

Is Distance Learning Right Option?

by Manjil Saikia - Saturday, January 07, 2017

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What is Distance Learning?

Distance learning is a way of learning that aims to deliver education to people remotely or who cannot be physically present in the classroom. It is an ideal solution where the teacher and students are separated by physical distance.

With the advancement of technological trends, distance learning has revolutionized the educational process. It is gaining immense popularity, especially among busy professionals, because with the help of distance education people can easily get desired degrees with a little hard work which could help brighten their career in future.

More people are gathering online rather than in classrooms to obtain undergraduate degrees, Master's degrees, diplomas and certificates. The reason for this may be the growing employment opportunities in the private sector. Also, the students who opt for distance education and obtain degrees and certificates get equal recognition and respect as those enrolled in regular courses.

While distance learning offers a number of advantages and makes education more accessible, there are some disadvantages also.

Advantages of Distance Learning

Flexibility. Flexibility is the biggest advantage of distance learning. With distance learning courses, people can complete their course from anywhere. Also some universities and institutions provide option to schedule the exam as per candidate's convenience.

Time and Money Saver. For availing the [benefits of a distance learning course](#), you need not travel across to new region or country. You can retrieve it by means of online or postal method of distance learning. This saves your time as well as cuts down your financial expense on transportation to reach from your home or workplace to the university or institution.

Wider Choices. Unlike traditional learning system, distance learning allows you to choose from a wider pool of institutions or colleges to complete education considering your field of interest. Just search on web the institutions that provide education related to your specialization subjects, and then you can apply for it.

Lesser Fee. Distance learning courses' fee is usually lower as compared to the regular colleges. You do not have to worry about any extra deposits during the course. The fee which is charged for distance learning is usually for the examinations and the study materials provided by the institution.

Learn and Earn. If you are a working professional, and thinking to go for further studies, then you can opt for distance learning. With the help of distance learning, you can work and study at the same time. You don't have to give up your job for the advancement of your career.

No Age Bar. One of the salient aspects of distance learning is that it does not place any bar on the age of learning. Individuals who are now past the age of admission or who could not continue their studies due to some reason can opt for distance learning programme.

Disadvantages of Distance Learning

No Direct Interaction with Faculty. If you are opting for a distance learning course then you may lack the personal contact with your instructor. However, you will likely get some interaction on chat rooms, discussion boards and through emails, but that will be quite different from the traditional courses. Here, you will need to depend only on your grasping power.

Over dependence on Technology or Postal services. Most of the distance learning courses especially online courses require access to internet. Unless you are not good at working on computers and internet then you might face difficulty in studying and interacting your instructors online.

Not All Courses are offered Online. Students or professionals pursuing a degree or certificate programme may not have all the necessary courses available through distance learning i.e. not all courses can be taught online. For example, [you can study a lesson of English online](#), but you cannot do the same thing for the courses like nursing and other medical studies. The reason is that practical classes and experiments cannot be conducted online.

Lack of Discipline. Since, in distance learning, you do not have an instructor at your head, asking for your assignments and reminding of your deadlines; there are chances that you will not take your distance learning course seriously. Hence, you need to be disciplined and self-motivated to take the full advantage of distance learning programme.

Not Valued by Some Employers. While a majority of employers value distance learning degrees and certificates, there are few who do not value or accept online degrees. No matter how good is your university or college from where you have pursued your distance learning programme, some employers always prefer candidates with a regular programme over you.

Now, after discussing the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning programme, it can be concluded that there are two sides of every coin; and here the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. So, I think it's worth opting for distance learning according to your choice, considering its benefits as well as drawbacks.