

Maynooth University Lecture Recording Guidelines¹

Introduction:

This is a set of guidelines to assist staff in making decisions about recording live lectures (whether in person or online) for use by students.

The findings of the [2019 Irish National Digital Experience \(INDEX\) Survey](#) reported access to lecture recordings as one of the top student suggestions for improving the experience of digital teaching and learning.

However, variability in lecture recording practices between different academic staff members may lead to unpredictability and therefore insecurity among the student body. The following document addresses this issue, in line with other institutions in Higher Education, by providing guidance with regard to recording lectures.

As there are a number of reasons to consider recording lecture content as part of a blended learning approach but also potential pitfalls and counter arguments the following document is not intended as a prescriptive policy. Rather, it is providing advice and clarity by laying out considerations to be taken into account as well as guidance when developing best practice with regard to lecture recordings. **Whichever route a lecturer chooses to follow it is essential that it is communicated clearly to the students in order to manage expectations.**

Benefits to be considered for online learning or a blended approach with on-Campus teaching:

Recording lectures and other live learning sessions can provide a number of learning benefits to students:

- Empowering self-directed student learning, including recap and review: students who attended an on-campus or remotely delivered learning session, for example, can re-visit the recording at a later date and at their own pace to support deeper engagement with lecture content.
- Flexible learning: better accommodation of diverse learning routines for students from groups underrepresented in Higher Education, or students who cannot attend an on-campus or remotely delivered learning sessions for any number of reasons. Students can access the recording at a later date.
- Accessibility: Students with disabilities and those whose first language is not English may particularly benefit from having access to recordings of teaching sessions. Students with specific learning difficulties or disabilities may require recordings of teaching sessions as a reasonable accommodation.

¹ These guidelines have been developed based on current best practice literature with regards to this topic. They incorporate the perspectives of Maynooth University students and staff members, including input from the [Maynooth Enhancing Digital Teaching and Learning \(EDTL\)](#) student-staff working group, [Maynooth Students' Union](#) who conducted consultations with class representatives, as well as a wide range of other University offices and staff/student committees. These guidelines were approved by Academic Council on 13 September 2021.

Potential problems to be considered:

- Impact on discourse, delivery, and on student engagement in class discussion, especially when sensitive topics are discussed. This may differ from subject to subject.
- Concerns about the impact on student attendance with knock on effects on staff-student and peer interaction.
- Inappropriate dissemination of material/parts of the delivered content (for example, taken out of context) with potentially harmful consequences.

While the recording of teaching sessions has benefits, at Maynooth University recordings are intended as a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, student attendance at on campus or remotely delivered lectures and learning activities. Recordings, especially pre-recorded lectures, should not be used to introduce a substantial amount of auxiliary content. In cases where there is a significant amount of additional content uploaded, lecturers are requested to clarify for students what is core, and what is supplementary, material.

Procedure:

- When recording, lecturers are encouraged, where possible and appropriate, to record or pre-record teaching sessions delivering core content using Maynooth University approved Video/Audio Capture tools (Video/Audio Capture tools in short).
- If the material is in presentation format, then ideally it should be recorded and made available to students.
- If the material is discussion based, it may not be appropriate to record, unless the students are all happy to have the material recorded.
- At the start of a module, lecturers should provide students with clear guidance as to if, and when, teaching sessions will be recorded in that particular module and for how long recordings will be made available. This information could be communicated, for example, in the module handbook, via Moodle or via email. Students should also be reminded that accessing recordings should not be considered a substitute for attending live teaching sessions.
- At the start of each session, the students should be reminded that the session is being recorded, and reminded of their obligations to use these recordings appropriately. Students should be advised that any class participation will be recorded unless the recording has been stopped or paused. This will enable participants to make informed personal choices with regards to their personal involvement in the recording.
- If a teaching session is being recorded, it is preferable that lecturers do not call on individual students by name to request contributions in order to allow for anonymity to be retained; instead students should volunteer to contribute.

Opting out of a recording:

- If the teaching session is taking place on campus and a student does not want to be recorded then the student should inform the lecturer, ensure that they are not in view of the video camera, and they can choose not to speak during that session.
- If the teaching session is taking place online a student can mute their microphone and/or turn off their webcam.

Dissemination, Retention, and Use of Recordings:

- Lecturers always need to make clear at the beginning of the module how the recordings will be made available. The means may differ depending on the technology used.
- In some situations, for example where elements of a teaching session deals with sensitive materials, teaching staff may elect not to make a recording available, or to remove sections of recorded material. If possible, this should be communicated to students in advance.
- Recordings of any student presentations should be shared only with the consent of the relevant student. Lecturers may retain student presentations for the purposes of assessment and examinations.
- It is recommended that recordings of teaching sessions should remain available to students for the duration of the module and until after the resit examinations. However, a recording can be removed at a lecturer's discretion.
- Recordings using Video/Audio Capture tools linked with a module are to be viewed only by students registered for that module. Any other copying, editing, circulation or publication is not permitted.
- Any student-generated recordings of teaching sessions must be made with advance agreement (see *Student generated recordings*) and may only be made for the personal and private use of the student.
- Once they have completed their programme of study students should destroy all recordings of lectures or other teaching sessions.

Closed captions and transcripts:

Teaching staff should be aware that while current Video/Audio Capture tools are configured such that it is possible to autogenerate closed captions of the audio content (MS Teams recordings also generate a transcript of the recording), these can be unreliable.

It is therefore strongly recommended, if closed captions are used, to correct any obvious mistakes or sources of misunderstanding in auto generated closed captions/transcripts. In particular, key terms etc. should be checked to ensure that the transcript accurately represents the audio track. However, it is recognised that this may not be possible in all circumstances. For example, the Gaelic captions and transcripts produced by Video/Audio Capture tools are at the time of writing known to be unreliable.

Student generated recordings:

- If a teaching session is not being recorded by the lecturer, a student may request permission to record the session, if the recording is to be used solely for the purposes of that student's personal learning and assessment preparation. Any such requests must be made in writing to the appropriate lecturer/module coordinator before commencing recording.
- The decision whether to grant permission for the student to record the session is at the discretion of the lecturer. Consideration should be given to reasonable accommodation for students with a disability under the Equal Status Act where appropriate. There may also be circumstances which necessitate students other than those with disabilities to record teaching sessions.

Unauthorised audio and/or visual recording of on campus or remotely delivered teaching sessions is prohibited.

Copyright & Intellectual Property Rights:

Where a lecture is recorded the recording is copyright, and students are permitted to use it only for the purposes of their study. Any misuse of the material may be a breach of the university regulations and subject to disciplinary actions.²

GDPR and Data protection law:

This is a sample notice you could use to inform students that the lecture is being recorded:

Please note that this lecture is being recorded and will be made available to students registered for this module for study purposes. The material in this module is copyright, and you should not use it for any purposes other than your own study. If you are unwilling to have your own image recorded you may turn off your camera (in online events) or stay out of camera range (in live events).

Information on GDPR and Data Protection is available at www.maynoothuniversity.ie/data-protection or by emailing dataprotection@mu.ie.

² Generally, copyright of course materials (e.g., lecture notes, assessment materials, recordings, podcasts) is owned by the academic who created the material. Where a lecturer records their own teaching for the purposes of making it available to students, this recording remains under the control of the lecturer, and will not be used by the university for other teaching purposes without the permission of the lecturer involved. (See MU Intellectual Property Management and Exploitation Policy, Section 3.1 Point 1.)