Recording Tips

Recording video (or audio) can be daunting especially if you're new to teaching online or using tools like Panopto. Some general tips on recording (and preparing to record) are below to get you started. And don't forget to practice!

1). **Shorter is better**. So instead of recording a full lecture, record a bunch of smaller videos -- this way you only have to re-record a few minutes if you make a mistake or to update the scholarship. (This also allows greater flexibility for the students). We usually recommend that videos be less than 7 minutes, but this obviously changes depending on the topic.

2). **Plan** what you want to say well before you start recording. You don't need to write and memorise a detailed script, but it's very useful to have a **list of talking points**. It's also very useful to plan how you're going to start and end the video (for example: "this video will cover..." and "this video covered ... thank you for watching." If there is a discussion board for the topic, you can end with "... and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this topic")

3). **Watch your language**. Beyond the obvious, try to avoid using: **temporal references** (such as "yesterday" or "next week"), **references to the module and its structure** (such as "last session we …" or "welcome to [module code], week 2…"), or **local references or colloquialisms** (such as "in the Leaving Cert") or temporal references (such as "yesterday" or "next week"). If each video can stand alone, you'll have more flexibility to restructure the module or even use the recordings in other modules.

4). Wear **solid, dark colours** (patterns can look very strange on camera) and it's also a good idea to avoid logos or branding -- remember these videos might be online for a while.

5). **Set the stage**. Sit/stand where you'll be recording, open your recording app, and make sure you're happy with what students will see. So, for example: (1) **adjust your camera angle** so your face is centred in the shot, (2) **remove any major distractions from the background** (books/posters/art/etc. are fine, but make sure they're all things you're happy with students seeing and possibly asking about!), (3) **check the lighting** (e.g. make sure there isn't a bright light behind you, angle lights to limit shadows, etc.), and (4) try to record in a smaller room (or one with lots of soft furnishings) to **limit echoes**.

6). If you're using slides, **review them multiple times to check for typos and other errors**. Make sure to use templates with title placeholders as doing so will automatically create a Table of Contents if you record with Panopto and will make the slides/PDF much easier for a screenreader to navigate.

Other useful resources:
- Guide – Presenting to Camera (Charlie Ruxton)
- Guide – Exercises to Reduce Nerves before Camera (Charlie Ruxton)
- Panopto and Video Recording in the Teaching with Canvas course

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