



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Faculty of Human, Social,
and Political Science

HSPS Tripos - Lecture recording policy

The departments of the HSPS tripos (POLIS, Social Anthropology and Sociology) recognise the pedagogical and social benefits of in-person lectures. Lectures provide a unique environment for collective learning and engagement between academics and students. The vitality of this environment, both for students and academics, depends upon regular and healthy levels of attendance. Lectures are not intended to provide content for reproduction in essays, but rather to introduce topics and orient thinking. Attending lectures enables students to form better connections with their wider cohort and to interact with the lecturer. These larger collective forums are a vital complement to the small-scale supervision teaching that is a hallmark of a Cambridge HSPS degree. The schedule of lecture delivery throughout terms sets the appropriate rhythm for engagement with topics across each paper.

Standardised recording of lectures has led to declining attendance, undermining the status of in-person teaching and depriving students of the pedagogical and social benefits of collective lecture hall learning. Repeat viewing of captioned lectures has also led to the misuse of lectures, transforming them from launchpads for further reading and critical reflection to quotable forms of content to be reproduced in exams and essays. Binge-watching of lectures at the end of term undermines their role in setting the rhythm of the paper by sequentially introducing topics. Recording of lectures may also inhibit student participation.

For academics, recording reduces the space for creative and improvisational forms of delivery, turning lectures into a forensically documented record that might plausibly travel well beyond its intended context. This discourages engagement with difficult or controversial political and ethical issues by undermining the space of relative intimacy and trust that lectures rely on. These considerations are particularly important for HSPS, where subjects regularly raise and require critical engagement with controversial and sensitive themes. Effective research-led teaching relies on academics' confidence that intellectual property, particularly unpublished work, is secure. Recorded lectures undermine this confidence.

In light of the benefits of collective in-person teaching, the observed negative effects of standardised lecture recording, and the regularity with which controversial and sensitive issues are discussed within HSPS, lectures will not be recorded as standard. The departments also strongly discourage the recording of seminars and of discussions during lectures, on pedagogical grounds and grounds of academic freedom and security.

Students with relevant access requirements are able to request permission for recording of lectures with support from the Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre (ADRC).

Consent for lecture recordings

By providing a recording of a lecture to the departments, lecturers consent to the use of that recording under the following terms:

Lecturers consent to the making of a recording and to the processing of their personal data collected within the recording (image, voice, opinions, etc.). They understand that, as a member of University staff, the University has a non-exclusive, royalty-free, license to use the recording for teaching in the University for the academic year 2022-23. The material may not be used for any purposes relating to non-registered students, without seeking additional



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consent from the lecturer. Material will be made available only to the cohort of students, or individuals within the cohort, for which the recording has been prepared. Separate consent will be sought for use in other modules/course sections or otherwise.

Lecturers can withdraw or modify this consent at any time.

This consent does not cover any periods of industrial action.

The university lecture recordings policy can be found here:

<https://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/supporting-students/policy-recordings>