AFRICA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

ODeL

2025

Student Orientation

An Introductory Manual to the ODeL Mode of Study & Portal

https://odel.aiu.ac.ke

Welcome

Welcome to AIU, we are thrilled to have you embark on this exciting journey of knowledge and discovery.

As you begin your studies through our ODeL (Open, Distance, and eLearning) portal, you are joining a community of learners who are embracing the future of education.

This mode of study offers flexibility, accessibility, and the opportunity to learn in a way that fits your lifestyle. Whether you're new to online learning or a seasoned digital learner, we're here to support you every step of the way.

The ODeL Team

CONTENT

iv

Overview of ODeL

Understanding ODeL:

ODeL represents a blend of learning modes designed to meet the needs of today's dynamic world.

It includes: -

Blended Learning (*a* combination of face-to-face and online learning experiences);

e/m-Learning: (Learning through computing /mobile devices, ensuring you can study anywhere, anytime);

Distance Learning (Education that reaches you wherever you are, removing the barriers of geography).

Hyflex Learning

Lecturer-Facilitated, Technology-Aided:

Our courses are intended to be interactive and engaging, with lecturers guiding you through your learning journey, aided by technology.

Need for the ODeL Mode of Study:

The world is changing, and so is education. From market demands to technological advancements, and even societal shifts like the COVID-19 pandemic and regional disruptions (like the recent Tuesday and Thursday protests in Kenya), ODeL is designed to keep you learning, no matter what.

Your Role as Student

Student Role in the LMS

Actively participate in the learning process by engaging with course materials, completing activities and assessments, communicating with lecturers and peers, and adhering to institutional policies. Students are responsible for managing their own learning journey within the LMS.

Key Roles & Responsibilities:

Task	Who Does It	Why It's Important
Access and navigate assigned courses	Student	Ensures they can engage with all required materials and activities.
Download/read/view course resources (notes, videos, readings)	Student	Builds the knowledge foundation needed for assessments and discussions.
Complete and submit assignments, quizzes, and activities on time	Student	Demonstrates learning progress and meets assessment deadlines.
Participate in forums, chats, or group work	Student	Encourages collaboration, peer learning, and deeper understanding.

Task	Who Does It	Why It's Important
Track grades and feedback	Student	Helps you identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.
Follow course and institutional policies (e.g., plagiarism rules)	Student	Maintains academic integrity and fairness.
Communicate with lecturers through LMS tools (messages, announcements, forums)	Student	Keeps them informed, clarifies doubts, and builds rapport with the lecturer.
Use LMS-integrated tools (e.g., Turnitin, MS Teams) when required	Student	Ensures participation in all course-related activities.
Manage personal profile and update contact information	Student	Keeps institutional records current for communication and reporting.
Additional critical role: Engage in self-directed learning and time management	Student	Increases academic success and reduces last-minute stress.

Team Required: No formal team role but students should have:

- Access to LMS Helpdesk/Support Officer for technical issues.
- Access to Lecturer for academic guidance.

Digital Learning Demands

Digital Literacy:

Success in online learning starts with being comfortable with digital tools. You'll need basic skills like browsing the web, sending emails, and using online applications.

Devices:

- **Laptop/Desktop with Webcam:** Essential for most of your learning activities.

- **Tablet or Smartphone (Android or iPhone):** Handy for learning on the go, but consider OS Version, screen size, processor, memory, and storage capacity.

Internet Access:

- **Wi-Fi or Data Bundles:** Ensure a stable connection for uninterrupted learning.

- **Starlink (via SpaceX Satellite):** An emerging option for those in remote areas.

Your Persona/Nature:

Online /remote learning demands self-discipline, time management, and motivation. Reflect on your strengths and areas for improvement to excel in this mode of study.

Apps, Software, and Tools You Need

To fully engage with your courses, you may need several digital tools, including:

- **Browsers:** Chrome, Firefox, Brave or Safari.

- **PDF Reader:** Adobe Acrobat, Foxit, OR Sumatra.

- **Moodle App:** Available for both Android and desktop.

- **Document Scanner:** AdobeScan, CamScanner , Microsoft Lens.

- **Office Suite:** Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, OneNote.

- **Communication Tools:** Teams, Zoom, Google Meet.

- **E-Book Readers:** Moon Reader, Adobe Digital Editions.

- **Productivity Apps:** Focus To-Do, Easy Reader, Speech Notes, Awesome Screen Shot.

- **Writing & Research support tools:** Zotero, Grammarly

- **Other Tools:** KJV Bible, Examination browsers.

The ODeL Portal

Overview

The ODeL Portal is a Learning Management System. Its market name is Moodle, which is essentially an aggregation of learning support tools set up in a modular schema.

The functional part of the portal comprises of courses are availed as course sites (websites) where you lecturer determine s the tools and modules to use.

These course sites can be used to facilitate courses, exams, evaluation, elections etc.

Accessing the ODeL Portal: (port of entry)

- Url directly or via the AIU website
- Via app or browser: note the app limitations.

Important : certain sections of the ODeL site are only accessible after logon e.g course, restricted pages

Navigating the ODeL Portal

Before Login

Before you even log in, familiarize yourself with the ODeL portal's homepage:

- **The Main Menu:** Your gateway to various resources and support services.

- **Top Menu:** Easy navigation tools to track where you are on the site.

- **Login Button:** Clearly marked to get you started.

- **Onboarding Starter Pack Section:** Essential resources for new students.

- **Chat Bot:** Instant help + a **WhatsApp Link**

- **Accessibility Tool:** tools to enhance your learning experience.

How and Where to Log In

Logging into the ODeL portal is straightforward.

Your credentials (username – your admission number and password) - *change the default password*.

If you encounter issues, ICT/ODeL support will help you troubleshoot and resolve any problems. Common reasons for login issues include password errors or browser compatibility, and our support team is ready to assist.

Navigation After Login

Once logged in, you'll find additional tools and features to support your studies:

- **My Courses Link:** Quick access to your enrolled courses.

- **Breadcrumbs**

- **Notification and Messaging Icons**

- **Right-hand Block Navigation Panel**

The Dashboard and It's Utility

The dashboard is your personalized space within ODeL:

- **Welcome Section:** A friendly greeting and important announcements.

- **Your photo + time zone**

- **Course Overview Section:** A snapshot of your active courses.

- **Timeline:** Keep track of upcoming deadlines and important dates.

The User menu:

Profile page and editing – *NOTE : do not change you name, or email address. Add you profile pic here,*

System Preferences - notifications

Accessing Your Courses

You can access your courses through:

- **My Courses on the Main Menu:** A direct link to all your enrolled courses.

- **Your Profile:** Another way to navigate to your courses.

- **The Dashboard:** An overview of your courses and access points.

Course Registration and Enrolment

Course registration and enrolment are straightforward:

Course registration takes place in the student portal whilst Enrolment is in the ODeL portal

For enrolment note the following terms:

- **Auto-Enrolment:** For academic courses, you'll be automatically enrolled. Auto-enrolment applies during the period. Once the period closes, you liaise with the registrar's office.

- **Self-Enrolment:** For non-academic courses like Turnitin training, you'll need to sign up manually. Locate the enrolment from the course intro page or request it from your lecturer.

Course Availability

The availability and access to courses depend on several issues

- On dashboard - immediate two semesters
- On my courses - only active courses
- Courses with no content will be unavailable after the fifth week
- Exams course sites are only available for the session.
- All Courses you registered for should be available
- The lecturer may bar you from access due to multiple reasons. E.g. attendance,

Some courses are usually merged after enrolment - usually in week 2 or 3 of the semester (note the use of multiple course Codes in the course name)

Course Navigation

Courses in ODeL may vary in layout, including:

- **Topic Format:** Organized by subjects or themes.

- **Weekly Format:** Structured around weekly learning objectives.

- **Tiles Format:** A more visual and organized way to access content.

Think of course navigation as exploring a house—each room (or module) has its purpose and content.

Course Features

Every course comes with a variety of features:

- **Course Banner:** Sets the tone and theme for the course.

- **Course Dashboard:** Your central hub for navigating course materials.

- **Content Sections:** The heart of your learning, including an introductory section, topic sections, and more.

- **Content Menu and Blocks:** Quick links and resources for easy navigation.

- **Filter Page Links:** Access grades, forums, resources, and assignments.

- **Progress Bar:** Keep track of your learning progress.

Lesson/Week Features

Within each module/ Lesson, you'll find:

- **Topic Overview:** A summary of what you'll learn.

- **Learning Objectives:** Clear goals for what you should achieve by the end.

- **Instructions:** Guidance on how to complete tasks and activities.

- **Learning Resources and Activities:** The core content, including readings, videos, and interactive elements.

- **Formative Assessments:**

Popular tools in your course

- Resources: files (static pdf, word, power, html pages, folders, lessons, links (URLs), text media areas
- Activity: forums, assignments, quizzes,
- File picker

Important : Visit the ODeL portal to learn how each of the tool is used.

MS Teams/Zoom/BBB in your study:

The ODeL Mode of study encompasses both using asynchronous and synchronous tools to facilitate learning. One such synchronous tool is MS Teams/ Zoom or BigBlueButton.

As such, you can expect a link to an online meeting using one of the tools in your course.

Visit the ODeL student starter pack or resources menu for more information on using this tool.

Integrated tools

- Turnitin: plagiarism & ai checking - remember to accept the initial user acceptance licence terms. Learn to use this tool
- Email/ authentication/: expect to receive notifications on your email from your course site on the ODeL portal.
- EBSCO discovery resources.

Online Exams

Online exams in ODeL may take several forms:

- **Open Book Exams:** Where you can refer to materials during the test.

- **Papers in-Lieu of Exams:** Assignments that replace traditional exams.

- **Proctored Exams:** Monitored tests to ensure academic integrity.

Support Teams (Course, ICT, and ODeL)

We're here to support you, but each support area is usually handled by a different team, but we can guide you accordingly:

- **ODeL Support:** Available during working hours via mobile, WhatsApp, email, and our ChatBot. For general Portal support

- **ICT Support:** For login and related technical issues and troubleshooting. Site availability.

- **Course Support:** For academic assistance related to your courses. Usually done by your lecturer and administrative by your faculty administrator. For Lecturers support may include - *Assignment date adjustment and course content availability online*

ODeL Training

Training is available to help you succeed:

- **Scheduled Training:** Regular sessions to get you up to speed.

- **Self-Driven Training:** Resources you can access at your own pace.

Some Success Tips

To thrive in your studies:

- **Write:** Learn how to write better; Take & Keep notes; and stay organized.
- **Time Management:** Remember, a 13-week term requires disciplined study habits.
- **Digital Tool Utility:** Make the most of the digital tools to enhance your learning experience.
- **Craming does not work**: consider comprehension and application of knowledge

More information on this resource

Visit the ODeL Portal @ **https://odel.aiu.ac.ke**
then navigate to the resources tab in the main menu

For practice purposes

Access a practice course using the ODeL portal by navigating *to the resources tab in the main menu*.

(Available to all AIU students)

Always remember that practice makes perfect if not improvement

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