



## Group Discussion Recording Guidelines – 2026

Good-quality recordings mean faster turnaround times and more accurate transcripts. These simple guidelines will help you get the best results from both in-person and online group discussions.

### In-Person Discussions

#### Use dedicated recording equipment

- A dedicated digital recorder or conference microphone will always outperform phones.
- Place the device centrally and unobstructed (watch out for papers, bags... and snacks).

#### Positioning matters

- Use a tripod or stand where possible.
- Keep the recorder close enough to capture all voices clearly.

#### Have a back-up

- Devices fail and batteries die at the worst moments.
- A second recorder can save an entire project.

#### Test before you start

- Always check sound levels and battery life in advance.

#### Set clear ground rules

- Encourage one speaker at a time to avoid over-talking and lost content.

Always remember to ask participants for permission to record.

### Online Discussions

Test audio before starting. Poor Wi-Fi reduces clarity and accuracy.

#### Prepare attendees in advance

- Send a short cheat sheet showing how to test microphones and audio settings.

#### Manage microphones

- Ask participants to mute when not speaking.
- Platforms like Zoom allow hosts to mute all participants centrally.

#### Mind your own noise

- If you're typing or taking notes, mute yourself to avoid drowning out respondents.

#### Have a contingency plan

- Agree at the start what to do if the connection drops (e.g. switching to phone).
- Don't forget to restart recording if this happens.

#### Store recordings securely

- Password-protect files and limit access to authorised users only.



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The right equipment as well as how you conduct the recording, and on what platform, all play a crucial role in obtaining a quality recording.

### Choosing the Right Equipment

- **Digital voice recorder** – portable, affordable and reliable.
- **Microphone arrays** – ideal for larger rooms and multiple speakers.
- **Conference microphones** – designed for group discussions with noise-cancelling features.
- **Smartphones/tablets** – acceptable in emergencies, but not recommended as your only device for important research.

Need advice on equipment? We're happy to help

If you can't hear the speaker clearly, the recording definitely can't.

### Recording Distance Guidelines

- **Small groups** – recorder on the table is usually sufficient.
- **Medium groups** – place centrally or use a tripod.
- **Large groups** – use multiple recorders positioned around the room.
- **Rooms with echo** – move recorders closer to speakers to reduce reflections.

### Platforms & Technology Notes

- **Skype, Google Hangouts** and similar tools usually produce usable audio, though external recording software may improve quality.
- **Microsoft Teams** supports very large meetings and built-in recording.
- **BlueJeans** is well-suited to webinars and large-scale events.
- **Zoom's** focus and speaker isolation tools can help reduce over-talking in large groups.
- Noise-reduction tools such as the **Krisp** can help minimise background sound.

Use a headset for optimal audio capture.



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### Uploading Your Recordings

All files should be uploaded securely via **Global Lounge**:  
<https://mcgowantranscriptions.globallounge.co.uk/login.php>

You can upload via desktop or mobile once files are saved to your device.

See our guide for  
uploading from an  
Android or Apple  
device



**Clear recordings mean faster turnaround and greater accuracy.**

If you have any questions or run into issues, get in touch, we're happy to help.

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