

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES of OFF-CAMPUS LEARNING?

There are advantages and disadvantages of studying 'in-class' and 'off-campus':

MODE	ADVANTAGES?	DISADVANTAGES?
IN-CLASS (SAME TIME - SAME PLACE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most people have experience with this mode • Students are often most comfortable in settings they have experience with • Students can see each other's eyes, facial expressions, body language or hear voice inflections and tones during communication • Students can participate in activities in laboratories and studios under direction of the instructor • Feedback to questions and issues raised in class is immediate; face-to-face interaction with no delays in communication occurs • Technical skills with a microcomputer and related software are not needed except as they relate directly to course material • Audio and/or visual media delivery is not limited by current computer technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in the course must gather in the same place • Everyone in the course must gather at the same time • Some students would need to leave employment, families, and community responsibilities to attend classes • Some students do not actively participate in class activities, choosing to be passive, although present, learners
MODE	ADVANTAGES?	DISADVANTAGES?
OFF-CAMPUS (ANY TIME - ANY PLACE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students do not need to unduly disrupt critical parts of lives - employment, family life, community responsibilities - to travel to campus • Students can fit course work into their own schedules at times that work best for them • Some students communicate best in an indirect mode • Sharing of work may be more easily accomplished; e.g., drafts of student works can more easily be shared with lecturer through electronic communication (i.e. email) • Different learning styles and disabilities may be easier to accommodate; self pacing of learning is facilitated • Students with industry knowledge should excel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual and hearing cues during communication are reduced or absent; limited reading and writing skills may reduce communication effectiveness • Requires self-direction and self-motivation to attend to the course work • Students need instructor assistance to feel a part of a "course community" in this mode • Providing laboratory and studio experiences for students may be more challenging • Hardware and software requirements and related skills may limit access for some students • Feedback to questions and comments is delayed

Source: <http://www.rit.edu> (adapted), Online Learning, Rochester Institute of Technology, 2000.

Use this information to help decide which mode of learning best suits you. Course materials and support are provided to assist with the off-campus mode of learning for students in both metropolitan and regional areas.

Central TAFE recommends in-class learning where possible in order to maximise the effectiveness of the course objectives and student outcomes.