

Evaluating the Use of Audio Smartphone Apps for Higher Education

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Abstract

Students using Audio Apps

Smartphones with audio apps are able to support recording and distribution/sharing of learning conversations more effectively as customisable and have integrated functionality.

The majority of student respondents own an iPhone. However only a small percentage, considered or are using audio apps for learning.

Student Reflections of an Academic using Smartphone for Feedback

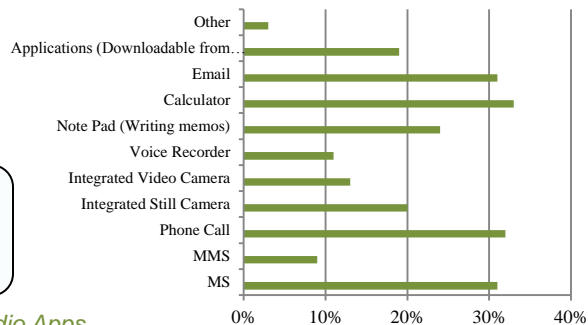
In response, "Is the feedback of good quality?" 80% students agreed or strongly agreed.

In response to the timeliness of the feedback, "Was the feedback provided quickly enough to be useful?", 93% students agreed or strongly agreed










"It is a very interactive way of getting feedback, nice and quick, you can play it again and again"



"It's easier to save audio feedback in a file; whereas a bit of paper - you might file it away and not be able to find it again."



iPhone Audio Apps

Audio app	Usability	Quality	Interoperability	Functionality	File Management	Distribution	Conclusion Application Suitability
 Ilemo	Easy to use:	Indicates the level of sound.	QuickTime/ iTunes/ iPhone.	Record, MMS, and email small files	File naming: Pre-defined labels Produces large m4a files.	Share via email/ MMS, but 5min audio are too large to email.	Quick audio memory notes to oneself.
 Smart Recorder	Fairly easy to use	No sound level indicator.	QuickTime/ RealPlayer/ Media Player/ Other Smartphones	Append to recording. Variety of distribution methods. Add tags and photos along the recording timeline.	Audio: Wav file, Images: JPEGs. Can amend Tags and filenames. Aif file format on the iPhone. Exports as Wav file and JPEGs	Export the finished file via wifi sync, SyncDocs, email, upload to Box.net, Facebook or Twitter account.	Adding a narrative to images, i.e. storyboard for assessment brief, or feedback on a visual medium student submission.
 Audio Boo	Simple to use	No sound level indicator		Record Podcast and broadcast to public via audioboo.fm.	Can upload Podcast to audioboo.fm.	Audioboo fm.	Audio record and broadcast public lectures.
 iSaidWhat?!	Simple, record, and intuitive.	Mic sensitivity. Can share files in low or high quality. 1 min low quality file is 1Mb.	QuickTime/ RealPlayer/ Media Player/ Other Smartphones	Records and append to recordings. Few seconds of audio snippets can be selected and cut from audio files	Large Wav files. Upon saving the user is prompted to name the file.	Files and snippets can be shared by email, wifi sync, Facebook and Twitter accounts.	Sample and share key messages with students, for example assessment brief instructions. or Key generic feedback. Also for students to record lectures.
 AudioMemos Free	Easy to use and intuitive	Mic sensitivity. Highest quality 1min is 3MB.	QuickTime/ RealPlayer/ Media Player/ Other Smartphones	Can add bookmarks whilst making a recording. Can overwrite audio files or append recording to file	Auto Name for file is default as date and time, just need to append subject. Large Wav file.	Send via email or to a server cloud.	Audio record student questions and answers whenever they occur in tutorial or lecture. Share via server with students..
 iProRecorder	Tactile controls mimic's iPod controls.	Can vary the quality of file. ½ hr low quality audio is 38 Mb.	QuickTime/ RealPlayer/ Media Player/ Other Smartphones	Can easily add book marks.	Name files. Large Wav file.	Share via email, wifi sync. Can only share short files.	Ideal app for students to record entire lecture.
 Audio Notes	Recorder intuitive, but settings not.	Can vary quality f1min files is 520kb	iPhone 4 or iPhone with OS 4. Format CAF requires on PC/Mac to use QuickTime. Will not play on Android Phone.	Can append written notes and information to file.. The recordings are geo-tagged. You can password protect files.	It supports file naming. Colour coding helps you to organize the recordings. Uses m4a or CAF file format.	Files can only be accessed and transferred from the iPhone via connecting to PC or Mac using iPhone explorer	Recording narratives especially where it is useful to identify locations. E.g. Industry tour of campus.
 Recorder Pro	Easy to use, and record.	Audio quality 8KHz, 22kHz, or 44.1kHz. ½ hr low quality AIFF file can be emailed.	Playable on QuickTime and RealPlayer 8 Plus. iPhone 3 and 4. Will not play on all Android Phones.	Append to recording new recording. Rewrite file and bin file.	Good file management features, i.e. name /rename files and folders possible to name and rename files. Audio format Aiff or CAF.	Share by Email, fully integrated to email set up in the phone and users contact details.	Audio record project supervision formal, informal and semi-formal, email to the student.
 VR+	Easy to use.	Audio quality 32kbps, 64kbps, 128kbps, or 192kbps, small file size.	Playable on QuickTime, RealPlayer and Media Player. In principle most Phones and MP3 players.	Auto voice activation facility.	Files can be categories by icon, but limited in number of icons provided. Audio format MP3.	File can be shared by email, Facebook, twitter, MySpace and podcast using the VR+ Online service.	Ideal for academic to podcast reflection of sample of class assessment 24hrs after assessment submission.