

## What about... issues with room lighting?

### Topic Summary

This document reports on some of Coventry University's experiences with lecture capture room installations. Retrofitting existing theatre-style lecture rooms with new technology can be problematic and may incur hidden costs in time and money.

At Coventry we experienced a number of issues with room lighting being insufficient for video. We give some general recommendations regarding appropriate lighting and solutions to common problems.

### Resource Summary

**Topic:** Installation, lighting

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### Things to Consider

- Modern lecture rooms often use down-lighting which is designed for computer use and non-reflective screens, but is very bad for video by casting shadows which obscure people's faces.
- Room lighting which dims the front to enable screen viewing often also puts the lecturer in darkness.
- Some backgrounds can create poor lighting situations for which the camera cannot compensate.
- Reflections of light in the recorded area can wash out the video.

### Practical Suggestions

- Additional spotlights mounted in the room can provide good lighting for the video, but can sometimes be a bit uncomfortable for the lecturer.
- Pay attention to what is behind the speaker. White, clear walls are a problem for cameras as many will auto-adjust for the brightness, making the lecturer's face too dark. A simple solution would be to paint the wall behind the lectern a medium blue or use some portable backing device (partitions, curtains, etc.)
- Although less common, back-lighting (such as a large window) or up-lighting (such as a lectern lamp in a darkened room) can also obscure a lecturer on the video.
- Avoid having a light which shines directly onto the whiteboard if it is within the camera view.
- Before affixing the camera, check the lighting, angle, background, etc. although ultimately there may not be much you can do to get a better picture.

### Resources

ELTAC document: What About... camera choice and installation advice?  
ELTAC multimedia: Issues with delivery and room installations

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