



1 We use these dials to control the amount of **gain** being received by the interface from the cassette deck. If our gain is too high then the sound is clipped, which means the waveform gets cut off at the top and bottom. This will result in the inaccurate capture of data from the tape.

In some cases the sound on the tape may have been clipped when it was recorded. For example this can happen if the speaker talks loudly and is too close to the microphone. When this happens you will not be able to correct the creators mistake during the digitization phase, but can apply de-clipping software post digitization.

Playing back a portion of your tape prior to digitization will allow you to determine what the sound levels are on the tape. If the sound is very loud and is near clipping then you will want to set your gain dial on your interface to 1/4 or less. If the sound is very quiet then the gain on the interface can be set higher. Do keep in mind if you raise the gain to compensate for quiet sound you also increase the background noise.

2 **Inputs** are used with cables that take the sound from your cassette deck into your interface. Be sure if purchasing equipment that you buy the cables that will fit your interface and cassette deck. The cables included in the kits from the First Peoples' Cultural Council are RCA to TS cables. Most cassette decks will require RCA on one end. The Focusrite will accept XLR and TS/TRS. Some interfaces may on accept TS/TRS

3 **Line/Instrument Level Switch.** This switch will alter gain and input impedance to suit either instrument or line level signals. 'INST' illuminates red when Instrument mode is selected. During digitization this switch should be OFF.

4 **AIR Switch.** This switch modifies the frequency response of the input stage to model the classic, transformer-based Focusrite ISA microphone preamps. 'AIR' illuminates yellow when the mode is selected. During digitization this switch should be OFF.

5

**Direct Monitor.** This switch determines how input sources are to be monitored: OFF, MONO and STEREO. When set to OFF, monitoring of sound from the cassette deck is done via the DAW. MONO (the open circle symbol) or STEREO (joined circle symbol), monitoring is taken directly from the inputs and is therefore free of any possible latency effect. The symbols illuminate green to indicate selection of mono and stereo modes.

When digitizing cassettes it is best to have this set to off or you will end up with an echoing effect. This echo is not captured in your recording however, it can sometimes be difficult listening.

6

**Main Monitor.** This is referred to as the main monitor on the interface. It controls the level of sound coming out of your speakers. Adjusting this knob does not change the levels being captured on our digital file. We use the Gain knobs (#1) for that.

7

**Headphone Jack.** The port where your headphones plug in.

8

**Headphone Monitor.** This dial controls how loud you hear the sound through your headphones.

9

**The phantom power switch** is for mic inputs. It enables 48 V phantom power at XLR contacts of both Combo connectors. This should be OFF for digitization.

## Good to Know

The USB symbol illuminates when the unit receives USB bus power and is confirmed by the computer as connected and operating correctly.

You will hear the word monitor used many times in reference to the interface and Audacity software. Monitoring in the context of cassette digitization means listening to. So monitor dials and controls are basically volume dials.

