

Audio – some tips for producing audio podcasts

Podcast – a downloadable portable mp3 file which can be listened to whenever and wherever the listener chooses

Things to consider:

- **Learning design** – how will your podcast be used alongside your other resources?
 - At what point during the topic will your students listen to it?
 - What will they need to do before, during, and after listening to the podcast?
 - What is the particular value of the podcast to support your students' learning in this context (what can it provide that other learning objects can't)?
 - How can it help achieve the learning objective?
- **Adaptation**
 - How suitable is the podcast for your teaching methods?
 - Can you adapt what you do to incorporate use of audio – make sure you understand what the benefits would be of doing this.
- **Plan and structure**
 - When producing a podcast, you need to think about how you will introduce the material, how you will end it, what will go in the middle – a script/storyboard could help, and it's worth rehearsing this to spot any areas which don't sound right;
 - Think about pacing, pauses ('white space');
 - Should you provide a summary at the end if it's a longer podcast?
- **Consistency** (plan a strategy)
 - If you are planning a series, make sure they are consistent in the way they are delivered;
 - Consider how they will be linked, one to another – eg a brief recap of the previous one each time.
- **Duration**
 - Think about overall length – how long will your students listen for?
 - Somewhere between 7-15 minutes is a good length to start with; if you need to record longer pieces, consider breaking them up into sections or chapters.
- **Student preference**
 - Don't expect all your students to want to listen to your podcasts;
 - If they are built in to a well-structured learning design with a variety of delivery methods you have a better chance of supporting a wide range of student learning styles.
- **Know your limits**
 - Start simple (technically) – eg just you and a recording device;
 - Get used to the device/software you are going to use beforehand;
 - Listen to others to get an idea of what works.
- **But avoid over simplification of content**
 - Get the students to think about what you're saying and apply it to their learning.
- **Experience**
 - Talk to others;
 - Think about adapting what others have done to suit your subject.
- **Production**
 - Use a good quality microphone or recording device;
 - Make sure you have a suitable area with no extraneous noises and no interruptions;
 - Rehearse your script so you are familiar with it and are comfortable with pauses, emphasis, intonation etc. Have your rehearsed script to hand.