



10 Points to Remember when Learning Online

Developed to support the Irish higher education community in the initial weeks of the move to online/remote teaching and learning in March 2020

Many of you may be doing a good deal more online and remote learning in the coming weeks. These tips, developed in partnership with the Union of Students in Ireland, outline some of the ways to make the most of online learning:

- 1 Make sure you're 'online ready'. If there is any reason why you will find it difficult to engage in online teaching (e.g. poor Wi-Fi connection, don't have a digital device, don't have the right software), notify your lecturer in case alternative arrangements need to be put in place.
- 2 Familiarise yourself with the virtual learning environment (VLE) that your institution uses. Quick guides and tutorials should be available on your institution's website.
- 3 Set up a workstation wherever you're joining from. This should be free of distractions, but you may wish to have home comforts (tea, sweets, fruit) at arms' length so you're able to settle in and stay motivated.
- 4 Find out what is expected of you as a learner in the online environment and familiarise yourself with any assessment requirements, especially if these have had to change with the move to online learning. If you're unclear on any of the requirements, check in with your lecturer as soon as you can.
- 5 Help one another...This can be an unsettling time for students, and staff, as you adapt to a new environment but you're all in this together. Consider hosting study sessions within your class via Zoom or Skype, or create a shared Google Doc so you can share notes. And don't forget to ask questions if you're unsure of anything.
- 6 Look for online reading material in the library. Through the online library, you'll have access to e-books and e-journals to help you complete your assignments. If you don't know how to access library material online ask your lecturer or a library staff member.
- 7 Build a routine. Don't think of the time at home as time off; see it as a normal day at college. Create a timetable for yourself, including breakfast, and study breaks, as well as the lecturer/seminar times. You may wish to use Google/Outlook calendar or you could use the USI 'Recharge' Study guide linked [here!](#)
- 8 Make use of online communication methods such as live chat and discussion boards. These are an excellent way to immerse yourself in the online lecture and they will make the learning experience more active and more engaging (and maybe even more enjoyable) for you and for the lecturer.
- 9 Familiarise yourself with what support services are available virtually - your institution will have details on how you can access counselling, disability services, etc. whilst the college is closed.
- 10 Share your experiences! Why not share tips with one another, and tag @TheUSI and @ForumTL, using the hashtag #KeepLearning?