such evidence as may be produced in support of the prosecution: Evidence for prosecution.

Provided that evidence of a witness under this sub-section may be recorded by audio-video electronic means.

(2) The deposition of evidence of any public servant may be taken through audio-video electronic means.

(3) The Judge may, in his discretion, permit the cross-examination of any witness to be deferred until any other witness or witnesses have been examined or recall any witness for further cross-examination.

**255.** If, after taking the evidence for the prosecution, examining the accused and hearing the prosecution and the defence on the point, the Judge considers that there is no evidence that the accused committed the offence, the Judge shall record an order of acquittal. Acquittal.

**256. (1)** Where the accused is not acquitted under section 255, he shall be called upon to enter on his defence and adduce any evidence he may have in support thereof. Entering upon defence.

(2) If the accused puts in any written statement, the Judge shall file it with the record.

(3) If the accused applies for the issue of any process for compelling the attendance of any witness or the production of any document or thing, the Judge shall issue such process unless he considers, for reasons to be recorded, that such application should be refused on the ground that it is made for the purpose of vexation or delay or for defeating the ends of justice.

**257.** When the examination of the witnesses (if any) for the defence is complete, the prosecutor shall sum up his case and the accused or his advocate shall be entitled to reply: Arguments.

Provided that where any point of law is raised by the accused or his advocate, the prosecution may, with the permission of the Judge, make his submissions with regard to such point of law.

**258. (1)** After hearing arguments and points of law (if any), the Judge shall give a judgment in the case, as soon as possible, within a period of thirty days from the date of completion of arguments, which may be extended to a period of forty-five days for reasons to be recorded in writing. Judgment of acquittal or conviction.

(2) If the accused is convicted, the Judge shall, unless he proceeds in accordance with the provisions of section 401, hear the accused on the questions of sentence, and then pass sentence on him according to law.

**259.** In a case where a previous conviction is charged under the provisions of sub-section (7) of section 234, and the accused does not admit that he has been previously convicted as alleged in the charge, the Judge may, after he has convicted the said accused under section 252 or section 258, take evidence in respect of the alleged previous conviction, and shall record a finding thereon: Previous conviction.