



# Application for Certification

## Lesson Recordings

# Overview

This following information is for teachers applying for certification at the Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher career stages but may also be used by teachers at any career stage who wish to use lesson recordings for reflection on practice.

Included is information about:

- **obtaining consent**
- **equipment**
- **video and audio recording tips**
- **how to reduce the size of video files.**

This is general advice only for creating successful lesson recordings. Please be aware that the QCT cannot provide technical support for you as you prepare these. If you require assistance, you should consult your school's IT support team.

## Application for Stage 1 Assessment

The total file size of the Stage 1 application is 2GB and all contents must be zipped into a single file. If you choose to include videos as part of your Stage 1 evidence, there is not a limit on the number, provided the application in its entirety does not exceed 2GB. It is recommended that each video should be no longer than 3 minutes, so it is clear for assessors what information or practice they are to focus on.

## Application for Stage 2 Assessment

Two unedited 35-minute recordings of lessons are required to be uploaded to your myQCT account along with other required documentation outlined in the QCT's [Guidelines: Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers in Queensland](#). Each recording must be no larger than 2GB.



**Before you commence any video recordings of a class you must:**

- ✓ Obtain consent from the school and individuals who will be recorded.
- ✓ Make sure the school equipment and device storage are adequate for the task.

# Obtaining consent

Consent forms can be found on your employing authority's website:



[Department of Education](#)



[Queensland Catholic Education Commission](#)

Consent must be obtained from all individuals (for example volunteers or colleagues), and the parents or legal guardians of all students, who will appear or be heard in any video or audio recordings. Please refer to your employer's consent procedures for more information.

Parents/carers will need to be informed that you may record videos as part of your application submission and/or as part of your ongoing reflection on your professional practice. If a student's parents do not provide consent, please do not attempt to edit or blur videos to de-identify students. Instead, it is recommended that those student(s) are seated out of the camera's range and cannot be identified or heard.

## Equipment

**Please do not use personal devices to photograph or record students.**

The QCT does not recommend or endorse the use of any particular device or brand of equipment; it is recommended to use the best video recording equipment available when making lesson observation recordings. You should investigate what equipment is already available in your school or nearby schools.

It is also recommended that you have a colleague to assist when recording.



### Microphones

It is important that all participants in the recording can be heard clearly, so ensure that the equipment you use has a suitable microphone. If you are filming small student groups and/or circulating around the classroom, a handheld microphone or recording device can be carried to record voices. Most issues in recordings of classroom practice are the teacher and/or students not being heard clearly, so testing audio levels is required to ensure successful recordings.



### Device storage

Before you commence recording, ensure there is sufficient storage capacity on the device for the length and number of recordings you are making. As a general guide, approximately 2GB is required for a 30-minute video, but this depends on resolution and format.



### Storing recordings

You are advised against using cloud-based storage options, as the security of the recordings cannot be guaranteed. Videos should be stored on the device or school network or downloaded directly to your school computer or laptop.

## Familiarisation and practice for you and your students

Until you and your students get used to the experience, recording classroom practice may not present an authentic or realistic view of your practice. You may find you act differently in front of a camera the first few times you are recorded, and students may not behave as usual.

Here are some tips to help you and your students get used to being recorded:

- Practise making recordings so you become familiar with the process. It will also help you and your students to be more relaxed and assist you to present an authentic video of your practice and your students' experiences during your lesson.
- When practising, be conscious of timing, video, and audio quality.
- View your practice videos to reflect on your teaching and use tools such as AITSL's [Classroom Practice Continuum](#) and [Looking at Classroom Practice](#) guide to explore areas for improvement. Through the video, watch what was said, made, done and written and what students said, made, did and wrote as the lesson progressed.
- Record different lessons and various teaching formats, including whole class lessons, and students undertaking group work, both large and small groups. In order to reflect your usual teaching context, these practice recordings should be made during timetabled class times, not during non-contact time or after school.

## Video and audio recording tips

Once you and your students are more familiar with having lessons recorded, you can produce good quality videos that best capture your teaching practice. Your videos do not need to be of professional quality, but it is important the viewer can see and hear everything that is happening during the lesson.

Audio quality is important and can be challenging in classrooms and particularly outdoor settings. If you or your students cannot be heard, it will be difficult for assessors to watch the video and understand what is happening. There are environmental and technical challenges when trying to get the best audio quality, including being outdoors, or in echoing areas.

When more than one person is speaking it is also difficult to hear everything that is being said. For these reasons, always check that the cables, device, and microphone are working before you start, and refer to the following video and audio recording tips:

### Equipment placement

When recording, place the device either on a tripod or stand, in an auto-tracking camera mount or in a vantage point where the camera view takes in all of the students participating in the lesson. Alternatively, ask a colleague to operate the device.

Record several sessions and watch these recordings to become accustomed to how the recording looks and sounds. Notice what students are saying, making, doing, and writing, and reflect on students' learning and how to capture this. Once you have established the ideal placement of the device or the person holding the device, note the placement for future reference.



## Video tips

- Where possible, use a tripod, stand or auto-tracking camera mount so that the recording is steady.
- In general, the camera should be focused on people when they are speaking. When your students are speaking, the camera should capture them so consider the best spot in the room when placing your device.
- If a person is assisting with recording, they may need to follow you, moving from group to group to capture what is happening. However, avoid having the camera follow a conversation back and forth between different people; it is preferable to capture both speakers at once.
- If you are using a tripod or stand, look through the viewfinder before you start recording to make sure that everyone, sitting and standing, is in full view.
- If writing on a whiteboard/smartboard is an important inclusion in your lesson, be sure what is written is captured on the recording and is legible. This may require:
  - refocusing the camera on the board and checking on the camera that the writing is visible
  - moving the camera to reduce the amount of glare on the board
  - using dark markers on the board.
- The amount of light in the room generally improves the quality of video recording but avoid aiming the device towards bright light. Be sure to check and note the combination of internal and external light that provide the best recording.

## Audio tips

- Whenever possible, eliminate noises that may interfere with recording, or if you can, avoid recording when competing with outside noises.
- The location of the microphone is key to capturing quality audio. Remember that the closer the microphone is to the speaker(s), the better the sound recording.

# Editing recordings

The most important attribute of your video is that the viewer can see and hear everything of importance that is happening.

It is important to manage the length of your videos. Any recordings included in a Stage 1 application should not exceed 3 minutes each, and Stage 2 applications require 2 x 35-minute recordings of lessons or lesson segments.

When you upload your recordings to myQCT for Stage 2 assessment, they must be continuous, with no breaks, music, dubbing, subtitles or any other editing, and no more than 2GB in size. To upload recordings as either part of your Stage 1 application or for the Stage 2 virtual site visit, you may need to compress your video files to meet file size requirements. There are a range of tailored video compression tools available.

# Checklist for making quality recordings

## Before you start

- Read the [Guidelines: Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead teachers in Queensland](#).
- Obtain consent from the school, individuals and parents/carers of students who will be recorded. If consent is not provided, ensure students are seated out of the camera's range and cannot be identified.
- Use school, not personal equipment.
- Ask a colleague to help you with your recordings.

## Make sure you have all the necessary equipment

- Recording device
- Memory card for device (if required)
- Optional auto-tracking camera mount
- Tripod, stand or colleague to hold the recording device
- Microphone or other voice projection device (as required)
- Extension cords, charging cables, docks and/or batteries.

## Familiarise, set up and test your equipment

- Read the user guide for your equipment.
- Check the cables, video and microphone are working.
- Check you have appropriate storage available on the device.
- Check the resolution settings of your device.
- Make sure videos are saved onto your school device – **do not use cloud storage**.

## Practise recordings

- Familiarise yourself and your students with video recording by practising.
- Record different lessons and varied teaching formats.
- Look through the viewfinder to make sure that everyone is in full view, and can be heard using the microphone.
- If writing on a whiteboard/smartboard is integral to your lesson, be sure what is written is captured on the recording and is legible.
- Check and note lighting.
- Eliminate/avoid noises that may interfere with recording.
- View your practice videos to reflect on your teaching.

## Check video length and size

- Check your videos and edit their length to meet the QCT requirements.