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The remote studio: Enabling higher quality teaching and learning resource creation in satellite campuses and increasing equity

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Satellite campuses have had varying success with some being in a state of decay (Fraser & Stott, 2015, p. 79). The distribution of resources is often contentious. Learning within these environments can be an underwhelming experience and students complain about unequitable learning experiences compared with their parent campus cousins. These frustrations are compounded with the costs of studying being the same (Fraser & Stott, 2015, p. 81). Another concern is that satellite campuses have a higher percentage of low socio-economic students (Ballantyne as cited in Craft, 2019, p. 1372). This is only going to rise with the Australian government enacting a recommendation from the Bradley review to increase this to 20% (Craft, 2019, p. 1372). Some of the most vulnerable students will be at a greater risk of receiving sub-optimal education. The authors are a part of a small, centralised media production team looking to reduce such risks by utilising their area of expertise. Distance posed a challenge in providing equitable services to one satellite campus at their institution. Academics did not see the value of driving an hour each way to record content that could sometimes take 5 minutes. Initial video production DIY setups were implemented but had low adoption, poor quality and were plagued with technical issues. In response a remote studio was proposed and funding became available to turn this concept into a reality.

In the design of this studio, an important emphasis was placed on creating an equitable experience for academics who would use the space. This studio was required to have all the features of the central campus studio. It needed to be highly configurable so that a variety of recording options could be possible. This included recording pieces to camera with curtains or virtual backgrounds, teleprompter support, interview format, slide presentations with picture in picture and touch screen stylus functionality. This would enable the creation of best practice multimedia informed by key researchers such as Richard Mayer (2012) which had already been proven in the central studio. Other areas of research that informed the design included educator presence (Swan, Garrison, & Richardson, 2009), visibility (Pi et al, 2020), delivery techniques and duration (Guo, Kim, & Rubin, 2014).
A point of difference for this studio was that it needed to be fully remotely operated. This objective proved to be the most challenging aspect which required a large amount of research, liaising with suppliers, contractors, and IT. These challenges were ultimately overcome, and a highly functional remote studio was established.

After the successful launch and trial of this studio, a similar remote studio was constructed at another satellite campus. These studios have recorded approximately 500 videos across dozens of courses and have provided enhanced learning opportunities for many students. Qualitative feedback from teaching staff of the room has been overwhelmingly positive. The remote studio project was an ambitious and unprecedented undertaking. This experience can be used by other institutions as a blueprint when negotiating the same types of equability issues across multiple campuses.
Keywords: Remote educational video production, satellite campuses

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