



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH Student Disability Service

Students who are deaf/have a hearing loss: making remote lectures accessible

Please distribute to all relevant teaching staff. It will significantly increase accessibility of the spoken content of remote sessions.

Clear speech with good audio will also increase accuracy of any auto-captions.

Advance information

- Provide information in advance so that students have as much context as possible.
- Share any new abbreviated terms before the session.

Good audio-visual (always use video as far as possible)

- Use a quality 'helicopter-style' headset mic when at all possible
- Mute the mic when not talking.
- Minimise background noise (such as shuffling papers).
- Ensure optimal wifi connectivity.
- Ensure that students can also see the presenter's face when showing Powerpoints, so that the student can optimise lipreading
- Keep facing the camera, so that lipreading is possible, and don't walk around.
- If you do have to walk around (e.g. demos), wear lapel mics appropriately (see Appendix).
- Ensure lighting is good (and from the front, not behind) so picture is really clear.
- Use plain background where possible.

Presentation tips

- Speak clearly and not fast.
- Clearly signal change of topic.
- 'Chunk' information so that the session is broken up into shorter sections.
- Provide ongoing summary points in chat boxes or equivalent.
- Include options for questions and for comments to be typed into chat box.
- **In group sessions:**
 - ask contributors to say names when they start to speak
 - repeat points from students which may have been unclear
 - ask students to say in chat box if they missed what was said
 - also encourage students to ask afterwards if this is helpful

Photo showing: good distance; plain & contrasting background; good lighting; and headset mic (not obscuring mouth)



Appendix: Lapel microphone use: best practice



- Ideally the mic should be about 8 inches below the mouth in central position
- Attached the mic securely.
- Make sure there is no interference from jewellery, lanyards etc.
- Make sure the mic is not pointing into clothing (or covered by lab coat), because rubbing will also cause interference.

'Where microphones are placed is really important, because some lecturers place it really low, and it doesn't pick up their voices at all. If you clip it on the collar, it needs to be upright; one lecturer used it with a collar that wasn't very stiff and the microphone direction flipped outwards and it didn't pick up any sound at all. So where they place it, how high, how low, and how they speak into it is really important...and sensitive mics pick up background noises, including rusting of clothes (in one case it picked up the sound of a lecturer stroking his beard...).'

Law student

'Everything hinges on where the mic is placed: an inch or two here or there makes a huge difference.'

Specialist technician

'You can have the most sophisticated radio aid, but if the mic is poorly used, you might as well not bother.'

Specialist technician