

## **Are you ready for distance learning?**

Take a few minutes to test your distance learning readiness here by answering the following five questions. There are no right or wrong answers – the exercise is designed to make you think about how prepared you are. Take some time to reflect on your choice of answers, and question whether you need to adapt or change your approaches to learning, in order to learn effectively at a distance.

### **What does my study routine for my distance learning course include?**

1. A strict timetable set up for reading, communicating, and completing assignments
2. A number of hours set aside for study each week
3. Finding time whenever my work schedule permits

### **How do I respond to an assignment deadline approaching?**

1. I have already completed and submitted the assignment
2. I usually set aside extra time to complete it on time
3. I procrastinate unless reminded by my tutor to complete the assignment

### **What technology skills do I have?**

1. I regularly send emails, use word processing software and internet search engines
2. I use email, the internet and processing software occasionally
3. I avoid using the computer whenever possible

### **What do I do when I need assistance?**

1. I ask for assistance but continue trying to find a solution on my own
2. I seek assistance and wait for a response from my tutor
3. I am usually hesitant about seeking assistance or advice

### **How do I find research materials?**

1. I am comfortable using online library resources, online repositories and journals
2. With help from staff, I can use the online library resources
3. I usually rely on hardcover books and journals

## Top ten tips

1. Before your course begins, arrange a quiet separate room or space with necessary learning aids (books, computer, learning aids etc).
2. Set aside a time for studying every day and stick to it. Don't fall behind!
3. Make a note of all assignment due dates and don't wait to the last minute to submit in order to account for postal or electronic delays.
4. Check your email or online module regularly for important updates.
5. Remember, technology may fail, but it's not your fault. Be patient and try again later.
6. Brush up on your technical skills by referring to the guides and advice available on the Queen Margaret University website.
7. Make a note of your tutor's contact email details, and office hours, and never hesitate to ask for help – misunderstandings easily occur at a distance.
8. Communicating with your peers or tutors online might feel uncomfortable at first – take your time and remember others feel the same way.
9. Actively access the learning resources available to you as a distance learner at Queen Margaret University.
10. Carefully evaluate material from the internet. Anyone can publish anything on the web.

Take a few moments to think about how your current study habits match with our tips. As well as recognising and building on your strengths, you may want to reflect on other skills you need to develop as a distant learner. In particular, it will be important for you to know how to find support and advice from our QMU resources. A wide range of LRC resources are already listed here on this site. The resources below may be of additional interest:

**Write and Cite: the Queen Margaret University Guide to the Harvard System of Referencing**

**The Effective Learning Service**

This site contains useful guides to essay writing, note-taking, reading skills and other key skills for study, as well as useful resources for non-native speakers of English.