Lecture Capture
Study Advice

How you can use lecture captures as an embedded part of your in-class and private study

Matt Cornock
E-Learning Development Team
University of York

Contents

1. Studying with lecture captures
2. Making the most of your lectures
3. Four ways to use lecture captures
4. From note-taking to note-making

Additional resources, including study workflows, available at www.york.ac.uk/replay/student-advice

Studying with lecture captures

You might have considered how lecture capture can support your revision. But have you thought about the way you can use lecture capture to support your independent study during term time?

Here we consider studying before, during and after lectures.

Before the lecture

Thinking about before you attend a lecture, coming prepared allows you to focus your attention in class on the points that you need to learn and the ideas that mean the most to you.

"I would preview the slides and make a mind map of the whole structure of the lecture"

If you look at the slides in advance, you might find you need to draw upon concepts from the previous lecture. If you're notes are incomplete, popping back to the lecture capture before your next lecture or seminar can get you back on track.

During the lecture

During the lecture itself, you rarely need to copy word for word what the lecturer is saying, however the capture can act as a safety net in case you miss something important.

"when I am watching the lecturer in person, if there is something I have completely missed or there is nothing about it that I understand I will just make a mark on the printed lecture slide and how far we are into the lecture"

As a result, you might find that you become more engaged with the lecture, following the development of ideas and arguments, perhaps even being inspired by what the lecturer is saying to look beyond the lecture content.
it’s less stressful....
you can enjoy it a lot more...

I’m like ‘that is absolutely fascinating’

I’ve actually gone away and
looked at some more papers based on stuff
they talked about in the lecture

All this can help you to consider your understanding during the lecture and make the most of the contact time you have, to ask questions and clarify points.

After the lecture

After the lecture, there are many different ways that lecture captures support your independent study.

if I don’t understand something in the
notes then I re-watch the lecture at that
specific point where it was mentioned

You may just want to play back a specific part of the lecture; link the lecture content to other resources such as text books and journal articles; watch how processes unfold, recap how a formula is derived; or simply refine your scrawly notes.

I looked in the text book,
listened to the lecture
and went back to the text book

listening back it was nice just to be
able to see the process unfold on the
screen as well as listening to them

Lecture captures can help you identify your knowledge gaps throughout the term, taking a structured approach to independent study helping you keep on top of the module content.

I find usually the notes the second
time around are a lot more
condensed and a lot more useful

Use your time effectively

However... Whatever approach you take, work out what really contributes to your learning and allocate your study time appropriately.
Lectures alone rarely provide all you need to know, so watch out for focusing solely on the lecture content. Whilst you might need to learn the facts, you also need to understand where they come from and how to apply them.

If your subject is more conceptual, then don’t forget your reading. That’s where you really start making connections and interpreting the module content through your own understanding.

Making the most of your lectures

Students have told us the best way to use lecture captures is to go to the lecture first. In this section we explore why.

Lecture content

In a lecture, you get a sense of the whole topic at once, a first take that some students find particularly useful as a starting point before going deeper.

\[ \text{it gives you a nice overview, the basic layout and then you can build on that} \]

Some students find revisiting the lecture content, by using their own notes, readings or the lecture recording, can help focus their understanding by condensing their notes into something more useful.

In lectures or when playing the captures, you might try to note down every detail, but be aware you might be focusing on just copying the lecture rather than thinking about what it means. When you go through a lecture a second time you have the opportunity to contextualise it and formulate your own understanding.

\[ \text{notes the second time around are a lot more condensed and a lot more useful rather than the sort of babblings from listening to something the first time} \]

Revisiting lectures throughout the term helps you to identify any knowledge gaps before your assessment. That way, if you find something during revision that you didn't get, you have plenty of time to find out more.

\[ \text{in going back on revision realised very quickly that I hadn’t got everything out of the lectures} \]

The lecture experience

Being in the lecture room there are other things that could help you remember the content, such as the lecturer’s gestures, pointing out things and practical demonstrations.
Part 2. Making the most of your lectures

they’re so interactive with their hands, with their gestures and if they’re pointing at something I’m not going to pick that up on the lecture recording

But being in the room also connects you with the lecturer. One of the main reasons students said they enjoyed going to lectures was being around people who were enthusiastic about their subject.

why wouldn’t I go and listen to someone who is enthusiastic about their job

In class you have the opportunity to discuss the lecture content during the lecture itself, with the lecturer and other students.

you have the opportunity to speak to that lecturer there and then

we are constantly jabbering on about our subject, we do kind of explain things to each other

The role of lectures

Beyond individual lectures, consider how your lectures relate to each other, to the assessment and their role in the programme as a whole. Different subjects will use lectures in different ways, whether to convey factual content, present an argument or as a starting point for further reading.

you do have to put all your knowledge together and somehow make it all fit into one big picture

Try using lecture captures to revisit content to help you make connections and help you judge your understanding, so that you can place the lecture content within the bigger picture.

If you do miss a lecture, you might find it takes you twice as long to work your way through the lecture content using the capture alone.
I find that using only the captures seems to take longer than actually going to the lecture...

I try and go to the lecture because I realise it’s going to save me time in the long run

This is because you are trying to understand everything you can in one go, watching, making notes, following up on bits that you didn't get. This can break the flow of the lecture and you might miss the overall argument.

It's getting that balance of making use of it, but not over relying on it

It's about finding a balance, using captures to help you get more out of your lectures.

Four ways to watch lecture captures

These approaches were provided by students we spoke to during our research. We are not saying any one approach is better than another, and you might find you want to use a combination of approaches depending on the lecture content.

1. Specific concepts

After attending the lecture, you might realise that you didn't quite get a particular concept or idea.

It's worthwhile identifying knowledge and understanding gaps of fundamental and complex concepts early on. Go back to specific parts of the lecture, rewatching explanations. This complements your notes and references from the lecture.

2. Supplementing notes

Read through the notes you made before and during the lecture. Check your understanding against what you were expected to take from the lecture and what you may need to take forward into future sessions, practicals and assessments. Play back the lecture for parts you didn't understand and draw upon other learning resources.
3. Speed-watching

After attending the lecture, you can use the playback speed control to replay the lecture quickly. This is useful for putting your notes in order and recapping the sequence of ideas presented in the lecture.

4. Playing back the whole capture

This is the most time intensive approach, so watch out for spending too much time here. Either a few days after attending the lecture, or during the revision period, play back the whole lecture again. During this create a separate set of notes, including where concepts link across the module, comparing your understanding from your original lecture notes.

Finding what works for you

As one student pointed out, making decisions about how you want to learn, rather than following your fellow students' approaches to studying, can help you work out how best to use your studying time and discover what works for you.

From note-taking to note-making

Regular users of lecture captures described a change in how they took notes in lectures, spending more time listening to the lecturer and being more selective about the key points to make notes on.

I can spend more time paying attention to what lecturers are actually saying and the broader argument

later on you can go back and look at the specific

Instead of writing everything, they’ve started enjoying lectures more, using the captures, where needed, to follow up later.

it’s less stressful because you don’t have that feeling

‘I’ve got to get this down now’ so you can enjoy lectures a lot more

In this section, we look at four ways you can be smarter at making notes.

1. Written notes
You might be used to this approach: writing pages of text and the occasional diagram.

It can sometimes be hard to identify the key points, so use different colours and expand on the facts with questions to follow up later.

*lined paper, pen, pencil usually two felt tips, green and purple...*

*important things are circled in a colour and everything else is in pencil*

You might also collate all your notes into one document for the module, but make sure you use headings and note references to slides and resources for use later.

*I usually go and put all my notes into Google documents*

*I’ve got a massive document for all that module*

2. Annotated slides

*it was very pictorial based...*

*I printed out the lectures*
Slides can be printed out one-to-a-page, with notes areas or even annotated digitally. You might find using the slides a useful approach where there are diagrams in the lecture, supplementing the slide with comments or for making visual indicators where concepts connect.

"it’s easier for me just to write down what I think and then go back to it and draw it on the slide or use the slide pictures"

In PowerPoint you can drag the bottom bar to expand the notes pane to summarise the slide. If you have PDF slides or have saved a PowerPoint file as PDF, you can use Adobe Reader on a laptop or tablet to comment with sticky notes, or highlight text.

3. Mind maps

If you aren’t keen on linear notes, mind maps can be a useful revision aid, linking words together and presenting them in a visual space. You might want to start a mind map before the lecture, representing the structure, key ideas and questions you want to ask.

"mind map of the whole structure of the lecture"

Or, you can use larger mind maps to bring together ideas and make connections.

"I’ll type it all out and then highlight things that link together and put that in a section on a mind map"
You can create a mind map within Google Drive. Go to the New button, then Connect more apps and add the MindMup app.

MindMup starts with a central node you put the lecture title in. You can then add additional nodes using the Enter and Tab keys, or by right-clicking a node. You can export your MindMup as PDFs from the File menu.

4. The Cornell note taking method

You may have used the Cornell method for reading, but it is equally powerful for lectures.
The Cornell method is a structured way to help you engage and understand the lecture content, rather than just memorising facts.

On a piece of paper, draw a vertical line almost to the bottom of the page to separate the page into one third and two-thirds. At the bottom of the page, draw a horizontal line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVE</th>
<th>PASSIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The right side of the page is your Passive note-taking. This is where you capture the content from the lecture, the key points, quotes (in quotation marks), essentially the stuff to remember. Structure this side with headings for each slide or topic, breaking detail down into bullet points, including slide numbers and references as appropriate. Separate topics with some space.

The left side of the page is your Active note-making. Here you record your thoughts on the content, questions you might have, identifying things you don’t understand, your own ideas and interpretations, connections to other lectures and resources, discussions with the lecturer or other students, experiences and reflections relevant to the topic, and any inconsistencies from your understanding to follow up later. The notes you make on this side of the page helps you go deeper into the lecture content.

Use the bottom of the page for a summary. Summarise in your own words the content of the page of notes, or if you prefer, the topic as a whole. Follow up points from the active note-making, and bring together your thinking on the topic. This is the first stage of revising your notes.

You can create this layout in a Google Doc. From the Insert menu create a two-column table. Adjust the column width to split the table into one third and two thirds. Use the right column for your passive note-taking, with a new topic per table row. Use the left column for your active note-making, filling in cells next to lecture content with your thoughts and questions. To create the summary area, highlight two cells on the same row, right click and select merge cells.

The Cornell method also provides a structured way to use these notes for revision. There is further guidance online from a number of institutions, just search for cornell note taking method.
**Summary**

In this section we've looked at four ways to change your note-taking, to note-making: written notes, annotated slides, mind maps and the Cornell method.

Each provides a space to add your understanding, interpretation and questions about the content, encouraging you to spend time with the content and to follow up on the bits you didn't get.

> I’d rather spend a bit more time than just rush through and miss out bits

Combine these approaches with using lecture captures and you can be smarter with your note-taking, and support your out of class note-making.

> I could pause, write my notes, I had my textbook and was adding to my notes

> It was like a lot better, definitely understood it more