

# Welcome to Online Class Orientation 101

## What is the purpose of Online Class Orientation 101?

This module focuses on developing the knowledge, self-motivation and responsibility needed for effective communication in both a learning and work environment. It provides students with valuable information regarding the use of online tools and the competencies required for independent work.

**N.B. Should you experience any difficulties, please review this document in its entirety. Should you still be unable to find a solution, please do not hesitate to contact us.**

## Outcomes of Online Class Orientation 101

Upon successful completion of this module, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of using online platforms as well as the key terms, concepts, facts, general principles, rules and theories of distance learning.
- Select and apply the standard methods, procedures and techniques as established by Belgium Campus, and plan and manage studies within the duration of his/her online experience.
- Take account of, and act in accordance with, prescribed organisational and professional ethical codes of conduct, values and practices as they pertain to academic integrity and the furthering of his/her studies and personal growth.
- Reliably, accurately, and coherently communicate information for use in an online environment.
- Take personal responsibility for his/her studies.



# Where do I start with distance learning?

Distance learning programmes provide excellent opportunities for students, however, they also come with challenges.

Before you begin distance learning, it is important to prepare yourself for the course you are taking. In addition, you must adjust to new ways of content presentation and adapt your learning style and study habits.

## Being Prepared

Before every class, make sure you are comfortable with the course content, expectations and delivery methods outlined in the MS Class Notebook attached to your class.


## Reviewing the Course Syllabus

You should prepare for your course by reviewing the **Welcome** page of every **Class Notebook**. On this page you will find the course purpose, objectives and activities. All scheduled presentations, lectures, assignment due dates and exam dates, will be posted to your class Team for the course duration. You should also familiarise yourself with the course delivery method, assignment submission process and means of contacting your lecturers and classmates for each subject.

## Expectations

Studying at a distance requires the same active participation and engagement as traditional learning. The following activities may form part of your class:

- Attending lectures presented via various multimedia channels.
- Participating in group discussions.
- Using various methods to stay in contact with your lecturer and your peers.
- Keeping up with reading and activity deadlines.



**As a student studying alone, you will need to join the course daily, participate in discussions and ensure that you maintain discipline. It is also beneficial to ask regular questions regarding the course material.**

## Software Requirements

You must meet the minimum software requirements prescribed for the course. A list of required software will be made available and can be downloaded from the **Microsoft Imagine** [Jan Goffing to provide details] account provided to you by Belgium Campus.

## Considerations to Look At

Distance learning requires a lot of self-discipline from the learner. To be successful with distance learning programmes, you must consider the following:

- **Managing Your Time**
  - Time management is a very important discipline which all students need to master. You can use the calendar in your MS365 application to keep track of your submission dates, online lectures, and test and examination dates. You can also use the calendar to create to-do lists to accomplish tasks on time and effectively manage the work you are doing.
- **Finding A Place to Study**
  - Don't fall into the trap of working curled up in bed just because you are studying from home. If you want to be successful you need to choose a conducive study space where you can sit and work. It is also helpful to establish a routine where you wake up and get dressed for class each day. You will want to look presentable and choose an environment where you can productively communicate with your peers.
- **Resilience**
  - When studying via distance learning it is easy to fall behind or miss a lecture. Distance learning students must maintain dedication and commitment to their educational goals to succeed.
  - Set yourself up for success by reviewing the distance learning course expectations and qualities of successful distance learners in preparation for your course.

## Debunking the Myths of Distance Learning

- **It's Easier**
  - Some students wrongly assume that studying via distance learning means you don't have to attend class and that you can just submit assignments and pass. This could not be further from the truth. Distance learning students must attend virtual

lectures, meet deadlines and study hard if they want to do well. If you are not disciplined, you will find distance learning very difficult.

- **Excuses**
  - Excuses like, 'I did not finish my work on time so I will just say my computer crashed, or that I accidentally deleted my finished assignment, or that I just sent in the wrong attachment, or that my data ran out etc.,' simply won't cut it. Make sure you fully understand your instructor's expectations and that you comply with them in a timely manner. It helps to keep an open channel of communication for when you need help or have questions.

**You are ultimately responsible for your studies and excuses will not be accepted.**

## Technology Ready

### Technical Understanding

As a student studying within the IT field, your technical knowledge is better than most. Despite this, we still need you to understand what is required for studying at distance.

It is important to familiarise yourself with the technical requirements outlined in your **Class Notebook** for each course. This includes becoming familiar with:

- the hardware and software requirements.
- the value internet connection.
- the basics of email.
- how to obtain tech support when needed.

**N.B. We understand that not everyone will have access to the required hardware, mobile data or a fast internet connection. We have made provisions to ensure that these students can still perform the required activities and make submissions for each course.**

What Will I Need?

These days it is possible for students to attend their online courses using a range of devices, from desktop and laptop computers to smartphones and tablets. You may choose to do your schoolwork on one or more of these gadgets—it's really about finding out which form of hardware best suits both your needs as a student and the requirements of the course.

There are some basics that your device will need to be equipped with in order to adequately interact with Office 365. For instance, you'll want to make sure that you have an up-to-date operating system. Your operating system is the software that manages the programs and functions of your computer, tablet or phone.

The following operating system is required for the courses you will take:

- For PC, Windows 8 or higher.

Each individual course may also have its own additional hardware requirements. Check with your instructor or take a look at your syllabus to see if there is anything else you might need for your course.

Some common hardware requirements (if not already built into your device or laptop) include:

- A headset
- Speakers
- A webcam

Internet Speed

- 1MB or higher

Preferred browsers for working with Office 365 include:

- Apple Safari
- Google Chrome
- Microsoft Edge
- Mozilla Firefox

## Procrastination

When you find yourself in a distance learning environment procrastination is one of the biggest challenges you will face, regardless of if you consider yourself to be a procrastinator.

Consider the following scenarios:

- Your assignment or project is due in two days and you haven't started it yet.
- You pulled an all-nighter to get an assignment done on time.
- You turned an assignment in late or asked for an extension when you didn't really have a good excuse not to get it done on time.
- You find yourself working right until the last minute that an assignment is due.
- You underestimated how long an assignment would take and didn't finish it in time for class.
- You had to rely on the internet for information (e.g. a summary of a concept or a book) because you didn't finish the reading on time.

Strategies for overcoming these challenges:

1. Keep your studying bite-sized. When confronted with 150 pages of reading or 50 problems to solve, break it down into manageable sections.
2. Mute WhatsApp, chat windows, and do not browse distracting websites.
3. Read or work for 40 minutes, then check your phone for 5 minutes.
4. Study in a place reserved for studying ONLY.
5. Use checklists and stick to them by completing one task at a time. Do not jump between tasks not completing a single one.

## **FAQ: Class Notebook for Online Class Orientation 101**

**What should I do if I cannot access MS Teams and it says I need to contact my administrator?**

- This could be due to your Belgium Campus financial account – please email [accounts@belgiumcampus.ac.za](mailto:accounts@belgiumcampus.ac.za).
- If your account is up to date you will need to contact [support@belgiumcampus.ac.za](mailto:support@belgiumcampus.ac.za)

**What should I do if I receive a message from MS Teams saying, 'Loading Chunk Failed'?**

- This is a Microsoft error. Ensure that MS Teams is updated, sign out of all your Microsoft profiles, clear the "appdata" cache for you Microsoft applications and restart the computer.

**Where can I find my username and password for my Office 365 account?**

- When you enrol at Belgium Campus, you receive an Office 365 account with your student number as your account name. For example: XXXXXX@student.belgiumcampus.ac.za where X represents your student number and a preset password.

**What if I forgot my student number?**

- Please visit <https://belgiumcampus.ac.za/Contact-Us-Main.html> and contact the campus you are registered at via one of the methods listed.

**What if I forgot the password for my Office 365 account?**

- Please visit <https://www.office.com/> and select log in. Enter your username in the following format XXXXXX@student.belgiumcampus.ac.za and click the forgot password link. Follow the steps to reset your password.

**Where do I learn to use MS Teams?**



- Navigate to the following link, it will serve as a quick start guide - [Office Quick Starts - Office Support \(microsoft.com\)](https://support.microsoft.com/office/quick-starts)

### **Will the HybeFlex/ Zoom sessions be recorded?**

- Yes, sessions are recorded and edited for distribution. In addition, short key videos relating to the day's work are shared in the Class Materials section of your team.

### **Where can I find the HybeFlex/Zoom ID for the meeting?**

- The meeting ID will be available in the team post every morning.

### **Will the meeting ID for HybeFlex/Zoom change?**

- No, not for the duration of the class.

### **Where can I find OneNote and Class Notebook training resources?**

The following short interactive courses are available on the Microsoft Education Center:

- OneNote Class Notebook: A teacher's all-in-one notebook for students.
- Getting Started with OneNote - Microsoft in Education
- OneNote: your one-stop resource - Microsoft in Education

### **Experiencing permission issues with your Class Notebook?**

- Troubleshoot notebook permissions.

