



UNIVERSITI
MALAYA

Open and Distance Learning HANDBOOK



ODL Handbook
2024/2025 Academic Session

GENERAL INFORMATION

This handbook is designed to provide students with essential information and guidance for studying in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programs at Universiti Malaya (UM). It should be used alongside the Universiti Malaya (Master's Degree) Rules 2024, Universiti Malaya (Master's Degree) Regulations 2024 and any program-specific guidelines.

Please note that this handbook does not override any of UM's official policies or resolutions that may be issued by the Senate from time to time.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided, the content of this handbook may be subject to change. Students are advised to regularly consult the faculty's ODL support team or official university resources for any updates or clarifications.

As an ODL student, it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook and all relevant university regulations. We hope the information provided will support you in making informed decisions and help you navigate your studies effectively.

CONTENT

About Universiti Malaya	4
1. UM Open & Distance Learning (ODL) Programmes	6
2. Preparation for Open & Distance Learning	7
3. Adapting to Being an ODL Student	10
4. Technical Requirements (Hardware & Software)	11
5. Learning and Assessment	14
6. Academic Integrity	17
6. Student Support Services	19
7. Fees	20
8. Graduation	21
9. Contact Information	22

ABOUT UNIVERSITI MALAYA



CORE VALUES



The Universiti Malaya (UM) is a public research university located in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It is the oldest and highest-ranking Malaysian institution of higher education according to two international ranking agencies. The university has graduated three prime ministers of Malaysia, and other political, business, and cultural figures of national prominence. Universiti Malaya's academic programmes are globally acclaimed and highly-ranked worldwide in its individual category while encompassing a broad spectrum of knowledge. Offering versatile modes of study, including coursework, mixed-mode, research, and clinical tracks, available in both Full-Time and Part-Time options, and via Open & Distance Learning (ODL) that meticulously designed to foster innovation, critical thinking, and global competitiveness, nurturing leaders of tomorrow.

The predecessor of the university, King Edward VII College of Medicine, was established on 28 September 1905 in Singapore, then a territory of the British Empire. In October 1949, the merger of the King Edward VII College of Medicine and Raffles College created the university. Rapid growth during its first decade caused the university to organize as two autonomous divisions on 15 January 1959, one located in Singapore

and the other in Kuala Lumpur. In 1960, the government of Malaysia indicated that these two divisions should become autonomous and separate national universities. One branch was located in Singapore, later becoming the National University of Singapore after the independence of Singapore from Malaysia, and the other branch was located in Kuala Lumpur, retaining the name Universiti Malaya. Legislation was passed in 1961 and the Universiti Malaya was established on 1 January 1962. In 2012, UM was granted autonomy by the Ministry of Higher Education.

Today, UM has more than 2,500 faculty members and is divided into thirteen faculties, two academies, five institutes and six academic centres. In the latest QS World University Rankings, UM is currently ranked 59th in the world, 9th in Asia, 3rd in Southeast Asia and the highest ranked learning institution in Malaysia.

1. UM OPEN & DISTANCE LEARNING (ODL)

ODL offers effective study methods to overcome existing barriers compared to conventional learning modes. Learning and teaching is implemented without geographical boundaries through the adaptation of the latest digital learning technology. ODL allows students to access learning materials in an easy and flexible way with the guidance and support of dedicated lecturers and other fellow students.

Various communication methods are used such as video conferencing, email, social media as well as discussion platforms. The use of these various technologies is combined with face-to-face interaction as well as the use of physical and virtual resources to ensure optimal learning.

As ODL learners, students will be able to study at their own pace. This can be achieved through efficient and ideal time management to balance the commitment between study, family and career. All programmes offered are accredited by MQA.

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

- Master of Facilities and Maintenance Management, Faculty of Built Environment
- Master of Project Management, Faculty of Built Environment
- Master of Real Estate, Faculty of Built Environment
- Master of Arts (Linguistics), Faculty of Languages and Linguistics
- Master of Biomedical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering
- Master of Safety, Health and Environment Engineering, Faculty of Engineering

To get more information, go to <https://study.um.edu.my/>

2. PREPARATION FOR ODL



2.1 Teaching & Learning

The Teaching & Learning (T&L) method of the ODL programme includes guided learning and self-paced learning through appropriate online learning methods and tools. Through guided learning, students will attend face-to-face lectures and discussions with lecturer in a session held synchronously online. Students will have the opportunity to interact with lecturers and fellow students in an interactive learning environment.

However, this guided learning session is set at a minimum rate of between 8 to 12 hours for each course. This is to fulfil the objective of offering ODL programme which is to enable students to have more autonomy and flexibility in managing their own learning time and access course materials at the most appropriate time especially for students who may have irregular work schedules.

2.2 Independent Learning

Students are provided with self-instructional materials (SIM) for self-learning consisting of recordings of lecture sessions, notes, slides and other course materials and links provided by lecturers. The course materials can be accessed at any time in the learning platform (ODL SPeCTRUM) based on individual needs and in accordance with learning instructions and course weekly study schedule provided by the lecturer throughout the semester.

Students also need to complete a formative assessment of either assignments / tests / quizzes or other assessments set by the lecturer throughout the course period as scheduled. Lecturers will also conduct summative assessments either in the form of final examinations or assignments / projects to assess students' overall understanding and to ensure the achievement of course learning outcomes.

2.4 Student Identity Verification

Universiti Malaya verifies the identity of a student registered in ODL programme through at least one of the following options:

- (i) A secure login via SiswaMail
- (ii) Proctored examination - may be required for a summative assessment for certain courses. If required, a qualified proctor, approved by the instructor, must verify the identity of the student taking the exam. Online proctoring is also available as an alternative to verify student identity.

2.5 Student Orientation

First-time ODL students are required to complete the 'UM Week of Welcome (UMWOW)' prior to the start of academic session.

The orientation is listed under 'Registered Courses' in the ODL learning management system via ODL SPeCTRUM. The online orientation helps to familiarise students with the online platform environment and outlines key strategies for success as an online student.

2.6 Your Responsibility

As an UM ODL student, you are required to comply with the Rules and Regulations. Students must register for the courses at the beginning of the semester, pay the tuition fees, and practice academic integrity during the studies.

ODL requires that you use a computer with internet connection equipped with basic software or may require additional software to fulfil the course syllabus. Thus, the responsibility of the ODL student constitutes:

- Updating personal details, including current home and email address and contact details (home, office and mobile phone numbers)
- Contacting the online course administrator within the first week of registration and visiting the ODL Portal for course details.
- Be alerted to attend the ODL classroom and to participate in discussion boards according to the course schedule. Ask questions if there is a problem in understanding instructions, assignments or learning materials.
- Abide to the course requirements and deadlines as scheduled. Use Calendar Apps (eg.: Google Calendar) and set reminder for your convenient. Be aware that class schedule and deadlines posted are in accordance with Malaysian local time. It is the responsibility of students to translate this to their own time zone.
- Checking course websites and your UM email for updates and messages on a regular
- Keeping soft copies of all work submitted.
- Ensuring appropriate internet access to enable participation in courses.
- Ensuring no restriction to sites or functions required for course participation.

- Having a backup plan for technical emergencies such as hard drive crashes, loss of internet connectivity or other computer malfunctions.
- Understanding UM guidelines, policies, rules and regulations that is applicable to you.

2.7 Online Learning Community

Through the UM ODL programme, the ODL communities can be educationally and personally fulfilling when student approach their course with a commitment to initiate and fully engage in the material discussions and group work. Learning happens through reflection, collaborative teamwork and most importantly, taking initiative to listen, ask question and think critically within the community of fellow learners.

2.8 Online Communication Skills

As an ODL student, you will explore various types of communication available in the online environment and the educational technologies that support them. Online communication plays a significant role in the learning process and works somewhat differently from face-to-face communication where most communication is asynchronous, and text based.

ODL programme requires all students to actively engage in an online communication to develop a meaningful learning experience among students and faculty members. To ensure a successful relationship, always practice important communication skills including active listening, friendliness, openness and courteous when communicating in the online platforms. Always being polite, respectful but constructive and mindful in your interactions and contributions.

These relationships will positively impact your academic performance, expose you to novel concepts, professional contacts and develop into long-lasting friendships.

2.9 Academic Calendar

The academic calendar will be provided at the beginning of each academic session. Schedule of activities shall vary according to cohorts.

Information for current Academic Calendar can be obtained here:

<https://masd.um.edu.my/academic-calendar>

ADAPTING TO BEING AN ODL STUDENT

Know the expectations



Your course will be either synchronous or asynchronous. Which ever method your course is delivered through, hold yourself accountable for the work you need to complete.

Staying engaged



To be a successful distance learner, you need to remain engaged throughout the whole course. Engage in the discussion, read your emails, ask questions, and be an active participant in the course.

Establish a functional work space

Have a designated study space that is free of distractions so you can focus on your work.



Communicate with your lecturer

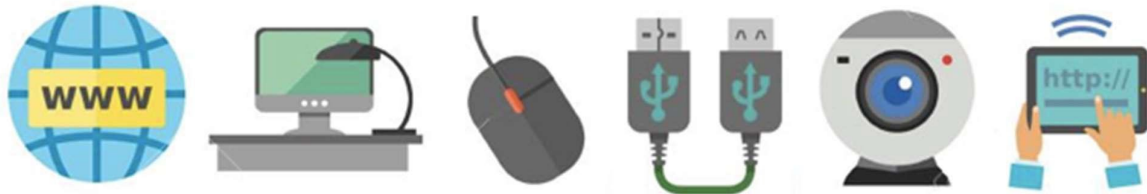


Reach out via email to your lecturer and ask if there's anything you can do before the course begins and touch base ever so often. Be sure the expectations are clear and if not, don't hesitate to reach out to them with questions!

Manage your time wisely

As a distance learner you will need to schedule your studies yourself and be disciplined enough to stick to it. Be sure to follow your syllabus and be active in discussions so that you don't miss out on any due dates or deadlines. Set aside time to participate in the class and work on your coursework.

3. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS (HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE)



3.3 Computer and Internet Access

As an online learner, ODL students must have access to a personal computer with a good internet connection. This is to allow you to participate in lectures live through video conferencing as well as to watch recorded lecture videos and to access learning materials provided in the online platform.

3.4 Computer requirements

The basic computer hardware and software requirements are as given below. Please check with your instructor for any other hardware/software requirements specific to your course.

3.4.1 Basic Hardware

Computer

There is no official quota when it comes to RAM (random access memory) or CPU speed, but we would recommend a Processor Speed of 2.0GHz with 4GB of RAM as a minimum requirement.

Mobile Device

Mobile devices allow you to receive tweets, e-mail, instant messages, and updates to your social networks. They can also help you download MP3 files of course lectures.

Microphone/Speakers/Headset

It's worthwhile to invest in a good headset, so that you can listen privately. A microphone lets you participate in class meetings via Zoom, Google meet, Teams, etc.



3.4.2 Basic Software

An up-to-date operating system is a requirement for many online programs. Windows 7 or higher are usually acceptable. For Mac users, you will need System 10.6 or higher. If you're not sure which operating system you have, or whether it's compatible, please contact your enrolment advisor.

Microsoft Office 365 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, Access, Teams)

For word processing and data analysis projects, you'll need programs that can create text documents and spreadsheets. Microsoft Office is most suitable for this purpose.

Adobe Acrobat (Professional)

This software allows you to create PDF files.

Browser Plug-ins (Zoom, Flash, QuickTime, Windows Media Player, Real Player, etc.)

Some version of a media player or flash player is necessary for streaming videos. These programs are usually free and easy to download. Your instructor can advise you on these and other necessary plug-ins. If you have any questions about any of the plug-ins or are unable to download the plug-ins, please contact [UMHelpdesk](#) > Category: ICT Services > Product: SPeCTRUM ODL.

3.5 Computer skills

You will need some basic computer skills to be a successful ODL learner.

i. Basic Computer Skills

As an online learner, you will be communicating and collaborating with your instructors and classmates in a variety of ways, most frequently through writing. Hence, you will need basic skills on email writing and application and Microsoft Office software especially Word, Excel and PowerPoint to perform required tasks and assignments.

ii. Digital Communication

Forums, email and video conference or chat platforms. You'll need to use proper netiquette skills when communicating online. For example, using full sentences, avoiding sarcasm, and using emoticons. These skills also apply to email communication, where you will want to be clear and succinct.

iii. Web Search

Knowing how to do a web search is a necessary skill set in today's digital culture. As an online learner, you need advanced web search skills to be able to obtain information relevant to your study and find resources to share in discussion forums, references for papers and projects.

iv. Collaboration

Most courses require some form of interaction among students in small teams, face-to-face where you will be collaborating with your classmates for group projects and assignments. The aim is to promote application of core concepts, builds knowledge and provide learners with skills that allow them to view problems and situations from different perspectives.



4. LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Delivery of course/s in each semester can be summarised in the Table below:

CATEGORY OF ACTIVITIES	TEACHING & LEARNING ACTIVITIES	METHODS	MODE	DURATION
Guided Learning	Lecture, Tutorial & Webinar Discussion	Live Video Conference	Synchronous	14 weeks
Self / Independent-Learning	Lecture & Webinar	Pre-recorded Video	Asynchronous	
	Independent Study	Slides, Reference Sources (books / notes), video links, animated videos, audio recordings		
	Discussion Forum	Forum in ODL SPECTRUM		
Assessment	Formative Assessment	E.g.: Assignment/Test/Case Study / Quiz	Synchronous	
		Presentation		
	Summative Assessment	Final Examination OR	Asynchronous	
		Alternative Assessment		

4.1 Definition and Methods

ODL academic programmes refer to programmes where the ODL courses offered comprise more than 60% of the total courses offered in the programme.

ODL courses refer to courses that have at least 80% of student learning time (SLT) delivered in open and remote modes. This should be supported by interaction between students and lecturers, either synchronously or asynchronously, through Self-Instructional Materials (SIM) and ODL SPeCTRUM.

- i. **Part-time Study Method**
Study for a coursework programme undertaken by students with less than 12 credits in a common semester (less than 60% of the maximum number of credits in a semester).
- ii. **Full-time Study Method**
Studies undertaken by students with a minimum of 12 credits in a common semester (60% of the maximum number of credits in a semester).

4.2 Course Registration/Withdrawal

All registration and withdrawal methods are subject to the UM Rules and Regulations, which you can find in this link:

https://umsitsguide.um.edu.my/student_lecturer_staff/rules_regulations_stu-lec-stf.php

4.3 Course Information

The course information is a document that explains the scope of your course. Information found in the course information includes list of course materials, assignments, important dates, assessment criteria and grades, and course expectations.

4.4 Learning Management System (LMS)

The LMS via ODL SPeCTRUM allows students to access course materials, learning schedule, announcements, and communicate with peers and course instructors. All teaching and learning activities will be conducted within this platform, including live video conferencing sessions accessing pre-recorded videos/audios, discussion through the forum, online quizzes, and assignment submission.

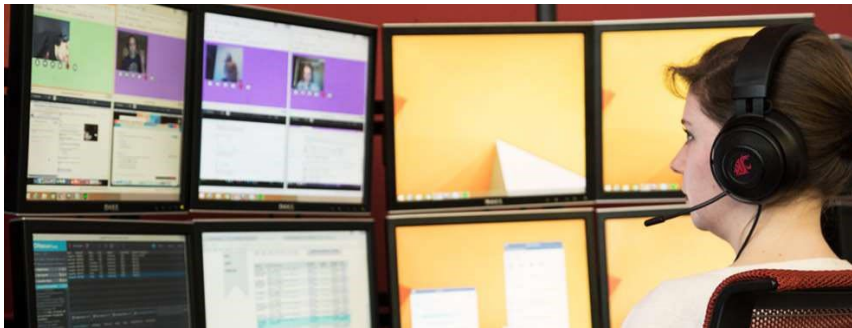
Learning Management System (LMS): <https://odl.um.edu.my>

4.5 Course Participation

Student participation is calculated from attendance of lecture session (synchronous / asynchronous) and student involvement in discussion board and frequency of accessing self-instructional materials provided by lecturers according to weekly learning schedule. Instructors will be able to identify students who have not accessed the course and students who have not completed their formative assessment.

Students are advised to contact the instructor or programme coordinator if they encounter problems related to completing their assignments.

4.6 Examination and Proctors



Some courses may require proctored examinations that is overseen by an appointed proctor who supervises the student during the examination.

The proctoring process may be conducted via Synchronous or Asynchronous where applicable. For a Synchronous examination situation, a physical location may be identified, where the student will be asked to come and take the examination at the scheduled time. Alternatively, online proctoring system may be used for examinations conducted online.

5. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY



Students must keep their UM ID, username and password confidential, to submit only original work, and to adhere to the Universiti Malaya requirement on academic misconduct. For more info refer to <https://hep.um.edu.my/disciplinary>

5.1 Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a guiding principle at the Universiti Malaya for all activities including and not limited to matters related to examinations, preparation of assignments and presentations, writing research papers / projects as well as other assessments. Every student needs to embody and practice the principles of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility through the recognition and proper acknowledgment of information and the work of others and only celebrate genuine works and ideas that belong to you.

5.2 Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty refers to:

- (i) giving a false impression with intent to deceive; or
- (ii) fails to acknowledge the original source of any data, information or any material; or
- (iii) falsification of information; or
- (iv) inaccuracies of statements; or
- (v) deception during examinations or tests or in the performance of any form of assessment; or
- (vi) improper use of resources.

Academic dishonesty can take many forms including plagiarism, deceptive fabrication and any act that leads to infringement of intellectual property and copyright law.

Here are some forms of behaviour related to academic dishonesty but not limited to:

1. Plagiarism
The act of a person using another person's ideas without citing the source;
2. False citations
Citing sources that have never been used or associating work with reference material from sources that is not being referred or obtained;
3. Falsify information
Fabricate or alter data for misleading purposes such as to obtain better experimental results;
4. Conspires or abets
Copying another student's work, asking another person to write someone's assignment, or allowing another student to borrow his or her work;
5. Cheating in examinations
Carrying or having access to books or any material in any form and format illegally during the examination or assessment, or in any assignment to be used by the lecturer/tutor/examiner as the basis of the assessment, and
6. Contract cheating and impersonation
Student's work is completed by another party (usually involving a payment to a third party) but was submitted as a result of their own work.

5.3 Disciplinary Actions

Students found to have committed academic offenses may be subject to the following Disciplinary action:

- ✓ Warning Letter
- ✓ Fine
- ✓ 'Fail' Grade on the assessed coursework/examination
- ✓ Suspension
- ✓ Expulsion.

6. STUDENT SUPPORT AND SERVICES



6.1 LIBRARY

The <https://umlib.um.edu.my> page provides our distance learners access to a wide range of online library resources: online databases, e-journals, and e-books.

Students may also access our large collection of research databases via <https://umlibguides.um.edu.my/az/databases>. You need to log in using your UM student email (SISWAMAIL) credentials and use SISWAMAIL password. Additionally, you will find links to e-resources throughout the library search and library catalogues.

6.2 ACADEMIC PORTAL: MAYA

The web page <https://maya.um.edu.my/> is the portal that links you to important information, including admission records, fees statements and payments, and exam results. Students are required to register for courses and examinations every semester through the MAYA Portal using their SiswaMail ID. After logging in, you will see a student dashboard screen containing options to view various functionalities.

6.3 EMAIL SERVICES

Our ODL students will receive an official UM student email (SISWAMAIL). Official and important information will be sent to your SISWAMAIL address. Hence, students are encouraged to check this email account regularly (daily) throughout the semester. You may log in to your account through the SiswaMail platform at <https://siswa.um.edu.my/>. Your username is '[user ID] @siswa.um.edu.my'.

6.4 COUNSELLING

Counselling services (academic or personal) are provided to support you throughout your studies. Please visit our Counselling Services page at <https://bit.ly/center-for-counseling-amp-disability-empowerment-ccde>.

7. FEE

- a. Refer to this link for latest programme fee <http://bit.ly/4dCdOJM>
- b. Student must settle all fees and other payments due to the University at the time of registration unless exempted from any fees or payments, or both. Failure to settle all fees and other payments within the period set by the University may result in the candidate being barred from registering for the next semester, and their status as a university student may be terminated.
- c. Applications must be submitted online through our application portal at <https://apply.um.edu.my> and choose programme. Complete your application - Personal details, academic qualifications, etc. Upload document - Passport, photo, academic transcript, certificate, etc.
- d. Pay processing fee via Payment Gateway FPX, Debit/ Credit Card, Flywire.
- e. Payment of processing fees:
 - Malaysian applicants:
Full-Time, Online & Distance Learning Mode Programme: RM 300.00 per application
 - International applicants:
Full-Time, Online & Distance Learning Mode Programme: RM 300.00 per application
- f. Submit your application and receive acknowledgement of your application via email. Check the application status on the application portal and accept the offer on the application portal.
- g. Fees are non-refundable unless stated otherwise in the University Rules and Regulations. Processing and registration fees are not refundable under any circumstances.
- h. Students are advised to keep their online payment details as proof of payment and for record keeping.

8. GRADUATION



Academic Transcripts

A student will be awarded a degree upon fulfilling the requirements for the programme of study as stated in the Universiti Malaya (Master's Degree) Rules 2024, Universiti Malaya (Master's Degree) Regulations.

Convocation Ceremony

The convocation ceremony will be held at UM Campus, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Students and family members are welcome to visit the Universiti Malaya to celebrate their success as well as to meet fellow graduates.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Academic Strategic Planning Department (ASPD)

Tel: 03-79677921/7818

<https://aspd.um.edu.my>

Marketing and Academic Services Department (MASD)

Tel: 03-7967 3282

<https://masd.um.edu.my/>

Universiti Malaya Library

Tel: 03 79567800

<https://umlib.um.edu.my>

Student Affairs Department

Tel: 03-79673506

<https://hep.um.edu.my>

Counselling and Disability Empowerment

Tel: 03-7956 3512

kaunseling@um.edu.my

Handbook prepared by:

Academic Strategic Planning Department (ASPD)

September 2024