<https://h5p.org/h5p/embed/100161>

Enter your "Students" response:   
Students can record audio: - on their phone, laptop or chromebook - on a borrowed laptop at the college - iPads are available in media services, also likely audio recorders Free software such as audacity could be used to edit (if needed). College laptops may have audio recording/editing software as well. Technology should be no cost and available to all students. If bandwidth issues present, students could use the wifi at the college.

Enter your "Ease of Use" response   
Audio recording is fairly easy to use. There are a few OER about how to podcast, which could be given as reference. There are a wide variety of tools, so no one provider is needed/necessary. No specific tech support available, but lots of information and how-tos on the web, freely accessible.

Enter your "Cost" response   
No need to develop anything other than tutorials and support for students. Lots of OER content available to reuse for student information. Liberated Learners "Podcasting" chapter can be assigned for student reference.

Your Teaching and Pedagogical Considerations response:   
The writing/research process currently used in class (formative assessments that build to a 5 paragraph essay) translates very well from "essay" as an output to "podcast" as an alternate choice. The 5 paragraph essay outline maps perfectly, even to pre-existing podcast outlines found online. Just a few words need to be changed. The main difference would be that students now have the option to produce an Essay OR a podcast (scripted) that can demonstrate the learning outcomes around academic research, thesis statements, writing style, and supporting information with citation/resources to credible sources.

Your "Interaction" response:   
Students preparing a podcast will still need to write a draft script (aligns with essay draft). The research project consultation will allow me to interact with students on the same level for both assignments - we can check in at the draft stage to determine if the podcast is being developed properly, and that students are aware of how to translate essay type skills (writing transitions, narrative citations/signal phrases etc) into their verbal delivery. Yes, I think this will provide a good balance.

Your "Organisational Issues" response:   
Our Centre ofr Teaching & Learning provides lots of training around new tech tools. I can check in with them around audio recordings/podcasts, though I haven't seen this specifically in their offerings lately. There's no need for release time to develop this. The technology is simple enough, and widely available. It's more a matter of getting my mind (and the student's minds) around the idea of meeting those learning outcomes via a new tool, rather than sticking with the traditional written essay.

Your "Networking" response:   
Yes! Creating a podcast will allow students to experiment with how they present academic research in different formats. They should be able to apply their learning to presentations and video assignments, as well as other academic work. The skills are completely transferable, and the podcast option should make the research assignment more palatable to those who think "how am I ever going to use this" about an essay. Really, you could share a podcast on social media if you wanted to. Not sure that students would do that for this assignment, but in general, yes.

Your Security and Privacy response:   
There should not be any breach of privacy or data concerns, since students can prepare the assignment using very basic tech tools. In terms of editing the audio clips... I could even ask for Audacity to be installed as part of the student computer image. This would mean the software was locally installed, and shouldn't require any extra logins or set up for the students, which would protect their privacy and data.