

## What about... personal capture advice?

### Topic Summary

Personal capture systems are installed on a desktop or laptop and so are recordable outside of a lecture theatre and are suitable for many purposes. They are generally easy to create and are growing in popularity with staff.

Because personal captures are recordable in various environments and depend on individual PC setups, they come with some different issues than theatre style captures. This document is aimed at usage, setup and technology advice to make a higher-quality recording.

### Resource Summary

**Topic:** Personal capture

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**Target audience:** Practitioners, technical staff

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**Comment:**

### Things to Consider

- Useful when lecture theatre installations are not available, when lecturers would like to make quick resources, and for recording demonstrations of on-screen material
- Increased flexibility of time, location, and resources
- Easy to make recordings with or without video (whereas lecture theatres usually record video by default)
- Increased control over the camera
- Desktop installations may be restricted by university PC defaults, limited environments, or additional costs (e.g. webcams and headsets)
- Lecturers can easily redo unsatisfactory recordings, and some software will allow limited editing

### Practical Suggestions

- Ensure you do a test capture to identify any issues - for example, the audio and video may not sync
- Try to do captures in a protected environment: quiet and non-distracting (especially with no telephone noises). Shared offices can make recording difficult.
- Some institutions or faculties may consider setting up a room or booth specifically as a recording space.
- Consider framing the camera shot. A plain background may be more suitable than something 'busy,' try not to capture people walking past a window or door, etc. Some software will let you preview the camera.
- Lighting may be an issue- the speaker should be front-lit if possible. Back-lighting creates dark shapes.
- Camera quality varies widely and a recording doesn't look good with a bad camera. Lecturers may want to use their own webcams, HD cameras, etc.
- Some software vendors publish a list of recommended cameras, it is a good idea to use a vendor-approved camera to avoid some unforeseen technical problems.
- Headsets or external microphones generally make a better audio recording than a PC's internal mic.
- With or without video, a desktop capture may be better than just PowerPoint slides.
- Desktop captures with video may be particularly nice for online modules when students rarely or never meet their lecturer face to face, simply to give the students a sense of the lecturer as a person and to help create a more connected, community feeling.

### Resources

Mimi Weiss Johnson and Justin Gagen: [Echo360 Personal Capture](#) (overview, instructions, tested cameras)

ELTAC document: What About... making a personal capture?

ELTAC document: What About... different methods of lecture capture?

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