

Video Guide: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Videos show off brands and drive home key messages

Video is important in how the University presents itself to a local and global audience. For prospective students, a video can form their first impression of the University, our courses, college life, amenities, programmes and initiatives. Every video we share is building our brand - at university level, faculty level and school level.

As well as using video to tell prospective students about why they should study at DCU, we use video content to showcase the outstanding work that takes place across our three academic campuses and to widen the publicity for our research. Video is a powerful tool to deliver key messages and share great stories. We also know from our social media promotional activity across the faculty that video content outperforms static images.

As the saying goes, you never get a second chance to make a first impression. So with any video we share across DCU platforms, we need to ensure good quality content. This doesn't mean we can't produce videos internally, but it does mean we need every video to be well planned with decent quality visuals, sound, lighting, background and so on.

At university level, any video production is expected to be of a certain standard if it is to appear on the DCU website or DCU social media platforms, and to adhere to brand guidelines. This is to ensure that the University is represented at a consistent standard visually and in its messaging.

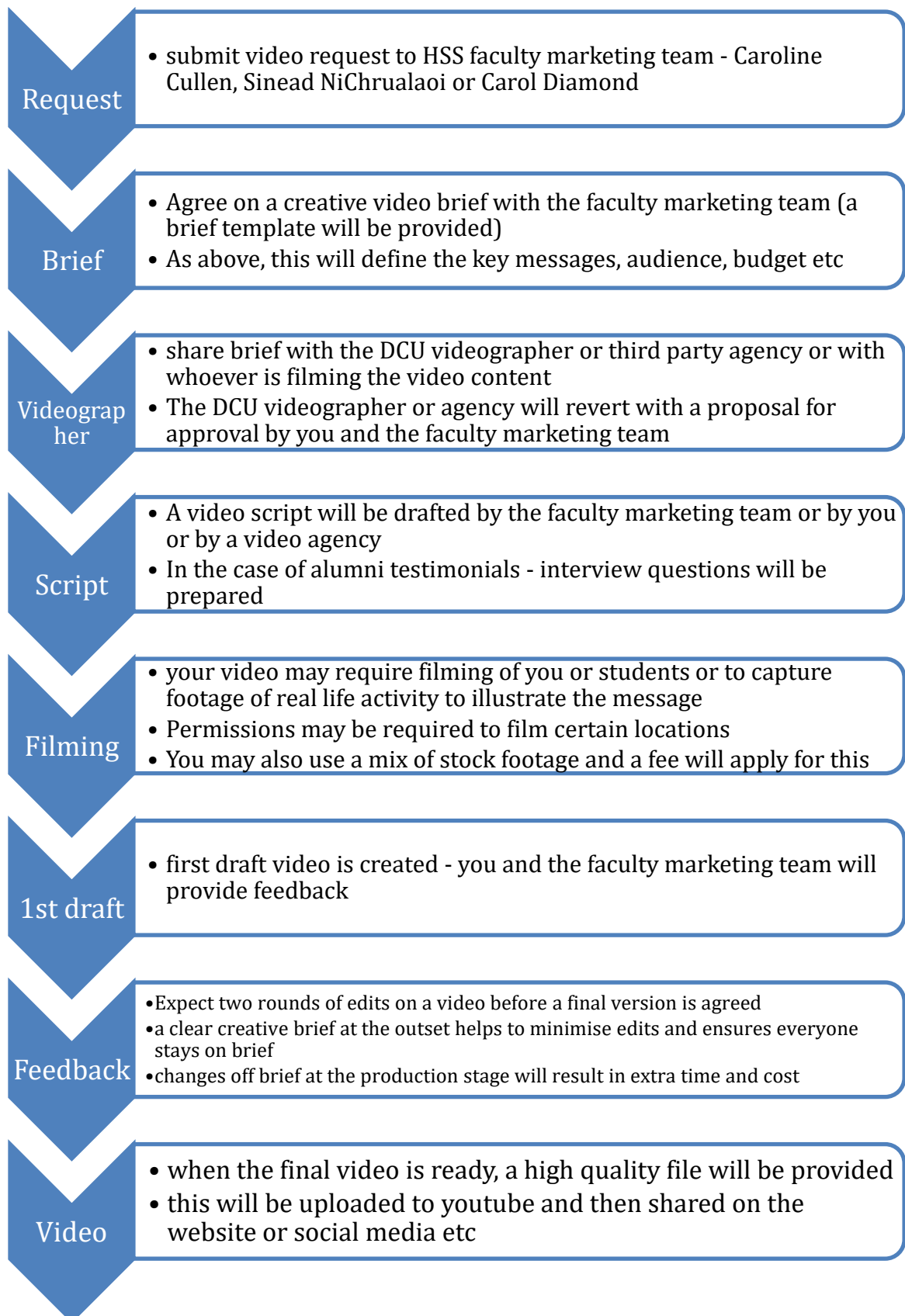
How should I start the video production process?

The process begins when you submit a request to the Faculty Marketing team to start on a creative brief for your video. Your video may be about featuring alumni testimonials or to explain about a course or to launch a research project. The creative video brief is a planning document that you work on in collaboration with the faculty marketing team to define the scope and key aspects of your video.

Creative video brief components

- Key messages and call to action
- Target audience and channels to reach them
- Budget – this can determine if the video will be internally produced or by a third party
- Visuals required - filmed or stock footage, location permissions
- Timing and deadlines
- Branding for inclusion - eg DCU logos, funder logos
- Any other mandatories for the video

Video production process



How long does the video production process take?

The video production process for course videos can take a **minimum of 6 to 8 weeks** end to end, assuming there are no delays on the way. It averages one week for each stage of the process. Early planning is advised so that you have your video for when you need it and can afford to allow some contingency time for any delays or bumps on the way.

Factors that can hold up production:

- Availability or capacity of the video team (programme chair, faculty marketing team, videographer)
- Availability of those being filmed such as students or alumni
- Changing the creative brief after the production process has started typically adds time and money
- Bad weather can impact on location filming eg filming fieldwork
- Lack of access to on campus or external locations if not booked in advance or permission is not granted

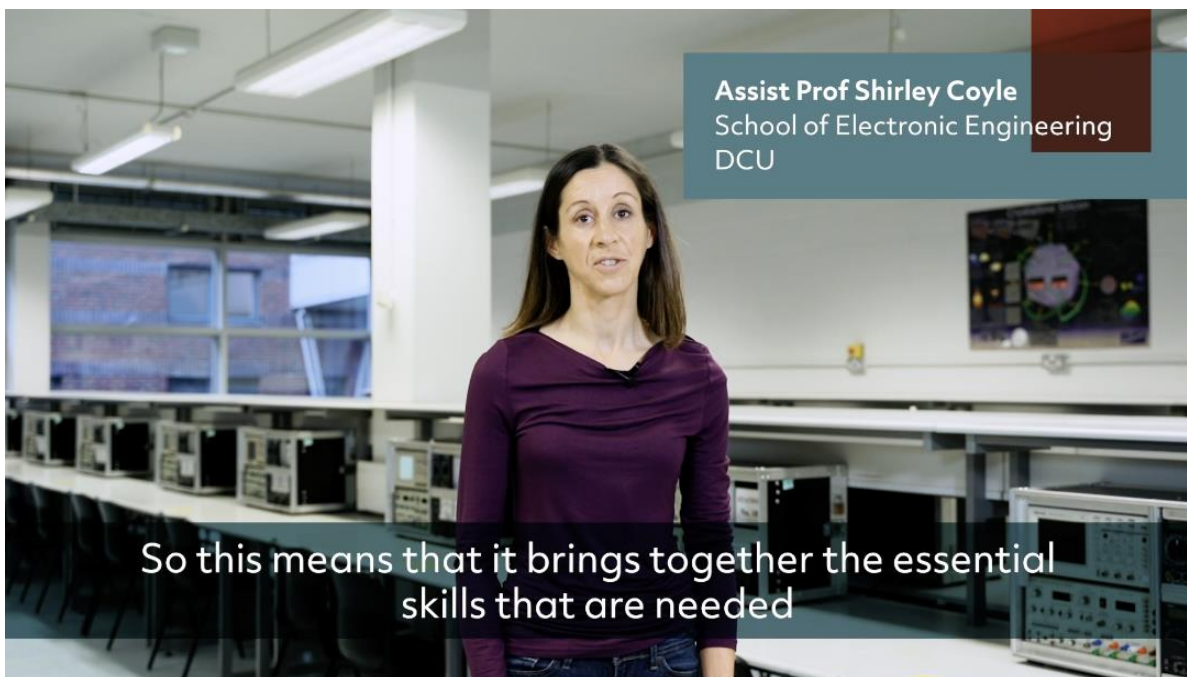
Branding for university videos

Videos that will appear on the DCU website such as the online prospectus, must carry the DCU branding. What does this mean? DCU video branding consists mainly of an opening and closing stinger, or 'top and tail', which appears at the start and end of a video such as a course video. You can see screen shots here to illustrate the moving blocks that reveal the DCU logo. The closing stinger/tail will often have a call to action, directing viewers to a website or an action. In the body of a video we use 'name cards' on screen to give the speaker details (see screenshots below).



We also use subtitles with a transparent background coloured bar, to help the text stand out and make it easier for viewers. To accommodate subtitles, branding and name cards move to an upper corner so they don't interfere on screen. We try to avoid having large amounts of text/lists on screen for promotional videos and make them as visual as possible. Also with so many of our audiences watching videos online, subtitles are important because many people view videos without using sound on their mobile phones.

Examples of name cards with speaker details and the use of subtitles:



Casting:

It is up to you as the client to suggest suitable candidates to participate in testimonial videos. The faculty marketing team or DCU videographer will meet/chat with the candidate to gain an insight into their academic and extracurricular activities and personality in order to create a

proposal for you, the client, before filming content. Casting can include current or recently graduated students. Candidates will also need to complete a consent form to give permission to film them and to inform them that their video may be used by DCU for up to 5 years.

Proposal:

A narrative will be created that relates to the particular student's personality and relationship with DCU and a shot list will be created. The outline is presented to you as the client and feedback is given as necessary. Once feedback is captured, a plan is agreed upon that is manageable for lead-in time before production and that aligns with the vision of both client and videographer.

Filming locations

- As the client, you will agree locations and dates/times for filming with the videographer (DCU or agency) and the faculty marketing team.
- It's a good idea to take photos of the area where you want to film so the videographer can consider any potential obstructions that could occur during filming. It is not advisable to turn up at a location without checking it out in advance.
- With external locations – it's important that you ensure you secure the necessary permissions for the videographer to film there and to secure enough time. For city centre locations, permissions can be sought from the Office of Public Works or Dublin City Council. Again – early planning is important here to allow time to receive the permission. Permissions typically require at least 2 weeks' notice. Where fees are mentioned, this should not apply to your video as it is not for commercial use.

Post-Production

Once filming is complete the video will be edited according to the agreed brief. Here is a rough outline of the process that follows:

- Audio and video are synced.
- Once a sequence is created and exported, a draft is sent to the client.
- Most video quotes only allow for 2 rounds of feedback. Note that additional rounds of feedback will slow down the delivery process and may mean additional costs on top of the original quote.
- If the client is happy with the draft, it will then be colour corrected and titles/ calls to action are added.
- The final video file can be uploaded to its final destination. In DCU we typically upload our videos to YouTube and from there we can embed or share videos on the DCU website. You may also wish to upload video files directly to social media channels or you can share the link to YouTube.
- Before your video can go up on YouTube, the faculty marketing team will complete a YouTube SEO form to optimise the video for keywords, tags and description.

The “Do’s and Don’ts” when it comes to video production

Practical tips if you plan to create a video internally

The Do’s

Do collaborate

Do collaborate and ask for feedback especially if you are unfamiliar with the production process. If you are a seasoned pro, we still recommend collaboration with the faculty marketing team to ensure your video is a good standard and quality and to ensure buy-in to help you promote your great content. Collaboration will also help you to identify other potential uses for your video now and into the future, that you may not think of on your own.

Do keep it short and sweet

Concise messaging is key because audience attention spans are dwindling every day, particularly among younger people. Most users are accessing videos on mobile phones while they’re on the fly which means every second counts to grab their attention before they move on to the next thing. Shorter videos are much more likely to be viewed especially when shared on social media.

Do plan

Do plan early to ensure you have enough time to achieve the video you want and to ensure your plan fits in with other schedules whether it is with the DCU videographer or a third party. Plan the shots and if necessary, do a location recce. The more you plan, the better the video. (The faculty marketing team will help you with this.)

Do bring ideas

You may have specific thoughts and ideas about what you want to capture in your video. To that end, you may find it useful to search for examples of video footage, imagery, or background music in advance on the DCU library subscriptions. You will not be able to download it directly but send the links to your faculty marketing team and they can organise this for you. A small licence fee will apply. (See links to libraries below).

Do film in landscape

Record your video in landscape orientation (1920x1080, 16:9) NOT portrait. This means you can crop and format your image for most social media platforms such as facebook and twitter. (There are some exceptions including SnapChat, TikTok or Instagram TV/Reels which prefer video filmed portrait from a phone at 1080x1920, or 9:16 format)

Do shoot wider on the day

It’s best to shoot slightly wider so you then have the option of cropping in when editing. You don’t get the chance to crop out if you’ve shot too tightly on the day. This also gives you the chance to crop in and give an alternative view if you do not have an alternative angle or much

b-roll to layer over your video. See examples below.



This also allows you to leave some space on one side for a lower third/name card to appear on screen:

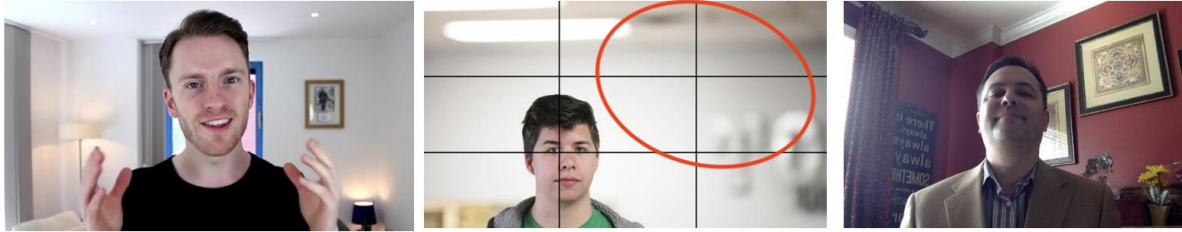


Do rehearse

Rehearse your speech in advance to get familiar with your speaking points and to get used to speaking directly to the camera. We recommend doing a few test-runs to get warmed up and to ensure that your audio and video settings are optimised.

Do position your camera at eye level

It is important to position your camera at **eye level** (not pointing upwards or downwards on your face). Be aware of negative/empty space (in second image below).



Good Framing

- In the centre of the screen
- Looking at the camera, which face level
- In focus
- Clean background

- Good light

Bad Framing

- Stuck in a corner of the frame
- Distracting top light
- Chopped off at the neck

Bad Framing

- Dark room
- Looking down at the camera

The Don'ts

Don't take content from the Internet

Don't take content from the Internet if you are creating a video yourself. As a rule, do not take an image, video, or piece of music from the internet for use in DCU content without the permission of the content owner. This is illegal and can have repercussions for the university. Best practice is to use creative commons content or consult your faculty marketing officer who can assist you in how to use third-party content correctly.

[Here is an explanation of the Creative Commons licenses](#)

Another option is to use stock imagery or footage from one of the DCU library subscriptions below. A small usage fee will apply. Please supply the links to the content you wish to use and forward them to the faculty marketing team to request it for you. Be wary of overuse of stock imagery - it can make a video look generic and de-localise it from the University or Dublin.

DCU Marketing has paid subscriptions to these music, video, and image libraries:

- a music website called [Artlist.io](https://www.artlist.io)
- a video library called videoblocks.com
- an image library www.storyblocks.com/images

We have access to unlimited content from these sites and they can be very helpful in production. However, the libraries will not always have search terms like 'biodiverse reserves in Ireland', so it's best to be realistic and consider how to produce bespoke footage as well.

Don't film shaky visuals

Do not record your video while holding your device, if possible, as this will create a shaky video. Set up your phone or device on something steady before you record, such as a tripod.

Don't have poor sound

If your audience cannot hear your video properly - its bye bye because they'll leave and go elsewhere.

Don't say everything

Let the visuals tell some of the story. If you can show it without having to say it, it makes it more interesting.

Don't show other logos

Avoid non-DCU branding when shooting your video unless it is to represent an agreed DCU partner.

Don't be too restless

Too much panning or cutting between shots can be distracting for your viewer. Try to balance a mix of motion shots with still shots of your speaker.

Don't ignore the basics

Good lighting, sound and storytelling are essential to a good quality video. Even the best equipment in the world cannot make a video better if the set-up is dark or the background is unsuitable or there is too much background noise. The more planning you can put into your shots and scripts, the better the video will be. (If you are working with the DCU videographer or a third-party video agency, they will help with this.)

Note: *Many of the Do's and Don'ts will be looked after when you work in collaboration with the faculty marketing team and/or the DCU videographer or video agency. These tips mostly apply if you plan to create and shoot a video internally yourself.*

Types of Video

Here are some types of video produced in DCU:

1. Course promo (Testimonial)
2. Course promo (Collage)
3. Research Project
4. News
5. Marketing or Promotional Campaign

1. Course promo (Testimonial) – eg Undergraduate Course Testimonial

Duration:

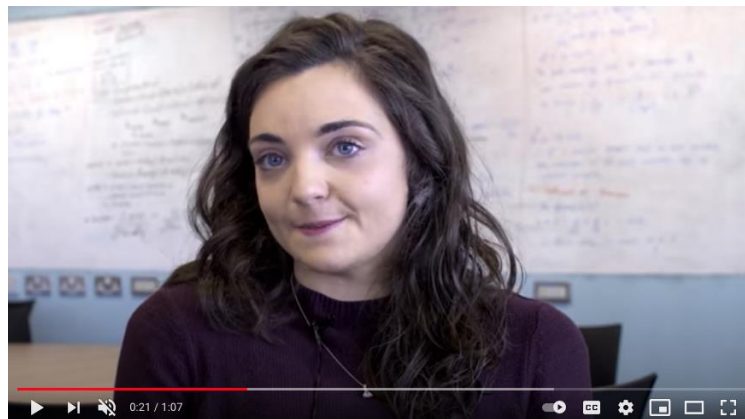
60-90 seconds

Style:

Inspiring/upbeat music, with an emphasis on showing the speaker's experience of DCU. It is important to make sure we have shots that show the academic and social aspects of university life.

Narration:

Video shots with student speaking off camera (not directly addressing the camera), as if in an interview.



B-roll of student at a lab/lecture/library. It is important to think visually. For instance, to illustrate media law – it's more visually engaging to film a class where students are using cameras or setting up an interview than filming students attending class. The classroom shot can form part of the video, but it is literally for a second! Other engaging shots can see students working or walking around campus with friends, attending clubs and society events (e.g. DramaSoc or Judo).



Testimonial video examples:

[BSc Actuarial Maths](#)

[Arts at DCU](#)

2. Research Project video

Duration:

1 - 2 minutes max

Style:

Research conducted at the university by topic or personality. Speakers should be engaging and confident presenting themselves to camera. Macro shots of equipment in use.

Conceptual based videos: For studies that are book/reading based (e.g. Humanities) and that don't translate very well visually, an abstract approach may work better here.

Narration:

Ensure language is as accessible as possible - keep it conversational and explanatory as opposed to academic. This is a spoken communication approach, not written. Simple language is best.

Research video examples:

[Dr Tom Hickey - DCU Spotlight on Research](#)

[Fire Detection with Drones](#)

3. Social Media videos

Duration:

10-30 seconds is preferable.

(There are exceptions when a longer video will work – such as an emotional story).

Style:

Fun or direct message. Or for brand building – more emotional content with good storytelling can really help to build our brand and give people a feeling about DCU. We also use videos on social media to promote open days, initiatives, launches etc.

Examples of videos that performed well on social media:

[Lisa Cusack](#)

[Jonny & Sam](#) (emotional story so slightly longer video)

4. News

Duration:

30-75 seconds

Style:

News stories are more detailed than Social Media stories, so they need a little more time to capture the essence of the story, the outcome and to mention any funders. Typically, news stories can relate to new research findings, new initiatives, or new courses. The soundbites from speakers should answer questions like – why this is new? What difference will it make or who will benefit? Who was involved? How was it funded?

Examples of news stories:

[Girls in STEM](#)

[Dig! - Newgrange Site](#)

5. Marketing or Promo Campaigns

Duration:

30–60 seconds

Style:

The look and feel of marketing campaigns can vary and are often created with an external agency. The goal is to grab attention usually to attract a user to click through to the website for more information or to register for an event.

Examples of marketing campaign videos:

[DCU Fuse](#)

[ABC Forum](#)

Video checklist

Checklist and considerations	Tick
Submit video request to faculty marketing team 6-8 weeks in advance	
Complete Creative Video Brief (key messages, audiences, channels, locations)	
Consider all possible uses for your video. For instance you may want a long and a short edit for sharing on different platforms.	
Consider factors that could date your video and bear in mind that your video could be used to promote a course etc for up to 5 years	
Ensure video includes DCU branding (eg if it is to appear on DCU platforms – website/social media/launches)	
Seek permission to film at external locations (as necessary)	
Identify and invite students/alumni to participate in filming	
Seek permission for on campus locations and ensure availability	
Send photos of new locations to videographer or organise a recce	
Consent forms by students or anyone featured in the video (available from DCU videographer)	
Organise PO's for payment	
If filming yourself, ensure access to equipment – camera, sound, tripod	
Secure logos for any partners or funders that must be included	
Be clear on any approvals required from partners or funders and at what stage they need to be consulted.	