

A2 LEVEL

FACT FILES

Journalism

For first teaching from September 2013

For first AS award in Summer 2014

For first A Level award in Summer 2015

Audio & Video  
Recording Tips

FACT FILE

journalism

*in the Media and Communications Industry (JMC)*

## Audio & Video Recording Tips



### Course Content

#### Video Recording

The most important technical aspects of capturing the subject on video are:

- The camera is well-supported and any movement is controlled
- There is suitable natural or artificial lighting to make the subject visible

Video recording can be carried out on a range of camcorders, phones and small devices such as webcams and flipcams.

Video Camera Type	Guidance on video quality
Hand-held video camcorder	Many low-cost cameras record in High Definition to an internal hard drive or memory card. They are, however, very light and need secured on a tripod. Camera movement other than panning is usually only permissible when using a sturdy tripod on wheels and/or tracks. Lens quality is often variable and exposure settings are automatic.
Shoulder-mount video camera	These are more expensive video cameras with large, though often light-weight bodies which can be rested on the operator's shoulder. This allows the camera to be moved in a controlled manner under flexible conditions to track the subject and move with lighting conditions and composition requirements.
DSLR Camera	Many stills SLR cameras now have HD Video recording capability of higher quality than traditional camcorders. They also allow for a more accurate reading of exposure to accommodate differing lighting conditions. They require the use of tripods for support although they can also be attached to shoulder-mount frames to maintain picture quality under camera movement
Flip Camera / Web Camera / Phones	These are small devices with often basic lenses and fully automatic focussing and exposure used for transmitting video immediately over wifi or mobile networks. They require support using a mini tripod or by attaching to a computer or laptop. Picture quality is usually low but this provides an aesthetic quality which has become associated with the immediacy of citizen journalism footage where video has been taken by those first on the scene or from reporters filing video from remote locations.

## Audio Recording

The most important technical aspects of capturing audio information are

- An appropriate microphone is used for the subject
- The audio quality is free from distortion and does not exceed sound levels
- Background noise is not obtrusive

Audio can be captured on both audio recording devices and as audio tracks on video recording devices.

Audio Recording Device	Guidance on audio quality
Handheld Digital Audio Recorder	<p>These are the most common devices used by journalists capturing audio for broadcast on radio when outside a studio. Print journalists will also use them during interviews instead of note taking.</p> <p>Devices store audio in internal memory or external memory cards. Most devices will have an internal microphone and automatic recording levels. Many have manual recording levels and microphone inputs to ensure a higher recorded audio quality.</p>
In-Camera Audio	<p>Camcorders and DSLR's with built-in microphones and auto recording levels will have a poorer audio quality than externally recorded audio. More expensive devices and shoulder-mount video cameras will have an external mic input and manual recording levels that allow in-camera recording of a comparable quality to digital audios recorders.</p> <p>It is however possible to use both camcorder and a digital audio recorder to record the audio separately. This can then be synchronised during the editing process.</p>
Microphones	<p>The main types of microphone used in journalism are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The handheld dynamic microphone</li> <li>• The clip or Lavalier microphone</li> <li>• The shotgun microphone</li> </ul> <p>A simple hand-held dynamic mic is often used by reporters and is convenient to use in impromptu interviews. They are inexpensive and convenient and can also be badged for the TV or radio station. In video use, however they can be prominent and distracting, as well as less able to exclude background noise.</p> <p>The Lavalier Microphone is very versatile. It is connected wirelessly to the recorder and is usually clipped discretely to the interviewer and interviewee. They can be more expensive and often pick up noise from brushing against clothing.</p> <p>The shotgun microphone is a directional mic capable of high audio quality and reducing background sound. It can be mounted on a boom pole if more than two people are being interviewed, but this requires a second person to hold the boom, and you ensure it is out of shot if being videoed. Alternatively, they can be mounted on a pistol grip and used as a handheld mic. The downside of shotgun mics are that they much more expensive.</p>

