

Quick Guide to AV equipment in NUI, Galway

I've been told that I'm teaching in a particular lecture theatre. How do I know what equipment is available in that location?

Check the listing on CELT website (www.nuigalway.ie). All the main lecture theatres have a central data/video projector that can be used with a laptop to show PowerPoint slides, etc. Most theatres also have a DVD/VHS player located at the front, either in an equipment cabinet or in the lectern itself. This is connected to the data/video projector.

In some of the theatres the DVD/VHS player is located in the projection room at the back of the theatre, but over the next few weeks all of these will be moved to the front. This is part of our ongoing upgrade programme – please check the website for the latest information.

Other equipment in most theatres include 35mm slide projectors (in projection rooms), overhead projectors, lectern microphones, radio microphones (to enable you to wander from the lectern! These are stored, for security purposes (they cost a few hundred Euros each), in the projection rooms).

You mention the Projection rooms at the back of the theatres; how do I get access to these?

Historically, this was done by borrowing the key from the Porters' desk in the middle of the Concourse, or at the side door in the Arts Millennium Building. This system will continue for the first two weeks of this semester, but considerable expense and effort has been used to replace this with a more efficient and less frustrating system using individual “swipe cards”. Buildings Office and Security staff are completing the installation of these new devices and CELT will be issuing all teaching staff with their own individual swipe cards. Please see email announcements and the CELT website for further details of this scheme in the coming week or so. We apologise for this not being implemented in time for the start of the semester but it represents a major step forward and we are pleased that it could have been done so quickly after our request.

How do I actually operate the data/video projector if I've never done it before?

This is actually fairly straightforward. The only tricky part is finding the control panel at the front of the theatre which allows you to switch on the projector. If the theatre is new to you, visit it in advance to make sure you can find these controls or so that you have enough time to find out from AV staff or colleagues. There is usually a switch marked “Projector On” which should be pressed first. Then you can select the “source”. There are switches usually marked as “computer”, “video/VHS”. All theatres now have a combined DVD/VHS player. This is a single box usually at the front of the theatre or in the lectern. You can operate this by pressing the controls on the machine itself and should have no need for a remote control. For the few remaining theatres where the player is still in the projection room (check the list on the website), you can control the machine from the front of the theatre, via the additional control panel.

When you have finished, please remember to turn off the projector.

Can I use a laptop or is there a PC in the theatre?

Again, we are completing the installation of PCs in all the major lecture theatres. These PCs are connected to the university network and you can use your normal Novell login to access the network and network drives. The machines have Microsoft Office and Internet Explorer installed on them. They also have “USB ports” which will enable you to use your little “flash memory” device if you have one! In these theatres, and the ones in which there is no PC as of yet, you can use a laptop and you will find the connection lead for the projector on the main lectern.

When using a laptop with a data projector, please remember that a common difficulty people face is the laptop display not appearing on the projector screen. When this happens it usually is to do with your laptop settings and you will need to change these. This is easy to do. Find the function key on your laptop which has a little icon depicting a screen (usually a rectangle with a smaller one inside it). Often, but not always, this is the F10 button. Press the Fn key and this button at the same time and wait! This is the important bit – often nothing happens straight away and people panic. Remain calm, there is always a delay built in. Wait a few seconds and see if the display appears. If not, repeat the key presses. Laptops cycle through a range of display modes (laptop display on and projector display off; laptop display on and projector display on; laptop display off and projector display on) and you might have to step through these options, waiting a few seconds in each case.

Can I change the volume/audio levels of the microphones or DVD/VHS player?

No. It is important that you do not adjust these. They have been set at an appropriate level in each venue which avoids feedback and other problems. Sometimes this is not obvious to the lecturer standing at the front of the theatre, because the speakers point towards the back. This means it sounds quieter at the lectern than it does to the students. Some of the theatres, especially the O'Flaherty, have very high quality sound systems and the volume, stereo and other levels have been carefully pre-tuned.

I have been allocated a room (rather than a theatre) that does not have any equipment and I really need a data projector/VHS player/TV monitor/slide projector/etc. How do I get one?

CELT has a central equipment pool that all staff can borrow equipment from. To do this you must send an email to audiovisual@nuigalway.ie indicating the equipment you require, the time, date and location. Bookings should be made more than 3 working days in advance. The equipment will then be available for you to collect in the AV Equipment Pool on the ground (ie bottom) floor of the Concourse (phone us for directions, or ask a colleague). You should return the equipment promptly in order not to inconvenience colleagues.

We also have store rooms located around the campus in which TV monitors and video players are stored and we will inform you of the details in appropriate cases.

If something goes wrong during a class, can I get immediate technical assistance?

Unfortunately, CELT's AV staffing is rather limited (although improving) so we cannot offer such a service, but we will act promptly and as effectively as we can to any given situation. We understand that it can be a stressful situation for a lecturer to be in when something stops working in a room full of students. We would always advise any lecturer to have a “Plan B” to cope with the *nightmare scenario* should it arise. That said, a call to 2173 might result in a

simple and speedy response. Our AV attendant and part-time assistants will help as much as they can (if a technician is not available), but remember that they are not technicians and may not be able to solve major technical failures, although these cases are extremely rare since most of our equipment is relatively new.

If I've noticed that a piece of equipment doesn't seem to be functioning properly, what should I do?

Please report the fault as quickly as you possibly can by emailing audiovisual@nuigalway.ie and/or phoning 2173 or 2787(P. Monaghan). It is vital that you do so. ***Please do not attempt to repair or reconfigure any AV equipment at all!*** This needs to be stressed because we have had cases in the past where substantial damage has been done through well-intentioned, but nevertheless “unprofessional” repairs or attempts to reconfigure connections.