



Clarification of Otago’s use of the terms ‘online’ and ‘distance’ for administrative purposes

As a short-term measure to enable students with an approved COVID-19-related reason to enrol in on-campus papers while studying away from a University campus, some papers have been labelled as “online”.

This “online” classification is not the same as the “distance learning” classification that is allocated to formally approved distance papers.

This document is to help clarify how Otago is making use of the terms “online” and “distance”, as in common parlance these words have a variety of meanings and are often used interchangeably.

1. Online

online education is teaching and learning that takes place in an online environment or uses online technologies.

A term that can be used in the literature and in common language as an umbrella term to refer to a variety of courses and types of learning and teaching including distance learning, blended learning, flexible learning etc

Otago’s use of “online”

“Online” is the term that Otago is using to refer to papers that are formally approved as on-campus papers (OC in the prescription) but in which approved students may enrol without having to be physically present at the location of the teaching.

Using the word in this way is a **short-term solution** to differentiate these papers from those that are formally approved as distance papers (DL). The solution addresses the need to provide access to students with a COVID-19-related reason for not being able to relocate close to one of the University’s campuses where their paper is being taught.

For teaching staff, and the planning for teaching these online papers, the paper remains primarily an on-campus paper, and is taught as an on-campus paper. No major changes to the paper are assumed. However, it is the teacher’s responsibility to provide learning support for the approved “online” student so that they can participate in the paper, along with the larger on-campus cohort.

This differs from formally approved distance papers because distance papers are planned from the outset as papers to be offered by distance and the assumption is that all students enrolling in that distance paper are studying by distance.

For administration. Enrolling approved students is undertaken by staff in Student Experience. To enable the students to be recognised as “online”, a distance occurrence of the (on-campus) paper is set up in eVision and used only for enrolling the online-approved students.

2. Distance learning

<p>distance education</p> <p>(distance education is distance learning + distance teaching)</p>	<p>a) is study/learning that normally occurs in a geographically different place from the teaching</p> <p>Because of (a), there is need for the following to help bridge separation:</p> <p>b) planned learning and teaching requiring special course design and instructional techniques; and</p> <p>c) the use of online, video and other technologies (not confined to computer-based or web-based) to facilitate and mediate communication and interaction.</p> <p>Finally, because of (a), (b) and (c), a coordinated and aligned wider system becomes imperative and therefore there is a need for:</p> <p>d) special organisational, support and administrative arrangements.</p>
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Otago’s use of “distance” and “distance learning”

<p>Otago’s distance papers - ‘DL’</p> <p>(‘DL’ in a paper prescription)</p>	<p>For the purposes of approval processes for papers proposed as ‘distance’ (DL): <i>“a “distance paper” at Otago is one taught in such a way that, with the exception of a short residential component and/or attendance at audio and videoconference sessions in some cases, regular attendance at one of the University’s campus centres is not expected”</i> (Senate, April 2003)</p>
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“Distance education” – as defined above - is used to refer to the processes of teaching and learning (distance education) that are built into papers formally approved as distance papers (also defined above).

Formal approval, based on Otago’s use of “DL”, occurs through departmental/programme academic committee processes and finally through BoGS or BUGS and Senate. These formally approved papers are labelled in the Calendar with a “DL” forming part of the prescription.

For teaching staff: From the start, these papers are designed with the geographical separation of teaching and learning in mind.

For administration: Because DL is an occurrence that the University uses, facility for labelling papers as such is built into eVision. Enrolling students are given the distance option (‘E’) to select when choosing papers.