

Teaching and Supporting Online Learners 1

Be aware of potential technology barriers for students

	Strategies	Some Student Comments
1	Learning materials need to be well designed and appropriate for online teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You do a lot of online research, you do a lot of book reading, you watch tutorials or listen to tutorials, you read through slides so it's not just all paperwork.• They had a reading theme for each week where we could get on and then they had an assignment page like for all the readings and it was all on one page and you didn't have to go... waste hours and hours and hours just trying to find the right document.• ... a whole bunch of YouTube videos about how to use the library and how to reference. They're fun and helpful. I can watch a three minute video and figure it out for myself.
2	Ensure students know where to get help with technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There was a section that couldn't be any more than 10 megabytes and it was lucky I knew what that was but mine was 44 megabytes. I had no idea how to reduce it. And when you're living in isolation it's very difficult. I finally got onto the IT guy. I went through my tutor and then I got onto IT.• I think number one would be the computer and working in isolation when you have problems and especially if you know it's out of university hours. There's nobody to ask and you need to know the answer now. That has been difficult. Not knowing what to do.

	Strategies	Some Student Comments
3	<p>Understand that online students are not usually digital natives – more likely to be mature age and may not be technologically savvy – so be patient with them...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>As an older person you feel a little bit more like the pressure's there to prove you're not too old to do it. The major obstacle of a lot of older people, [is] you feel you're competing with younger ones who have got the language; they've come out of school and they've got the computer literacy.</i> • <i>My computing skills aren't good enough that I can become part of the 'buddy' system; I don't seem to be able to work that properly but I need to learn how to do that.</i> • <i>I had to do a PowerPoint presentation as a curator and also making catalogues and so forth. I had no idea what they were talking about. I didn't even know if I had PowerPoint on my computer. So it's just little things like that. When I say 'little' I mean it seems 'mammoth', but I look back and I think gosh I've come so far.</i>