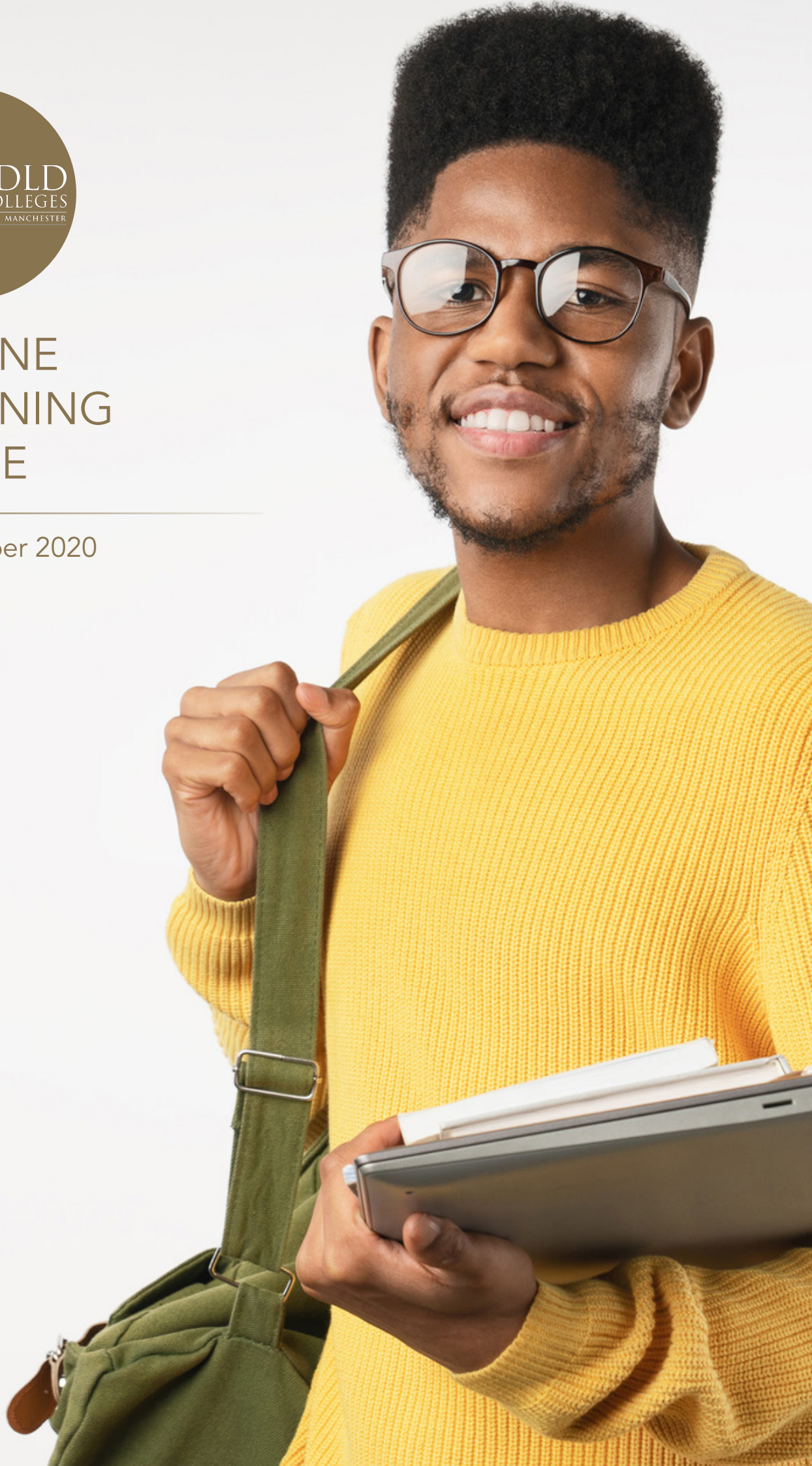




ONLINE LEARNING GUIDE

September 2020



INTRODUCTION



I hope you and your family are keeping safe and well.

These are difficult and uncertain times for us all. In late March, as the coronavirus pandemic spread around the globe, the British Government took the unprecedented step of closing all UK schools and colleges.

Our colleges had begun to make preparations in advance of the physical closure of schools. This has enabled us to continue teaching our students online throughout the Spring and Summer terms, offering the 'gold standard' of education, pastoral, and tutorial support for which our colleges are renowned.

The good news is that we now look to be winning the battle against coronavirus, both here in the UK, and in many other countries. What remains less clear however, is how much longer we will have to live with the effects of this pandemic.

We do not want this uncertainty to deny any students the opportunity of a world-class British education, which is why we are offering new students keen to join us in September these options.

1. If you are able to, you can join us in college in person and begin your studies.
2. If you are not able to join us in person, you can begin your studies online at a discounted fee, and then join us in person when you feel safe and comfortable to do so.

In the following pages, you will learn more about these new September start options, and if you choose to start online, then we will tell you about what learning in the virtual world has in store for you.

Yours sincerely

Mark Hanley-Browne, CEO Alpha Plus Group

ONLINE LEARNING WITH ABBEY DLD

BENEFITS OF ONLINE LEARNING WITH ABBEY DLD

- High quality online lessons are delivered by our experienced, professional, Abbey DLD teachers.
- Small class sizes (averaging 10 students) allow students to ask questions and teachers to deliver feedback in real time.
- We are experts at delivering the programmes (GCSE, A-Level, Foundation) that give international students the best opportunity to access top UK universities.
- Academic English classes offered as standard.
- We offer the same extensive tutorial, extra-curricular and pastoral support online that students will receive if they study with us in person.
- Flexibility for new students to join in person when conditions allow (from the October half term in term or from January 2021 onwards).
- Learning online helps prevent students from falling behind and will avoid a gap in their education.

SEPTEMBER START OPTIONS

On campus learning

Much as in any normal year, students who are able to physically join us on campus for the start of the school year will be able to move into their boarding, attend lessons and extra-curricular activities. The appropriate level of social distancing and health protection measures will be in place.

Online learning



New students unable to join us physically on campus will be able to join their classes online until they are able to physically join.



OUR ONLINE PLATFORMS

Our colleges use Microsoft Teams and Canvas as our primary online learning platforms. These platforms are supplemented by a wide range of online communication tools.

ONLINE PLATFORMS

	 canvas	 Microsoft Teams
Cambridge		✓
London	✓	✓
Manchester		✓

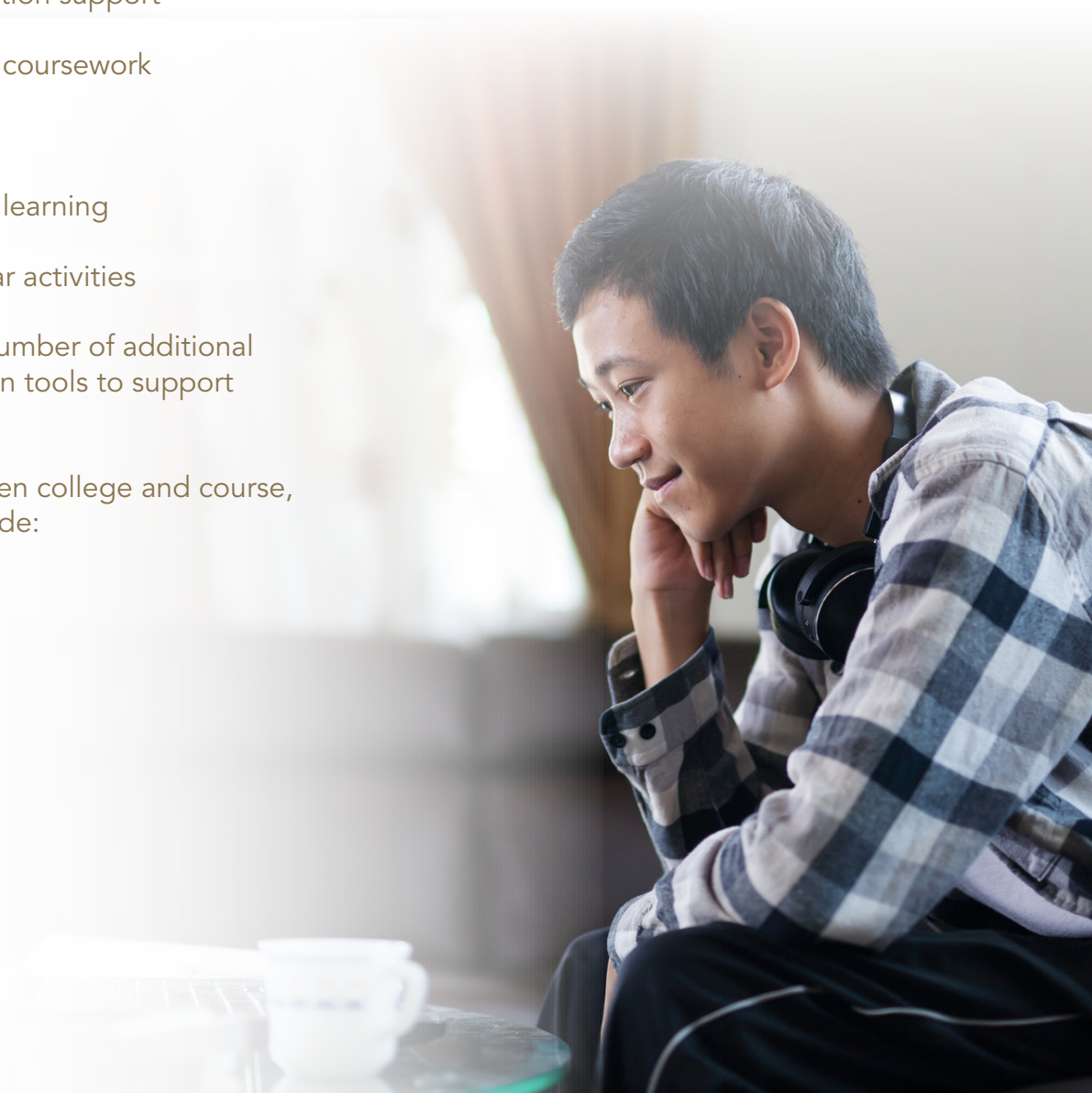
Our online learning platforms allow students to attend live lessons and watch recordings of past lessons. Additional learning materials which can be accessed online include:

- Lesson notes, worksheets and other materials
- Timetables
- University application support
- Textbooks
- Assignments and coursework
- Quizzes
- Tests
- Revision notes
- Additional video learning
- Personal tutorials
- Extra/Co-curricular activities

Our colleges use a number of additional online communication tools to support our main platforms.

Tools will vary between college and course, but are likely to include:

- Skype
- Outlook (emails)
- Sway
- Zoom
- WeChat
- WhatsApp



ABBHEY DLD ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

We have used our experience to align our online learning practices with those used by top ranked UK universities such as the University of Cambridge and the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

This means that as an Abbey DLD online student, alongside a flexible weekly lesson plan you will also receive the full range of academic, pastoral and extra-curricular support. This will include:

FULL SYLLABUS OF TAUGHT LESSONS

Depending on the programme you are studying, this will mean about 5 hours of virtual class time per subject, per week; so a student studying 4 A-Level subjects would receive 20 hours of lessons per week.

Classes will be flexibly timetabled to ensure that as many students as possible are able to attend live. If a student is unable to attend live, recordings of lessons and relevant course material will be available.

ONLINE INDUCTION

Students will receive a full online induction to help them familiarise with our online learning platforms, meet their teachers and fellow students, and settle into our college community.

ACADEMIC ENGLISH

Online students will receive a full programme of Academic English classes designed to improve their written and spoken English. Strong English is one of the key components in determining academic success for international students.

PERSONAL TUTORIALS

Online students will complete a daily virtual registration and have weekly one-to-one sessions with their personal tutor at a convenient time to check on each student's academic progress and personal wellbeing. Tutorials also provide an invaluable opportunity for students to discuss their studies, and for tutors to deliver any academic or pastoral support that students may require.

PROGRESS TESTS

Regular in-class and formal academic tests to ensure that students are attending, engaging and making academic progress in their lessons.

UNIVERSITY APPLICATION SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Year 12 and 13 online students will benefit from an extensive programme UCAS and university application preparation and support from our expert in-college teams.

VIRTUAL EXTRA/CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMME

Online students will still be able to attend and experience many of the weekly clubs and activities organised by our colleges. These activities are designed to be fun, but also provide evidence of skills and interests gained outside of studies that make Abbey DLD students more attractive candidates to top universities.

HOW DOES ONLINE LEARNING WORK?

Online lessons will start on the first day of term, and run in parallel with face-to-face on-campus learning to ensure that students are fully prepared to slot seamlessly into classes when they join us in person.

Students taking online learning at our Abbey DLD colleges will receive a 20% discount on tuition fees for the duration of their online studies. This discount will apply to students who are unable to physically attend and to those who have opted for our fixed term Abbey DLD online options.

For students who have reserved spaces in college boarding, boarding fees will be discounted on a pro-rata basis.



ONLINE LEARNING Q&As

Q. Is online learning different at each college?

A. Each of our colleges has its own character, and offers a differing range of courses and subjects, so we have not employed a 'one size fits all' approach with our online learning.

Each college has been free to build the components of their virtual learning environment using the tools that will be most beneficial to their students. But our colleges remain linked by a common set of values and beliefs which ensure consistency and quality across our online provision.

Q. What equipment do students need to take part in online learning?

A. A PC, Laptop or tablet and access to the internet. We advise students against using mobile phones to access our online learning.

Q. Will the colleges provide IT support?

A. Colleges will provide IT support to enable each student to access online learning from day 1.

Q. Has online learning been going well so far?

A. Our teachers gave a lot of thought as to how to deliver a comprehensive online education for our students. It has certainly been an adjustment, but online learning has been remarkably successful so far with over 90% lesson attendance across all colleges.

Q. Will online learning affect a student's record of attendance or visa?

A. No, providing students continue to engage with their online learning programme, maintain communications with their tutors and complete assignments. At the conclusion of their online learning students must attend face-to-face learning as agreed with their college, unless specific circumstances prevent this.

Q. Can returning students attend online lessons from September 2020?

A. Returning students are expected to attend lessons face-to-face unless specific circumstances prevent them from doing so. All cases of returning students who want to study online must be agreed with the college beforehand.

ONLINE LEARNING Q&As

Q. Will online learning affect a student's chances of getting a place at a top university?

A. The simple answer is no. UK universities moved their learning online during the spring term, and some are planning to continue online lectures throughout 2020. This means that they will have a clear understanding of the challenges and capabilities of online learning, and will not look unfavourably on any student who has had to complete some of their learning online.

With that said, as the coronavirus pandemic eases and lessons move back on campus, we expect that the highest ranking, most competitive universities will expect applicants to have engaged with face-to-face learning here in the UK for the majority of their studies. This is why we believe that the flexible model of online and face-to-face learning offered by our colleges represents the best option for students looking to secure a place at a top-ranked UK university.

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