

Name:

Instructor:

Course:

Date:

Online Education

Studying is obviously not a thing young people enjoy doing. It would be true to say that the majority of adolescents prefer more active ways of spending their time instead of listening to lectures, sitting in a library, writing countless essays and reports, and worrying about exams. At the same time, no one will possibly argue with the fact that education is extremely important in modern western society. A diploma is often a ticket to the world, a pass to adult life, and there does not seem to be a way around this.

Considering how important it is to study, it turns out that one should approach choosing their future area of studies with full responsibility. Chances are that what you study in your college or university will later become your profession. This is why educational systems of some countries such as the United States allows young people to take a “gap year”: a period of time between graduating from high school and entering a higher educational institution. This time can be used for anything a young person wants, but supposedly he or she will spend it earning money to pay for education, or trying to figure out which way of life seems most appealing.

But even if you made a mistake and realized that the field of studies you chose is not for you, you can always take a turn and walk another road. Anyone who wants to study has the full ability to do so, regardless of their age or previous educational background. There are different online schools specializing in teaching specific disciplines. Whether you want to change your

profession, or you are disappointed in what you currently study and feel like trying something new, there is always an option for you. Let us take a closer look at online studying, and why it can be an attractive choice.

There are plenty of websites offering educational services. The most popular are probably *Udemy* and *Coursera*, but there are also others such as *Khan Academy*, *Skillshare*, and *edX*. Your choice will probably depend on the region you live in, because some of these services may or may not support your native language. Also, some of these services can offer significant discounts, which will most likely affect your choice as well.

Not focusing on the differences between these online platforms, let us find the advantages they possess. When you choose to study online, you will most likely receive access to video materials—as it is the only way you can watch and listen to your instructor. Depending on the complexity of a course, it may be divided into modules that contain educational material, presented in a logical order. Some courses may be designed for novices, while others will focus on advanced learners, so you might want to pay attention to a course's description before paying for it. You mostly study through watching educational videos and completing assignments given to you by the instructor in PDF documents or otherwise. These assignments can be checked either by your instructor, or by the community, but completing them is your responsibility fully—meaning that no one will control you. Upon finishing a course, you will receive a digital certificate confirming that you have successfully listened to a course of lectures on a certain discipline.

Obviously, one of the main advantages of such a method of education is that you can study at your own pace. Basically, all you need in order to master a new field of knowledge is

your laptop with Internet access, and perhaps additional materials or software—depending on the discipline you are studying. You can watch videos whenever and wherever it is convenient for you, and do the assignments as you find it suitable. *Udemy*, *Coursera*, and other similar services often host highly skilled professionals, so you can be sure you are paying for real knowledge. You get a lifetime access to all the materials, and even if you did not get some part of the material, you can always return to it later, rewatch the video, and address the community for additional assistance.

The not-so-positive aspect of online education is that it may take a long time for you to get feedback. Sometimes, your assignments will be checked by your teacher, but most likely you will have to address your fellow students for feedback and assistance (*Udemy*). Although instructors are encouraged to interact with their students as often as possible, let us not forget that one teacher may have thousands of students all over the world. Naturally, it is impossible for him or her to check all of the assignments. And although you can still count on help from other students, this fact can still be disappointing.

Also, let us not forget that in some countries, a digital certificate is not a legitimate proof of your skills. A person with a diploma from a college or university will often have a preference over a student with a certificate from an online educational service. This is especially true for such professions as nurses, pharmaceutical technicians, mechanics, and other specialists whose skills cannot be obtained via watching a video, or whose jobs are highly demanding (*Best Colleges*). In other cases, although it is skill that matters, formal education is still more attractive for potential employers. There are companies that care about what you can do rather than what college you graduated from, but it can take you time to find them.

Overall, it can be said that online education is a reasonable choice for people who want to study, and who know what they need. Although there are some disadvantages to such a method of studying—difficulties with assignment checks, for instance, or prejudice against online certificates—it is still a great option for anyone who wants to know more. Studying at one's own pace, flexibility, and the high quality of educational materials—this is what makes online studying platforms popular across the world.

Works Cited

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