

Statement on Captioning of Recorded Content

SUMMARY

Closed captioning is now a requirement as part of the Public Sector Bodies (Website and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations. This came into force in September 2020. Accessibility is about everyone. It is a misconception that accessible practice is just for those with accessibility needs.

Closed captions are generated when recording audio/visual teaching and learning content in Panopto. Captions can be greatly improved if the presenter speaks at a clear- even pace, uses a microphone (where possible) and minimises background noise. Despite this for some subjects closed captions are less than ideal when using Panopto. Panopto uses automatic speech recognition (ASR) technology to generate captions with a stated accuracy of approximately 60-70%.

This statement outlines the university position on the use of captions.

The University is taking a practical and graded approach. It is recognised that teaching and learning material must be compliant and that students may report inaccessible content. At the same time it recognises that this is a new requirement and therefore there needs to be an element of scoping and understanding how best to embed this into everyday pedagogical practice to ensure a high quality outcome for students.

Guiding Principles for Academic Year 2020/21:

- Facilitate the best quality captioning of recorded content and live teaching by taking reasonable steps to achieve the best possible sound quality including reducing background noise and using microphones where practicable.
- We must ensure closed captions are provided for all audio/visual teaching and learning content.
- It is the responsibility of the resource creator to generate and import these captions.
- Students must be informed that closed captions may not be fully accurate. This should be done by including a slide in the presentation and/or guidance on Canvas Module Information pages which clearly states 'The automatic speech recognition generated closed captions may not be fully accurate. Whilst they can supplement your learning, we advise you **not** to rely solely on the captions. If the quality of the closed captions is insufficient to support your learning, please notify the Module Convenor and the University will look into how you can be supported.'
- Students may report inaccessible content and, in these circumstances, reasonable steps must be taken by the module to provide the captions in an accessible format. TEL can provide guidance to staff on how to edit captions in Panopto.
- Consider providing a glossary slide to include technical words and proper nouns if not already written within the presentation/teaching material.

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- Students can be advised that a range of AI auto caption apps are available free of charge e.g. Otter AI and that these may assist their learning.
- Where synchronous teaching is being delivered using Zoom, live transcription which automatically generates closed captions should be enabled.
- The Digitally Enhanced Education Programme (DEEP) – chaired by DPVC Prof. Claire Smith - will initiate a project to scope and evaluate the use of closed captions, working with students and schools to determine future software requirements.