

ONLINE STUDY SKILLS

AN ESSENTIAL GUIDE FOR STUDENTS



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PREFACE

Dear student, welcome to this online study skills guide for students enrolled in academic programmes in higher education institutions. The guide is intended to help you to successfully embark on and undertake online or blended learning. Although it is prepared based on Chuka University as a case study, *the content of the book is applicable to any university that is providing online or e-learning courses. Therefore, the guide can benefit any student enrolled or wishes to enroll in online study, for a complete academic programme or in course unit(s) offered on online study mode.*

Chuka University is the 9th Chartered Public University in Kenya since 2013 (*take a tour of it here:* <https://www.chuka.ac.ke/>). The University started in the 1950s and is located on Meru Tharaka-Nithi County at about 180 km from Nairobi City on the slopes of Mt. Kenya. It presently has a population of nearly 20,000 students and 700 staff (academic, technical and administrative). So far it has produced over 24,000 graduates since 2013 at Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate levels. Its main mode of learning that is preferred by students is face-to-face (physical learning) but lately many of its courses are offered on online mode.

With the advent of the Information Revolution (IR), as well as the emerging education challenges, reforms, and opportunities, *universities across the world embarked on delivering higher education through Open, Distance and Electronic Learning (ODEL)* and blended modes. These new modes of delivery are facilitated by the internet, e-platforms and social media channels such as email, WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook.

This guide will help you as a new, beginning and continuing student to adapt easily to these new norms. The Guide has activities and

optional quizzes for you to attempt for reflection and comprehension. Refer to activity/quiz feedback at the back of this Guide or embedded online only after attempting them. Upon attempting the activities and quizzes, you will be rewarded by correcting any shortcomings you may still have and be motivated to engage in online learning without fear or stress.

If you score less than 50% in the quiz, take 24 hours off, re-read the Chapter and then attempt the quiz again. You are free to attempt the quizzes as many times as necessary until you attain that pass mark to earn the certificate. You may then add that achievement to your Curriculum Vitae (CV). It should take you at least 4 weeks to complete reading this Guide.

When reading a hard copy of this Guide, you will need to have access to the Internet, or a smartphone with internet bundles or WIFI for accessing e-links/e-content and open educational resources (OERs) to learn more from them. For proper context, peruse terms/acronyms at: <https://moodle.org/mod/glossary/view.php?id=851&mode=cat&hook=0&sortkey&sortorder=asc&fullsearch=0&page=8>

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Preamble:

This chapter presents to you tips on the following areas:

- 1.1. Targeted Users of the Online Study Skills Guide
- 1.2. Expected Outcomes from Reading the Online Study Skills Guide
- 1.3. Benefits of Online Learning
- 1.4. Justification and Challenges of Moving Learning to Online Mode

Expected Reading Outcomes

By the end of reading Chapter 1, you will begin appreciate the importance of this Skills Guide and identify subsequent chapters that can support your online learning.

1.1. Targeted Users of the Online Study Skills Guide

The principal users targeted to benefit from this Guide are online students embarking on online study. You do not have to read the material in this guide or peruse it in the order given. You are free to exercise flexibility in choosing any order to suit your needs. Quizzes and activities are also optional, to help you with comprehension and not to gauge your academic aptitude. Should you need elaboration, follow the given references and links and also engage in in-depth study through course units in your specific academic programme. Should you need context for proper comprehension, refer to Moodle Educational Terms and Acronyms available at: <https://moodle.org/mod/glossary/view.php?id=851&mode=cat&hook=0&sortkey&sortorder=asc&fullsearch=0&page=8> or the internet.

1.2. Expected Outcomes from Reading the Online Study Skills Guide

By using this guide, you will:



- (a) Strengthen your understanding of online learning preparedness
- (b) Further develop your skills to engage in blended and online learning
- (c) Develop your comprehension of online learning requirements
- (d) Increase your understanding of student-involvement and why it is important
- (e) Address one or more challenges you face through online learning and OER use

 **Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 1:** Take a pause from reading this Guide.

<i>Activity 1 query</i>	<i>Response(s)</i>
Write below 5 things you expect to achieve through online learning.	

Provide your answers...

Activity 1 feedback: Refer to page 50 of this Guide for suggested answers

1.3. Benefits of Online Learning

There are many benefits of studying online to you as a student. They can be grouped into two categories: facilitative and impactful. Some that come to mind are: connectivity, extension, inquiry, personalization, publication and scale, whereby the first three are facilitative and the last three are impactful.



Connectivity: The internet offers a wide range of tools that can support networking, collaborative and conversational approaches to learning, including OERs (Open Educational Resources) and linking you across the country and around the world.

OERs refers to various resources shared on the web to use and reuse for educational purposes. They are available in the public

domain and specifically licensed for reuse freely. OERs can include: electronic textbooks, reading and learning content; simulations, games and other learning applications; syllabi, quizzes, and assessment tools; and virtually any other material (See Chapter 7 for more details).



Extension: Technology supports extended learning by connecting learning experiences across locations, times, devices, social settings, outside and inside a classroom.



Inquiry: Students with smartphones have built-in sensors that measure, interrogate, analyze and record their environment, organize data, new reference sources, and new tools to investigate the information space. The internet supports citizen inquiry in scientific investigations that involve the collection and analysis of data on a worldwide scale.



Personalization: Interactions with technology help reveal patterns and trends to enhance your learning experience by offering learning paths or resources that are personalized to meet your needs and learning preferences.



Publication: You can share worldwide by publishing your creations or research findings.



Scale: You can now access education at large scale (variety/limitless) through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) sometimes/many times for free or minimal cost for exciting and lifelong learning.

1.4. Justification and Challenges of Moving Learning Online

As society is becoming increasingly modernized, students are expected to use several types of emerging digital technologies in learning. This is not surprising because in modern society students encounter and apply various electronic technologies in everyday life. Therefore, to learn well in a digital age, students need to develop new skills that are required in education.

As a student you need a variety of study skills to be able to learn online. These are not confined to self-regulation (Zimmerman and Moylan, 2009), but also include setting up a study environment, getting organized, computer skills, managing time, stress, and other resources.

Furthermore, the fourth industrial revolution is prompting many institutions to move teaching online or blend it. The modern world is characterized by rapid changes to technology, industries and societal patterns and processes including education in the 21st century due to increasing interconnectivity and smart automation (Wikipedia).

Online learning requires you to adapt to approaches that are different from those used in faced-to-fac physical classroom. The ensuing challenges are acutely felt among students who have minimal online learning and study skills. The increasing number of students also dictates adoption of online or blended learning, and the use of digital networking platforms and social media (See Chapter 3).

When moving learning online, careful thought about students' access to technologies and digital tools should be done because some participants use older models of phones/devices than expected, and the structure of sessions needs to be planned very differently to work online (Beck and Fovet, 2014; CAST, 2018). Other challenges experienced include:

Change management;
Resistance to change; Mindset change;
Digital divide;
High cost of IT infrastructure and overhead utilities (internet bundles, airtime, devices);
Low IT literacy/induction;
Mixed demographics;
Low fees paid by students;
Low adoption of e-learning; s;
Low digital library resources use in learning and teaching; and
No online assessment for/of students.

Chuka University is overcoming these challenges as stated below and, in the chapters, ahead.

The challenges facing both students and teachers can be addressed by building capacity in digital education, media, networking and providing reference resources/guides (William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, 2021). Consequently, the authors opted to contribute to providing solutions by drafting this Guide. The available broad solutions include:

- Inducting students/faculty in online learning and OER use requirements;
- Training/attending trainings in change management;
- Securing funding for IT devices, online bundles;
- Mindset change to become IT literate;
- Incorporating e-learning in academic programmes;
- Providing information literacy training to all stakeholders (faculty & students);
- Including digital library resources as core texts (references) in course units;
- Adopting course assessments such as term papers, seminars, critical book and article reviews that enable students to use

- digital library resources;
- Training staff in online assessment;
- Providing technical support.

Addressing these challenges involves all stakeholders/groups from across the university setup - from senior management to you, the student (Figure 1). The stakeholders include:

- University management to organize and facilitate change management trainings;
- Staff and students to embrace mindset change;
- Government and trainees to invest in personal IT devices (Buy Your Own Device);
- University administration to set up a policy on inclusion of digital learning in all programmes, inclusion of digital library resources as core texts, facilitate training opportunities, provide leadership in information literacy training and IT technical support;
- Faculty to effectively participate in the teaching process;
- Librarians to provide information literacy training and support; and
- Trained individuals to cascade skills learned to others.

The roles of stakeholders in Figure 1 below include:

- ✓ Organizing and facilitating change management/IT literacy/ODEL trainings;
- ✓ Sensitization of students and educators;
- ✓ Enforcing the Buy/Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy (<https://portal.chuka.ac.ke/policy/ICT%20POLICY.html>); and
- ✓ Lobbying the government for commensurate capitation.

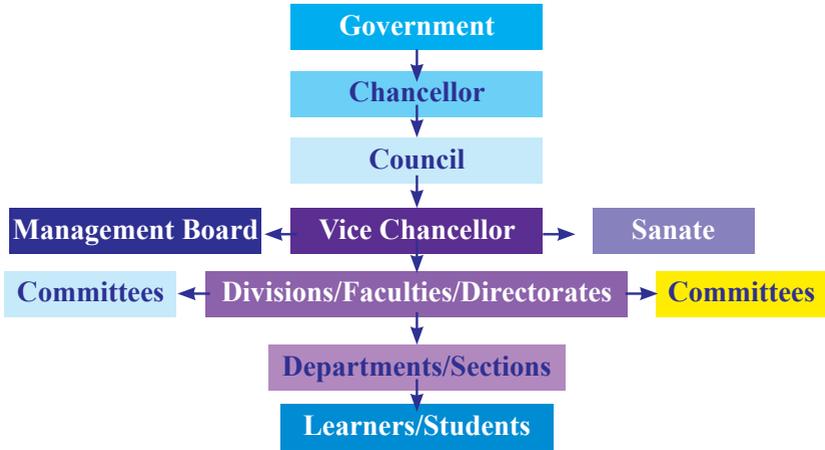


Figure 1. Chuka University stakeholders in higher education

 **Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 2:** Pause your reading and reflect on Figure 1 above.

<i>Activity 2 query</i>	<i>Response(s)</i>
Write down 5 things you think are your roles in online learning.	

Provide your answers...

Activity 2 feedback: Refer to page 50 in this guide for suggested answers

End of Chapter 1 Comprehension Quiz

Query	Provide your answers: Click here while on the internet to view them or refer to the back of this Guide
1. Differentiate what you understand by online learning and in-person learning.	

2. What digital challenges do you face while learning in the University?	
3. In the context of this guide, give the full name of the following: BYOD, ODEL, ICT,	
4. Name five technological tools that you understand are useful in online learning and their application.	
5. Fill the missing word in the blank space: Many learning institutions are transitioning to online learning because of _____.	
6. What channels/platforms/apps do you use in communication and why?	



C:\Users\jg2592\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\IS3HGE00\1.1.Chuka University humanities students packed in an in-person classroom. Photo by D. K. Isutsa.jpg and is licensed CC BY-NC-ND 6.0.



CHAPTER 2. BASICS OF ONLINE LEARNING

Preamble

This chapter presents to you online study-skills tips in the following areas:

- 2.1. Definition and Methods of Online Learning
- 2.2. Justification and Motivation
- 2.3. Types/Approaches to e-Learning
- 2.4. Myths about e-Learning
- 2.5. Learning Activities
- 2.6. Learning Materials and Tools
- 2.7. Assessment for Learning (CATs)
- 2.8. Assessment as Learning
- 2.9. Assessment of Learning/End of Semester Examinations

Expected Reading Outcomes

By the end of reading Chapter 2, you are expected to demonstrate knowledge of how to prepare yourself to engage in online learning effectively.

2.1. Definition and Methods of Online Learning

(What does it involve? Who does it?)

The Internet has become one of the vital ways to make available resources for research and learning for students to share and acquire information. Technology-based learning or e-learning encompasses the use of the internet and other important technologies to produce materials for learning, teach students, and also regulate courses in an organization. There has been extensive debate about a common definition of the term e-learning.

Arkorful and Abaidoo (2015) defined e-learning as **using information and communication technologies for enabling access to online teaching and learning resources.**

Clark and Mayer (2016) defined e-learning as **instructions delivered through digital devices with the intent of supporting learning.**

2.2. Justification and Motivation

(Factors giving rise to/shift, Advantages)

These two definitions above contain the what, how and why of e-learning:

What: Online courses contain both content (information) and methods that help people to learn the content.

How: E-learning courses are delivered via digital devices, using words in the form of spoken or printed text, images, audio and videos.

Why: the aim of online learning is to help learners achieve personal and educational objectives more conveniently from a distance.

Motivation of Online Learning

Customised Learning	Acceleration of Expertise	Learning through Digital Gaming
Online learning has the potential to customize learning to unique needs of the learner e.g. learner can progress at their own pace, learner can select topics and methods that best meet their needs, learner has control of their learning.	Online learning offers opportunities to immerse learners in job-realistic environments requiring them to solve infrequent problems or complete tasks in a matter of minutes that would take hours or even days to complete in the real world; for example when troubleshooting an equipment, some problems are infrequent and may take some considerable time to resolve. A computer simulation can emulate/create a scenario of those failures and give learners an opportunity to solve them in realistic work environment.	An emerging strategy involves adding games as a form of engagement. E-learning provides an opportunity for application of this strategy.

2.3. Types/Approaches/Modes of E-learning



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Asynchronous Learning: A mode of online designed for individual self-study. It allows individual learners to access learning material at any time or any location on their own.

The asynchronous mode also allows students to discuss with the instructors or teachers as well as among themselves at different times. It is therefore not interaction at the same moment but later, with the use of tools such as thread discussion and emails. One disadvantage of this mode is that the students will not be able to receive instant feedback from instructors as well as their colleagues.



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Synchronous Learning: A mode designed for real-time instructor-led learning. They include webinars or virtual classrooms. The synchronous type allows students to discuss with the instructors and also among themselves with the use of tools such as video conference and chat rooms. It offers the advantage of instantaneous feedback. Although synchronous

sessions are real-time, they can be recorded allowing them to be viewed by a single learner in a self-paced (asynchronous) manner. Synchronous and asynchronous modes of online may support collaboration with others through applications such as Wikis, breakout rooms, chat, discussion boards and email. An instructor may combine instructor-led virtual classroom sessions/webinar (synchronous), self-study sessions (asynchronous) and collaborative knowledge-sharing opportunities in the delivery of a course to provide a holistic learning experience.



C:\Users\fg2592\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\IS3HGE00\2.2.Synchronous Learning Demonstration Photo by D. K. Isutsa and is licensed CC BY-NC-ND 6.0.

Blended Learning: A mode comprising both online and face-to-face elements. This creates an environment where learning does not take place entirely online or entirely face-to-face. A blended approach can bring together three core elements:

- Classroom-based activities with the teacher present;
- Online learning materials;
- Independent study using materials provided by the teacher.
- Blended learning combines the main advantages of synchronous learning namely teacher presence, immediate feedback and peer interaction with those of asynchronous learning namely independence, flexibility and self-pacing.
- It can help you avoid the possible issues of asynchronous learning, such as learner isolation and difficulty with motivation, as well as the possible issues of face-to-face learning, such as lack of flexibility and the need to work at the same pace as others.

It can help you avoid the possible issues of asynchronous learning, such as learner isolation and difficulty with motivation, as well as the possible issues of face-to-face learning, such as lack of flexibility and the need to work at the same pace as others.

2.4. Myths about E-learning (*Quality, Cost, Effort*)

When you move online, you may often be tempted to reproduce some assumptions inherent in in-person classroom. These assumptions include:

- ❖ Learning Takes Place at Set Times.
- ❖ Learning Must be Synchronous.
- ❖ The Educator Must See the Students.
- ❖ The Students Must See the Educator.
- ❖ Class Members Should All Engage at The Same Time.

- ❖ Class Members Should All Take a Break at The Same Time.
- ❖ Technology is Distracting.

Sometimes these assumptions may sound appropriate for online, but in many cases, need to be set aside completely to add flexibility to online learning.

2.5. Learning Activities (*Attending online, experimenting, personal readings, making notes, doing assignments, discussions, presentations*)

When learning online, you need to consider how best to engage with course materials, search related information, make notes, communicate with others and take tests. You therefore need to:

- a. Make a note of your study goals to help you to decide where to focus attention while studying.
- a) Block out time for study in your diary or calendar and set aside time each week for study.
- b) Note the webinar dates if any and add them to your calendar. If you are not able to watch them live, set aside time to watch them on video.
- c) Agree on meetings with your colleagues when you will work together on your group work and add these times to your calendar.
- d) Agree meetings for consultation/mentorship or workshop and add these to your calendar.
- e) You will need to be online and logged in to access and take online assessment tests.
- f) If you would like to work with others, for example in a study group or with a study friend, contact those who may be interested in studying with you.
- g) Decide where you will make or store your notes and set up the space to do so.

2.6. Learning Materials and Tools (modules, notebooks, devices, internet)

If you do not already have an appropriate **workspace**, take some time to decide where you will study on campus e.g., at the pavilion, outdoor tents, library and cafeteria. You are also expected to acquire the access gadgets you will need. These gadgets include a desktop PC, a laptop or a tablet.

BYOD Policy

Chuka University operates a Buy/Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy where students or staff bring a personally owned device and use it to access ICT resources related to University programmes. Buy Your Own Device practice is encouraged at Chuka University to augment other resources. Both staff and students are required to use their own devices in a responsible way, following the ICT Policy [<https://portal.chuka.ac.ke/policy/ICT%20POLICY.html>].

The following guidelines govern the ICT Department's level of support for student-owned PCs, laptops, notebooks, tablets, smartphones and mobile phones:

- Students who wish to use their own devices for wireless access to the University network must register their device with the ICT Department, who will record the device's MAC address, serial number, owner personal details and establish access on the wireless network.
- Students will authenticate in the usual way as they would on any other device, such as university PCs on Ethernet connections using wireless access within the university. This requires the use of a user name and password registered for use on the University network.
- To achieve functional access, the device shall be compliant with current standards like supported operating systems.
- Students/staff using their own devices on the university network

should set up secure access to their device, to prevent fraudulent use of their device by someone else.

- Up-to-date anti-malware protection should be installed on the portable device.
- The University is not liable for loss of or damage to a personal device while the device is on University premises.
- The university reserves the right to inspect the device if it is believed that acceptable use or BYOD guidelines have been violated.
- In exceptional circumstances, students may be restricted from using their personal devices in the computer labs.

Internet

The University provides on-campus broadband internet connection which may be of use to you in case you reside in a place with inconsistent or non-existent internet. In such a case, plan how you will **access the online content** e.g., the times you will need to be online and when you will download sections of the online content. The University has implemented Learning Management System (LMS) or Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) using Moodle where students are automatically enrolled once they register for the semester. Students' access the platform using the same credentials as those they use to log in to the student portal. The University has additionally deployed a web conferencing platform implemented as an instance of Big Blue Button. The two platforms are open source and therefore have open licenses. They complement one another by allowing you as a learner to enjoy the benefit of asynchronous learning through Moodle and Synchronous learning through the web conference platforms.

2.7. Assessment for Learning (CATs) (*online, revision*)

Assessment for learning, also known as formative assessment, gives

you and your educators information about what you know, so that:

(i)	(ii)	(iii)
Your educators can target future assessments and resources	Your educators can feedback to address any areas in which a particular learner needs further development	You can determine areas of study that need additional attention

Assessment for learning can make a significant contribution to your achievement and attainment. Assessment for learning can take place before a course of study, in the form of a diagnostic assessment intended to identify students' existing knowledge, skills, strengths, needs, interests and learning preferences. Such assessments will often collect information from multiple sources, including the learner and previous educators. Assessment for learning can also take place during a course of study, to give you and your educators information that can help them improve their knowledge and skills; for example, by giving the learner additional resources or providing resources in a different format.

2.8. Assessment as Learning (*participatory*)

Assessment as learning emphasizes your role – engaging you in self-assessment as active participants in directing your learning. Often featuring reflection-based activities, this approach requires your educators to help you analyze your learning critically.

2.9. Assessment of Learning (end of semester examinations, online, revision)

Also referred to as summative assessment, is generally used to confirm what you know, and can do, and whether you have achieved the related learning outcomes. It can also be used to rank students in order of ability. End-of-semester examinations whether online or face-to-face exams are administered for this

purpose. You as a learner are therefore advised to revise for them thoroughly to perform well. The marking and processing of results for examinations administered online follow a procedure similar to that for examinations administered face-to-face.

You are therefore encouraged to access the Students' Information Handbook available from <https://portal.chuka.ac.ke/policy/Students%20Information%20Handbook.html/> to familiarize yourself with university examination regulations.



Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 3

Take some time to reflect on the content in this chapter and make notes on the following queries:

<i>Activity 3 query</i>	<i>Response</i>
How does what you have learned in this chapter relate to you as a student?	
Has this chapter changed your understanding of online learning? If so, how?	
What changes, if any, would you make to your online learning as a result of what you have learnt in this chapter?	
<i>Comments on reflection activity: Refer to page 50 of this Guide for suggested answers</i>	

End of Chapter 2 Quiz for Reflection and Comprehension

Query	Provide your answer
1. True or False: Online courses contain both content (information) and instructional methods (techniques) that help you to learn the content. T ____; F ____	

<p>2. True or False: E-learning courses are delivered via digital devices (in digital electronic form) using words in the form of spoken or printed text and pictures such as illustrations, photos, animation or video. T ____; F ____</p>	
<p>3. _____ can be defined as using information and communication technologies for enabling access to online teaching and learning resources.</p>	
<p>4. Which of the following is true about blended learning? Tick all that is True.</p> <p>[A] Designed for individual self-study</p> <p>[B] Comprises both online and face-to-face elements</p> <p>[C] Designed for real-time instructor-led learning</p> <p>[D] Can help you avoid learner isolation and difficulty with motivation</p>	

5. Which of the following is true about assessment in blended learning? Tick all that is True.

[A] Assessment for learning gives educators and students information about what students know so that educators can target future teaching and resources

[B] Assessment for learning gives educators and students information about what students know so that educators can give feedback to address any areas in which a particular learner needs further development.

[C] Assessment of learning can take place before a course of study in the form of a diagnostic assessment intended to identify students' existing knowledge, skills, strengths, needs, interests and learning preferences.

[D] Assessment as learning emphasizes the learner's role, engaging students in self-assessment as active participants in directing their learning

[E] Assessment of learning is generally used to confirm what students know, and can do, and whether they have achieved the related learning outcomes.

6. Give examples of electronic media is used to do more these days compared to what analogue media used to do in the past.



CHAPTER 3: HOW E-LEARNING WORKS

Preamble

This chapter presents to you online study-skills tips concerning the following areas:

- 3.1. Who Teaches You?
- 3.2. Managing Your Study
- 3.3. Technology for e-Learning
- 3.4. How to Attend Classes Online
- 3.5. Using the University e-Learning Platform
- 3.6. Obtaining Support in Online Learning in the University



C:\Users\yfg2592\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\IS3HGE00\3.1.Chuka University staff and students exhibiting digital media equipment. Photo by D. K. Isutsa.jpg and is licensed CC BY-NC-ND 6.0.

Expected Reading Outcomes

By the end of reading this chapter, you are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the process of online learning, particularly instructor and technology roles.

3.1. Who Teaches You? (Role of lecturers)

Lecturers provide guidance, counseling, schedules, assessments. In addition, they engage in:

- Designing and developing course learning and delivery materials.
- Supporting you to set goals that they value and to plan on how to achieve them, as well as to think of when resources and support will be available.
- Providing you with different strategies for approaching tasks
- Offering a structure for you to reflect on learning.

3.2. Managing Your Study *(Role of students: activities and expectations from students)*

The skills you need when studying online are not exactly the same as those you need in an in-person classroom. In an in-person classroom you may rely on the University and your lecturers to keep you on track. For example, timetable, resources and study spaces. On the other hand, when studying online you need **self-regulation skills** to manage your learning. The skills you need to acquire to benefit more from online learning may be categorized based on three phases of self-regulation: planning phase, performance phase and self-reflection phase.

Planning phase =>	Performance phase =>	Reflection phase
<p>Involves getting organized for learning. You need to acquire skills to help in: Setting goals that you value, plan how to achieve those goals and think ahead to identify when resources and support will be available.</p>	<p>Includes strategies for approaching online activities/ online tasks. Important skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following deadlines • Attending classes • Creating a learning schedule • Selecting and setting a study environment • Mobilizing study tools: Laptop, internet access, bundles • Time management • Knowing how to monitor your online learning • Knowing where to go and who you can contact for help • Knowing where you can access support when a tutor is not available. The following are options depending on the type of help required: friends, family, social networks, librarians, resource centres and online groups • Sharpening computing skills • Managing stress 	<p>You will also need skills to help you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To evaluate your learning • To evaluate your progress • To understand why things worked or did not work, and • To understand how you could improve your approach. <p>Double-loop learning skills are skills which help you to reflect on how you are solving problems, think about what you are trying to achieve, question your assumptions, consider how to become more effective, and remember to try different options. This helps you to become self-determined with the ability to seek out sources of knowledge and make use of appropriate online networks for advice and support.</p>

3.3. Technology for e-Learning (*Learning management system (Moodle) usefulness; Internet usefulness; Social media purpose and usefulness*)

3.3.1. Learning Management Systems

Online courses and courses with any online component are usually delivered using a host platform, commonly referred to as a Learning Management System (LMS) or Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). These platforms (Moodle and Blackboard are popular examples) support the delivery of materials to students, keep track of registered students, and support other tasks such as assessment and communications. A variety of tools can typically be included, such as e-books, blogs and wikis, quizzes and automated assessment processes, spaces for synchronous and asynchronous learning activities, and repositories for learning objects. For contextual meaning of these digital terminologies, refer to Moodle glossary.

3.3.2. Web Conferencing Tools

Web conferencing platforms are applications (apps) that enable students to access and share learning material over the internet in real-time. They are divided into two main categories: audio and video communication, and those that offer audio, video and features like document sharing, access to the desktop, and editing during the virtual meeting. The most common examples of these apps in recent times include.

 BigBlueButton™	Big Blue Button
	Zoom

	Google Meet
	Webex
	Microsoft Teams

The ICT helpdesk technologists and library staff are always available to demonstrate these platforms to you.

3.3.3. Content Creation Tools

A variety of content creation tools and applications used to package together to form a coherent learning system as well as provide interesting ways to use audio and video techniques to support activities. These tools can support the production of reports (Microsoft word), graphs and infographics (Excel), animations (PowerPoint), storyboards, screen-casting and more. Refer to COSC 101: Introduction to Computer Applications course unit and Chapter 5 for elaboration. The ICT helpdesk technologists and library staff are available to demonstrate these platforms to you.

3.3.4. Note Taking, Networking and Collaboration Tools

	<p>As an online learner, you can use software like Microsoft Word, Email, Google Docs and other elements of the Google Workspace and similar tools to make notes and save them, and also to share your progress with your teachers and work with them together in real time or asynchronously. This can strengthen the teacher-student online relationship.</p>
---	---

	<p>A range of collaborative networking tools can be used to foster group work and a sense of community of practice (CoP) between you and other students in an online course. One good example is Facebook</p>
	<p>Instant messaging apps such as WhatsApp can be used to support backchannels (communication among colleagues, feedback, etc.).</p>
	<p>You can also use Twitter or Pinterest to search for information or Diigo to gather together relevant internet bookmarks.</p>

3.3.5. Library Systems (<https://www.chuka.ac.ke/storage/2022/07/information-brochure-on-digital-library-services.pdf>)

	<p>These are online systems that facilitate access and retrieval of reading and learning materials such as e-books, e-journals, videos in electronic formats and other services. A typical example is My Library On Finger Tips (<i>MyLOFT</i>) app. Visit the University Library to be shown how <i>MyLOFT</i> works. Proceed to it as follows: Download app from Google Play App Store to your device => Chuka University Kenya Library Team => My Library on Finger Tips => Enter Email address => Set Password => Use <i>MyLOFT</i>. For more on Libraries, see Chapter 7 of this Guide.</p>
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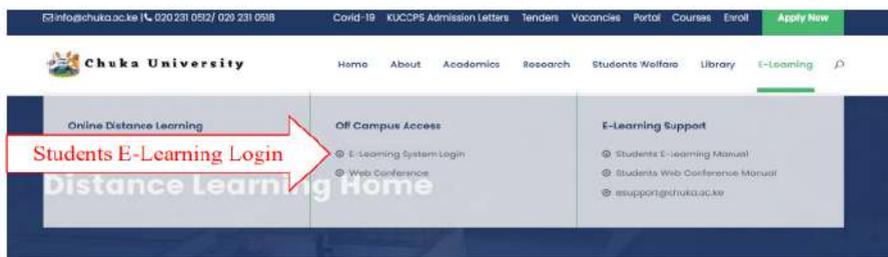
3.4. How to Attend Class Online (*Outline of online classes software*)

(i) A Short Guide on how to Use Web Conference Software

Prerequisite

Please make sure you are able to login to the LMS platform first, either through your computer, mobile phone browser or the mobile app. If not Please refer to the Students E-Learning manual on the website under the menu E-Learning System otherwise please proceed to page two.

Step 1



Click E-Learning System Login under E-Learning Menu to access LMS (Learning management system) on the university website.

Step 2

A screenshot of the LMS login page. It features a login form with fields for Username and Password, and a checkbox for 'Remember username'. Below the form is a blue 'Log in' button. To the right of the form, there are three links: 'Forgotten your username or password?', 'Cookies must be enabled in your browser' (with a question mark icon), and 'Some courses may allow guest access'. Below these links is a blue 'Log in as a guest' button.

Login to LMS using your credentials

Step 3

Under each unit on the LMS check for a conference link if any. It can be given any name that indicates its either a conference or an online class.

The screenshot shows a section titled "Announcements" with a sub-section "Topic 1". Under "Topic 1", there are two items: "COURSE OUTLINE" with a red icon and "Lecture one Conference Room link" with a blue icon. Below the link, the text "Room Passcode: COSC0150" is displayed, followed by a note: "* Room passcode will be required in order to join the meeting." A red arrow points from the text "Usually, it has a blue icon" to the blue icon of the conference link. Another red arrow points from the text "Click on this name to view online class details" to the text "Lecture one Conference Room link".

Step 4

Once you click on the name of the online class, you will be able to view the online class link and the password for the link.

Lecture one Conference Room link

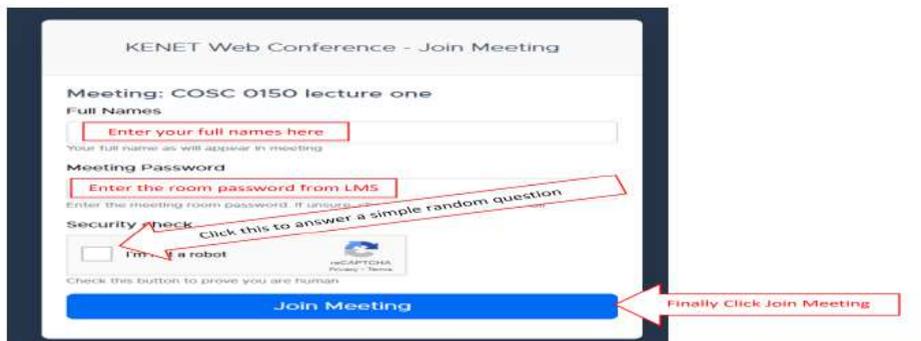
Room Passcode: COSC0150
* Room passcode will be required in order to join the meeting.
Click <https://conference.ke/ClZ7e6qXG5VngTSZtRTB7fqFb178/> link to open resource.

PREVIOUS ACTIVITY
COURSE OUTLINE

Click on this link, it will open on your browser

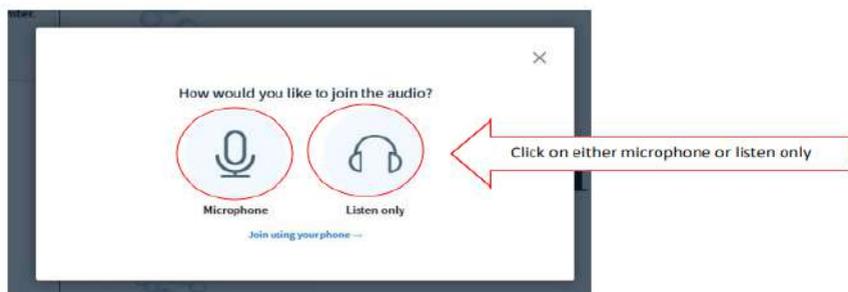
Step 5

Enter your full names for attendance record purposes, Enter the room password given on the LMS and click on the security check then click Join meeting.



Step 6

Select either microphone or listen only, click it and enjoy the class.



With microphone option, you can be able to talk in an online class and with listen only option you will only listen and follow the class proceedings.

Please keep on checking the LMS platform as lecturers create online classes and update the invite links on the LMS frequently

(ii) A Short Manual for use of Moodle Platform: Registration and Downloading Notes.

Prerequisite

First make sure you are able to login to your student's portal before you login to the LMS portal. In case you are not able to login to your students Portal follow these reset password steps. Otherwise proceed to page 3 to Login.

1. Go to the student portal <https://portal.chuka.ac.ke/Default.aspx> and click "Forgot Password"



Chuka University
Sapientia divitia est (Knowledge is Wealth)
Chuka University

Chuka University Students Portal

Registration Number

Password:

Log In Forgot Password

2. Key in the Registration Number and Click "Reset Password"



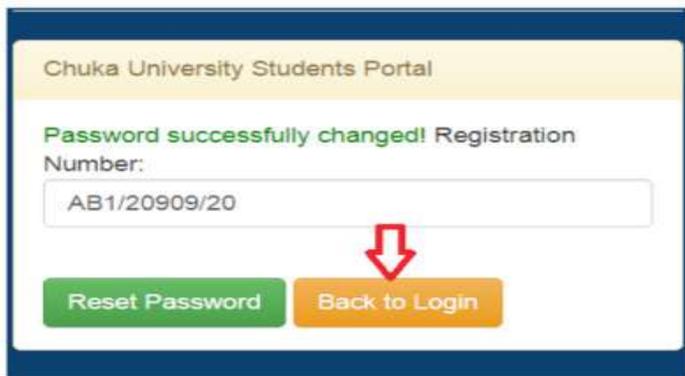
Chuka University
Sapientia divitia est (Knowledge is Wealth)
Chuka University

Chuka University Students Portal

Registration Number:

Reset Password Back to Login

3. Check for the success message, Click “Back to Login”



Chuka University Students Portal

Password successfully changed! Registration Number:

AB1/20909/20

Reset Password Back to Login

A red arrow points down to the 'Back to Login' button.

4. Login in to the portal using your Admission number as username and your ID as your Password



Chuka University Students Portal

Registration Number:

AB1/20909/20

Password:

Enter your ID Number

Log In Forget Password

A red arrow points to the 'Log In' button.

USING A LAPTOP OR A COMPUTER TO LOG IN TO THE LMS

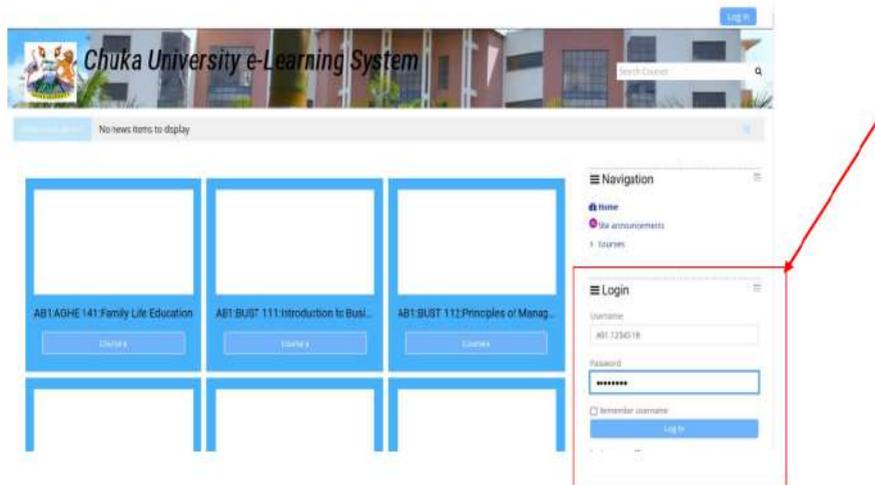
Step 1

Visit the university website, www.chuka.ac.ke under E-Learning Menu, click E-learning System Login



Step 2

The LMS home page opens, Bottom right of the page Login with your student portal details and remember to replace your registration number slashes (/) with dots (.). For example, if your registration number is AB1/12345/18 (THIS IS YOUR STUDENT PORTAL USERNAME), BUT FOR THE LMS PLEASE USE AB1.12345.18 (AS YOUR USERNAME) AND PASSWORD IS YOUR STUDENT PORTAL PASSWORD.



Step 3

Your Dashboard shows with all the units you are taking for the semester. If your units are missing, please clear your fees and send your query to studentfinance@chuka.ac.ke

Click On a unit to open the notes

Step 4

This section has the notes and also the link to scheduled live classes by your lecturers. Open the notes or link to view the details.

Click on the notes name to open and read
If it's a Conference link, open to access the link and the details

3.5. How to Use Moodle e-Learning Platform (*Short manual for use of Moodle platform: registration, downloading notes, uploading assignments*) - See 3.4 Above.

3.6. Obtaining Support in Online Learning in Chuka University

To support online learning, the ICT Department in collaboration with the Department of Open, Distance and e-Learning (ODEL) of Chuka University will:

- Facilitate orientation for you to prepare toundertake ODEL programmes using ICT gadgets such as tablets, LMS and other support services.
- Provide supportive infrastructure-learning portal for student support, Learning Management System (LMS), Web Conferencing facilities and equipment, computer rooms with Internet connectivity, eBooks and user accounts.
- Ensure availability and adequacy of technical support staff.
- Provide technical advice on equipment (hardware and software) specifications and any defined technical agreements.
- Check and maintain technologies to ensure reliability and security.

□ Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 4

Take a pause from reading this Guide and do the following:

Activity 4 query	Response(s)
Log in to the University Learning Management System (Moodle). Write down what you did/ saw as you logged in.	
Explore the features available in the system. Write down what you did/ saw as you explored.	

Make short notes/observations about its benefits and areas that can be improved to be more beneficial to you as an online student	
<i>Comments on reflection activity: Refer to page 50 for suggested answers</i>	

End of Chapter 3 Quiz for Reflection and Comprehension

Query	Provide your answer(s)
1. True or False: Learning Management Systems are software that enable you to access learning over the internet in real-time. T _____; F _____	
2. True or False: You can use Google Docs and other elements of Google Workspace and other similar tools to take notes and also to share your progress with your teachers and work on them together in real-time or asynchronously. T _____; F _____	
3. Fill in the missing two hyphenated words: When studying via online mode, you need _____ - _____ skills to manage your own learning.	

<p>4. Read the statements about blended learning. Tick all that are True.</p> <p>[A] The skills you need to acquire to benefit more from online can be categorized based on three phases of self-regulation: planning phase, performance phase and self-reflection phase.</p> <p>[B] When studying online, you can also use Twitter or Pinterest to search for information or Diigo to gather together relevant internet bookmarks.</p> <p>[C] The skills needed by you when studying online are exactly the same as those you need in an in-person classroom.</p> <p>[D] Learning Management Systems support the delivery of materials to students, keep track of registered students, and support other tasks such as assessment and communications</p>	
<p>[5] Of the following what is true about important skills necessary for approaching online activities/tasks? Tick all that are True.</p> <p>[A] Planning for deadlines</p> <p>[B] Attending synchronous classes</p> <p>[C] Attending in-person classes</p> <p>[D] Creating a learning schedule</p> <p>[E] Selecting and setting study environment</p> <p>[F] Mobilizing study tools: Laptop, internet access</p> <p>[G] Time management</p> <p>[H] Knowing how to monitor your learning</p> <p>[I] Knowing where to go and who to contact for help</p>	
<p>6. If you were asked to choose between the Internet and a Mobile Phone for online learning, which one would you choose and why?</p>	



Preamble

This chapter presents to you online study-skills tips regarding the following areas:

- 4.1. Preparing for an Online Course
- 4.2. Organizing Your Study and Everyday Life
- 4.3. Collaborating with Others
- 4.4. Communicating with Others
- 4.5. Overcoming Disabilities in Online Learning



C:\Users\fg2592\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\NetCache\Content.Outlook\IS3HGE00\4.1.Participants in a seminar. Photo by D. K. Isutsa.jpg and is licensed CC BY-NC-ND 6.0.

Expected Reading Outcomes

By the end of reading this Chapter 4, you will understand how to prepare to participate and collaborate effectively in online learning.

4.1. Preparing for an Online Course (*Selection of online courses, Registration of courses*)

Before starting your online studies, what is expected from the on the learner for every course you are taking. Also, examine your schedule for the next few months checking out the time for online assignments. If possible, put reminders on your phone or online calendar, so you won't miss any due dates. Confirm that you can access all the courses you will be taking online.

Register for the course and ensure you have everything you need to start the course. These include a computer, appropriate software and links to references for further reading. Confirm the scope out the online course by accessing the syllabus and reading it through to the end. This will enable you get an idea of what you are going to study, how much reading there will be, what kind of assignments you will be doing, and generally acquaint yourself with the instructor's expectations.

4.2. Organizing Your Study and Everyday Life

1. Develop a schedule	2. Create a designated study space	3. Set specific goals	4. Stay focused	5. Stay healthy
A consistent schedule will get you more organized and productive. Commit to making your online coursework part of your weekly routine. Designate specific hours to study and complete assignments.	Set up a designated workspace to help you create a routine. Keep you organized and enhance your productivity.	-Create daily goals on tasks to be completed in specific timelines. -Create time to visit the library after taking notes from your tutors during learning to broaden knowledge, ideas and notes taken in class in the subject of study (More in Chapter 7)	Do not allow yourself to be carried away by the distractions around. Remain focused to your daily objectives. In the end of every day, assess your progress as per your established schedule.	Create time in your busy schedule for activities you enjoy doing that are of benefit to your mental and physical health.

4.3. Collaborating with Others *(For different groups, Who, Why, What, When, Where, How)*

Every online course will provide you with a platform(s) for collaborations. Be sure to follow the guidelines provided. Platforms like *discussion forums* will give you an opportunity to engage in fruitful deliberations with other colleagues. For effective collaboration, note the following:

- **Keep your study groups small:** Large groups will be hard to coordinate. A group of three to five members will offer every member a chance to express their contribution and take note of other members' views as well.
- **Establish peer evaluation:** This will encourage every member to contribute and improve the group's cohesiveness.

4.4. Communicating with Others *(Why? About what?)*

4.4.1. General netiquette

Netiquette (“net” and “etiquette”) refers to a set of rules that define acceptable and appropriate guide in online communications. It encourages use of courteous/polite expressions when communicating online.

4.4.2. Elements of netiquette

- **Identity clarity:** Practice honesty and transparency when engaging online.
- **Respect others’ privacy:** Do not disclose another’s student’s email address or personal contact information without their consent.
- **If it’s on the Internet it’s everywhere:** Don’t share personal information about yourself in public online fora, especially something that could expose you to safety or security risks.
- **Beware of online crime:** One common example with students is “peer bullying”. Avoid the trap of just saying anything. Always think of the repercussions of what you are posting online and desist from misrepresenting your colleagues.
- **Forgive other’s mistakes:** There will always be new online users. Give them time to adapt to acceptable online culture. If comments are offensive, assume you may have misunderstood and let it go. Don’t hold grudges online. If offended and you wish to notify the person, be kind to use a private chat or email to express your dissatisfaction. Don’t pick a fight of words (Chuka University Code of Conduct & Ethics Policy, 2019; <https://portal.chuka.ac.ke/policy/Code%20of%20Conduct%20and%20Ethics%20Policy.html>).

4.4.3. Communication channels *(various channels and suitability for purpose)*

Some favorite communication channels/platforms:

- ✓ **Email:** Emailing tops the list and is often used for official communications and for conversations that you would refer to in the future.
- ✓ **Social channels like WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter** are good for general engagements and discussion forums. However, these sites keep losing messages so they should only be used for what you do not intend to refer to in future.

4.4.4. Communicating with tutors (*About what? How often to give feedback*)

Remember to treat your online tutors as you would in face-to-face interactions. Preferably use official channels provided in the course material. Most courses will provide guidelines for interacting with your tutors. So, make it a habit to follow their directions as they are also attending many other students in other courses. Remember to note online office hours.

4.4.5. Communicating with other students (*Why? About what?*)

Treat your fellow students with respect. The fact that they are students like you does not make them a “trash bin” for receiving any form of comment. Your peers have feelings and will judge you by what you say on walls. Avoid vulgar or demeaning language while online. Before hitting that “send button” examine the content in your message and decide if it is worthy sending or not.

4.5. Overcoming Disabilities in Online Learning (*Key disabilities and adaptations to make*)

In our online studies, everyone has way out. No one should be limited by a condition. Most courses are tailored to everyone’s advantage. Flexibility in the delivery and acquisition of knowledge, multiple versions of content presentations (braille, audio-video, large font size notes) and many ways of interacting with online content are among our key considerations in our online courses (Chuka University

Disability Committee; Chuka University Disability Policy, 2022
 (<https://portal.chuka.ac.ke/policy/DISABILITY%20POLICY.html>)

□ Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 5

Take some time to reflect on your work on this chapter and make notes on the following queries:

<i>Activity 5 query</i>	<i>Response(s)</i>
Identify two online communication channels you are familiar with and write three ways you would use them for communication during your online studies.	
<i>Comments on reflection activity: Refer to page 51 for suggested answers</i>	

End of Chapter 4 Quiz for Reflection and Comprehension

SN	Query	Response(s)
1	<p>Which of the following is not important for online study sessions?</p> <p>(a) Familiarizing yourself with the course syllabus</p> <p>(b) Sending anonymous messages in group chats</p> <p>(c) Knowing the available communication channels for the course</p> <p>(d) Checking out possible options for accessing online content</p>	

2	<p>Tick the correct statements given below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In online studies, I can find different ways of accessing the same content. -I need to be careful on the information I share online. -Everyone studying online is lazy and is wasting time. -Only emails are acceptable mode of communication in online studies. 	
3	<p>State why preparations for face-to-face and online study may be similar.</p>	
4	<p>When learning online, write down four things you need to bear in mind when communicating with others</p>	
5.	<p>Why is it important to visit the library after taking notes from your tutors?</p>	
6	<p>List resources you expect to find in the library to help learners with disabilities</p>	



Preamble

This chapter presents to you online study-skills tips in the following areas:

- 5.1. Digital Skills in Online Learning
- 5.2. ICT Proficiency
- 5.3. ICT Productivity
- 5.4. Information Literacy
- 5.5. Media Literacy
- 5.6. Digital Collaboration
- 5.7. Digital Identity Management
- 5.8. Digital Wellbeing



C:\Users\jg2592\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\IS3HGE00\SFPK Guide Photos\5.1.Chuka University Journalism and Media student in the Educational and Community Outreach Radio Studios. Photo by M. I. Murithi.jpg and is licensed CC BY-NC-ND 6.0.

Expected Reading Outcomes

By the end of reading Chapter 5, you will understand the importance and role of Digital literacy in facilitating effective online studying. In addition, you will assess yourself on how well you are prepared and equipped with these digital skills for different learning activities.

5.1. The Need for Digital Skills in Online Learning



Society is becoming increasingly digital therefore as an online student you are expected to use several types of emerging digital technologies in learning activities. This is not surprising because even in modern society students encounter and apply various emerging technologies in everyday life.

Similarly, workplaces are changing and employers are keen to recruit workers with digital skills. Therefore, to live, learn and work

in a digital society, you need to develop commensurate skills that are required in educational institutions and which employers want. You also need to develop confidence and deeper-seated capabilities that will enable you to progress in their careers and adapt to emerging technologies. This section describes the key digital skill capabilities (profile) you are expected to have for online study.

However, it is not expected that you have all the capabilities included in this profile or the highest levels of these skills. It is expected that you will be able to assess yourself on how well you are prepared and equipped with these digital skills for different learning activities so as to put special effort to develop them.

5.2. ICT Proficiency Skills

ICT proficiency simply refers to the ability to use ICT in various forms such as:

- **Skills ICT-based devices** (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones, desktop computers, digital equipment)
- **Associated computer accessories** such as a mouse, keyboard, touch screen, voice control and other forms of input; use screens, audio headsets and other forms of output;
- **Digital capture devices** such as a camera, video camera and audio recorder.
- **Basic productivity software** (word processing, presentation, spreadsheets, image editing)
- **Web browsers** (e.g., Internet Explorer, Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox).
- **Search engines** such as Google, Yahoo, and MSN Search
- **Email and other digital communication** services e.g., text, photo sharing, video conferencing.
- **University/college digital systems** such as learning management systems, student portal and the library systems
- **Sign on to and use a range of personal digital** services to

socialize, shop online and share sites.

- Use new devices, applications, software and services and stay up to date with ICT as it evolves.

5.3. ICT Productivity Skills

Having these skills means you have or you need to develop the ability to use ICT to undertake the following activities in online learning:

- Download and upload materials to the internet or cloud or institutional shared spaces;
- Organise, manage and back up digital files;
- Choose software/apps and services to suit task requirements;
- Work effectively across different software/apps and services to achieve learning-related tasks, as well as find digital solutions;
- Adapt and personalize software/apps and services to personal preferences and needs (e.g. adaptive/assistive features);
- Use digital tools to fit learning around other demands and make learning time more efficient, e.g. use calendars, task lists, project and time management apps, contact databases, collation/curation tools; and
- Choose new devices and software/apps/services - including plug-ins and upgrades - based on assessing their value.

5.4. Information Literacy Skills

For you as a student, information literacy means being able to find, evaluate, organize, use, and ethically apply information in your class assignments and other situations that require decision-making or problem-solving.

For example, it means being able to:

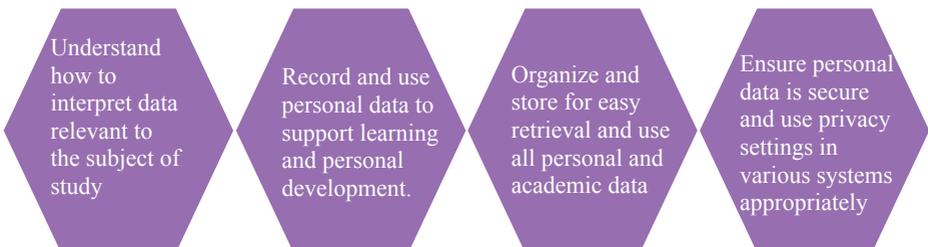
- ❖ Find relevant digital information using search engines (e.g., google) and search for information in wikis, blog posts, academic e-journals, e-books in digital libraries, and the general web.

- ❖ Organize and manage digital information using various file spaces and folders, bookmarks, reference management software and tagging.
- ❖ Judge whether the information you have accessed is trustworthy and relevant
- ❖ Distinguish kinds of information, including academic, professional, personal and political.
- ❖ Use the information in textbooks and other sources of information to answer questions, solve problems, etc.
- ❖ Share academic information with classmates/peers.
- ❖ Download and post assignments to tutors.
- ❖ Know and follow the rules of copyright, use only legal sources and avoid plagiarism in undertaking class assignments.

5.5. Data Literacy Skills

For successful online study, you need good **data literacy skills which refer to the ability to manage access and use digital data in different formats and media**. As an online student every day you will generate and also be provided with a lot of data and information in digital format in both social and academic activities you will engage in. In each subject you study, you will encounter and be required to analyze data to understand and explain various concepts. The University has a common course taught to all students on how to handle ICT and data management issues.

Good examples of successful application of these skills include the ability to:



5.6. Media Literacy Skills

Media (singular: medium), refers to any channel of communication. As an online student, you will be expected to **use digital media such as the Internet and more specifically, websites, blogs, podcasts, videos, digital radio stations, and mobile phones, as well as the communication methods used to transmit information such as instant messaging, video calls, and emails.** For you as an online student, to be media literate means being able to:

- Make sense of messages in a range of digital media formats – text, graphical, video, animation, audio and multimedia.
- Access digital media for entertainment and enjoyment as well as for learning.
- Appreciate how digital messages are designed e.g. for audiences, purposes and effects.
- Know and follow the rules of copyright and plagiarism as they apply to digital media;.
- Use only legal sources of digital content.
- Know about and use alternatives such as open access literature.
- Understand and avoid plagiarism.

More details on plagiarism are coming in Section 7.8

5.7. Digital Collaboration Skills

In online learning, you will be required to collaborate with others in various learning activities. **Digital collaboration skills refer to the ability to use various ICT tools to collaborate with others.** This is essential in online learning because they facilitate the following aspects, among others:

- Participating in a range of digital communication media eg email, presentations, blog posts, video conference, photo sharing, text, Twitter, online forums, understanding the differences between these media.
- Understanding and respecting the different norms of

communicating in different spaces e.g. personal, social, academic, professional, political etc.

- Communicating respectfully and inclusively, recognizing that digital media can be used to intimidate, shame and harass other people.
- Identifying and dealing with false or damaging digital communications. Should you be affected and need help, follow stipulations in the Code of Conduct and Ethics (2013) of Chuka University.
- Working in digital teams, groups and projects to produce shared outcomes or meet shared goals
- Use collaborative tools e.g. file sharing, shared writing/drawing tools, project management tools, shared calendars and task lists.
- Participating in collaborative online environments e.g. webinars, discussions, flash meetings
- Participating in a range of online networks related to personal interests and/or the subject studied. Share digital resources eg links, bookmarks, images, text.
- Participate actively in discussion forums: post reviews, comments, ‘likes’ etc.
- Build and manage online contacts
- Building and managing online contacts

5.8. Digital Identity Management Skills

Digital identity management refers to the way personal information is collected, stored and accessed on the web. As an online student, you will spend a lot of time working on the internet and in all cases, you will be required to register and identify yourself on many internet sites. With time you will accumulate a digital identity, which refers the body of information about an oneself, organization or electronic

device that exists online. All this touches on four important things about yourself:

- ❖ Personal credentials,
- ❖ User information,
- ❖ Character information, and
- ❖ Reputation.

It is thus important to cultivate skills of effectively managing well your digital identity.

Digital identity management skills will help you to:

-  Manage and maintain profiles and make sure they are suitable for different networks eg personal, professional, and academic.
-  Maintain digital reputation when posting and communicating online.
-  Understand how personal data is collected and used in different systems and use privacy settings appropriately.
-  Maintain a current digital CV or portfolio of work.
-  Make sure outcomes of learning and other achievements are accessible in digital forms (e.g. via an e-portfolio, digital CV, personal website).

5.9. Digital Wellbeing Skills

The use of technologies and digital services can have a negative or positive effect on the physical, mental and emotional well-being of the user. With the constant use of electronic tools, systems, devices and resources it is important to maintain both physical and mental health. This is referred to as digital wellbeing.

Digital wellbeing helps you to do the following:

1. Use digital technologies in ways that support personal development, well-being and safety, and respect the wellbeing and safety of others.

2. Act positively against cyberbullying and other damaging online behaviour.
3. Consider the rights and wrongs and the possible consequences of online behaviour.
4. Use digital tools and media in ways that are aligned with personal values and goals.
5. Use digital media to access services, monitor health, and participate in the community.
6. Recognize that digital information and media can cause distraction, overload, stress and disconnect.
7. Manage online and real-world interactions in ways that support healthy relationships.

As indicated before, all aspects of the society are becoming more and more digital and therefore it is important that as a student you muster of digital literacy. These skills will help you navigate your learning processes with ease. You will also find them very useful after your graduation. The University library and Computer Science Department has many opportunities that you can take advantage of to develop your digital literacy skills.



Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 6

Take a pause from reading and reflect what you have read in this Chapter 6.

Activity 6 query	Response(s)
1. List five digital skills that are essential in online learning	
2. How does what you have learned about digital skills apply in your life as a student?	
3. What changes will you make in online learning based on what you learnt in Chapter 5?	

<i>Comments on reflection activity: Refer to page 51 for suggested answers</i>	
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End of Chapter 5 Quiz for Reflection and Comprehension

Query	Response(s)
1. Why do you think digital skills are important for learning in the 21 st Century world?	
2. Give examples of why digital skills are important to you as an online student?	
3. Give five (5) examples of digital communication media that you may use as an online student.	
4. In what ways can digital information and media cause problems in your life as an online student if not well managed?	
5. True or False: Online learning does not require possession of any ICT skills. T _____; F _____	
6. Name at least five examples of digital skills you need to acquire for successful online learning	



Preamble

This chapter reiterates to you online study-skills tips in the following areas:

- 6.1. Good habits for online study
- 6.2. Online identity
- 6.3. Dos and don'ts in online learning
- 6.4. Money management
- 6.5. Time management and avoiding procrastination

Expected Reading Outcomes

By the end of reading this Chapter 6, you will understand the importance of managing your resources well to engage in fruitful online studying.

6.1. Good Study Habits for Online Study (*Specific habits and importance*)

- **Begin with the end in mind:** As an online student, know that the study you are undertaking has a reward in the end.
- **Dedicate specific days and times for classes:** Treat this online course as if it were an in person or face-to-face course. Be consistent with your daily schedules.
- **Find a quiet place with no distractions:** Your study area should provide a conducive environment for learning. Remember, for maximum uptake of knowledge and synthesis, you will need to set up a learning environment devoid of distractions and that is well organized and structured for learning.
- **Do not study for more than 2 to 3 hours straight without a break:** Take breaks preferably 30 minutes in between study sessions to refresh yourself. Use that time to take a health or nutritio[n] break or do other chores and daily activities in life, take a nap or physical exercise.

- **Make sure you are actively involved in the study:** Take notes along the way and attempt quizzes presented at the end of every session. Where personal reflections on a session are required, be sure to try it out. All these will help engage with the learning content presented. Keep notes online, using a tool such as OneNote, EverNote or Google Docs; on your computer or tablet; or you may prefer handwritten notes (safe for off-line access). It is usually easiest to have all your notes in one place. Plan ahead to avoid situations where, for example, you are studying at home but your notes are on a computer at work, or your notes are online but you have no access to an internet connection during a study session.
- **Remain focused in the study:** You will notice that staying mentally engaged is not easy while studying online so it will help to disengage from online distractions. The first distractor is your mobile phone. You are likely to be habitually addicted to checking your phone and social media accounts. If you are not using it for the online session, keep it away. Also, eliminate online notifications and emails and turn off notifications on your computer. If you are studying at home, remember to treat your study time like a job. Do not let your concentration wander by attending to other tasks like laundry or house chores.
- **Where possible connect with others:** Being an online student sometimes can be very isolated. To prevent this talk to other students in your course or engage with them via a social media/ channels like WhatsApp, Twitter or Facebook to be a part of the course community and attend university online events.
- **If you need any help, ask:** If you are struggling with the course or learning material, it is normal and okay especially in an online set up when you are not able to instantly get assistance. Do not hesitate to ask for help. Share your thoughts and frustrations with your facilitators by dropping genuine comments or email a student counsellor or call a friend when in need of help.

6.2. Online Identity (*Definition and importance*)

Online identity refers to the information we leave on the Internet about yourself. This may include but is not limited to email address, date of birth, bank details, and the activities we routinely engage in such as online shopping. It can be as simple as an account you created on social media forum. Other online users know you by what you post or the information you have made public for other online users to access and it is important to create a positive digital identity such as sharing CVs, publications and avoid offensive posts including pornography.

6.3. The Do's and Don'ts in Online Learning

- **Be punctual and log in on time for online lectures/discussions:** Punctuality is an indicator of motivation and preparedness to learn. This gives you the confidence to ask for clarity when you miss a point or two.
- **Be respectful and considerate:** Other users may not always understand your situation or circumstances. Be aware of how you use discussion forums, whether to ask a question to the group or make a point about a topic.
- **Be patient in online communications:** A times you may send email messages or requests for assistance to your instructor or classmates. Be patient to wait for their response. Sending too many emails or reminders can be overwhelming.
- **Don't post pictures or comments that may be inappropriate or sexually provocative:** It may seem good and pleasant to you but be mindful of the many and different recipients of your posts. Even if it's private post, it could be hacked or copied and forwarded.
- **Don't hide your identity when attending online lessons:** Use official names (no nicknames). Remember your instructor may be expected to give account of those attending or interacting online. See Students' Information Handbook: <https://www>.

chuka.ac.ke/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Students-Handbook-draft-from-lavinda.pdf. For details.

- **Don't log in and disappear:** There is a temptation for online students to just show attendance by logging in and then switching to other activities. After all, no one is monitoring you. Remember, treat the online engagement just as you would a normal face-to-face discussion.
- **Don't respond to inappropriate requests:** Not every request needs your precious attention. It is a good idea to ignore suspicious requests. Your response may prompt you to be rude something you are likely to regret in future. If you feel harassed by a colleague, report to the facilitator.
- **Don't respond rudely to anyone:** You feel like firing off an angry text or comment? Count 1 to 10, wait a few minutes, calm down, and remember that the comments may stay long after you've regained your temper or changed your mind.
- **Don't procrastinate:** Except in unavoidable circumstances like sickness, always be available and rise to occasion when needed. Consult the Dean of Students and the Students' Information Handbook if you need counseling to cope with learning and social stresses.

6.4. Money Management (*Needs to meet, sources, limitation/ scarcity and using wisely*)

- Online exposure brings a rich environment of expenses. Spend money only on important things for your studies. Subscription to online sites can expose you to online fraudsters. Subscribe to authenticate well-purposed sites. If in doubt, consult the ICT Department for advice.
- Make a budget for your expenditure considering the source of your money. In your budget, always remember to prioritize your needs.
- Flee the lure of quick money on online betting sites. The urge

to make more money is addictive and can drain your finances handing you a load of stress.

6.5. Time Management and Avoiding Procrastination (*Importance of time management, drawbacks of procrastination, how to avoid procrastination, balance private work with studies*)

6.5.1. Freedom

One of the biggest appeals for taking online courses is the flexibility on creating your own schedule. However, this freedom can be detrimental without proper time management skills. You will appreciate that even the online study has timelines created by the course managers.

6.5.2. Tips for successful time management

- **Plan ahead:** Look through the course and take note of assignments and other important events calendar. You will need a diary for this work.
- **Prepare a schedule:** Create a weekly schedule that you will follow where possible setting reminders for key tasks completions.
- **Avoid procrastinations:** Procrastination is the art of pushing forward what could be done now to a later time even if for a good reason. This is the easiest way to fail in your online study. You may be forced to do shoddy work due to too little time allocated for large activities. Also, procrastinations will land you in a stress when handling many things simultaneously. Do fall in the temptation of doing everything the last minute.
- **Assume a face-to-face scenario where someone is monitoring your progress:** The freedom to have your own schedule should not compromise your learning objectives.
- **Schedule regular study breaks:** As an online learner, avoid the temptation of thinking you will do everything in a short time.

In your study schedule, designate breaks and time offs for other activities like sports, socializing with colleagues, household chores, among others.

- **Reward yourself:** After a successful completion of a task, a milestone or a planned study session, take time to celebrate your achievement. This can be sharing with a colleague your experience or doing something you really enjoy. This will keep you motivated.
- **Get a good night's sleep:** Make it a habit to sleep for seven to eight hours in the night. Sleep is essential to rest your body and keep your mind fresh for the next day. “Studying or engaging late in the night” in the name of completing tasks is counterproductive than studying consistently. Include sleep in your schedule, and you can reap huge rewards.

6.6. Dealing with Cybercrime

In online interactions, remember that many crimes can take place online. The crimes committed in physical settings are now possible on the Internet. Specifically, take note of online fraudsters posing as concerned guys to help you sort your online challenges. The Internet has been invaded by criminals. You thus need to take care of your security and safety in your online engagements. Ensure you visit only authorized sites and avoid installing most free software whose purpose you are in doubt. For more information on cybercrime, please visit the following site: [cybercrime](https://www.techtarget.com/searchsecurity/definition/cybercrime) (<https://www.techtarget.com/searchsecurity/definition/cybercrime>).

□ Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 7

Take some time to reflect on your work on this Chapter 6 and make notes on the following queries:

<i>Activity 7 query</i>	<i>Response(s)</i>
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Open www.google.co.ke and search “bad habits in online studies”. From the many results that come-up, list five habits you will work to avoid.	
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<i>Comments on reflection activity: Refer to page 51 for suggested answers</i>
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End of Chapter 6 Quiz for Reflection and Comprehension

SN	Query	Responses(s)
1	<p>Which of the following is not a good habit for online learning?</p> <p>a) Organizing your time. b) Asking for help when stuck in tasks. c) Finding a quiet place to carry out assignments. d) Asking a colleague to send you their work so that you submit as your work.</p>	
2	<p>Identify and tick the correct statements regarding time management in your online studies.</p> <p>a) Avoid postponing tasks to be done now to a later unspecified time b) Online studies have no time limit c) Plan ahead for the tasks ahead d) Make a regular study schedule</p>	
3	<p>Tick the correct answer to “self-discipline is important in online studies”.</p> <p>a) False b) True</p>	
4.	List 3 types of resources you need to manage well for successful online learning	

5	List 3 types of resources you expect to find in the library to help learners with disabilities	
6	Define “Information Literacy”	



Preamble

This chapter presents to you online study skills tips in the following areas:

- 7.1. Using library resources to support your online learning
- 7.2. Types of reading materials available to you
- 7.3. Types of libraries and databases
- 7.4. Types of library services
- 7.5. Getting support from library staff
- 7.6. General procedure for finding resources from the university digital library
- 7.7. Library support for students living with disability
- 7.8. Plagiarism in academic writing and how to avoid it
- 7.9. Referencing/acknowledging academic sources

Expected Reading Outcomes

By the end of reading Chapter 7, you will understand the importance of using the library and other information resources in online study in a professional and ethical manner.

7.1. Using Information Resources to Support Online Learning

Being in a university is a time unlike any other in your academic life. Unlike in secondary school, where you were closely monitored on what to learn and when to learn, in the university, you are treated as an adult who controls how you spend time on your studies. University education seeks to develop you as an individual who is self-motivated in the discovery of ideas and knowledge about the subject of study and their application in real life. Therefore, as a student, you are fully responsible for your education and the quality of your final academic qualifications.

Accordingly, as a university student, you should not be content with making and reading lecture notes or handouts and modules provided by the lecturers. Indeed, attending lectures, reading and reproducing information from modules, lecture notes and handouts only will not make you the quality professional that you are meant to become at the end of your course.

On the contrary, you are expected to engage in one extra important thing, which is personal reading in all the subjects being taught to you. Personal reading assists you to develop a deeper and wider understanding of the content of the subject. It also enhances what you have learned during lectures and from study modules by providing you with an opportunity to independently engage with global experts of the subject you are studying, analyze different issues, topics and ideas, build your knowledge and skills, and discover deeper meaning and application in life situations.

To succeed in this, you are required to access the university library and read a variety of information materials with diverse viewpoints on each of the topics being studied. This will enable you to effectively participate in learning activities such as the fulfillment of class assignments, library research and writing research papers, term papers, presentations and laboratory experiments.

Furthermore, you must develop an attitude and skills of finding relevant information, self-direction, independent learning, critical thinking and problem-solving. This section provides brief information on how you can best find and use different sources of academic-related information for purposes of achieving success in the learning process. The main sources of information at your disposal are libraries, study modules and Open Educational Resources (OERs). **OERs are teaching, learning, and research information materials available in the public domain and people can freely use them for these purposes.**

7.2. Types of Reading Materials Available to You

The library supports your learning by providing reading materials that help you discover new ideas, build knowledge and expertise, focus, analyze different issues, and generate new ways of solving practical problems in different situations. As an online learning student, you have many types and sources of information for learning purposes from the university library as well as the web. These include textbooks, academic journals, videos, cases studies and research reports.

For most of your online course units, your lecturers will provide you with the following resources to facilitate your online learning:

A list of textbooks and journal articles which are for core-reading or or further personal reading.

A list of book sections (pages), and URL links to documents in the internet including educational videos to watch and analyse in preparation for class.

Continuous Assessment Tests (CATs) in form of quizzes, term paper assignment, class presentations, and group discussion projects that need to be attempted and submitted for marking during the semester

List of revision questions (where appropriate)

7.3. Types of Libraries/Databases

It is your responsibility to access and retrieve all the reading materials from the library and use them for the various purposes stated above. These materials may be in either the:

- **Print-based library:** This is a collection of hard copies of books, journals acquired by the university, for different courses taught in the University. They are arranged by subject on library shelves. These are accessed using an online public access catalogue (<https://koha.chuka.ac.ke/>)
- **Digital library:** This a collection of e-books, e-journals databases, online video, etc which the library subscribes to and is available through the university library website (<https://library.chuka.ac.ke/>)
- **University digital repository:** This is a database that contains digital copies of the research projects by senior students,

publications by academic staff, as well as and copies of past examinations for all the units offered in the University (<https://repository.chuka.ac.ke/>)

- **Course study modules:** These are documents that contain content and activities to be covered within a period of time and organized to create a clear learning path for students. This is an important information resource to you because it explains different aspects of the course such as length of lectures, sequence of activities to be undertake, the content to be covered, how performance will be assessed.
- **Open educational resources (OERs):** Open Educational Resources (OER) are learning library materials in various format and medium that are available on the web at no-cost access. They include books, journal articles, research reports, etc and can be used, adapted and distributed to others freely. You are likely to find materials that are relevant to your online studies in different directories on the internet. A good example of a collection of open educational resources can be accessed at: <https://doer.col.org/>

7.4. Types of Library Services

Library staff are information specialists trained to ensure the proper development of library and information services and ensure their fruitful use of these services by both students and lecturers as individuals or in groups. Therefore, feel free to seek their assistance in locating information materials you need for your learning activities.

The key library services you can receive from the library to fulfill your learning needs include:

- i. Borrowing printed books
- ii. Personal access to electronic information (e-books and e-journals)

- iii. Support in searching and retrieving literature
- iv. Information literacy skills training
- v. Consultation services when looking for information, engaged in research, writing projects
- vi. Reading spaces that are conducive for personal study and academic reflection.

7.5. Getting Support from Library Staff

Library services are both face-to-face as well as digital, meaning that they can also be accessed from remote locations away from the university through the library web portal or digital communication channels with the library staff. It is therefore important to note the various channels of communication you can use in seeking assistance library support such as:

- ❖ Customer support team leaders' emails e.g. *libhelp@chuka.ac.ke*, <https://www.chuka.ac.ke/library-support-team-leaders/>
- ❖ Twitter account: e.g., *@chukalib*
- ❖ Facebook page: e.g., *Chuka University Library*
- ❖ WhatsApp platforms: e.g., *Chuka University Library*
- ❖ Mobile telephone numbers: e.g., *+020-2310512/18 Ext 3604*

As a new student you need to register with the library online platforms and receive a password to use the library especially the digital library. Various library guides will be provided to you but you may also retrieve them from the University website (<https://www.chuka.ac.ke/library-guides/>). The staff provide library policies, regulations, as well as procedures for smooth use of the library services (Chuka University Library Policies, 2019; <https://portal.chuka.ac.ke/policy/LIBRARY%20POLICIES.html>).

7.6. General Procedure of Finding Materials from the Digital Library

There are many ways of searching for information on the Internet

(i)	(ii)	(iii)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Browsing relevant home pages on the Web or websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using search engines machines to find relevant websites and articles e.g. Google	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Searching for scholarly articles in e-journals and e-databases from the University digital library

A Simple Procedure for Accessing E-Databases (e-Journals and e-Books) is as follows: (<https://www.chuka.ac.ke/general-procedure-university-library/>)

Step 1: *Decide on the keywords or subject names* that describe the topic on which you need information

Step 2: *Access the E-books /E-journals platform* via the University website as follows:



Step 3: *Select a library database* that is relevant to your information need (e.g., *Emerald, Jstor*, etc.)

Step 4: *Search the databases using the keywords or subject headings* you identified as relevant for your search topic.

Step 5: *Browse/download /read/save/email or print the articles* selected for further reading

NB: (i). For you to access the digital library you have to activate your account on Myloft Platform.

(ii). Request the library team to create an account to be created for you

(iii). When your account has been created by the library team an email will be sent to you to activate and change your password.

For information on e-books and e-journal available and how to access visit your library website e.g., for Chuka university: <https://www.chuka.ac.ke/library-guides/>

7.7. Library Support for Students Living with Disability



The library has special services for students with disabilities such as mobility, hearing and sight. These services include materials designed in various disability-friendly formats such as braille, large font size, video and audio. Contacting the Library Department, Student Welfare Department and Examinations Department is the best way to find out what support you can get to ensure that as a student with a disability, you are fully supported in your learning activities. (See also Chuka University Disability Policy, 2019;

<https://portal.chuka.ac.ke/policy/DISABILITY%20POLICY.html>).

7.8. Plagiarism in Academic Writing and How to Avoid It (Using other people's ideas)

Advancement in all branches of knowledge is based on the already existing literature (or knowledge) generated by others across space and time. Often as a student, you are expected to review the ideas

of others to analyze, evaluate, reconstruct or even critique them through critical thinking, or avoid repeating the same experiments in research.

Whenever you engage in academic writing you are expected to indicate (cite) the sources of the ideas that you include in your assignment to contextualize any new knowledge and ideas in the existing knowledge. Citing your sources will indicate what you have obtained from others and what constitutes new ideas what you have generated. In learning activities, a point that cannot be overemphasized is the need for you to avoid plagiarism as you engage in class assignments whether oral or written.

7.8.1. Definition of plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of intellectual dishonesty or presenting ideas, opinions, conclusions, facts and words of others as if they belong to you by:

- Using ideas or writings of another person and presenting them as our own.
- Failure to acknowledge the sources of ideas, conclusions, models and frameworks in our academic endeavours.

Plagiarism is unethical, dishonest and ground for disciplinary actions, ranging from denial of marks in examination to expulsion from the university. If you use in part the work of others and you do not cite them, then you will have failed in your responsibilities as a student and you will have committed **plagiarism**.

7.8.2. Types of plagiarism

There are many types of plagiarism including:

<i>Direct plagiarism</i>	<i>Self-plagiarism</i>	<i>Mosaic plagiarism</i>	<i>Accidental plagiarism</i>
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<p>This is word-for-word copying parts of parts of other people's work without acknowledging and pasting it as part of the assignment you present for marking.</p>	<p>This occurs when you submit for marking your previous presentation, or incorporate parts of previous work, without permission from your lecturer. Self-plagiarism also applies to submitting the same piece of work for assignments in different classes on academic forums without acknowledgement or permission.</p>	<p>This occurs when you borrow phrases use it in your writing without using quotation marks to indicate that it is from elsewhere. It may also include using synonyms for the author's language or paraphrasing it while keeping to the same general structure and meaning of the original and fail to acknowledge the source. This is sometimes called "patch writing," and whether intentional or not, it is academically dishonest and punishable as long as you do not acknowledge the source through a citation.</p>	<p>Accidental plagiarism occurs when as a student you neglect to cite your sources or misquote your sources, or unintentionally paraphrase a source by using similar words, groups of words, and/or sentence structure without attribution</p>
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7.8.3. How to avoid plagiarism

The following are suggestions on how you can avoid plagiarism while taking notes from sources:

<p>Summarize or Précis:=></p>	<p>This is a brief overview of what you read, so as to capture idea quickly by recording only facts or important points. It is important for you to understand the material before summarizing it so that you can records clear notes and avoid plagiarism. Whenever you include a summary in in your work you have to cite the source.</p>
<p>Paraphrase:=></p>	<p>This is a restatement in your own words, the ideas you have borrowed from others. In a paraphrase you use the author's ideas, and acknowledge the source. The most important issue in paraphrasing is that you should reword it in such a way that the words are yours not those of the author.</p>
<p>Direct quotation:=></p>	<p>This is recording the words you read exactly as they appear in the original source including the exact punctuation. When you quote directly it is important to copy the author's words verbatim, indicate who you are quoting and place quotations marks around the entire quotation and record the exact page in the source.</p>
<p>Outline:=></p>	<p>This is creating an outline of the major ideas of a passage and which are relevant to one's review. When you an outline you have to indicate the sources.</p>
<p>Personal reactions and comments on readings: =></p>	<p>This is the best way to write because you are able to put in the review the original thoughts on the topics as they occur and therefore avoid the difficult task of having to remember them later. These will be very useful when it comes to compiling the review. However, you need to separate your reactions from the ideas of another author which you also have to acknowledge.</p>

Making notes by direct quotation can be a hindrance to evaluation and assimilation of the material itself into your style when you start writing the review. Therefore, it is advisable to take notes in other forms and use direct quotations only when the material is especially well stated or for points that require the impact of a respected authority's exact words. Therefore, when making notes you are advised to:

- Use your own words even when you are writing about the ideas of someone else.
- Ensure that the structure of your sentence is different from the original work.
- When paraphrasing text, use your own words unless it is technically necessary to use the author's original words.
- Put quotation marks on phrases that are original and cite the source and page/date.
- Acknowledge the ideas, paraphrase and not just words of other writers by proper documentation or referencing.

7.9. Referencing/Acknowledging Academic Sources

Acknowledging words and ideas from other people applies to direct quotations, paraphrases as well as the summaries you make of other people's ideas, conclusions, words, and so on. Referencing (citing or documenting) your sources is important because:



You acknowledge the work of other writers and researchers.



It shows that your evidence is reliable in explaining or providing your thesis or problem statement.



It proves to the scholarly community that what you have presented in your paper constitutes new knowledge or represents a different viewpoint



It also gives readers the chance to crosscheck your findings to ensure that you have fully reviewed the related literature and correctly interpreted it.



Assists other researchers to trace your sources for more information in their research.



Use anti-plagiarism software e.g. Turn-it-in or Viper to ascertain that your work is free of plagiarism.

This means that when you have decided to use a particular source, you have to make a record of all its bibliographic details that you will need to reference it using an accepted referencing or citation style. The details of each source which include name(s) of author(s), title of the work, volume, place of publication, publisher and year of publication, are usually found on the cover of the work and in the first couple of pages of the source whether a book, a journal or an online source

The most commonly used referencing styles are:

- (a) Modern Language Association (MLA) style [<https://www.mla.org/MLA-Style>]
- (b) American Psychological Association (APA) style [<https://apastyle.apa.org/>]
- (c) Harvard Style [<https://www.mendeley.com/guides/harvard-citation-guide/>]
- (d) Chicago Style [https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html]
- (e) Turabian Style [<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian/citation-guide.html>]

These referencing or citation styles help you acknowledge the material which you have borrowed from other sources. Your library has guides developed or approved for use in your university. It is very important that you apply accurately and consistently the referencing style you use or are advised to use, throughout your assignment, research project, term paper, book or journal review or class presentation. It is good to note that in this guide APA referencing style has been used.



Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 8

Take some time to reflect on what you have read in this Chapter 7.

<i>Activity 8 query</i>	<i>Response(s)</i>
List five things about the library you have learned in this Chapter 7 that are relevant to you as an online student	
<i>Comments on reflection activity: Refer to page 51 for suggested answers</i>	

End of Chapter 7 Quiz for Reflection and Comprehension

Query	Provide your answer(s)
1. Give examples of reading materials that you can use as an online learning student.	
2. Why is it important for you to use library resources in your learning activities?	
3. Name five (5) library services to support your learning activities.	
4. Name four channels of communication you can use in seeking assistance to access the library	
5. Define the word “ plagiarism ”. Give examples of how as an online student you can avoid plagiarism in your academic study	
6. Briefly explain how you can retrieve e-books from the University’s digital library.	
7. Name five (5) commonly used referencing styles .	

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APPENDICES

READING ACTIVITIES FEEDBACK

Chapter 1: Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 1 Feedback

Five things you expect reading this Guide to help you to achieve as you think about online learning. Any 5 from:

1. *Plan online study time, space, finances, electronic devices*
2. *Change mindset and assumptions*
3. *Demystify misconceptions/myths*
4. *Enjoy online study and avoid stress*
5. *Know where to get further help*
6. *Know how to co-exist/interact with classmates and instructors*
7. *Understand how to manage study time, space, finances, electronic devices etc*
8. *Know what is expected of me and what is not expected of me*
9. *Excel through online or blended study*
10. *Any other valid response*

Chapter 1: Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 2 Feedback

Five things you think are your roles in online learning. Any 5 from:

1. *Buying/bringing your own device*
2. *Change mindset/Adapt positive mindset*
3. *Demystify assumptions*
4. *Adapt new norms/change with changing times*
5. *Exercise diligence and prudence*
6. *Seek available help*
7. *Build new habits (self-study, self-regulation, independent study, community of practice)*
8. *Manage available resources productively*
9. *Focus and set achievable goals*
10. *Any other valid response*

Chapter 2: Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 3 Feedback

<i>Activity 3 item:</i>	<i>Expected response</i>
How does what you have learned in this chapter relate to you as a student?	<i>Relates to my role of getting myself prepared to engage in online learning:</i> <i>-Identification of study workspace</i> <i>-The need to locate access gadgets I will require</i> <i>-Attending class online</i> <i>-Personal readings</i> <i>-Making notes</i> <i>-Doing assignments, presentations etc.</i>

Has this chapter changed your understanding of online learning? If so, how?	<p><i>Yes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>-It has made online learning clearer.</i> <i>-It has made online learning easier to attempt.</i> <i>-It has made me to start embracing it and acquiring necessary skills to participate it as required by from time to time.</i>
What changes, if any, could you make to your online learning as a result of what is learnt in this Chapter 2?	<p><i>Adopt different approaches to online learning so that I do not transfer the approaches I employed in face-to-face learning to online learning</i></p>

Chapter 3: Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 4 Feedback

Activity 4 item	Expected response
Log in to the University Learning Management System (Moodle). Write down what you did/ saw as you logged in.	<p><i>The University website address is: www.chuka.ac.ke. Under e-learning menu, I clicked e-learning system login. I entered my user name and password to login. My user name is my registration number but I replaced slashes (/) with a dot (.). For example for registration number EB1/123456/20, I entered user name as EB1.123456.20. Password is my student portal password and is confidential. I was assigned once I registered as a student in Chuka University.</i></p>
Explore the features available in the system. Write down what you did/ saw as you explored.	<p><i>Some of the features I explored/saw were:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>-Units registered for in a semester.</i> <i>-Content uploaded by lecturers for me to access. The content is in form of text/notes, video clips, audio clips, images.</i> <i>-Links to scheduled classes by my lecturers.</i> <i>-Announcements posted by my lecturers.</i> <i>-Assignments/Quizzes posted by my lecturer for me to attempt etc.</i>

Make short notes/ observations about its benefits and areas it can be improved to be more beneficial to you as an online student	<i>The LMS helps me as a student to do self-study. It has potential to customize learning to my unique needs e.g. I can progress at my own pace, select topics and methods that best meet my needs, and control my learning. Areas of improvement may fall within the context of accessibility, user interface / interaction addition of more features etc.</i>
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Chapter 4: Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 5 Feedback

<i>Activity 5 item</i>	Response(s)
Write two online communication channels you are familiar with and write three ways you could use them to communicate during online studies	Channels: Email, WhatsApp, SMS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Booking an online appointment ✓ Asking for help ✓ Voicing a concern

Chapter 5: Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 6 Feedback

<i>Activity 6 item</i>	Response(s)
List five digital skills that are essential in online learning	<i>ICT proficiency, ICT productivity, Information literacy, Media literacy, Digital collaboration, Digital identity management, Digital wellbeing</i>
How does what you have learned about digital skills in your life as a student and afterwards	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Use of technology in studies and in preparing for life after school</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>There are both advantages and disadvantages in the use of technologies</i>
What changes, if any, could you make to your online learning as a result of what you have learnt in this Chapter 5?	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Assess myself on how well I am equipped with digital skills</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Make special effort to develop them.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Apply these skills in every possible opportunity</i>

Chapter 6: Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 7 Feedback

Activity 7 item	Response(s)
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Open www.google.co.ke and search “bad habits in online studies”. From the many results that come, list five habits you will work to avoid.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Late assignments / tasks submissions ✓ Postponing assignments and homework ✓ Watching YouTube or other videos or listening to music while taking online lessons ✓ Not taking notes or part in discussions during online lessons ✓ Log in to online classes and leave to do other unrelated tasks ✓ Late log in and attending of online classes
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Chapter 7: Skills Guide Comprehension Activity 8 Feedback

<i>Activity 8 item</i>	<i>Response(s)</i>
List five things about the library you have learned in this Chapter 7 that are relevant to you as an on-line student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The importance of information resources in learning <input type="checkbox"/> Types of reading materials available from libraries <input type="checkbox"/> Types of libraries and databases available <input type="checkbox"/> Types of library services provided by the library <input type="checkbox"/> General procedure for finding resources from the digital library <input type="checkbox"/> How to avoid plagiarism in academic writing <input type="checkbox"/> How to referencing/acknowledging academic sources in writing

QUIZZES FEEDBACK

Chapter 1

Query	<i>Expected answer(s)</i>
1. Differentiate what you understand by online learning and in-person learning.	<i>Online learning is a learning experience that is enhanced through utilizing computers and/or the internet both outside and inside the university to facilitate interaction of students and instructors. It is a form of distance learning and not in a traditional classroom. In-person learning refers to classroom learning involving interactions with a teacher and peers.</i>

<p>2. What digital challenges have you faced while learning in the University?</p>	<p><i>Inadequate internet bundles, Low ICT skills, Low information literacy skills, Weak digital devices, Social mischief, Negative attitude, Fixed mindsets, Inadequate technical support</i></p>
<p>3. In the context of this guide, give the full name of the following: ODEL, ICT, BYOD, 4IR, CV</p>	<p><i>ODEL: Open, Distance and Electronic Learning ICT: Information [and] Communication Technology BYOD: Buy your Own Device 4IR: Fourth Industrial Revolution CV: Curriculum Vitae</i></p>
<p>4. Name five technological tools that you understand are useful in online learning and their application</p>	<p><i>Internet/WIFI: Connectivity Computer/Laptop/Desktop: Data processing & communication Smartphone/Tablet/Ipad: Data processing & communication Flash disk/DVD/CD: Data storage Data bundles: Internet/mobile phone connectivity</i></p>
<p>5. Fill the missing word in the blank space: Many learning institutions are transitioning to online learning because of _____.</p>	<p><i>Any of the following would be correct: -Fourth Industrial Revolution push -Increasing demands in education/industries/society/business -Large student numbers per class -Convenience/scale/speed/versatility</i></p>

<p>6. What channels/ platforms/apps do you use in communication and why?</p>	<p><i>WhatsApp: Networking, Group sharing, Rapid, Encrypts</i> <i>Facebook: Networking, Group sharing, Rapid</i> <i>Email: Communication, easy to attach large files, private</i> <i>Telegram: Communication, Large capacity, Group sharing</i> <i>Tweeter: Group sharing/networking</i> <i>Email: info@chuka.ac.ke</i> <i>Website: www.chuka.ac.ke</i> <i>Facebook: @ChukaUniversityOfficialPage</i> <i>YouTube: @Chuka University Official</i> <i>Twitter: @chuka_uni</i> <i>Instagram: @Chuka_University_Official</i> <i>LinkedIn: @ChukaUniversityOfficial</i></p>
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Chapter 2

Query	<i>Expected answer(s)</i>
<p>1. True or False: Online courses contain both content (information) and instructional methods (techniques) that help people to learn the content.</p>	<p><i>T</i></p>
<p>2. True or False: e-learning courses are delivered via digital devices (in digital electronic form) using words in the form of spoken or printed text and pictures such as illustrations, photos, animation or video. T ____; F _____</p>	<p><i>T</i></p>
<p>3. _____ can be defined as using information and communication technologies that enable access to online teaching and learning resources.</p>	<p><i>e-learning</i></p>

<p>4. Which of the following is true about blended learning? Tick all that is True.</p> <p>[A] Designed for individual self-study</p> <p>[B] Comprises both online and face-to-face elements</p> <p>[C] Designed for real-time instructor-led learning</p> <p>[D] Can help you avoid learner isolation and difficulty with motivation</p>	<p><i>B, D</i></p>
<p>5. Which of the following is true about assessments? Tick all that is True.</p> <p>[A] Assessment for learning gives educators and students information about what students know so that educators can target future teaching and resources</p> <p>[B] Assessment for learning gives educators and students information about what students know so that educators can give feedback to address any areas in which a particular learner needs further development.</p> <p>[C] Assessment of learning can take place before a course of study in the form of a diagnostic assessment intended to identify students' existing knowledge, skills, strengths, needs, interests and learning preferences.</p> <p>[D] Assessment as learning emphasizes the learner's role, engaging students in self-assessment as active participants in directing their learning.</p> <p>[E] Assessment of learning is generally used to confirm what students know, and can do, and whether they have achieved the related learning outcomes.</p>	<p><i>A, B, D, E</i></p>

<p>6. Give examples of what you hear electronic media is used to do more these days compared to what analogue media used to do in the past.</p>	<p><i>Use of email instead of paper letters.</i> <i>Use of phone instead of paper fax etc</i> <i>Data storage on disks instead of folders</i> <i>Data processing instead of hand writing</i> <i>Data publication via e-repositories, e-books instead of print texts/journals</i></p>
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Chapter 3

Query	<i>Expected answer(s)</i>
<p>1. True or False: Learning Management Systems are software that enable students to access learning over the internet in real-time. T ____; F ____</p>	<p><i>F</i></p>
<p>2. True or False: You can use Google Docs and other elements of Google Workspace and other similar tools to take notes and also to share your progress with your teachers and work on them together in real-time or asynchronously. T ____; F ____</p>	<p><i>T</i></p>
<p>3. When studying via online mode, you need _____ - _____ skills to manage your own learning. Fill in the missing two hyphenated words.</p>	<p><i>Self-regulation</i></p>

<p>4. Read the statements about blended learning. Tick all True Ans.</p> <p>[A] The skills students need to acquire for them to benefit more from online study may be categorized based on three phases of self-regulation: planning phase, performance phase and self-reflection phase.</p> <p>[B] When studying online, you can also use Twitter or Pinterest to search for information or Diigo to gather together relevant internet bookmarks.</p> <p>[C] The skills needed by students when studying online are exactly the same as those you need in an in-person classroom.</p> <p>[D] Learning Management Systems support the delivery of materials to students, keep track of registered students, and support other tasks such as assessment and communications</p>	<p><i>A, B, D</i></p>
<p>[5] Which of the following is true about necessary skills for approaching online activities/tasks? Tick all that are True.</p> <p>[A] Following deadlines</p> <p>[B] Attending synchronous classes</p> <p>[C] Attending in-person classes</p> <p>[D] Creating a learning schedule</p> <p>[E] Selecting and setting study environment</p> <p>[F] Mobilizing study tools: Laptop, internet access</p> <p>[G] Time management</p> <p>[H] Knowing how to monitor your learning</p> <p>[I] Knowing who you can contact for help</p>	<p><i>All except C</i></p>

Chapter 4

<p>Query</p>	<p><i>Expected answer(s)</i></p>
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<p>1. Define what you understand by online learning</p>	<p><i>Education that takes place over the internet, also referred to as e-learning</i></p>
<p>2. Which of the following is not important for online study sessions?</p> <p>(a) Familiarizing yourself with the course syllabus</p> <p>(b) Sending anonymous messages in group chats</p> <p>(c) Knowing the available communication channels for the course</p> <p>(d) Checking out possible options for accessing online content</p>	<p>B</p>
<p>3. Tick the correct statements given below:</p> <p>-In online studies, I can find many ways of accessing same content.</p> <p>-I need to be careful on the information I share online.</p> <p>-Everyone studying online is lazy and is wasting time.</p> <p>-Only email is acceptable for communication in online studies.</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>4. In your opinion, state why preparations for face-to-face and online study may be similar.</p>	<p><i>Both face-to-face and online study have the same learning expectations and outcomes.</i></p>
<p>5. Why is it important for you to visit the library after taking notes from your tutors during learning?</p>	<p><i>Broaden knowledge, ideas and notes taken in class in the subject of study</i></p>

6. List 3 types of resources you expect to find in the library to help learners with disabilities	<i>Braille, audio-video and large font size notes</i>
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Chapter 5

Query	Expected answer(s)
1. Why do you think digital skills are important for learning in the 21 st Century?	<i>Learning is increasingly getting digital. These skills are required to succeed in education.</i>
2. Give examples of why digital skills are important to you as an online student?	<p><i>As a student able, I am able to: -</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>✓ Use them (e.g. ICT skills) in learning</i> <i>✓ Manage learning information</i> <i>✓ Access and use information correctly</i> <i>✓ Manage personal data</i> <i>✓ Use them to collaborate with others in learning activities</i> <i>✓ Develop and maintain online personal credentials like CV, profile</i> <i>✓ Maintain my health in use of digital information and media</i>
3. Give five (5) examples of digital communication media that you may use as an online student	<i>Email, blogs, podcasts, TikTok, mobile phones, Facebook, WhatsApp</i>
4. In what ways can digital information and media cause problems in the life of online students if not well managed?	<p><i>Cyberbullying</i></p> <p><i>Addiction</i></p> <p><i>Cybercrime</i></p> <p><i>Plagiarism academic disciplinary</i></p>

<p>5. True or False: Online learning does not require possession of any ICT skills. T ____; F ____</p>	<p><i>False. Chapter 5 has clearly demonstrated that to excel in online learning one must acquire and cultivate ICT literacy, and better still proficiency. Otherwise, it becomes very stressful and chances of dropping out increase.</i></p>
<p>6. Define “Information Literacy”</p>	<p><i>Information literacy means being able to find, evaluate, organize, use, and ethically apply information in doing class assignments and in other situations requiring decision-making or problem-solving</i></p>

Chapter 6

Query	Expected answer(s)
<p>1. Which one is not a good habit for online learning? A) Organizing your time. B) Asking for help when stuck in tasks. C) Finding a quiet place to carry out assignments. D) Asking a colleague to send you their work so that you submit as your own work.</p>	<p><i>D</i></p>
<p>2. Identify and tick the correct statements regarding time management in your online studies. A) Avoid postponing tasks to be done now to a later unspecified time B) Online studies have no time limit C) Plan ahead for the tasks ahead D) Make a regular study schedule</p>	<p><i>A, C, D</i></p>

<p>4. Define plagiarism? Give examples of how as an online learning student you can avoid plagiarism in your academic writing</p>	<p><i>Plagiarism is a form of intellectual dishonesty or presenting ideas, opinions, conclusions, facts and words of others as if they belong to us. One can avoid plagiarism through proper taking notes, acknowledging sources through referencing, and paraphrasing.</i></p>
<p>5. Briefly explain how you can retrieve e-books from the University digital library.</p>	<p><i>Access the digital library portal (https://library.chuka.ac.ke/) and select an e-database that is relevant to your subject. Conduct a search using a keyword that denotes the subject of your search.</i></p>
<p>6. Name Five (5) commonly used referencing styles.</p>	<p><i>MLA, APA, Harvard, Chicago, Turabian styles</i></p>

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