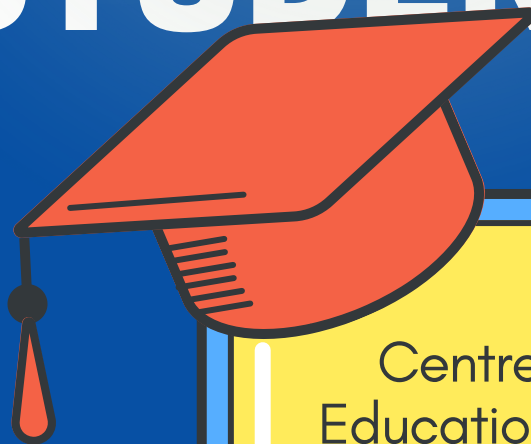


LEARN **MMU**

# GUIDE LINES

for

# ODI STUDENTS



Centre for Lifelong  
Education and Learning  
Innovation (LEARN)  
Multimedia University

## **Guidelines for ODL Students**



Centre for Lifelong Education and  
Learning Innovation (LEARN)

Multimedia University Cyberjaya  
Campus, Persiaran Multimedia,  
63100 Cyberjaya, Selangor,  
Malaysia.

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This handbook is designed to help ODL students find basic information about becoming an online learner.

Please take your time to go through the handbook!

# INTRODUCTION

Though challenging in many aspects, online learning can be a rewarding experience for you. You may have chosen online learning for various reasons convenient to you.

Regardless of your reasons, we want to prepare you before you start to ensure that you will have a positive learning experience.

This handbook is designed to give you the information and tools you need to be successful in your online courses. It is developed to help you understand what is expected of you in a online learning environment.

Online learning may be unfamiliar to many. Therefore, you should be prepared to learn in this new environment.



Before starting the course, you need to have the following basic skills:

- using a keyboard and a mouse
- running computer programs
- using the Internet effectively
- sending and receiving email with or without attachments
- using word processing programs using online tools
- using discussion boards and other collaborative tools



Image source: Freepik

Online learning is student-centered, flexible and convenient learning. As such, you must be self-directed and self-motivated in order to complete your course successfully. It is advisable that you establish a routine and maintain it throughout the semester.

Online learning allows for many online discussions and collaborative work with other peers. Being dedicated to providing feedback and support to each other is central to your success.

Dedicate approximately 10-12 hours per week per course. Specific requirements vary according to different courses. You should adhere to deadlines that are set for assessments, assignments and activities throughout the semester.

Active communication and participation will help you tremendously in your learning. Remember to manage your time wisely. Do not delay projects and assignments until the last minute.

The main learning management system used at MMU is called the Multimedia Learning System (MMLS). You can access your course materials at: <https://mmls.mmu.edu.my/> using your student username and password. Your lecturers may want to utilise other platforms too such as the Google Classroom to supplement the MMLS.

Prior to the start of the semester, you will be required to complete an online Orientation module created for ODL students.

# NETIQUETTE

Do realise that an online classroom is a classroom indeed. You just do not see your lecturer physically face to face. As such, proper conduct in an online class is just as important as in a face to face class. There are certain behaviours that need to be observed when communicating with both your lecturer as well as your peers.

The following netiquette guidelines help you be a more effective and successful student when communicating via email, chat rooms, or on discussion boards as a part of your online learning activities. Your ability to communicate properly and effectively in an online class is important for your success.

**Watch this short video on YouTube on the basics of netiquette -**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwdqQjCfWSc>

# NETIQUETTE GUIDELINES



Treat your everyone with respect when communicating online. Show the same professionalism and respect in an online class as you would in your workplace.

Address your lecturers appropriately e.g. Professor, Dr.



Use clear and concise language. As much as possible, adhere to correct spelling and grammar rules. This helps others understand you better. **Do not write in all capital letters as THIS IS EQUIVALENT TO SHOUTING.** Avoid writing in abbreviations and informal language such as “CU L8R” and “wassup”.

Use a positive tone in your messages. Always review them before you click the Send or Submit button. Ask yourself if your message might offend anyone. Use humour or sarcasm cautiously as your tone can sometimes be wrongly interpreted in a long thread of email or discussion posts.





ABC  
123

Use consistent font type and size that eases online reading such as Calibri and Times New Roman size 12 or 14.

Limit or avoid use of emoticons.  
Not everyone knows how to interpret them.



Be careful sharing personal information  
online (both yours and other's).

Respect other people's time. Email only to the relevant recipients and not to the entire class. Write subject lines that reflect the content of your emails or discussion board postings.





# DISCUSSION BOARD GUIDELINES

As an online student, you will frequently engage with your lecturers and course mates via a discussion board in MMLS. Discussion boards are commonly used by the lecturers as a platform to discuss learning content. Your participation is crucial to your success as an online learner. Here are some tips on Discussion Board participation:

- 1** Post responses or opinions that are clearly related and within the scope of your topic. Ensure that your writing is reviewed and checked before posting.
- 2** Make sure your posts follow the length requirement and are made within the timeline set by your lecturers. Be brief and specific. Lengthy posts can be demotivating for others to read.
- 3** Always acknowledge when referencing or quoting other sources. Do not copy and paste other students' posts or other authors' ideas and claim them as yours. You may respond to other posts by adding your own opinion.



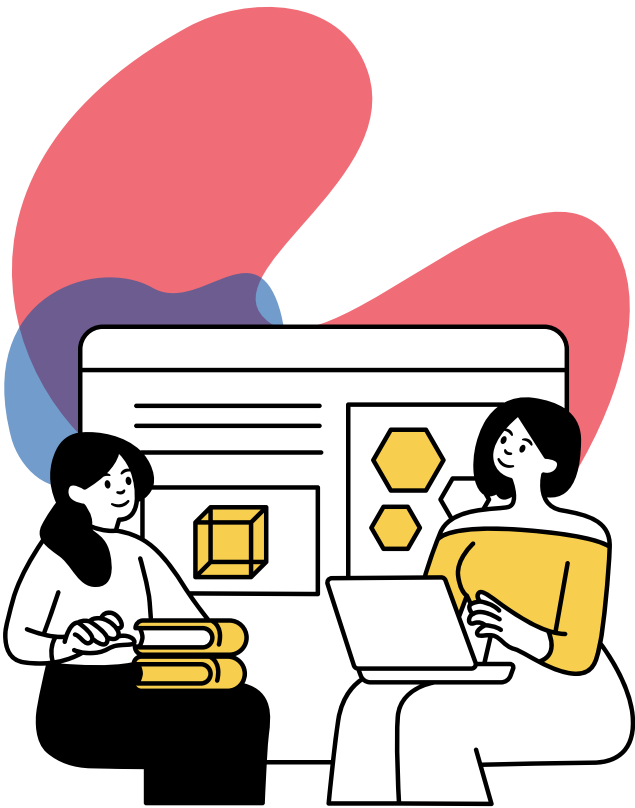


4 Read all messages in a thread before replying and posting yours.

5 Respect others' opinions even when you disagree with what is stated. Express your disagreement in a respectful, non-critical way. Refrain from insulting others and making personal remarks. Your peers have a right to their opinions too.

6 Original posts and replies should be of quality and reflect your understanding of the topic. Do not post generic replies such as "I agree." Discuss the subject matter at critical level. In-depth discussions between you and your peers will facilitate understanding of the topics you are learning.





7

Try and be open-minded when participating in discussion boards. Be more forgiving of your peers' mistakes.

8

If you are posting a question, check if the question has been asked before and if it has received a reply. It is a waste of precious time to read repeated questions. If the question is pertaining the course, check your course description as the answer may be obvious.

9

Check the most recent comments before you reply to an older comment so as to keep updated with the latest opinions and discussion on the issue. This will prevent you from expressing outdated opinions.



10

Always be polite and stay close to the magic words “Please” and “Thank you”.

11

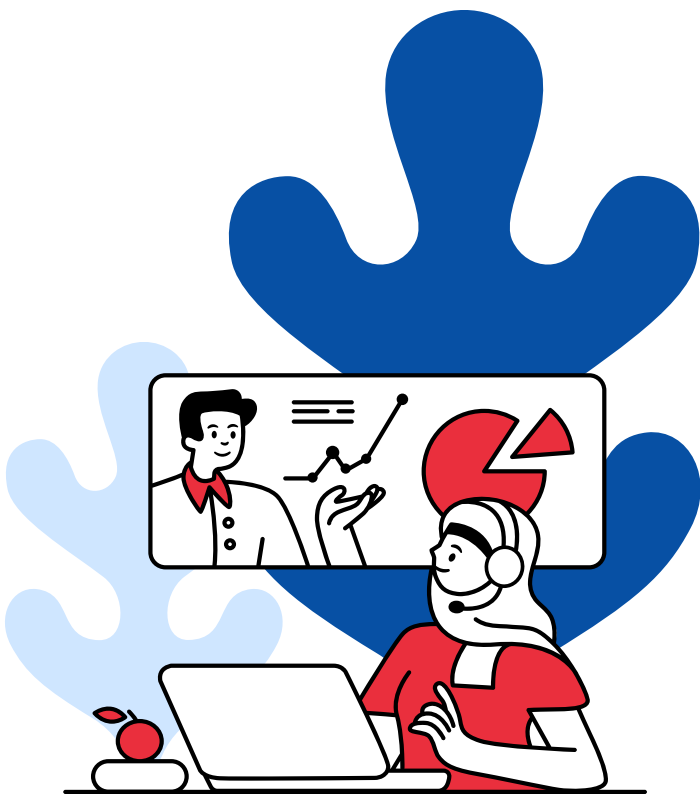
Write in a professional tone. Check your spelling and grammar before posting on the discussion board.

12

If you receive many responses or replies to your post, you can summarise them and post that summary to benefit your whole class.

13

When replying to your peers, quote or restate a few ideas from their posts to help bring others in the class into focus. Address your peers by their names when responding to their posts.



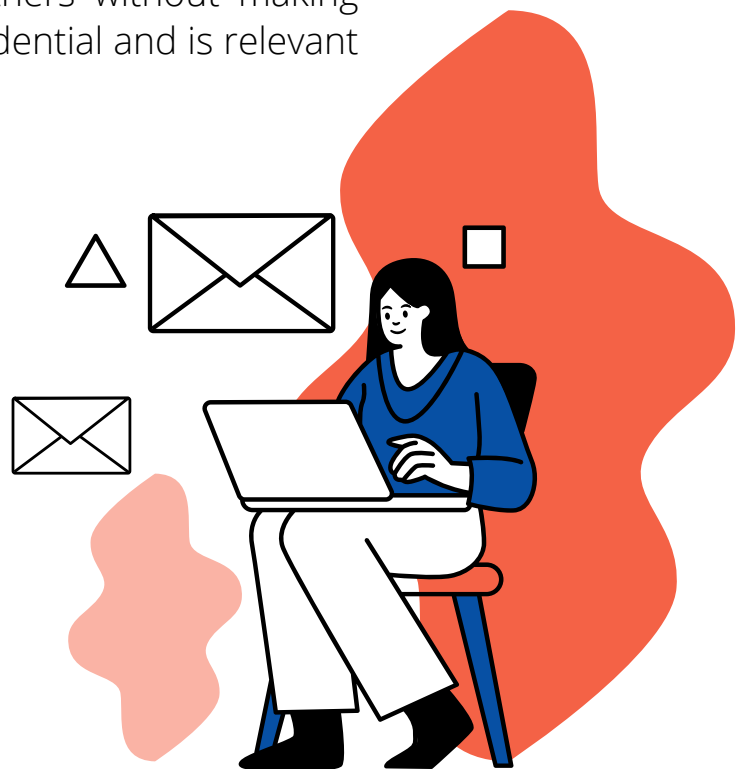
# EMAIL GUIDELINES



Being an online student requires you to communicate online with both your peers as well as your lecturers. Other than the social media, email serves as the main online communication tool between you and others. It is important to observe the basics in email etiquette as follows.

- 1 A clear and descriptive subject line** is of great importance in email writing. Make sure your subject line is concrete and informative enough to reflect the content of your email. **An example of a good, clear subject line is "Marketing Student Requests Your Input"**. In an online learning environment, all correspondences are recorded. Thus, your subject line may be used by your lecturers or other receivers of your email as an indicator for filing purposes.

- 2** Follow the conventions in good sentence and paragraph writing. **Do not** write paragraphs that are too long as too much scrolling makes reading difficult. **Keep your paragraphs short makes them easier to read.**
- 3 Put the most important information at the beginning of the message** to ensure the recipient reads it. If you leave the most important information last, your recipients who may not read your email to the end may miss it.
- 4 Mention in your email** if you have included attachments to ensure your recipients are aware of them. Many people access emails through their mobile devices like hand phones and tablets. If possible, ensure that your attachments can be viewed via these devices.
- 5** Think before sending or replying email to more than one person. Usually the message written is relevant to only the recipient intended and not others in the mailing list. If you are sure your message is intended for everyone to read, click "Reply All".
- 6** Do not simply forward emails to others without making sure that the information is not confidential and is relevant for them too.
- 7** Do not write or respond to an email when you are upset or angry. You might end up flaming (being rude to the recipient) and regret this later.



# FAQS FOR ODL STUDENTS

- **How do online courses work?**

The content for online courses is organised in such a way that it is effectively delivered online instead of face to face in a classroom. All instructions are provided online and no face-to-face classroom instruction is required. You will be able to view all self-instructional learning materials (SIM) such as lecture videos, interactive digital content and other resources such as lecture notes, pdf articles, etc.

through the Multimedia Learning System (MMLS). As such, you can access them at any time convenient to you. Though delivered online, our courses are interactive and you will feel that you are part of a learning community. You will have regular contact with your lecturers as well as your fellow course mates through synchronous virtual lecture or tutorials, asynchronous discussion board and collaborative work online.

- **What are the advantages of online courses?**

Online courses allow you to upgrade yourself and get a qualification without having to travel to campus and take time off from work. You can choose to study with us regardless of your location as long as you have internet connection.

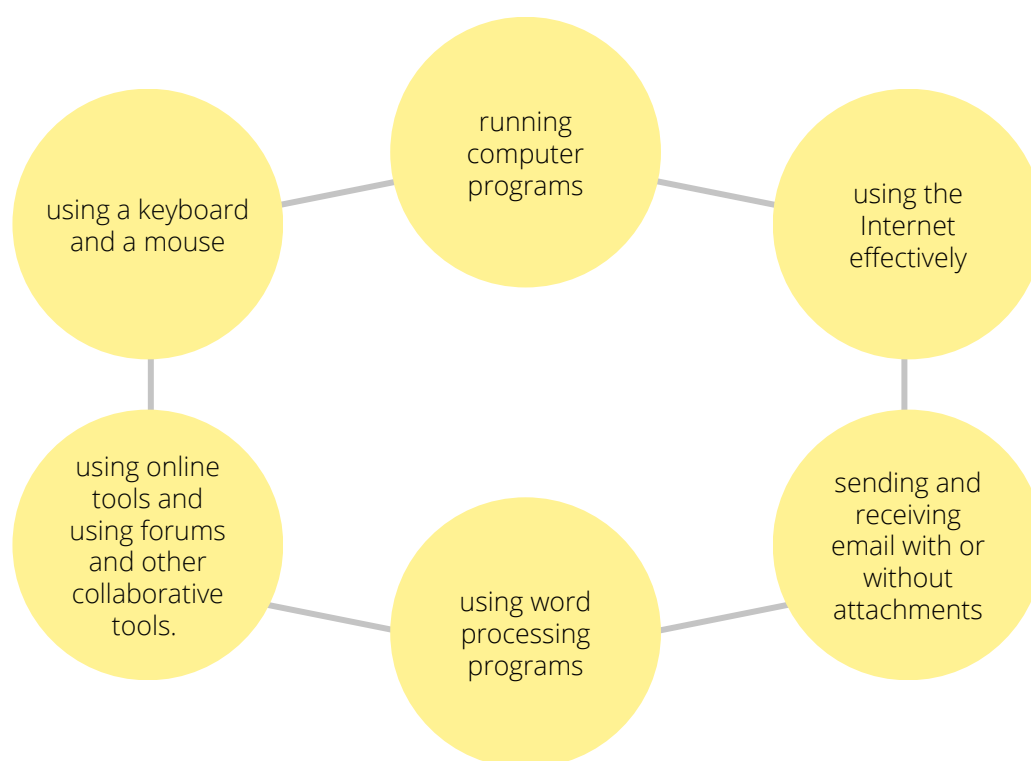
In fact, you don't even need to sit in front a computer or lap top as you can access your learning materials and participate in online discussions from your smart phone or tablet. Rather than having to follow a fixed schedule and attend classes, you can study whenever it suits you. Online courses give you the flexibility to manage your study time around other work and personal commitments.

- **What methods will be used to teach my online course?**

Methods may vary according to course and lecturer but may include pre-recorded or synchronous lectures, videos, podcasts, PowerPoint slides, interactive chat rooms, blog posts, and more.

- **What technical skills do online students need?**

The Multimedia Learning System, MMU's online learning platform is designed to be as user-friendly as possible. There will be clear instructions to guide you through any tasks that you need to do. These skills, however, are still needed to ensure that you can access and navigate through your courses with ease:



If you feel you do not have these basic technical skills requirements, please contact CODL for online resources that can help you. Microsoft's online digital literacy curriculum is a good place to start too.



- **What personal skills do online students need?**

In order to succeed in an online course, self-discipline and motivation are of great importance. You need to be able to manage your time wisely and organise your study time effectively. You should also be comfortable with writing as the primary mode of communication and not be hesitant in asking questions and expressing difficulties.

Online learning requires you to complete your learning tasks with minimal supervision. As such, you need to enjoy working independently and not become over reliant on guidance given by the lecturers.

Being flexible and creative in dealing with your learning materials help too. You may print out reading materials and form online study groups to help cope with difficult content. Most importantly, do not procrastinate for procrastination is a huge hindrance to success in online learning.



- **Is online education as effective as face-to-face instruction?**

Online education can be just as effective as conventional courses on campus. Having more control over your own studies allows for more reflection time, hence leading to more effective learning. Online learning helps develop self-discipline and motivation which are important determinants of success. It also creates good group dynamics whereby you will be engaged in an active learning community. The online format actually facilitates and enhances communication among students and lecturers even more as opposed to conventional face-to-face delivery.

- **Is an MMU online degree as good as the on campus degree?**

Yes. Your degree will have the same validity and credibility as the equivalent degree awarded to a graduate who took the programme on campus. There is no difference in quality between the online and on campus degree programmes.

- **How much is tuition fees? Are there any additional fees?**

Information regarding fees can be obtained from the Institute for Postgraduate Studies - <http://ips.mmu.edu.my/>

- **What do I do after I am registered?**

You will be assigned an MMU Student ID. Use MMU ID to access our Multimedia Learning System (MMLS) and Campus Management System (CamSys).

Access to MMU's main learning management platform, the MMLS, enables you to view your Self-Instructional Materials, participate in your class activities and upload assignments - <https://mmls.mmu.edu.my/>

CamSys access enables you to register for subjects, view your transcript and obtain your grades. Many academic-related processes are completed on CamSys throughout the semester such as completing online evaluation and doing pre-registration - <https://cms.mmu.edu.my>

You can also use your MMU ID to participate in lessons held in the Google Classroom since MMU has an organisational GSuite for Education Account. These lessons will be announced and linked to the MMLS platform.

- **How many subjects can I take per semester?**

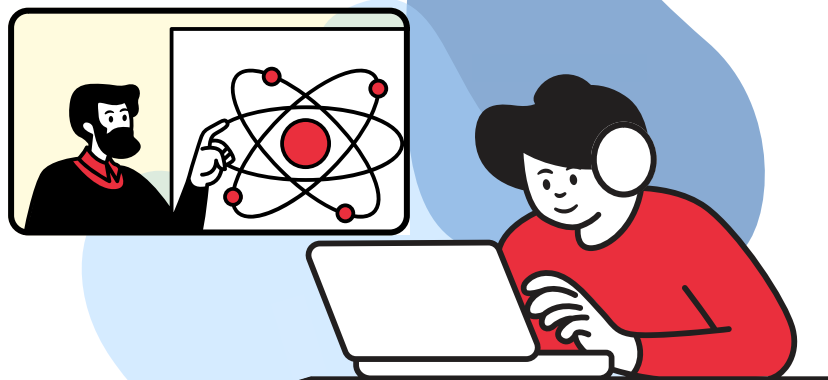
Follow your programme structure for the number of subjects you can take in a semester. If you are unsure, please contact your Programme Coordinator.

- **Can I withdraw from the programme or drop my subject once I have registered?**

Withdrawal can be made within the first two weeks of the commencement of the semester. Adding and dropping of subjects should be done within the same time frame too. You will be charged the full fee if withdrawal and add/drop are done later than that.

- **What are the technical requirements for an online course?**

You need to have a good internet connection in order to ensure smooth access to your learning materials and for participation in your learning tasks. All our courses are offered through the MMLS. Google Classroom may be used as an additional tool.

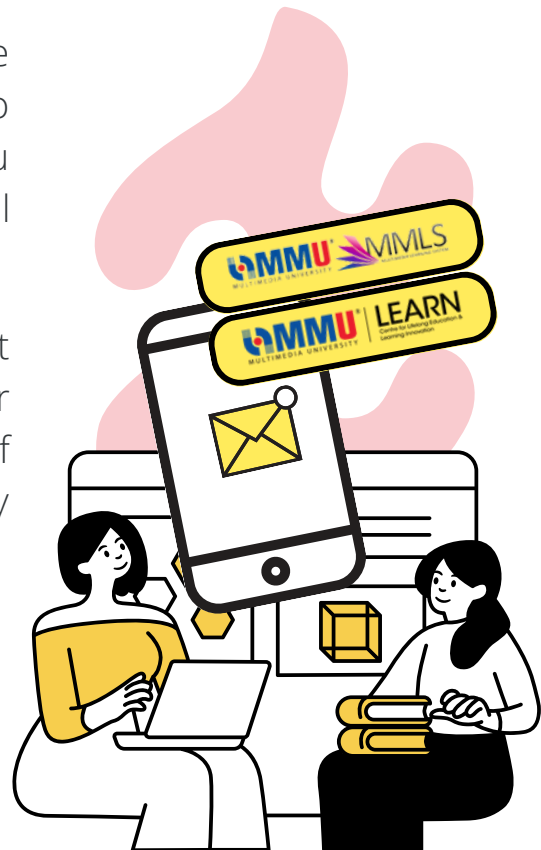


- **What if I face any technical difficulties in viewing my course?**

You should contact LEARN of your faculty admin office if you face any difficulties or have any queries.

Describe your problems clearly to the personnel in charge. They should be able to resolve your technical issues or direct you to the right resource if you need additional support.

If you have queries regarding an assignment or course content, you may contact your lecturer by phone, email, or via MMLS. of your faculty admin office if you face any difficulties or have any queries.

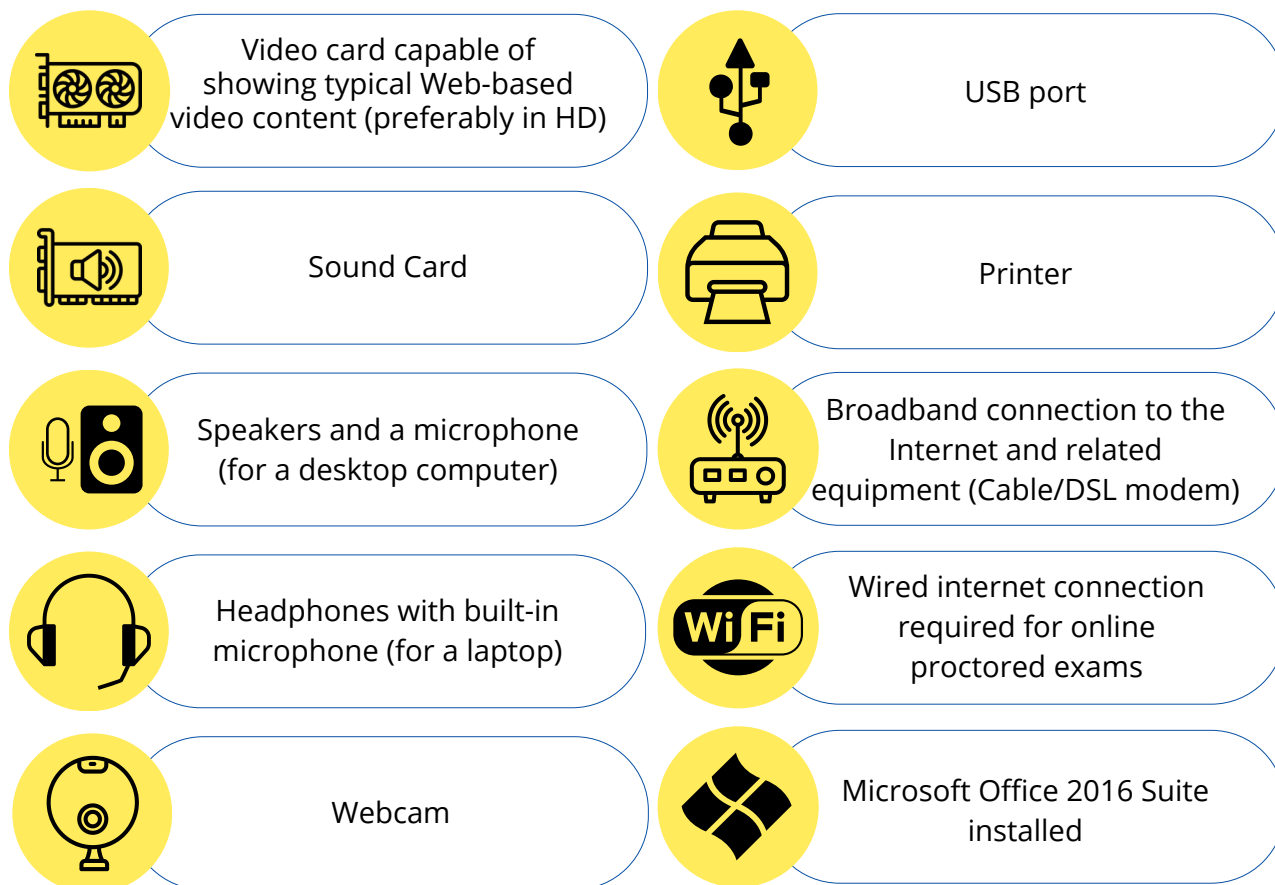


- **How can I access my learning materials?**

Once you receive your MMU ID, lecturers teaching the subjects you have registered for will contact you with instructions and class information.

## • What are the hardware and software requirements for my computer?

Most computers are capable of meeting the following general requirements:



	Operating System	Hardware	Web Browsers	Plugins
<b>PC</b>	Windows 7 or higher	1.5 GHz Intel® Pentium® 4 10 MBps internet connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Firefox</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Chrome</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Internet Explorer</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Safari</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Adobe® Acrobat® Reader</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Adobe Shockwave Player</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">QuickTime</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Java</a></li> </ul>
<b>Mac</b>	10.4 or higher	1.5 GHz Intel® Pentium® 4 10 MBps internet connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Safari</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Firefox</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Chrome</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Adobe® Acrobat® Reader</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Adobe Shockwave Player</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">QuickTime</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Java</a></li> </ul>

- **Do I have a timetable for when my classes are scheduled?**

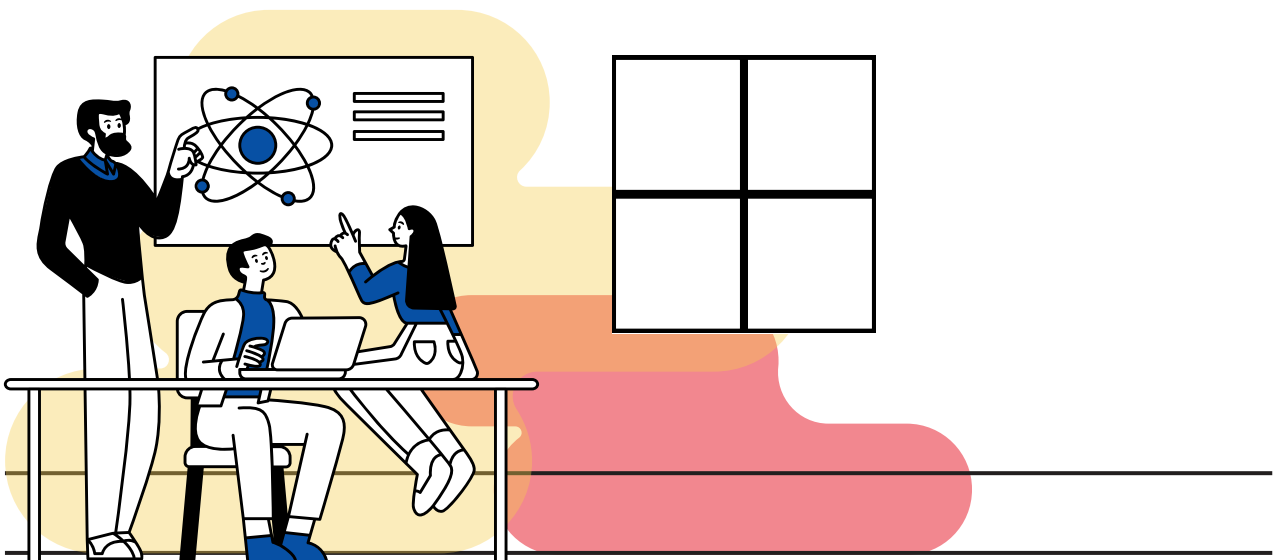
However, online courses are generally conducted "asynchronously". This means there is no set time for you to be online except for face to face tutorial or lecture sessions. You will communicate with your lecturers and discuss your learning materials in a back and forth manner.

Log in to the system whenever it is convenient for you - any time, day, or night, to complete assignments, retrieve learning materials and/or send course information.

Most lecturers require frequent participation in online discussion and webinar. Follow the requirements set by your lecturers. Asynchronous learning allows for flexibility and enables students in different time zones to participate in classroom discussions.

- **Will I be required to attend class at a specific venue at any time?**

Each course requires about 8 to 10 hours of face to face contact for lectures or tutorials. Your lecturers will inform you when these sessions take place. These sessions are conducted fully online and via the GOOGLE MEET application or any other Video Chatting/Conferencing application like SKYPE, or ZOOM.



- **Will I have to meet a lot of deadlines?**

The number of deadlines to meet each week depends on what is set by the different lecturers teaching you. Online learning calls for good time-management skills. You need to be motivated, organised and independent in order to be successful.

- **What teaching methods will be used by my lecturers?**

The methods vary according to the different lecturers. They generally include pre-recorded or synchronous lectures/tutorials, videos, online discussion, podcasts, PowerPoint slides, collaborative group activities, blog posts, webinar and more.



- **How long do I have to complete a course?**

A semester is 12 or 16 weeks long. Coursework must be completed within the time frame set by your lecturers.

- **What happens if I don't finish the course?**

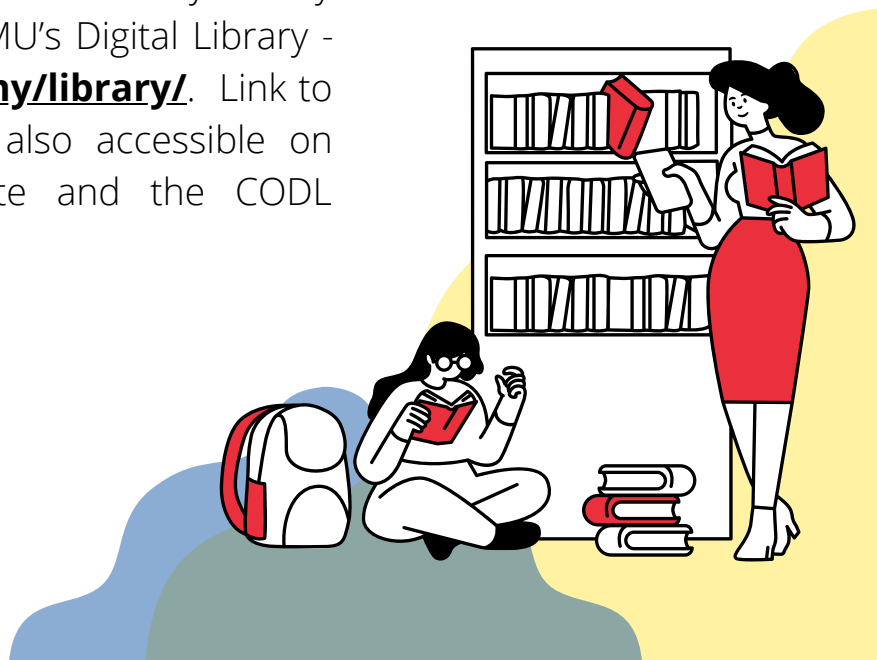
If you do not finish the course during the semester without formally withdrawing, you will receive an "F" (Fail) or "I" (Incomplete) grade. You must officially drop from a course by the necessary deadline in order to remove the course from your transcript. You may also withdraw from the course and receive a "W" on your transcript and a refund if you meet the refund schedule deadlines.

- **How are exams administered?**

Depending on the subjects taken, you may be required to sit for your exams on campus – either at Melaka or Cyberjaya. If needed, certain venues can be arranged as exam centres. Invigilation will be done by MMU lecturers or appointed invigilators to be recommended by the faculty and approved by the University's Academic Development Committee.

- **As an online student, will I have access to MMU library?**

Yes, you will have access to many library services provided by MMU's Digital Library - <http://vlib.mmu.edu.my/library/>. Link to the Digital Library are also accessible on both the MMU website and the CODL website.





## Correspondence

Good communication between students and staff is important so that your individual needs as ODL students are addressed and met. The Lifelong Education department staff from the Centre for Lifelong Education and Learning Innovation (LEARN) are always available to assist you with administrative and academic matters. In case of any enquiries please contact us at:

### **Centre for Lifelong Education and Learning Innovation (LEARN)**

Office of Vice President and Internationalisation

Multimedia University

Persiaran Multimedia

63000 Cyberjaya

Selangor

**Tel:** 03-83125509/5257

**Email:** [lle@mmu.edu.my](mailto:lle@mmu.edu.my)

