Using lecture recordings:

A guide for students

- Attend lectures.
- Make notes.
- Be specific.
- Catch up.
- Ask for help.
- Don’t cut corners.

Attend lectures.

- Research shows that students who attend more lectures tend to get better grades.
- There are also social benefits to attending lectures, you become part of the community.
- Ask questions and provide answers. You may get a chance to use a catchbox microphone or try Wooclap audience interaction tools.
- Remind the lecturer to wear a microphone to ensure recordings have good audio.
- Use recordings in Learn to revisit bits you found challenging, rather than using them as a substitute to live lectures.

Make notes.

- Making notes helps you learn but it also gives you material to review later.
- The best way to make notes is to summarise or paraphrase what the lecturer is saying, rather than writing down word-for-word.
- Note-taking can be a skill in itself. You can use systems like the Cornell Method to help you structure your notes.
- Focus on understanding the lecture. You can make verbatim notes first and paraphrase later. Any notes are better than no notes.
- Don't worry about writing down every word, if you miss something you can revisit the recording on Learn and Media Hopper Replay.

Be specific.

- Before you rewatch the lecture try to recall as much as you can.
- Check your notes and identify sections you missed or need to revise.
- Rewatch specific sections of the lecture related to these problem areas, rather than watching the full recording.
- Revisit the recording within 2-3 days, rather than rewatching immediately after the lecture, or waiting too long.
- Use the recording’s transcript to add detail to your notes, but don't forget to summarise and paraphrase in your own words. Writing your own notes is part of the learning process.

Catch up.

- If you can't attend a lecture for valid reasons, you can watch the whole session on Media Hopper Replay, our lecture recording system.
- You learn more effectively when your learning sessions are spread out, so it's good to keep up-to-date with the lecture content each week.
- There is evidence you won't learn as much if you watch the recording at higher speeds, so watch it at normal speed once and take notes as if you were in the live lecture.
- Once you've watched the recording in full, go back and revisit bits you found difficult.
- This ensures that you will have spent the same amount of "time-on-task" as a student who attended the live lecture.

Ask for help.

- Even with recordings available in Learn, it’s perfectly okay to ask for help if something is not clear.
- Forming a study group to watch lectures with other students can be a great way to learn together.
- Use the recordings as a help resource to check your knowledge when testing yourself.
- By reviewing specific bits of the recordings, you can identify exactly which parts of the lecture you would like more clarity on.
- Pause the recording to look up additional resources - don't just rely on the content in the lecture.

Do not:

- Avoid watching all the recordings in the revision period. Research shows spacing your study helps you learn more effectively over time.
- Unless you missed a lecture, do not rewatch the recording in full. Identifying the bits you need to revisit will actually help you learn more.
- Give recordings your full attention. Multitasking, such as doing household chores or driving, will reduce how much you take in.
- Remember recordings are provided for your personal academic use. Do not share them outside of the University of Edinburgh.

Adapted from Nordmann et al. (2018):

Lecture capture: Practical recommendations for students and lecturers

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