

## **Learner guidelines for using an online synchronous learning environment (OSLE) tool**

The guidelines for learners presented here have been developed drawing upon our findings from the [Palatine study](#) and our experiences (both within the study and when working with our students). These guidelines are set out in the following sections: preparing to use an OSLE, and the OSLE session.

### **1. Preparing to use an OSLE**

- Check that you have the necessary equipment – it may be necessary to borrow/acquire this from the institution or other sources;
- Ensure equipment such as microphones and webcams are working – test prior to a meeting;
- Practice using the tool with your tutor or peers and become familiar and comfortable with how it works – seek training/help if necessary;
- Make arrangements with your tutor/fellow students in advance regarding the date and time of a meeting. In particular, make sure that you are clear at what time you have arranged to meet e.g. if you are overseas and your tutor is in the UK (or vice versa), check the time difference between each location when arranging meetings;
- Prepare for a tutorial in the same way that you would prepare for a tutorial at the institution – have the necessary paperwork, notebook and pen to hand;
- Be prepared to follow the ground rules that have been set out for the meeting e.g. formal or informal? Turn-taking or free flow?
- Watch out for details about your OSLE session in your VLE;
- Ensure you know where to go, or who to contact, for technical assistance.

### **2. The OSLE session**

- Ensure you have the URL address of the OSLE – or that you know where to go to access;
- Ensure you have your log-in details (username and password);
- Allow yourself plenty of time for a meeting;
- Check that you have a good Internet signal – if necessary move to an area with a stronger signal;
- Find somewhere quiet (and private if necessary) – somewhere you are comfortable using the tool;
- Use the different tools, such as quizzes, to interact with your tutor;
- Access the archive after the session;
- If possible, try out new tools such as iPhone apps for the OSLE that your tutor is using.

Don't forget to use the OSLE as a tool to meet with other students, outwith the times that your tutor has set aside for meeting with you.