Top Tips for Student Blended Learning

Your course may be delivered in a blended approach with some learning on campus and some online learning. For online learning, you will require access to a device and Wifi. You will also be accessing learning resources on our virtual learning environment called Canvas. Your lecturers will tell you what apps or software you will be using on your course.

Make sure you're ready. If there is any reason why you will find it difficult to engage in blended learning (e.g. poor WiFi connection, don't have a digital device, don't have the right software, need accessibility support) notify your lecturer in case alternative arrangements can be put in place.

Familiarise yourself with the virtual learning environment (VLE). Our VLE is called Canvas. You will receive specific instructions on completing the Passport to Canvas introductory course. Your lecturers will inform you where to find course-related information. You can find out more about Canvas **here**.

Find out what is expected of you as a learner. Find out what is expected of you and familiarise yourself with any assessment requirements. If you're unclear on any of the requirements, check in with your lecturer as soon as you can.

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 lectures, study time, meals and breaks. Remember to check any office hours or timetabled sessions on your course(s) and any deadlines. You may wish to use Google/Outlook calendar to keep track of your activities. There are many time management techniques, so find one which works for you **here**.

Make use of online communication methods. Live chat and discussion boards are an excellent way to immerse yourself in the course and they will make the learning experience more active and engaging for you and for the lecturer. Ask questions, comment on what others are saying, and develop the conversations. You will communicate in different ways in various formats (discussion boards, social media, online groups). Be professional and appropriate, but also don't be afraid to be yourself.

Look for digital resources in the library. Through the library website, you'll have access to e-books, e-journals and other materials to help you complete your course including assignments. You will also have support from the team of Academic Support Librarians and will receive an introduction to the Library at your Induction. If you don't know how to access library materials then ask your lecturer or contact **library@cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk** Find out more **here**.

Be patient. Blended learning is different to always being on campus for class. Take time to set up any equipment in advance. Be patient with others as they take time to respond to a question or put comments in the Chat area.

Blended learning does not mean learning alone. There is support here for you. Keep in touch with your lecturers and ask for help when you need it. Staff are always happy to hear from you and will support you with your learning.

Prepare Your Online Environment

- **Set up a workstation that you can use for studying.** This should be a comfortable, quiet space, free of distractions but with good internet connection. A desk or a table can be much more comfortable in the long term than a bed or a sofa. You may wish to have home comforts (water, tea, sweets, fruit, tissues) at arms length so you're able to settle in and stay motivated. Remember to take regular breaks away from your screen and your studies to rest, relax, eat, exercise and get outdoors if you can.

- **Be aware of your surroundings** and background, how you sound and look. If you are online at home or on campus, be sure you are in an appropriate space without noise and where you aren't disturbing others. It may be helpful to wear headphones or ear buds.

- **Speak** slowly and to camera.

- If using video, **check** lighting and quality of audio from your microphone.

- Be aware of and **limit noise** when working at home – e.g. pets, kettles, domestic appliances etc.

- For **better audio quality,** use a headset rather than the microphone built-in to your device.

- If using a laptop, **consider raising it** so that you are looking directly into the screen.

Ground Rules for Online Behaviour

- **Respect other people's time.** Be early. Remember you will need to login and access the platform or software. Your Lecturer will give you access at the start of the class.

- **You're on camera.** Your Lecturer and classmates will be able to see you. Wear clothing that is appropriate and that does not distract or offend. Use a virtual background that is neutral. Make sure that the area behind you is not distracting or displaying personal items. Other people should not be on screen with you - e.g. family members, friends.

- **You may be recorded.** Your Lecturer will tell you if the lecture is being recorded.

- **Control noise**. Keep your microphone on mute. Your Lecturer will tell you when to unmute.

- **Be careful with what you share.** Don't share personal information such as your address, phone number or email. Do not share anything illegal or inappropriate.

- **Pay attention.** Put your mobile phone away. Pay attention to the lecture. Concentrate on your learning.

- **Show respect.** Don't use language or signs that are rude or offensive. Don't write anything inappropriate in the group chat. Raise a virtual hand when you want to speak or follow the Lecturer's guidance on speaking. You should behave the same as you would in the classroom on campus.

- **Mind the rules**. Remember that college rules, policies and procedures still apply to online learning. If you don't mind the rules, you may face disciplinary action.

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