



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

The University of Edinburgh New Online Learners

GETTING STARTED

Guide 2019/20

A guide to starting as an online student

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Welcome

#edwelcome



Welcome

Welcome to the University of Edinburgh

This essential guide will help you get started at the University of Edinburgh, showing you where to find useful information and services throughout your time as an online student.

Getting ready to study online can be an exciting time but also daunting too. This guide puts all of the practical advice and information you need to know in one place.

Start with looking through your checklist which outlines important tasks you need to do **before you start** and also **when you start**. Take your time to go through each section of this guide and make sure you understand what you need to do.

Stay
connected
when you start

Get the latest announcements,
news and events from the University:

 www.ed.ac.uk/news/students

 [www.fb.com/EdinUniStudents](https://www.facebook.com/EdinUniStudents)

 www.twitter.com/ueo_online

#edwelcome

Principal's welcome

On behalf of all students and staff at the University of Edinburgh, a huge congratulations on your successful application and a very warm welcome!

We are delighted that you are joining Edinburgh, one of the world's leading universities. More than 3,800 postgraduates are currently studying online with us, and 5,000 have graduated with online degrees since 2005. You are joining a diverse global community of online learners, and will be part of a wider University community made up of around 40,000 students, over 14,000 staff and an ever growing alumni community of 250,000+. Our students and staff come from around 160 countries making the University of Edinburgh a uniquely diverse place to learn; we are justifiably proud of our whole community which aims to be open in both outlook and ethos.

Starting an online degree will be exciting, but there may be a tinge of apprehension as well, especially as many of you will continue to maintain many professional and personal commitments while you study. In order to get the best possible start to your degree, I encourage you to take every opportunity to interact online with your fellow students and tutors, to attend online induction and training courses and to embrace the range of platforms available to you.



My top tips for studying online:

- 1. Make the most of all the opportunities** and services studying at the University of Edinburgh will offer you.
- 2. Embrace your global online community.** Students tell us that the opportunity to learn from others and to hear how they apply what they have learnt within their local working environment is what makes online learning so valuable. Seek out new perspectives and be open to different points of view.
- 3. Make the most of the resources available to you.** You have access to one of the largest academic libraries in the world, with almost 700,000 electronic book titles, 100,000 e-journals, 700 licensed databases and over 66,000 streaming videos. Our Academic Support Librarians are here to help you.
- 4. Study at times that work for you.** The majority of our online students are balancing work and study simultaneously, and many have family commitments too. Some students like to dedicate fixed days to studying, while others like to login every day. Work out what suits you best.
- 5. Look after yourself,** you are not alone and don't be afraid to ask for help: during your university studies, you will face challenges. They could be academic, financial, or social, and may test your confidence. There are many people here to help you - your wellbeing is a priority for us.

You will encounter lecturers who are among the leading figures in their field and passionate about their subjects. Take every opportunity that you can to learn from them to find out more about yourself and to build your own success. Many challenging and rewarding experiences lie ahead for you – above all, enjoy yourself!

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Mathieson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Principal and Vice-Chancellor Peter Mathieson

Checklist

As a new online student, you probably have a lot of questions about finding resources and information you need to prepare and get started at University. The new online students' checklist is a useful contents tool which maps out all of the essential things to be aware of and do **before you start** and also **when you start**, in priority order. You can download/save the checklist and use the interactive tick boxes to keep on track. Click onto the page references below to read more about the information provided via the checklist.

✓ Tasks to do before you start	More info
Read all relevant sections of the New Student GETTING STARTED Guide	
Read all emails received from the University, especially from your School/Programme	
Read all emails received from the Students' Association	
If accessible, join relevant social media groups, including the UoE new students 2019/2020 Facebook group and/or your school/programme groups	
Activate your University email address (essential)	
Login to MyEd (essential)	Page 05
Activate your Office365 email address	Page 05
Familiarise yourself with how to use MyEd (including how to use each of the channels within it)	Page 05
Familiarise yourself with your Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) (essential)	Page 09
Register online as a student	Page 06
(If applicable) Complete the online learning programme mandate form for paying fees	Page 07
Organise your financial assistance, if required, and send a copy of your sponsor award letter	Page 07
Apply for your University student card	Page 08
✓ Tasks to do when you start	More info
Attend all of your online School/Programme induction events (essential)	
Confirm your attendance online with your School/Programme (essential)	Page 06
Take care of yourself (essential)	Page 10

Top 5 Tasks

The following top 5 tasks have been put together for all students who are preparing to start at the University of Edinburgh.

The Top 5 Tasks cover the essential tasks to be completed **before you start** and **when you start**. The following tasks are ordered in priority but are all essential to complete in full to become an online student at the University of Edinburgh.

Task 1: Get connected to the University systems

Step 1 - Before you start

Activate your email (essential)

You need to firstly register for EASE (Edinburgh Authentication Service) www.ease.ed.ac.uk/register/ with the University username (UUN) and temporary password that will have been sent to the email address you used to apply.

Once registered, you can activate your free Office365 email account with your new EASE password on www.office365.ed.ac.uk. After activating this account, most future communications from the University will go to this email, therefore it is important to access this regularly.

For any help activating your email account, watch this video: www.ed.ac.uk/is/activate-office365-youtube

You can also find more information: www.ed.ac.uk/is/it-help

Step 2 - Before you start

Log on to MyEd (essential)

MyEd is the University web portal and the best way to find many of the University's online resources. This portal includes access to your emails, timetables, course learning material, course information and also links to University services and news.

You can log in to your MyEd account by using your University username (UUN) and EASE password at: www.myed.ed.ac.uk

If you need help with accessing your MyEd, visit: <https://edin.ac/myed-support> or www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/students/odl-students



Task 2: Complete the matriculation process

Matriculation is an entirely online process by which you will formally enrol into the University of Edinburgh before you start your online studies with us. Without fully matriculating, you will be unable to access all of the University's services and/or facilities. If you don't complete the matriculation process your access to your courses and virtual learning environment will be deactivated.

Step 1 - Before you start

Register online (essential)

Registration is open to any student with an unconditional offer 4 weeks prior to your start date. You will receive an email to your University email address with details on how to complete this step. For more information on registration: www.ed.ac.uk/student-systems/guidance-online-registration

Step 2 - Before you start or When you start

Pay tuition fees (essential)

Paying for your course, either with financial assistance or funding, is an important step of matriculation and there are many ways in which to complete this in the next task (Page 07).

Task 3: Confirm your attendance

Step 1 - When you start

It is essential to confirm your attendance by accessing your Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) e.g. Moodle, Learn or Blackboard Collaborate or alternatively making email contact with your School Support Office or Programme Team.

More information on these platforms is online: www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/learning-technology/virtual-environments



Task 4: Make arrangements to pay your tuition fees

Step 1 - Before you start

Organise your funding (if required)

Every course has a cost associated with it and up-to-date tuition fee levels are available online:

www.ed.ac.uk/student-funding/tuition-fees/postgraduate/odl-fees

You should also check your offer letter to see whether there are any additional costs associated with your programme, including any deposit required by your school.

For most financial support towards paying for tuition fees, you will have to apply as early as possible. When you have completed this, your relevant financial support or sponsor funding/award provider will be able to advise you on what happens next.

For further information on funding routes for postgraduates, please visit: www.ed.ac.uk/student-funding/postgraduate

If you have any queries regarding your tuition fee level, your sponsor award letter, graduate or alumni discount or any problems with your funding, get in touch at fees@ed.ac.uk or 0131 650 2230.

Step 2 – Before you start or When you start

Pay your tuition fees (essential)

Tuition fees are charged when the invoice is sent to your University email account and/or directly to your sponsor but you (or your sponsor) can pay without an invoice.

Sponsors are invoiced for the fees they have confirmed to the University that they will pay for you.

You will also be sent an invoice if the sponsor amount is less than the total fees for your programme or course. You will need to send evidence of any of the following to:

finance.helpline@ed.ac.uk

- sponsor loan paid in scheduled portions **directly to you**
- bank or private loan paid in scheduled portions directly to the University

For more information: www.ed.ac.uk/finance/fees/external-funded

The Finance Channel in your MyEd shows your student and sponsor fee invoices, credit notes, payments and instalment plans. You can pay using this channel and complete a direct debit mandate. The mandate allows the University to collect payment for your fees direct from your UK bank account.

Students on “Part-time Intermittent Study” (postgraduates only) are degrees invoiced for each individual course as you study it. More info: www.ed.ac.uk/student-funding/tuition-fees/postgraduate/course-level-2019

Students who have annual tuition fees can pay in advance, during Welcome Week, or in three instalments (typically one of 50% and two further instalments of 25%). You can make advance payment in a single or in multiple amounts in the months **before you start**. The final dates to pay tuition fees in full (not by instalment) are:

- 15 October 2019, for courses commencing in September 2019
- 15 February 2020, for courses commencing in January 2020

Paying in instalments

In most cases, students with a UK bank account can pay fees in two instalments by direct debit after the first 50% of the fee is paid online or by bank transfer.

The remaining instalments are 25% each collected direct from your UK bank account. There is no additional cost for paying by this method.

Non-UK resident students can also pay instalments online or by bank transfer. The bank transfer and international online payment service allows students, their families or their sponsors the opportunity to securely send payment of student fees in sterling as well as in local currency.

An instalment plan letter will be sent to your University student email account confirming the amounts on each instalment date once the first 50% is paid and the mandate is received and actioned.

You must complete the:

- direct debit mandate by 15 October 2019 (autumn start students): www.payments.ed.ac.uk/instalments
- online learning payment mandate no later than ONE month after your programme start date: www.ed.ac.uk/finance/students/fees/ol-mandate

For students completing matriculation in August, September or October 2019 (autumn start), the instalment dates are:

- 1st instalment - 50% - 3 October 2019
- 2nd instalment - 25% - 3 December 2019
- 3rd instalment - 25% - 3 February 2020

Further detailed information and ‘How to Pay’ videos for all students commencing their studies in 2019/20 are available online: www.ed.ac.uk/finance/students-fees

Task 5: Apply for and receive your University student card

Your University student card serves as your official student ID, your library card, as well as identification to benefit from various 'student discounts'.

Step 1 - Before you start

Apply for your University student card (essential)

It is important to upload and submit your photograph online via the Card Photo Submission channel in your Accounts tab in the MyEd channel as soon as possible. You will receive an email to your email address used to apply with details on how to complete this step.

A guide to submitting your photo is available online: www.ed.ac.uk/is/card/photo-submission

Step 2 - When you start

Receive your University student card (essential)

- Your University card will be sent to your home address no sooner than 3 weeks before the start of your course.

A guide to applying for and receiving your student card is available online: www.ed.ac.uk/is/getting-first-card

Your checklist

We have also put together a helpful 'Getting Started' checklist to help keep you on track. You can find the checklist at the start of this guide, or online: www.ed.ac.uk/new-students/checklists



Learning Technology & Digital Skills Development

As an online and distance learning student at University all online programmes deliver content and opportunities to interact with other students in a number of ways. Platforms may include one or more of the following:

- virtual learning environment, e.g. Moodle, Learn or Blackboard Collaborate
- wikis
- blogs
- discussion boards and forums
- video streaming services, e.g. Lecture recording, YouTube or Vimeo

You will be introduced to the platforms most used by your programme before you begin and you should have access to most online resources in the month before you start to familiarise yourself with them. However, there is no expectation to be familiar with any platform before you commence your studies.

Virtual Learning Environments (VLE)

You will be using a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), such as “Learn”, “Moodle” or “Blackboard Collaborate”, which are online learning platforms allowing course materials to be shared online for you to view and supports collaboration and assessment activities for students. The type of VLE you will use will vary depending on your programme but you will have access to your VLE in advance of your start date which gives you the opportunity to familiarise yourself with your VLE and digital resources. However, there is no expectation that you should be fully competent in this programme in advance. For more information on VLEs and how to use these: www.ed.ac.uk/is/virtual-environments

Technical assistance for online and distance learning students

To study one of our online programmes, you will usually just need a computer with internet access but technical issues can occur and we want to help resolve any issues.

During your time studying at the University the IS Helpline is available 24/7 on 0131 6515151 / is.helpline@ed.ac.uk for enquiries relating to online learning, computing services or to the library. Outside of University working hours (08.00 - 18.00) your request may be automatically transferred to the out-of-hours support team who can deal with a wide variety of common IT queries. If your request cannot be resolved immediately, it will be passed onto the IS Helpline for investigation and may take longer to resolve.

Online study skills support

The Institute for Academic Development (IAD) provides free study skills workshops and online resources to support you throughout your studies and develop your skills and confidence in your academic studies: www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development

Digital and Information Skills Development

As a University student you can use the Digital Skills Framework which includes a self-assessment questionnaire to evaluate your digital skills, digital role profiles for Learners and Researchers to highlight skills relevant to you, and the Resource Finder to identify development resources and training. You have free access to online learning platforms such as Lynda.com (LinkedIn Learning) and classroom-based training for developing your digital and information skills including:

- Using technology effectively to study and learn,
- Developing the ability to find, evaluate and share information,
- Using digital networks and tools for collaborative learning,
- Managing your online identity,
- Developing broader skills such as Office 365, programming, data visualisation, artificial intelligence, web technologies, UX design and digital marketing.

For more information see the Digital Skills web pages: www.ed.ac.uk/is/skills



Take care of yourself

As with all transitions in life, studying at university as an online student can be both exciting and challenging – It may be that you are new to online learning, or that you are returning to higher education after a long time away. You may be a bit apprehensive, but over the next few weeks you will discover a host of people and services to help put your concerns to rest. Make sure that you look for help when you need it, and that you prioritise self-care



Introduction to the Five Ways to Wellbeing

The Five Ways to Wellbeing is a national campaign that has identified five distinct actions that can be used in life to allow you to manage and help improve personal wellbeing.

Turn over to the next page and click onto one of the distinct actions to be directed to the New Students Webpages and discover more about the support, development opportunities and/or spaces for you to reflect and learn in.

This information will provide you with tips, advice and support services to utilise, which in turn eases your transition into university and throughout your university journey.

Further details can be found on the New Student Website:
www.ed.ac.uk/new-students/managing-your-wellbeing

“Wellbeing can be understood as how people feel and how they function, both on a personal and a social level, and how they evaluate their lives as a whole.”

(New Economics Foundation (2012) Measuring Wellbeing: A guide for practitioners, London: New Economics Foundation.)



Connect

Connecting with the people around you is important - with family, friends, your online peers and academics. Studying online allows you to build relationships in your online courses with people from all over the world.

[Click here for more information about how to connect.](#)



Be active

Sport, exercise and physical activity play a key role in both your physical and mental wellbeing. If you need a break from the online screen, go for walks or a run, or explore the physical and emotional benefits of other forms of physical activity such as dance/swimming/martial arts/anything!

[Click here for more information about how to be active.](#)



Take notice

Your time as an online student at University can fly by so fast, that it is important to be mindful and take time to savour the moments that you experience as an online student both personally and academically. Take time to spend with friends, go for walks and share your thoughts with your online peers.

[Click here for more information about how to take notice.](#)



Keep learning

The University provides you with plenty of opportunities for personal and academic growth, becoming more confident throughout your time as an online student at Edinburgh.

[Click here for more information about how to keep learning.](#)



Give

There are lots of opportunities as an online student to give back to your community. The University encourages volunteering offering students to enrich their lives and the wider community. Taking time through volunteering, supporting and listening to your peers, being part of an activity to enhance your own experience, are all examples that are incredible rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.

[Click here for more information about how to give](#)

Helpful links to your resources

Before you start your online studies, it is strongly recommended that you become familiar with all of the resources that are available to you so that you can thrive as a student throughout your studies.

For all general information:

New Students Website	www.ed.ac.uk/new-students
University of Edinburgh (General enquiries)	www.ed.ac.uk
Welcome Week	www.ed.ac.uk/new-students/welcome-week
Edinburgh University Students' Association	www.eusa.ed.ac.uk
Advice Place	www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/advice
Edinburgh Global	https://global.ed.ac.uk/
Student Stories blog	https://studentstories.ed.ac.uk/

For information about getting around Edinburgh:

Accommodation, Catering & Events	www.accom.ed.ac.uk
Campus Maps	www.ed.ac.uk/maps
Security	www.ed.ac.uk/security
Sport and Exercise	www.ed.ac.uk/sport-exercise
Sports Union	www.ed.ac.uk/sports-union
Transport	www.ed.ac.uk/transport

For your academic development:

Careers Service	www.ed.ac.uk/careers
Institute for Academic Development	www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development
English Language Education	www.ed.ac.uk/english-language-teaching
Peer Learning & Support	www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/peersupport

For your health and wellbeing:

Chaplaincy Centre	www.ed.ac.uk/chaplaincy
Big White Wall	www.bigwhitewall.com
Feeling Good App	www.foundationforpositivementalhealth.com
Nightline	www.ednightline.com/
Student Counselling Service	www.ed.ac.uk/student-counselling
Student Disability Service	www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service

For guidance with IT systems:

Card Services	www.ed.ac.uk/is/card
Finance	www.ed.ac.uk/finance
Learn (VLE)	www.learn.ed.ac.uk
Library	www.ed.ac.uk/is/library-museum-gallery
MyEd	www.myed.ed.ac.uk/
Scholarships & Student Funding	www.ed.ac.uk/student-funding
Student Administration	www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration
Tuition Fees	www.ed.ac.uk/student-funding/tuition-fees
Timetabling	www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/timetabling



The Online Students Getting Started Guide has been created to help inform and direct you as a new online student about what is important and to action essential tasks to be completed (before and when you start). It also provides you with key information to help you settle into online learning and be part of the university community.

We hope that you find the Online Students Getting Started Guide of great value and insight and wish you all the very best for your online journey at The University of Edinburgh.

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