Temporary Policy for recording and/or preparing online lectures 2021/22

In the context of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic more lectures are returning to face-to-face delivery. Nevertheless, there is still a need for some lectures or other teaching activities, that will be referred to as lectures hereafter, to be made available online. This short-term policy supersedes the “Policy for recording synchronous online lectures 2020/21”.

This policy applies to all those employed in the process of recording and preparing online lectures, including for instance PhD researchers and hourly paid staff.

Definitions

A **synchronous online lecture** is defined here as an online teaching session, or part of a teaching session whereby the lecturer live-streams an online presentation to the student group on a part of the syllabus. A recording of the lecture will capture an audio of the lecturer’s voice and may also include visual aids such as presentation slides, which supplement oral delivery.

An **asynchronous online lecture** is an online teaching session, or part of a teaching session whereby the lecturer uploads a pre-recorded presentation (and or associated learning materials) for the student group to access on their own schedule (or as part of a designed sequence of learning). Any additional work entailed in creating online material should be counted into the staff member’s teaching hours.

Background and rationale

The University remains committed to offering a high-quality learning experience for all students throughout the public health emergency. This commitment includes the provision of flexibility in when, where and how students can access course content. Staff and students with caring responsibilities may find the delivery of and participation in face-to-face classes particularly challenging during the Covid-19 context, especially during periods of Covid isolation or illness. The University remains committed to promoting an inclusive approach to teaching and learning, and to reducing disadvantages that exist for students and staff that are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable, or have complex medical diagnosis exacerbated by the pandemic and who might struggle to participate in face-to-face lectures.

During the public health emergency, having access to recorded material aims to enable students to:

* work around unanticipated challenges due to illness, Covid isolation, difficulties dealing with family/caring commitments;
* to reduce the challenges faced by staff and students who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or have complex medical diagnosis exacerbated by the ongoing pandemic;
* catch up on material missed following NI Executive mandated quarantine;
* keep pace with the speed or complexity of information being provided due to the ability to pause, rewind and review lecture content;
* review lecture content multiple times to deepen learning, particularly prior to assessments;
* reflect on lecture content and research concepts before potentially posing questions in a face-to-face teaching session. This may suit certain learners who like time to deliberate, or students whose first language is not English.

As a result of these points, where online materials are used for the provision of lecture materials these should usually be made available asynchronously.

Policy

1. It is expected that online materials used for the provision of online lectures should be made available asynchronously. Online “live” or synchronous lectures should be used only with permission from the relevant Associate Dean for Education.
2. The University commits that staff workload should not be unduly increased through the requirement to provide recorded material. Where a staff member is concerned about workload implications, they should raise this with their line manager, so that additional resources, alternative delivery arrangements or a refactoring of overall workload can be explored.
3. Panopto is the platform of choice for delivering recorded, asynchronous lectures. Panopto is also recommended for publishing and streaming recordings of live sessions (where authorised as below). Whilst Blackboard Collaborate does automate recording and publishing of live sessions there are many reasons why Panopto is recommended for playback.
4. Recordings generated through Panopto will remain private and accessible to a defined student group and for the period of their studies during that academic year, unless the creator chooses to share more widely. Access to recordings can be restricted by controlling the permissions in Panopto.
5. Recorded lectures will only be available through the relevant Blackboard module area to the staff who created the recordings and to the teaching team and student cohort for whom they are intended unless the creator spreads them more widely. The recordings will only be made available for the duration of the module in the current academic year, but they will remain available to use in the future if required with the consent of the creator.
6. Student voices may only be captured and/or uploaded with their consent. Consent may be implied rather than explicit if students’ attention is clearly drawn to this policy at the start of the module and at the start of every class and in a clearly visible message shown throughout the class and that this policy is made available on the University website.
7. Students must be reminded not to reproduce nor share recorded content with another person without obtaining the consent of the lecturer. Inappropriate use by students of recorded material is a disciplinary matter and will be referred to the relevant Faculty Executive Dean.
8. Where external lecturers deliver online lectures, or elements of lectures, it is the responsibility of the module coordinator to seek their written permission for the session to be recorded on an opt-in basis.
9. Recorded lectures will not be used to monitor the performance of lecturers. At an individual level, recordings may be used for reflective review of personal practice as part of wider CPD activity.
10. Staff retain ownership of any performance rights in the delivery as recorded, but license their use to the University, for reasons of practicality. A lecturer retains the right to withdraw permission to the further publishing of a recording after the event.
11. In accordance with the University’s Copyright Policy, Lecturers must cite and reference any copyright materials in line with accepted citation practice and must ensure that the appropriate permissions to utilise such materials are acquired before use unless such use is covered by statutory exceptions. All lecturers must ensure they follow the Copyright guidance for teaching material on Blackboard Learn.
12. The content of online lectures, including teaching aids produced by the lecturer in the course of their employment, remains the academic property of Ulster University as per the Intellectual Property Policy and Procedures. However, recorded material will not be used by the University to replace staff presence, and recordings will not be used in any scenario without the express permission of the staff member.
13. This policy should be read alongside the guidance on captioning 2020/21.

## Asynchronous Lectures

1. An asynchronous recording can be offered as an alternative to a face-to-face lecture where there is prior approval or where there is an operational need to deliver a lecture through this medium.
2. It may be that recordings made during the 2020/2021 session can be made available to students. Staff wishing to make 2020/2021 recordings available will need to consider the currency of the content. In addition to ensuring that these recordings do not contain information that may mislead/misrepresent arrangements for the current academic year. Particular care must be exercised with reference to information relating to assessments and examinations.

## Synchronous Lectures (not recommended for 2021/22)

1. It is expected that synchronous online lectures that are core to the curriculum, and not otherwise exempted for reasons set out below, should be recorded and made available to students.
2. In line with General Data Protection Regulations and the recording of identifiable students, clear information must be provided in advance to those being recorded about the nature and purpose of the recording. This includes who is making the recording, how it will be re-used and how long the recording will be kept for and to whom it will be disclosed or shared with. A general statement can be made available on each module and/or programme Blackboard Learn site.
3. It is the responsibility of the module coordinator to inform students that core online synchronous lectures will be recorded. Individual tutors should remind students of this at each session where recording is taking place.
4. Where online synchronous lectures include particularly interactive elements such as group activities, student-led discussions or student presentations, the lecturer is encouraged to pause the recording so that this element is not captured. Additionally, if an element of the lecture includes sensitive or confidential content, the lecturer, at their discretion, may pause the recording to exclude this content from the recorded version.
5. It is the responsibility of the lecturer to inform their student cohort when a recording, or an element of a recording will not be made available. Alternative study materials should be made available for students.
6. Lecturers are encouraged not to record online synchronous lectures, or elements of lectures if the content includes material which has copyright1, consent, highly sensitive or other legal implications. Examples of opt-out categories include (but are not restricted to):
   * A real patient’s name or other unique patient identifier
   * Hospital Trust confidential data
   * New/unpublished research
   * Highly controversial views as determined by the tutor

1 Details of Exception to copyright for Education and Teaching can be found here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/375951/ Education\_and\_Teaching.pdf