

Getting the Students Online

Many internal students are fearful of the online learning environment and may need encouragement and specific instruction in how to engage with your online unit.

Some Steps:

- 1. Arrange for face-to-face meetings that deal specifically with using the online environment – even where the delivery is entirely online.**
- 2. Arrange an initial meeting or two at the start of the unit. Use this time to:**
 - ◆ Log students on, explain how the unit works and how to use the site.
 - ◆ Reassure students that they are not on their own, but that you are available through alternate means such as the discussion board, email, and through feedback on tutorial exercises and assignments.
 - ◆ Discuss 'netiquette': what is appropriate to say publicly online and what is not (see BOB sheet on "Developing Online Courtesy").
 - ◆ Allow students to meet one another, get contact details and form groups if needed for your unit.
 - ◆ Give the students an initial activity where they practise using online tools that are part of your unit (such as the discussion board). This gives them a chance to ask you questions and allay fears about the technology. (See BOB sheet "Breaking Discussion Board Apathy").
 - ◆ Check all students can send and receive information in a useable format.
- 3. Email students around week three to check that they have been able to do everything they have been asked to do online, e.g., access specific forms, readings.**
- 4. Meet approximately one third of the way through the unit to:**
 - ◆ Address any problems that may be affecting learning.
 - ◆ To ensure that students are on track and keeping up with their work.
- 5. Meet at the end of the unit to get final evaluations of the process and resolve any issues and questions prior to the exam.**