



Online Learning Centre: Preparing to learn online

Online learning can be a rewarding experience if you prepare for it and then stay with your plan. If you are doing an extended program such as a qualification, consider these:

Create an offline folder

Find a ring binder and label it with the name of your online learning program. Sometimes online learning can generate just as much paperwork as offline learning.

Create an online folder

Name a folder after your online learning program on the c: drive of your computer. This is where you will save any online documents, templates and assignments relevant to your program. If you are unable to save to the hard drive, then have a USB pen drive especially for this purpose.

Record your login

Most people collect lots of usernames and passwords from registering on various internet sites, so it is difficult to remember them all. Write your login details down in a safe place and do not share them with anyone.

Print important information

It may be useful to print program details, any assessment requirements and any important emails or imessages from facilitators or administration and file them in your folder. This provides a quick reference point when you are away from the computer.

Choose a place

Consider your lifestyle. Now decide *where* you will be when you login – work, library, home study, next door etc. Choose somewhere that is available, comfortable, private and where you are least likely to be interrupted.

Choose a time

Consider your weekly schedule. Now decide when you will login – early morning, weekends, late Wednesday night etc. Be ready to make the commitment to login at least twice a week. It is not necessary to be online for long periods of time – short visits (about 25 minutes at a time) are often more effective. Now inform your partner, flatmate, children, parents, siblings or others that when you are at the computer at these times, you are actually 'at class' and are not able to speak with them. You may like to put up a sign!

Contact the facilitator

It is important to establish a connection with a human being quickly, so login and introduce yourself to your facilitator via imessage. This person is your 'guide on the side' and will assist and encourage as you work through the learning program.

Fill out the web profile

Write a little about yourself in the web profile and upload a photograph. This puts a human face to you and will be greatly appreciated by others in your group and by your facilitator. If you are unsure how to do this, check the *help* guide. If still in doubt then imessage the facilitator.