# Introduction

Video recording is a powerful, research-backed tool that supports deep reflection, professional growth, and effective feedback for teacher candidates. Unlike memory or written reflections, video captures the complexity of teaching as it happens—allowing candidates to revisit, analyze, and improve their practice in real, actionable ways. DESE recommends the use of videos in coursework or practicum to be used for reflection and improvement.

When considering using of video observations for CAP, sponsoring organizations should carefully consider whether this type of observations is the best way to consistently capture the evidence required for such a high-stakes observation.

## Key Benefits of Using Video in Educator Preparation

**1. Promotes Reflective Practice**  
 Watching themselves teach helps candidates move beyond surface-level observations to deeper insights about instructional choices, student engagement, and classroom dynamics.

*“Video-based reflection helps preservice teachers notice critical moments and examine their own teaching with more nuance”* (Sherin & van Es, 2005).

**2. Enhances Feedback and Coaching**  
 Video provides a shared reference point for mentors and supervisors, leading to clearer, more specific, and actionable feedback (Gaudin & Chaliès, 2015).

Practical Applications in Teacher Preparation

* **Self-recorded lessons** for reflection journals
* **Peer video study groups** to normalize feedback
* **Video clips shared with field supervisors** for goal setting and growth tracking

## Virtual Observations for CAP

Some programs may choose to apply to DESE for approval to conduct virtual observations as part of the Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP). (See the [CAP Guidelines](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/cap/cap-guidelines.pdf) for more information on this application process.) According to the [Candidate Record Retentio](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/retention-advisory.docx)n Advisory, any virtual observation used for Formal Review must be recorded. While video can be a powerful tool to support candidate reflection and growth, sponsoring organizations should carefully consider whether virtual observations—especially in the high-stakes context of CAP—are sufficient to meet candidates’ developmental and evaluative needs.

Virtual observations conducted through platforms like Zoom often fail to capture the full complexity of classroom teaching. Critical aspects such as student engagement, classroom climate, body language, and peer interactions are frequently missed or distorted through limited screen views and inconsistent audio or video quality. These constraints can hinder an observer’s ability to accurately assess a candidate’s instructional effectiveness. In contrast, in-person observations provide a more holistic, immersive perspective, allowing observers to fully experience the learning environment. For this reason, in-person observation remains the most reliable and comprehensive method for evaluating teacher candidates in CAP.

## Selected References

* Sherin, M.G., & van Es, E.A. (2005). Using video to support teachers’ ability to notice classroom interactions. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education, 13*(3), 475–491.
* Gaudin, C., & Chaliès, S. (2015). Video viewing in teacher education and professional development: A literature review. *Educational Research Review, 16*, 41–67.