

Policy on Recording of Oral or Visual Presentations

1) Introduction

It is the policy of the University to provide equal opportunities for all staff and students and therefore it is fully committed to the principles established in equality legislation. Following consultation with students and staff, the University has published a Group Strategic Equality Plan (2016-20). As a further demonstration of its commitment to equality of opportunity, the University implements this policy on the Recording of Oral or Visual Presentations by certain disabled students.

2) The Law and Reasonable Adjustments

The Special Educational Needs Disability Act (SENDA) (2002) amended the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and placed an obligation on all higher education institutions to provide reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled students were not disadvantaged. The Equality Act (2010) replaces all existing equality legislation with a single duty to promote equality for all protected characteristics including disability. While it is not lawful for disabled students to be placed at a disadvantage, it is lawful to treat them more favourably than non-disabled students, as long as academic standards are not compromised.

3) Recording of Oral or Visual Presentations

Recording lectures is often one of the recommendations made in a Needs Assessment report which determines the reasonable adjustments the University is required to provide when supporting a disabled student. The recording of lectures by certain disabled students is considered to be a reasonable adjustment and is permitted under the procedure outlined below.

It is acknowledged that academic staff make oral or visual presentations in a variety of situations including lectures, seminars, tutorials, practicals, practice or performance-based work and field courses.

4) Procedure

All lecturing staff need to be aware of the University's policy on the recording of oral or visual presentations, and should be aware of the possible consequences of refusing to grant permission i.e. that individual liability may apply and that their decision may be subject to scrutiny. Schools will be informed by Student Services if certain disabled students need to record oral or visual presentations. Schools will only be informed of the specific reason for the recording of presentations with the student's explicit consent. Students who are recording oral or visual presentations will complete a consent form which provides details of the information that they are willing to disclose regarding their disability and learning support needs. This consent form also confirms that the student agrees with the conditions for the recording of oral or visual presentations. This consent form is held by Student Services but may be shared with Schools (with the student's permission). Best practice would include the establishment of ground rules for professional behaviour in the classroom at the start of every year/module, which is discussed with students. This could include issues such as the recording of sessions, the purposes of this and how recordings can or cannot be used. Course information should include reference to arrangements for recordings.

Academic staff should inform the whole group at the beginning of lectures where recordings are being made. This should be done in such a way so as to avoid the identification of individual disabled students.

Students who need to record oral or visual presentations should understand that the content of a lecture remains the intellectual property of the lecturer delivering it. Textual and performance rights in the lecture are protected under the terms of the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988. Copies must only be used for personal study, and must not be reproduced or passed to anyone else other than for transcription purposes. Recordings must not be shared with friends or colleagues and must not be uploaded on to the internet or distributed via social networks.

Disciplinary measures may be taken if students do not comply with this policy by copying and/or distributing recordings.

Students also undertake to destroy all forms of recording at the conclusion of their programme of study.

It should be noted that students have a responsibility to attend lectures. Asking someone to record a lecture is not a substitute for attendance. The only exception to this is when Student Services (Learning Support) staff have made a recommendation for recordings to be made in the student's absence.

If students or academic staff are unsure of the position in relation to the recording of oral or visual presentations, they are advised to contact Student Services.

5) Procedure for visiting lecturers

A visiting lecturer should be informed of the University's policy on the recording of oral or visual presentations by the Programme Director / module tutor and permission for a disabled student to record a lecture should be obtained. If the visiting lecturer does not give this permission, it is the responsibility of the Programme Director / module tutor, in conjunction with Student Services, to ensure that the student is not disadvantaged.

6) Exceptions

In some cases, it may not be possible to record oral or visual presentations e.g. when confidential information is being discussed by staff and/or students. The student should be informed by the module tutor when it is not possible to record oral or visual presentations and a clear justification should be provided. In situations where other students are permitted to take notes, the module tutor should ensure that the disabled student is not disadvantaged e.g. by implementing alternative methods or ensuring that notes are taken.