Tips to Manage Your Online Studies

We’ve all experienced classroom study at school, but online learning is very different and requires a whole new set of skills. As an online student you will need to be tech-savvy, self-disciplined, self-motivated, have strong time management skills and be able to work effectively with others in the online environment. Read through the tips below to ensure that you are well prepared to succeed in your online studies at UTAS and remember that you are not alone. At UTAS, there is plenty of support available to assist you develop these skills.

Have Access and Know How to Use Computers

In order to get access to your materials you need to make sure you have a reliable computer, up to date software and a good working knowledge of how to use it. It is wise to use good quality hardware and software and have a fast, reliable internet connection. We recommend you use your own computer because it minimises any technical risks, and you'll have access when you need it. To be able to log into UTAS systems you will need the user name and password sent to you when you were given the offer to your course. If you have any difficulties with your login details, please contact the IT Service Desk by Logging a Job online or by phone on +61 3 6226 1818.

Get to Know the Various Online Systems at UTAS

eStudent focuses on the administration management of your UTAS studies. Here, you can enrol in your units, pay fees, update your contact details and more.

Make a habit of checking your UTAS webmail account regularly, at least once every day or two. It is the main way that the University will communicate vital information to you.

My Learning Online (MyLO) is a system used to deliver online content for your unit or units. Once you have enrolled in your unit via eStudent you will receive access to the unit’s MyLO site within 48 hours. Please note that you may not have full access to your unit until the first day of the semester. You will however have access to two useful modules in MyLO called, Getting Started in MyLO and Academic Honesty. Here you can learn more about navigating your way through MyLO as well as the tool Turnitin which is used when submitting assignments.

When you do have access to your unit/s we recommend first reading any notices in the Announcements section that the lecturer may have posted, as this will guide you on how to navigate your unit. The Unit Outline found under the heading Unit Information will tell you everything you need to know about the unit including the unit schedule, reading materials, assessment requirements, referencing guidelines and so on.

It is important that you feel comfortable using MyLO given that you will need to be accessing it regularly. Over time there will be other systems that you will need to use while studying at UTAS, such as Library Databases, MyPassword and Office 365, so allow time to learn these.

Manage Your Time Well

As you won’t be attending physical classes each week you will need to be vigilant with keeping up with your coursework. The best way to do this is to be as consistent as possible. Set aside time for online learning just as you would for attending classes. Give yourself plenty of time to sit down and read through your materials so you understand everything clearly. We recommend that you assign between 10 – 12 hours per week, per unit for study. This includes listening to your lecture, reading your weekly readings and participating in discussions and completing tasks on MyLO.
All students find that strong **time management skills** are needed to balance the various commitments they have. When planning ahead, identify the time of day you will devote to studying. Ask yourself if you are a morning person or a night owl, if you work best with background noise or in silence and then schedule in your study at a time and location when you are performing at your best.

**Stay Connected**

At times studying online can feel isolating. The best way to combat this is to connect with others who are in the same situation as you. Online units in MyLO strongly encourage students to build connections with their peers. This is a great way to make new friends and it can be useful for your academic success to participate in study groups and topic discussions. Other avenues to connect with your peers are via the **UTASLife** Facebook page or the **Distance Students at UTAS** sub-group. Making contact with others early is the best time to do so as your classmates are often in the same situation. You may find that other students in your units live nearby, so consider forming a study group.

**Ask for Help**

While your lecturer is the best person to contact for unit specific information, there are many other support options for students who are studying online. **Personal Counselling, Student Advisers, Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS), Student Learning Workshops** and **one-to-one consultations, Disability Services** as well as others all offer their services by phone or online.

**Library Services for Online Students**

The Library has a huge collection of **online materials** which means you have fast and easy access to all the relevant study resources. There is also the **Flexible Library Service** which can deliver hard copy books and journal articles to your door if you live more than 40km from the Launceston or Hobart campuses.