

Learning just got even more exciting!

The advent of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has made learning so much easier and more convenient – qualities that the Polytechnic of Namibia strives to offer its students. In another first for the Polytechnic, the Centre for Open and Lifelong Learning (COLL) recently launched its first fully-fledged e-learning courses.

“This is an exciting event especially as we have heard such positive comments during the e-learning students’ orientation a week ago,” commented Ms Georgie Fröhlich of COLL who is the Coordinator for developing e-learning courses for distance education students. Sharing a passion for technology-mediated learning, both Georgie and her colleague, Ms Leena Kangandji who is an Instructional Designer at COLL, have been working tirelessly with two e-learning tutors- Ms Sandra Tjiramanga and Mr Steven Denk, to develop several e-learning courses specifically catering for the changing needs of the modern student.

Put simply, e-learning is just another way of studying, but instead of being face-to-face with a lecturer or tutor or studying alone at home with your study guide, you are provided with a virtual classroom via a networked computer. This means you can study anywhere and at anytime, which is a real plus for those students who have a busy schedule. At the Polytechnic of Namibia, e-learning is a paced week-by-week way of studying cooperatively with your tutor and fellow students by means of a virtual classroom that provides a variety of technology enhanced learning tools such as electronic text, images, animations, streaming video and audio. All you need to enrol for e-learning courses is good access to a networked computer and be able to show you can operate it sufficiently- this is evidenced by having passed Principles of Information Systems 1A & 1B (PIS121S & PIS122S) or Computer User Skills (CUS0100).

Some excited students have commended the Polytechnic on making the registration process smoother and for introducing this convenient and flexible mode of study.



“What is the difference between studying through the kind of distance education I do now and that of e-learning?”

Through e-learning a student is able to access study guides and other additional material, and submit assignments directly via the site. You can also be in contact with your tutor and fellow students via the course website. Students are guided through the course by a dedicated tutor.

Says Georgie: “The beauty of e-learning is that it does not break down the sense of community, as some would think. Students are able to interact regularly with their tutors and fellow students and you get regular feedback to questions, tasks and assignments. In fact, students will experience a much more interactive and supportive learning process than if they studied by the traditional distance education mode, because of the technology enhanced communication tools used and much lower student to tutor ratio”.

Please note: E-learning courses will be offered only when there is a demand from the students to do so. A minimum of 10 students is needed to make it possible to offer a course via e-learning. At this stage, not all courses are offered in the e-learning mode, but plans are to make more available with each passing year.

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