



# What is distance learning?

## Fernando

My name is Fernando Rosell-Aguilar and I am a senior lecturer. I work in distance learning, designing and organising courses for distance learning. Distance learning takes place normally in people's homes at a time that they choose when it's convenient for them. The learning comes from a number of sources: it could be websites, books, all sorts, and you digest that information at your own pace.

I think anyone can be a distance learner. Some people just like an app on their mobile phone so they can learn small chunks of information. Other people want to get a qualification out of their study. Or they may want something a lot more geared up towards their professional development.

There are very short courses and there are very long courses that lead to full-on university qualifications.

The difference between face to face and distance learning is that in a face to face situation you have the opportunity to ask questions if you haven't understood something. What you tend to find is that the materials have been written so that they provide the answers to any questions you may have already in the materials and the answer goes beyond whether it's correct or incorrect. It normally has an explanation of why it's right or wrong.

As a non-native speaker you may find that it's an extra challenge to study in English. You are expected to submit assignments in good academic English and you may need a little bit of extra support with that.

A really good idea is to try shorter courses. There are institutions that offer lots of free learning materials as samplers of their courses.

Studying at a distance doesn't necessarily mean that you have to do more work because you're on your own. It just means that you have to be more committed, and you have to be motivated to make sure you see this through.