THE INTERVIEW PROCESS
A Guide to Best Practice for Research Projects
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1) INTRODUCTION

This document is aimed at staff and students considering recording interviews as part of their research. While recognising that the term ‘interviewing’ has a range of different meanings across disciplines, this document details common concerns and general best practice standards, noting areas where disciplinary norms diverge and require specific consideration. It describes the various processes involved in interviewing from planning for interview set-up to data collection, editing, transferring, storing, and archiving interview files.

It frames this process in the context of the research lifecycle, which for interviewing purposes outlines the various stages that will need to be addressed:

- Researching
- Recording
- Editing
- Archiving
- Disseminating

At each stage consideration needs to be given to the ethical and legal dimensions, including meeting data protection requirements under GDPR legislation.

As this is designed as a general introductory document we strongly recommend that one seeks out additional help and training tailored to one’s disciplinary methodology. Some options are listed in Section 14: Further help and training.
2) FIRST STEPS
The initial planning process is key to developing a successful interview project. The following sub-sections will outline the initial steps required to address the areas listed above. It is necessary to consider these well in advance of the actual process of recording. A key issue is that of ethics and the ethical approval process in UCD:

2.1 Ethics and ethical approval
All UCD research involving humans must go through the Human Subjects Ethical Review process¹. The UCD Office of Research Ethics includes a listing of the supporting documents² that should be included as part of the application process.

2.1.1 Human subjects ethical review application
The Human Subjects Ethical Review Application Form and process will outline areas to be addressed. These will include:
› Research design and methodology – describe these in clear language.
› Possible ethical concerns - outline methods of addressing these.
› Participants – describe who they are, where they are from and how they will be recruited. Address the level of risk or harm they may face as a result of participation and the steps that will need to be taken to mitigate these.
› Informed consent – ensure that all participants are fully informed about the nature of their involvement in the research and how their agreement to participate will be documented.
› Data protection and confidentiality - outline the procedures in place for handling personal data. For more information see the points to be addressed listed in GDPR Article 13 - Information to be provided where personal data are collected from data subjects.
› Data Management - participants need to know if data are to be anonymised, how data will be stored, if the data will be archived at the end of the study, and if so, how? For more details see sections below, including Section 2.2: Archiving.
› Withdrawing from - for studies offering full anonymity participants should be aware that at some point it will no longer be possible to identify their contribution to remove it from the study. Conversely it will not be possible to

¹ http://www.ucd.ie/researchethics/information_for_researchers/, last accessed 01 May 2020
² http://www.ucd.ie/researchethics/information_for_researchers/application_supporting_docs/, last accessed 01 May 2020
remove a named participant fully from the project if a contribution is made available online. If contributions and names are to be made available online, participants need to be informed, in advance, of any risk associated with online publications as it results in them losing full control over their personal data. In both cases explicit consent is required, which needs to be kept on file and a clearly stated date after which withdrawal will not be possible should be provided to participants.

The Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee, UCD, outlines the application process in a recording available from the Library’s Research Data Management guide. The online application form is available from UCD’s Office of Research Ethics. More information on general legal and ethical considerations can be found on the Library’s Research Data Management guide.

Going through the ethical approval process will help to clarify archiving options for the research project - see Section 2.2: Archiving.

GDPR requirements have created a greater emphasis on the process of gaining and maintaining the right to store and use recordings of people. Where data are held on the basis of consent, participants have the right to withdraw their data without reason at any point i.e. participants can revoke their consent. Where it can be sufficiently justified and documented, it is therefore best to use the exemption outlined in Article 89(1) of GDPR that allows for data to be held for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific, or historical research purposes or statistical purposes, provided that data minimisation principles are followed and the data are not used for any other purpose. More information is available from the Data Protection Commission’s website.

2.1.2 Supporting documentation

In addition to the Ethical Approval Application Form the following documents are required:

Information Sheet for Participants
UCD Ethics requires the following headings for the Information Sheet:

- Introductory statement including: researcher’s name and descriptor (Professor, Dr., Mr., Ms, other); name of researcher’s School; the topic and title of the research.

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3 https://www.ucd.ie/library/researchers/ethicsprocess/, last accessed 01 May 2020
4 http://www.ucd.ie/researchethics/apply/applications/, last accessed 01 May 2020
5 https://libguides.ucd.ie/data/ethics, last accessed 01 May 2020
‘What is this research about?’
‘Why am I doing this research?’
‘Why have they been invited to take part?’
‘How will their data be used?’
‘What will happen if they decide to take part in this research study?’
‘How will their privacy be protected?’
‘What are the benefits of taking part in this research study?’
‘What are the risks of taking part in this research study?’
‘Can they change their mind at any stage and withdraw from the study?’
‘How will they find out what happens with this project?’
Contact details for further information.

The process of seeking informed consent, with examples included, is outlined on UCD’s Office of Research Ethics website.

Under GDPR, gaining informed consent is a two-step process that comprises two agreements:

(i) initial permission to participate in a recording (Participation Agreement) and
(ii) once the interview is completed and reviewed an agreement outlining how the recording may be used and transferring copyright where appropriate (Recording Agreement). These agreements are outlined in more detail below.

Participation Agreement Form
The Participation Agreement Form should be written in plain language and free from jargon. It should:

- Make clear that it is an agreement to only allow for the initial processing and storage of the interview recording and that no other use of the recording will be made until the participant signs the recording agreement.
- Provide clear information about the project and the purpose of the interview.
- Outline how the data collected in the interview and on the participation agreement itself will be stored.
- Provide details of the interview date, participant’s details, and clearly state a withdrawal period if one is required.
- Include space for a signed declaration of permission to participate.

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8 http://www.ucd.ie/researchethics/policies_guidelines/, last accessed 01 May
Recording Agreement Form
The Recording Agreement Form specifically asks permission for a recording to be added to a project archive and agrees for copyright to be assigned to the project. It lists the ways in which the interview might be used e.g.:
› In public performance, lecture or talks.
› In publications, including print; DVDs, CDs, USB keys, etc.; or online.
› For teaching purposes in schools, universities, colleges and other educational environments.
› For research purposes including use in a thesis, dissertation or similar research.
› On radio, television or social media.
› In apps for smartphones / tablets / laptops and computers.
› For public reference purposes in libraries, museums and archives.
› For publication worldwide on the internet.
And it provides the legal basis for the transfer of copyright from the interviewee to the interview project.

It should also contain (where appropriate):
› The participant’s name and contact details.
› The date of the interview.
› Confirmation of the agreed withdrawal date.
› Space for the participant to place any restrictions required on the use of the recording.
› Space for both interviewer and interviewee to sign the form.

2.2 Archiving considerations
Researchers devote a large amount of physical and intellectual effort to collecting, managing, collating and analysing their data before publishing their results. Archiving or sharing this research data facilitates its reuse beyond the context of the original research, and is a key benefit for the wider research community. Sharing research data has a number of other benefits, for example, research integrity and reproducibility, innovation and impact, as well as complying with funder or journal requirements. See the Library’s Research Data Management guide⁹ for more information.

⁹ https://libguides.ucd.ie/data/share, last accessed 01 May 2020
Enabling others to re-use the data needs to be considered from the start of a research project. Careful consideration is required on how research data can be shared, factors that might limit or prohibit data sharing (for example, the permissions received from participants, confidentiality concerns), and whether any steps can be taken to remove such limitations. Sensitive and confidential data can be safeguarded by regulating or restricting access to and use of the data. Access controls should always be proportionate to the kind of data and level of confidentiality involved. The access controls put in place will be guided by those available from the chosen Archive or Repository.

UCD Digital Library may be a suitable option for some cultural heritage projects conducted within UCD. If interested in exploring this option further, please contact Audrey Drohan, UCD Digital Library Manager: digital.library@ucd.ie

For further advice on the archiving of research data please see:

- UCD Library Guide: Sharing Research Data
- UCD Library Guide: Where to Deposit Research Data
- UCD Library Guide: Digitisation Projects

2.3 Documentation and metadata

Researchers should consider what forms of documentation will be needed to generate and support re-use of the data. For example, there should be interview protocol & interviewer instructions, information sheets and a blank copy of the project’s participation and recording agreement forms, details of ethical approval and any methodological reports produced as part of the research project.

Metadata is a form of documentation and is simply ‘data about data’. Metadata is related to the broader contextual information that describes the data, but is usually structured in that it conforms to set standards and can be machine readable.

The quality of the descriptive information (documentation and metadata) regarding the data has a profound impact on their reusability, so the more documentation and metadata provided the better. The chosen Data Repository or Archive may have a metadata template which can supply the required fields to be completed. If not, follow the relevant disciplinary standards, or use a general and widely available, straightforward metadata standard such as Dublin Core. This is comprised of 15 ‘core’ metadata elements

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10 http://libguides.ucd.ie/data/share, last accessed 01 May 2020
11 https://libguides.ucd.ie/data/deposit, last accessed 01 May 2020
12 https://libguides.ucd.ie/digitisation/hosting, last accessed 01 May 2020
13 https://dublincore.org/, last accessed 01 May 2020
which can be used to describe a variety of physical and digital resources. All elements are optional and repeatable: Title, Creator, Date, Description, Rights, Type, Language, Contributor, Relation, Source, Coverage, Subject, Identifier, Format, Publisher.

For further advice on metadata please see:
- UCD Library Guide: Research Data Management Documentation
- UCD Library Guide: Research Data Management Metadata
- UCD Library Guide: Digitisation Projects Metadata

### Descriptive metadata

We recommend that you collect as much “descriptive” metadata as possible as you go along, or straight after the interview while it is still fresh in your mind. (It will be very time-consuming to do this retrospectively).

Descriptive metadata includes common fields such as project title, interviewee, interviewer, description of topic, topics discussed, dates.

To help with the gathering of the descriptive metadata it is useful to bring a form/template that includes the relevant fields.

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### 2.4 Equipment and location

In order to achieve the best possible sound quality in an interview due consideration should be given to the recording equipment and recording location.

#### 2.4.1 Equipment

While smartphones offer the potential to record interviews, they are not suitable for recordings that will be broadcast or archived. Depending on the sensitivity of the interview topic, they also might not offer the required technical security measures. A broadcast quality recorder that records in appropriate file formats should be considered. These are produced by a range of manufacturers at a variety of price points. Some of the most popular include: Zoom; Roland; Tascam; Sony; Marantz.

**Borrowing a recorder**

One H5 Zoom Recorder is available for loan from the Library. This can be used either in the Library’s Recording Quiet Room or taken off-site. There is a small charge for this service (€10 for a half day; €20 for a full day). For more details and online booking please see the Library’s Video and Audio Recording Services guide.
2.4.2 Location
Considering where to conduct an interview is a key part of project planning and is often dependent on the type of interview and the use to be made of the recording. For some projects, participants will feel most at ease in their own homes, for others participants may prefer to be in a safe space where they can speak confidentially without fear of being overheard. For some projects the required audio quality will be a deciding factor.

UCD Library's Research Services’ area has a Recording Quiet Room available and equipped for basic recording purposes. For more details and online booking please see the Library's Video and Audio Recording Services guide.

2.5 Formats
Where long-term preservation of interview recordings is anticipated, it is important to consider the file format used for the initial recording. ‘Preferred’ file formats are those that allow for long-term preservation:

- Audio: The preferred format for audio is WAV (.wav) or BWF. It is best not to use any compressed formats such as MP3 or AIFF.

Check the settings on the recorder to make sure it is set to record in preferred formats, rather than a proprietary format.

- Video: Preferred formats include MPEG-2 (filename extensions include: .mpg, .mpeg, .m2v, .mp2), MPEG-4 H264 (.mp4), Lossless AVI (.avi), QuickTime (.mov).
- All interview transcripts/logs/indexes should be converted to .pdf/A for archiving.

‘Preferred’ file resolutions are those that allow for long-term preservation:

- Audio: 96kHz, 24 bit is the preferred minimum standard.
- Video: Camera dependent [set to highest resolution].

For further advice on preferred file formats please see:

- UCD Library Guide: [File Formats & Standards](http://libguides.ucd.ie/video_audio_recording/audio), last accessed 01 May 2020
- UCD Digital Library: [Preferred Formats for Data](http://libguides.ucd.ie/data/description), last accessed 01 May 2020
2.6 Providing a copy of the interview
Consider whether resources permit offering participants a copy of their interview. If so will this be provided as standard, or on request? How will it be provided (USB, disc, online file transfer) and is this in keeping with any confidentiality agreement reached. Further consideration needs to be given to the mode of transfer and whether this is in line with security and confidentiality considerations, especially if sensitive personal data from interviews are transferred, where the participant needs to remain unidentified. If e.g. an unencrypted USB stick is lost in transit, this constitutes a personal data breach.

3) RESEARCH THEMES AND SUB-THemes
Developing an interview schedule (topics to be covered and questions to be asked) is a vital part of interview preparation. As with any research project a list of key research themes and sub-themes should be developed based on an extensive literature review. These sub-themes will form the basis of the interview questions. See Box 5 for examples of “open-ended” interview questions.
4) BRIEFING INTERVIEWEES
In order to ensure that interviewees are fully informed about the interview process and outcomes, they should be provided with:

- The Information Sheet for Participants
- The Participation Agreement Form – this needs to be signed and returned to the interviewer in advance of the recording
- Confirmation of date, time and location of the interview and your contact details

**How long should an interview last**
Regardless of the length of time scheduled it is often worth thinking about additional time to allow the participant to “wind down” following the interview. This may include going for a coffee/having a cup of tea.

5) EQUIPMENT PREPARATION
Become familiar with setting up and using the equipment in advance of the recording session. In particular, check how to set microphone levels and position mics and recorders to optimise sound quality.
6) THE INTERVIEW SPACE
Regardless of where the interview is held ensure that:
- The room is comfortable.
- The room is away from appliance noises (e.g. a sitting room is better than a kitchen and has the added benefit of soft furnishings that help to reduce sound “echo”).
- There are minimal distractions and interruptions.
- Drinking water is provided for the interviewee.

Reducing noises that may be picked up in a recording
- Keep paper and cups away from the recorder
- Don’t click pens
- If you are working with notes copy onto single sides so you can lay them out to avoid turning pages over.
- Avoid jingling jewellery, such as bracelets or jacket buttons that may bang against the table
- Ensure mobile phones are switched off or set to Airplane mode. This will reduce interference that might wipe out whole sections of the recording. Simply turning phones to silent is not good enough

7) STARTING THE INTERVIEW – BEFORE RECORDING BEGINS
As a preamble to the recording, ensure that the interviewee:
- Broadly understands what the project is about and their contribution to the overall project.
- Is reminded that they have the freedom to withdraw at any time.
- Understands how the recording will be used and that a Recording Agreement will be signed after the interview if the interviewee is happy to sign over their rights to the recording.
- Is alerted with a friendly reminder to avoid referring to other people’s life stories (data protection) and if appropriate a reminder to avoid admitting to any criminal activity (done in a light-hearted but clear way).
- Is advised they can take a break at any point if required.

Indicate that as interviewer, you:
- May take a few notes – unless an experienced interviewer these should be minimal as it is very distracting for participants. It is often more effective to take notes only to remind oneself about follow up questions / things to
check afterwards rather than trying to keep a record of the interview.
- Will “talk with the face” to minimise interruptions.

Talk with the face
This means smiling, nodding, using encouraging body language - the idea is to create a good recording which means keeping the interviewer’s voice off the recorder where possible. Avoid encouraging sounds, such as, ‘ahah’ or ‘mmm’.

Useful phrases
- ‘I might not say too much because we want to hear your voice’
- ‘If I needed to come back to you, would that be OK?’

Set the sound level:
- Ensure that the sound levels are between -12 and -6 decibels - adjust volume and microphone position to achieve this.
- Do a test record and play it back.
- Wear headphones (interviewer only) – this facilitates checking sound quality.

8) STARTING THE INTERVIEW – AFTER RECORDING BEGINS
The interviewer should record a “lead” at the beginning of each recording session to state the following information:
- Project title
- Name(s) of interviewee(s)
- Name(s) of interviewer(s)
- Location of interview
- Date
- A few words regarding the expected content of the interview, for example: “This is Jenna Nolt with the Family Histories project, and I am here interviewing Jane Nolt on March 18, 2016. Jane is going to tell me about her experiences growing up in the rural Midwest in the 1930s.”

NB: do not include the address or date of birth of the individual because of data protection.

A verbal recording of agreement to participate is also important here and it is good practice to have interviewees spell their names at this point on the recording. This ensures that even if the paperwork gets lost/destroyed/separated that verbal consent is recorded and the interviewee details are recorded correctly. It also helps in group interviews to have each person speaking on their own for long enough to make their voice identifiable in later segments.
9) DURING THE INTERVIEW

- If the interviewee uses unfamiliar words or confusing phrases, ask them to explain the meanings if it assists in an understanding of the context. If, however, someone is speaking in dialect it would be more fruitful to take notes of these during the interview and ask about them over a cup of tea afterwards.
- Be wary of asking participants to spell on the tape as we need to be cognisant of potential literacy issues which are easier dealt with off-tape.
- Where useful clarify the location of unfamiliar places, dates etc, which could facilitate the creation of useful functionalities such as geo- and chronolocation in online collections.

Use open questions and open body language to encourage the interviewee to open up

- An 'open question' begins with When, What, How. “What was it like”, “How did that happen”, “What happened then”, “Can you describe xxx for me”.
- Using open body language means showing interest and encouragement by nodding and smiling (but avoiding encouraging sounds), and maintaining eye contact (but don’t stare - use soft focus which means looking at the interviewee’s forehead or between their eyes).

10) AFTER THE INTERVIEW - AT THE END OF RECORDING

- Once the recorder is switched off, reassure the interviewee that their contribution was very valuable.
- If any potentially libellous or sensitive details that they may want to consider removing were identified, raise these issues at this point.
- If they are happy with everything they have said, ask them to sign the Recording Agreement, placing any restrictions on the future use of the recording that have been agreed.
- Remind them of the withdrawal period and make sure they have the necessary contact details.
- Sign two copies of the Recording Agreement and provide a copy to the interviewee and retain the other.
- It is possible that an interviewee may wish to review their contribution before signing over their copyright. Offer to send an audio copy of the interview to the participant and direct them to whom they should contact to discuss any concerns they may have before making a final decision on whether to include their contribution or not. When sending their contribution, remember to secure the interview/data in transit. For example, if using a USB key, encrypt it and send the decryption key via a different channel.
- Respond to the needs of the interviewee; do not rush away at the end of the interview as the interviewee may want to de-brief. Have a cup of tea and return to more mundane topics of discussion, if that seems appropriate.
- If concerned that they have been impacted in a negative way by the interview, remind them of the support numbers supplied in the information leaflet.
- Thank them again!

**11) DATA MANAGEMENT**

Good data management practices are key for long-term preservation and interview reuse. In order to aid preservation it is important to create an access copy of the recording for regular use, keeping a master copy that is accessed as rarely as possible and only by authorised staff.

*Please note:* there are a range of disciplinary norms when dealing with requests to amend, redact or remove sections of an interview. These requests should be dealt with according to those disciplinary norms and may include the deletion of a section entirely; the redaction of a log / transcript / publicly accessible recording while maintaining an archival original or inserting a closure period on a section. If any of these steps require future action, these should be discussed in advance with the repository (in which the recording will be archived) before being implemented and, if agreed, a document clearly outlining these actions should be provided for the repository.
### 11.1 File transfer and storage

Always consider the security of the content recorded. Ideally any portable device that is used to record personal information should be encrypted so that the recorded data are not disclosed to unauthorised individuals, should the device be lost or stolen.

There are several ways to transfer files from a recording device to a computer, depending on the recording device. Most cameras and smartphones come with USB/micro USB cords, which can connect directly to any computer. The files on cameras and smartphones are usually stored on SD cards or micro-SD cards, which can be removed and plugged into some computers directly, or if not, through a card reader.

The UCD account gives access to a number of different file storage and file sharing options. UCD IT Services outline the different file storage and file sharing options according to the sensitivity of the data and level of security required. For example, Novell storage is given the highest security level and so ‘RED’ data may be stored using this platform, while Google Drive has been given an ‘AMBER’ security level meaning that while Google Drive is a very secure platform it is not recommended for ‘RED’ or sensitive data. For more information see IT Services website.

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21 Red data is where protection of the data is required by law or regulatory instrument - disclosure would cause risk to those whose information is disclosed. Amber data refers to data that UCD has an obligation to protect.

22 https://www.ucd.ie/itservices/ourservices/documentsandstorage/options/, last accessed 01 May 2020

HEAnet’s FileSender is a web-based application that allows users to securely and easily send large files to other users. Following receipt of the file it is then available for download for a certain amount of time, and after that time has elapsed automatically deleted. Since 2016 FileSender includes an option to securely encrypt files before sharing or sending them.

Once they are encrypted with a strong password, the information is safe should the files accidentally go missing. It is important that when sending encrypted files, the password is sent separately. For example, if an email is an encrypted file, then send the decryption password using SMS or call the person directly.

For further advice on HEAnet FileSender please see:
- UCD IT Services: HEAnet Filesender

### 11.2 File management

Once a file has been downloaded ensure that it has transferred fully before deleting from the memory card i.e. play the recording through, testing parts at the beginning, middle and end to ensure the downloaded file is not corrupted.

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23 https://www.ucd.ie/itservices/ourservices/email/calendar/collaboration/documentsharing/heanetfilesenderservice/, last accessed 01 May 2020
Make a low resolution user copy or ‘digital surrogate’ of the recording (as described above) e.g. MP3, for active use, allowing the original to be archived.

### 11.3 Naming files and folders

Research data files and folders should be labelled and organised in a systematic and consistent way so that they are easy to find. There is no single recommended way to name files and folders, but consistency is key.

It is generally useful to aim for file and folder names which are concise, but informative – it makes life easier if a file is recognisable without having to open it.

Elements of a filename can include:

- A project acronym
- Content description
- File type information
- Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
- Creator name or initials
- Version number
- Status information, e.g. draft

Recording devices automatically create folders and subfolders for the files as they are created, many of which remain empty. Extract only the folder(s) containing the necessary files, and rename them using the chosen conventions.

The benefit of consistent naming of data files is that it is easier to identify all files connected to one data collection event (e.g. one interview). The files related to one collection event (e.g. audio tape, its transcription and photographs that were taken by the interviewee) can be connected by the file name, for example:

- 20200311_interview2_audio.wav
- 20200311_interview2_trans.txt
- 20200311_interview2_image.jpg

#### Multiple files

Depending on recording equipment, format, and length of the interview, the recording might be automatically broken up into multiple files. This happens to prevent files from being so large that they are difficult to use. If this is the case, follow the convention on naming folders and files in this section.

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24 [https://libguides.ucd.ie/data/organisation](https://libguides.ucd.ie/data/organisation), last accessed 01 May 2020

Folders should eventually contain all files generated by the interview including the audio files, a completed copy of the interview metadata form and a copy of the interview log / transcript. It is important to note that folders should not include copies of the participation / recording agreements as these contain sensitive personal data; these should instead be stored in a secure location in their original hard copy format.

For further advice on file and folder organisation please see:
- UCD Library Guide: [Data Organisation](https://libguides.ucd.ie/data/organisation), last accessed 01 May 2020

### 11.4 Backups

After renaming files, copy them to another storage device, such as an encrypted external hard drive or an institutional server. These backup files are important in case something goes wrong during the editing, upload, or access process. Network storage can be good for storing large files like audio/video recordings because it is local, which means that it is typically quick to upload/download large files to/from.

Backups of research data are essential to ensure that data and related files can be restored in case of loss or damage.

- Make at least three backup copies of the data on at least two different types of storage media.
- Keep storage devices in separate locations with at least one off-site, where appropriate.
- Regularly check whether the backups are functioning properly.

For further advice on file and folder organisation please see:
- UCD IT Services: [Backup Plan](https://www.ucd.ie/itservices/ourservices/security/campaigns/personalbackupplan), last accessed 01 May 2020

### 11.5 File editing and merging

It may be necessary to cut parts of an interview. Recordings may also benefit from minor editing, such as noise correction and trimming the beginning and end, but editing should be kept to a minimum to preserve the integrity of the recording.

With video interviews a title screen, subtitles, and credits may be added. As mentioned in Section 11.3: Naming files and folders, larger files may be automatically divided up by the recording device, in which case they will need to be merged.

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24 https://libguides.ucd.ie/data/organisation, last accessed 01 May 2020

25 https://www.ucd.ie/itservices/ourservices/security/campaigns/personalbackupplan, last accessed 01 May 2020
These tasks can be accomplished in any basic editing program. Popular editing programs include Audacity\(^{26}\) (free and open source audio editor) and InVideo\(^{27}\) (video editor with some free options).

Professional options such as Final Cut Pro X, Camtasia, and Adobe products are also available, but they are expensive and typically have a steep learning curve. They are powerful tools intended for professional grade audio and video creation and editing and are generally unnecessary for basic processing. Due to the cost and complexity, it is not recommended to use these products unless it is a necessity for the project.

12) TRANSCRIPTION AND CONTENT PROCESSING

Depending on the methodology or disciplinary approach, plans for the future use of the interviews may require either a full transcript of the interview or a time-coded interview log / summary / index. There are pros and cons to both approaches so use the approach that best matches the project and resources.

If a transcription or translation is required, use a low resolution digital copy of the interview, not the original. MP3 format is useful for transferring files via email, but be aware of the security of your data.

12.1 General transcription guidelines

Manual transcription is a time-consuming process. To transcribe without using transcription software, plan on it taking six or seven times the length of the interview. For detailed help with formatting see this example\(^{28}\) from Kenyon College. In summary, the basics are:

- Identify the interviewee(s) and interviewer(s) by their full names at the beginning of the interview. If any of this information is not available, use whatever information is available. If someone is not identified, call them Unknown.

\(^{26}\) https://www.audacityteam.org/, last accessed 01 May 2020

\(^{27}\) https://invideo.io/, last accessed 01 May 2020

\(^{28}\) https://digital.kenyon.edu/librarydocs/5/, last accessed 01 May 2020
If the names of multiple people are unknown, call them Unknown 1, Unknown 2, etc.
- After the first identification, identify individuals by initials.
- Do not use quotation marks.
- Do not transcribe “um” or other meaningless filler noises.
- When someone laughs, coughs, or makes a significant hand gesture like pointing, write it as (laughs), (coughs), (waves), etc. These can be integrated into the sentence, and include their own punctuation. If the expression comes at the beginning of the sentence, capitalise it within the parentheses.

12.2 Transcription software
There are essentially three services that transcription software can provide – those that:
- Streamline the process of manual transcription.
- Automate the process of converting spoken word into written text.
- Enhance manual transcriptions by adding new functionalities.

Software for converting spoken word to written text is developing rapidly, and new products are constantly becoming available, but as of yet, there is no perfect solution.

12.3 Interview summary log/index
Full interview transcripts may not be required or desirable in all cases. It is often more beneficial to provide an index or summary log of an interview using key words and important contextual information. This method has a number of practical and ethical benefits:
- It is much less resource heavy as it is much quicker than transcription.
- It increases the findability of search terms (people do not talk in key words).
- It encourages future users to engage with the actual interview recording rather than relying on the transcript alone.
When logging interviews consider the following:

- The log should be time coded in hours, minutes and seconds.
- Short simple sentences are sufficient e.g. ‘He describes’ rather than ‘The interviewee goes on to describe’.
- Be clear as to whom the statement applies - be careful of ‘he’, ‘she’, ‘they’ just after a number of people have been mentioned.
- Always think of the interview log from the perspective of a future user of the archive – the purpose of the log is to assist users in selecting recordings or parts of recordings which may be relevant to them. It should be detailed enough for the user to decide whether or not they will listen to the recording – but not so detailed as to provide a substitute for listening.
- The log should provide a clear statement of what is talked about in the interview, rather than detailing stories or opinions. It should be a guide to what can be found in the interview rather than a paraphrase of what was said.
- Always include any names of people, places, events, dates or organisations mentioned in the interview. In cases where the interviewee has abbreviated, where possible give the full name.

- As a rule of thumb, a reasonably fast typist should try to type the interview log while listening to the interview straight through. People who type more slowly or more quickly will naturally find that this varies, however, stopping and summarising after every sentence is excessive.
- Remember the log should accurately represent what the interviewee has said rather than the logger’s opinions on what has been said.
13) PUBLICISING THE COLLECTION
UCD Library offers support in using freely-available tools that can enhance and help to provide a context to research projects. Examples include:

- **StoryMap JS**[^29] is free and straightforward to use, with a very polished and lovely interface. For example:
  - [A Literary Landscape of Ireland][30]
  - [The Story of Sarah Jane Smith][31]
  - [Deep Maps: West Cork Coastal Cultures][32]
- **Timeline JS**[^33] is another free tool and displays a story through time. For example:
  - [Military Archives 1912 Events][34]
  - [Bord na Móna : Key Milestones][35]
  - [University College Dublin : Timeline (draft)][36]

For further information please see:
- [UCD Library Guide: Show Your Data on a Map][37]

[^29]: https://storymap.knightlab.com/, last accessed 01 May 2020
[^30]: https://s3.amazonaws.com/uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/bf1363f5047e90f28b6c0e64fc945c0/the-literary-landscapes-of-ireland/index.html, last accessed 01 May 2020
[^31]: https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/a0ec7d32c37a2422a5e672bdcdf7ec11/the-story-of-sarah-jane-smith/index.html, last accessed 01 May 2020
[^32]: https://uploads.knightlab.com/storymapjs/27deb338510bab9703daaf26ecc1f8df/lough-hyne/index.html, last accessed 01 May 2020
[^33]: https://timeline.knightlab.com/, last accessed 01 May 2020
[^34]: http://timeline.militaryarchives.ie/1912.html, last accessed 01 May 2020
[^35]: https://www.bordnamona.ie/about/bord-na-mona-story/key-milestones-in-our-history/, last accessed 01 May 2020
[^37]: https://libguides.ucd.ie/gisguide/show_your_data, last accessed 01 May 2020
14) FURTHER HELP AND TRAINING

14.1 Books
UCD Library has a range of books on qualitative research interviewing. Check the Library website for further materials.

14.2 UCD assistance
- Managing research data e.g. files, metadata; also assistance with Data Management Plans that many funders now require:
  - Jenny O'Neill, Data Manager, UCD Library
  - Research Data Management guide
- File transfer and storage:
  - IT Services - Which File Storage should I use guide
- Recording locations:
  - UCD Library's Recording Quiet Room
  - IT Services Media Creation Services

14.3 External training
- Oral History Network of Ireland (OHNI) Training courses include:
  - An introduction to oral history
  - Ethics and oral history
  - Interview skills
  - Archiving oral history
- Social Research Association (SRA) Based in the UK, but with an Irish branch, the SRA runs a wide range of courses and training events

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38 http://library.ucd.ie/iii/encore/search/C__Sresearch%20interviewing%20 qualitative_Orightresutl_U?lang=eng&suite=cobalt, last accessed 01 May 2020
39 https://www.ucd.ie/library/, last accessed 01 May 2020
40 https://libguides.ucd.ie/data, last accessed 15 May 2020
41 https://www.ucd.ie/itservices/ourservices/documentsandstorage/options/, last accessed 15 May 2020
42 https://libguides.ucd.ie/video_audio_recording/audio, last accessed 15 May 2020
43 https://www.ucd.ie/itservices/ourservices/educationaltechnologies/ multimediacocontentdevelopment/mediacreationservice/, last accessed 15 May 2020
44 https://libguides.ucd.ie/video_audio_recording/audio, last accessed 15 May 2020
45 http://www.ucd.ie/gdpr/, last accessed 15 May 2020
47 https://www.oralhistorynetworkireland.ie/, last accessed 15 May 2020
48 https://the-sra.org.uk/, last accessed 15 May 2020