

# DAMASCUS COLLEGE

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# REMOTE LEARNING MANUAL

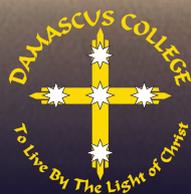
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FOR FAMILIES

TERM 3, 2021



DAMASCUS COLLEGE LTD A.C.N. 609066775



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# REMOTE LEARNING MANUAL - FAMILIES

## Introduction

In the event of a school closure due to COVID-19, it is our priority to provide continuity of learning for all students at Damascus College.

This manual sets out the remote learning plan to assist students and families of Damascus College, prepare for learning at home.

The four principals that have continued to underpin our College's planning and decision making in response to COVID-19 are:

1. Maintaining the safety of the entire Damascus community
2. Ensuring we remain connected and support one another
3. Ensuring continuity of quality learning and teaching
4. Being willing to adapt, change and try new things, recognising that we will make mistakes at times.

## Preparing to Learn from Home - Parents

The transition to home learning is a significant change for your student and your family. The resources and guidelines below can help you work with Damascus College to make home learning a positive experience.

### Maintain Calm and Check Communications

Lockdowns, as we have become familiar with, can be called at very short notice. It is important to remember that everyone is still working things out regarding the changing nature of the particular COVID-19 outbreak. As a parent, you must take the time to check your email regularly, particularly if you receive an SMS advising of a Principal communication. Damascus will send regular updates to keep you abreast of any changes, supplemented by the regular newsletter, Damascus News. All students will receive their work program for each subject from their subject teacher through Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) in line with their timetable. Parents/guardians are encouraged to open PAM frequently to check for any parent/guardian specific information and monitor student assessment feedback.

### 1. Establish a schedule

During a significant transition, students need consistency. Keep normal meal and sleep routines, and build an awareness of your student's timetable within PAM; you can also observe impending tasks. Put your student/s timetable up where everyone can see it. (Tip: Put all family members' schedules up together!)

### 2. Create a designated learning space

Organise learning materials and designate a common area for learning. Ideally, the space has a strong wireless connection, can be blocked from noise at times, and is located where family members can participate in your child's learning.



### **3. Ensure appropriate dress**

Keep the day as normal as it can be. Students should be up and dressed, ready to learn for the day as per the regular school timetable. (They do not need to wear school uniform, but pyjamas would be inappropriate)

### **4. Begin and end each day with a check-in**

Designate time to check in with your student; this helps your young person feel more secure and supports them to process the situation. Questions to ask: What are you learning today? What materials do you need? What did you enjoy learning today? What was challenging?

### **5. Schedule physical activity and social interaction**

Physical and social activity are essential to your young person's wellbeing. Scheduling time (recess and lunchtime) for movement, social interaction, and recreation helps your student/s have a positive experience at home. Encourage them to spend some time outside.

### **6. Support your student's emotional needs**

In stressful times, young people need supportive and stable relationships with trusted adults. Stay close with your young person and provide age-appropriate information.

### **7. Monitor communications from your student's teachers and school**

Make sure you know how and when you and your student will receive communications.

Please note that teacher response times to student communication will be based around a 24-hour timeframe. Staff will not be expected to respond after hours.

Please open PAM frequently to check for any parent/guardian specific information

## **Communication Methods**

The main form of communication will be via email (Outlook) and Microsoft Teams.

### **Microsoft Teams – Camera On**

To encourage increased engagement and connectedness in TA and classes, staff and students are required to have their cameras ON when speaking. Please refer to the online etiquette guidelines for further information.

The curriculum will continue to be delivered via remote access, where subject teachers and TA's will continue to maintain regular communication with students throughout the closure period.



Group of students	Method of communication
ALL students	<p>TA will continue in the remote learning environment at the normal time (8.55am – 9.09am). The expectation is that students are to be online at this time to contribute to discussion and hear other messages for the day. All TA's will be in contact with their TA group. The medium for TA communication is Microsoft Teams. Students are expected to continue to work through the activities through their resilience diary.</p> <p>Roll marking will take place at the beginning of TA and each lesson/double lesson using SIMON. Students are expected to attend each lesson and get their name marked on the roll. Roll marking enables the tracking of student connection and highlights students for follow-up. It also provides an opportunity for them to engage with their teacher over the work set for the lesson.</p> <p>TA is a key component of the pastoral care and community engagement throughout the period of remote learning.</p>
Year 7 - 10	<p>Teachers will liaise with students via Microsoft teams and email. Communication from teachers will occur within the timetabled class time. It is important for students to be online as per their normal timetable to engage in discussions and conferences with teachers.</p>
Year 11 – 12 – VCE & VCAL	<p>VCE/VCAL teachers will liaise with students via Microsoft teams and email. Communication from teachers will occur within the timetabled class time. It is important for students to be online as per their normal timetable to engage in discussions and conferences with teachers.</p>
Diverse learning needs	<p>Subject teachers will modify tasks as appropriate for the individual student's needs, as would occur here at school. Teachers will liaise with families if the modifications require specific family support.</p> <p>Families of Diverse Learners are reminded that on occasions, their learning needs can make the student vulnerable. This may be a legitimate reason for the student to be able to access on-site learning. Please contact the College if you feel this may apply to your student/s.</p> <p>Learning Support Officers will be allocated to classes, and some LSO's will be available on-site for student supervision.</p>
Year 10-12 VET	<p>Internal VET subjects will continue and be directed by the subject teacher via online delivery. The cluster teacher will direct the online delivery of VET Cluster programs. The Applied Learning Leader will direct further information and clarification.</p>



### **Learning and Teaching – Quality over Quantity**

For students in Year 7-10 the learning and teaching throughout the period of Remote Learning will focus on quality over quantity. Students may engage in reduced submissions of class work and each subject in each year level will be directed by the subject teacher based on direction of the Learning Area Leader. The subject teacher will provide direction to students in accessing the work and distribute it through Microsoft Teams.



## Expectations of each student

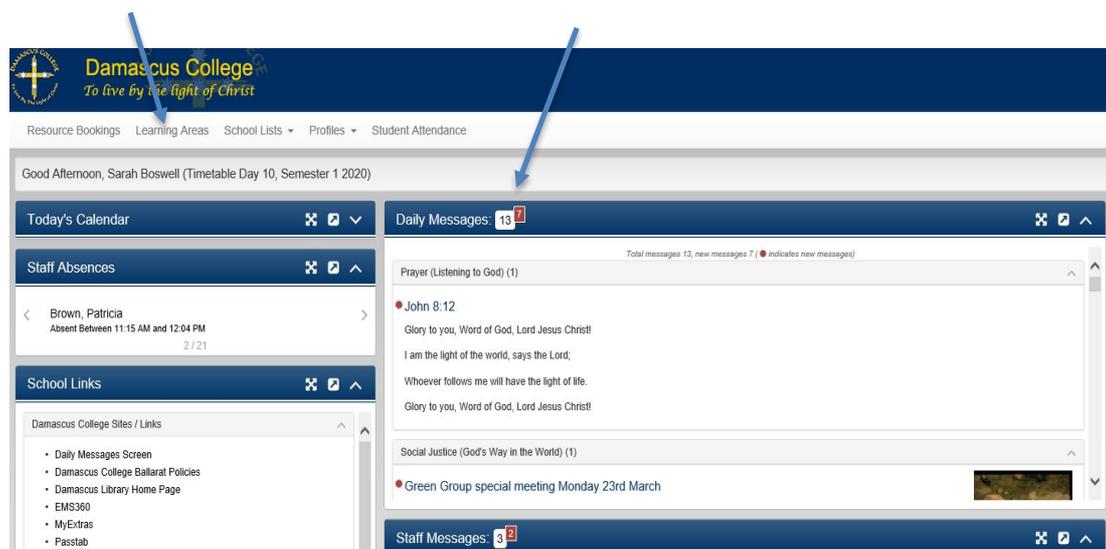
That each student will 'mirror' their normal day at school as closely as possible to minimise any impact on their learning during a school closure.

On each school closure day:

1. Log in to Outlook to check your daily emails. Keep Outlook and Microsoft Teams open during the day to maintain classroom discussion and engagement with your teacher.
2. From 8.55am – 9.09am, be available on Microsoft Teams to participate as guided by your TA every morning. Continue to work through your resilience diary each morning. Take time to read the prayer in the Daily Bulletin
3. Log in to SIMON to check the daily messages and to access content referred to by teachers

Check all learning areas

and Daily messages



4. As you move through the day log into your teams meeting for each lesson you are scheduled for.
5. Rolls will be taken at the beginning of each lesson/double lesson; therefore, students are expected to attend each lesson and get their name marked off the roll. TA's will touch base regularly with students throughout remote learning. Students are also encouraged to reach out to their TA as needed.
6. Work should be submitted by uploading to SIMON or by email as requested by the teacher. Students are encouraged to contact teachers' to assist them with content and assessment preparation.

7. To encourage increased engagement and connectedness, during a Microsoft Teams session, all students must have their camera turned ON when speaking
8. Please remember to keep your device charged or work with it plugged into power. Be careful of trip hazards.

## Remote Learning Platforms at Damascus College

Damascus College maintains a robust ICT infrastructure that can deliver online learning for students in a time of need. Each element provides a unique service and together form the College's Remote Learning Platforms.

Platform	Link	Use case
SIMON	<p><a href="#">SIMON</a></p>	Central space for communication to the College Community, including PAM. Please use Microsoft Edge for accessing SIMON
OUTLOOK	<p><a href="#">Outlook</a></p>	All official communications between staff and students or parents must use the @damascus.vic.edu.au account provided. All coursework should be delivered via SIMON rather than emailed to students.
Learning Areas on SIMON	<p><a href="#">Learning Area on SIMON</a></p>	All work programs, course material, assessment tasks and discussion should occur within SIMON with links to other digital resources (Clickview, Libguides, online resources) if applicable. SIMON forums can be utilised and for rolling TA communication.
Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Products (Office 365)	<p><a href="#">Office 365</a></p>	Collaborative communication, Online Collaboration and Video conferencing can be conducted using Microsoft Teams. All Microsoft Products is integrated into Microsoft Teams (Word/PowerPoint/One Note). OneDrive is also available for students to store their documents on their devices in appropriate folders. Microsoft Teams App will be made available on all devices (staff and students) All Microsoft Products are accessible from Office

		365.
Curriculum support portals	<a href="#">Edrolo</a> <a href="#">Libguides</a> <a href="#">Oxford Digital</a> <a href="#">Cambridge GO</a> <a href="#">Stile</a>	Edrolo (VCE), Cambridge Go (Mathematics), Stile (Science), Oxford (English/Science/Humanities), Libguides are all available for students to access to support learning and complete tasks set by teachers.

## Supervision on campus

Damascus College has sought further information from families via a survey as to which students will need supervision on campus during the period of learning from home. The College will put processes in place so that those students who come on campus for any period will be safe and cared for and will be spread out as per the social distancing guidelines throughout the campus.

During a snap lockdown, there will be a skeleton staff on-site, including members of the leadership team, supervisors of the students, and other support staff. Please note that the canteen will not be open, so if students attend school for supervision they should bring their own food to sustain them throughout each day. The Dobsons uniform shop on campus will also be closed during this snap lockdown.

Rural and regional buses will continue to run, and please reach out to CDC, so if parents plan on sending their child to school on the bus system, this is available as normal.

For those students and staff that will be attending the campus for supervision, there will be a stringent entry and exit process, where all those on campus will need to report via Student Reception, where the relevant health questions will be asked, if someone presents as being unwell, they will be sent home. Reception will have a sign in and sign out process so that we know who is on campus for social distancing measures. Hand sanitisers and wipes will be available throughout the campus, and strict cleaning will take place at the specified locations throughout the day, where students and staff will be based on a 1:8 ratio. All students must wear masks as per the government regulations.

Families that complete the survey will be sent further information on the on-site supervision guidelines.

## Preparing to learn from home – Students

The transition to home learning is a big change for all students and families. The resources and guidelines below can help students work with our College to make home learning a positive experience.

- **Keep calm, check your email and Microsoft teams and work to your timetable each day**

While learning from home, you, the student, are responsible for your learning. You must take the time to check your email regularly, in line with your school timetable.

**For Year 7-10 students,** Teachers will liaise with students via Microsoft teams and email. Communication from teachers will occur within the timetabled class time. It is important for students to be online as per their normal timetable to engage in discussions and conferences with teachers. Students must have their camera on in class.

Students will be required to complete set work in the specified time as outlined by their teacher.

**For Year 11-12 VCE/VCAL students**, the VCE/VCAL teachers will liaise with students via Microsoft teams and email. Communication from teachers will occur within the timetabled class time. It is important for students to be online as per their normal timetable to engage in discussions and conferences with teachers.

For students with **diverse learning needs**, subject teachers will modify tasks, and these will be distributed directly to students and made available to parents as required.

- **Routine is important**

During a big transition, all students need consistency. It is important that students keep normal structures, and this includes sticking to your school timetable. You should be up and dressed, ready to start learning by 8.55am, as per a normal day at school.

TA will continue to happen at the normal time (8.55am – 9.09am) during remote learning, so all students are expected to be online to contribute to discussion and hear messages for the day. All TA's will be in contact with their TA group via Microsoft Teams. Students are expected to continue to work through their resilience diary.

- **What programs do I need to access to continue my learning?**

Students need internet access to successfully continue the learning program at home. It is vital that students are able to access Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft Teams to receive communication from teachers. All students need to access SIMON for TA and daily messages; please remember to use Microsoft Edge for SIMON. All students will require access to all digital resources eg Oxford, Cambridge, Edrolo. Your subject teacher and TA will inform you of the programs required. If you are having trouble accessing online educational resources or PAM login details, please contact [a.gason@damascus.vic.edu.au](mailto:a.gason@damascus.vic.edu.au) for support.

- **Online etiquette- refer also to the remote learning student checklist**

Keep the day as normal as it can be. Students are encouraged to maintain normal routines and be up and out of bed, ready to begin learning by 8.55am. It is expected that students do not wear their pyjamas all day; instead, they should be up and dressed, ready to learn for the day as per the regular school timetable.

It is important to remind students that respectful conduct needs to be adhered to in all online forums and normal communication courtesies are to be observed. In order to keep a remote learning community healthy and to make it possible for all of us to participate fully, we need to be overt in our openness, welcoming all people to contribute, and pledging in return to value them as human beings and to foster an atmosphere of kindness, cooperation and understanding.

- **Make sure you have breaks, physical activity and social interaction**

Physical and social activity are essential to student well-being. Students and families need to schedule time for movement, social interaction and recreation. This all helps students have a positive experience at home.

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It is recommended that all students keep to the timetable. This will ensure you maintain structure and routine, ensure breaks are taken at recess and lunchtimes, move away from the computer, be active, go outside, play a board game etc.

- **Where do I go for help outside the classroom?**

The usual Damascus College support mechanisms that are in place to support student well-being should continue to be available during a period of school closure. Students can email their TA's, Subject Teachers, House Leaders and Counsellors at [counsellors@damascus.vic.edu.au](mailto:counsellors@damascus.vic.edu.au), should they wish to ask a question or need assistance outside the classroom. Please note that response times will be based around a 24-hour timeframe. Staff will not be expected to respond after-hours during a school week.

- **What if I don't have access to the internet at home?**

If students do not have access to the internet at home, families should communicate this to their College, so that means of support can be provided.

- **What if I have a SAC scheduled during the school closure?**

Students are to make contact with VCE Coordinator, Matthew Hallowell via email to communicate their query. The College has some flexibility to delay or reschedule SACs and SATs. While it is possible to deliver some coursework online, SACs should be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe. There are occasions where SAC's are delivered remotely.

- **I am having trouble with my device; what do I do?**

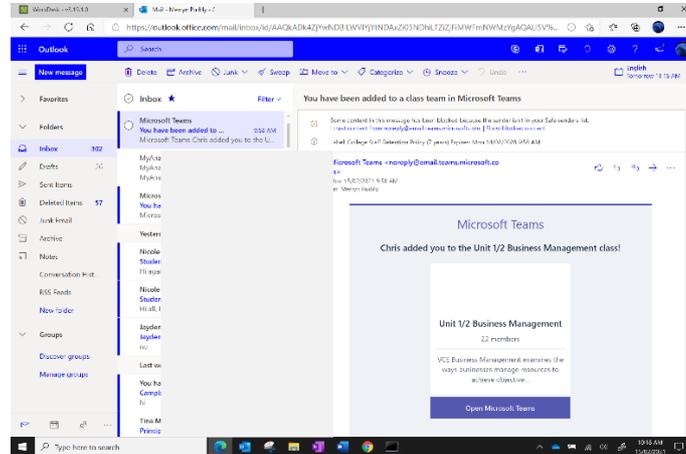
Students are recommended to send an email directly to the ICT helpdesk [helpdesk@damascus.vic.edu.au](mailto:helpdesk@damascus.vic.edu.au) with the issue that is presenting with their device. Please note that the Damascus ICT staff cannot solve internet issues that are confined to your home. They will, however, respond to any issues related to your College device and programs installed on it.

## **Accessing MS Teams for the first time and joining your first Team**

Microsoft Teams has and continues to be a valuable resource when maintaining connection through Remote Learning. All student devices come with MS Teams pre-loaded, so there is no need to install any additional software for MS Teams to function and for you to join your class and TA Teams. The steps below take you through the process of connecting to your TA and class Teams.

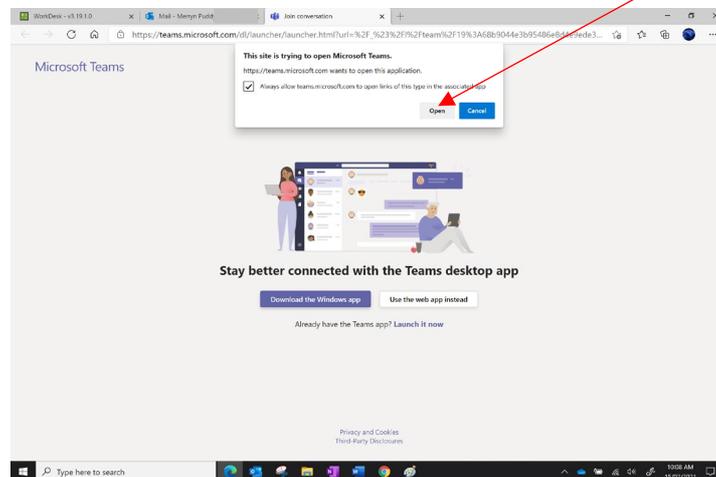
1. Your Teacher Advisor or classroom Teacher will add you to the relevant Team. You will then receive an email from **Microsoft Teams**, with the subject line **You have been added to a class team in Microsoft Teams**, to your student email account.



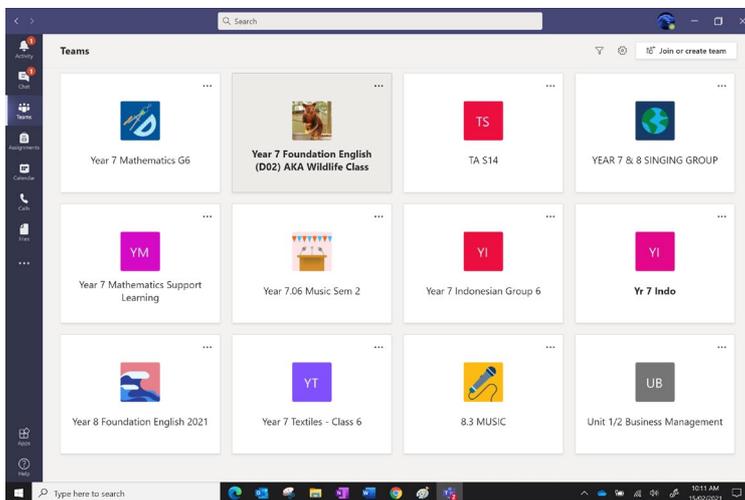


# The figure above shows a student being invited into a class called Unit 1/2 Business Management.

2. Click on the  button to take you to the Team.
3. This will then take you to the following page, prompting you on how to open Microsoft Teams (desktop app or browser). Place a tick in the box to Always allow (this will not prompt you again). Click **Open**.



4. You will now be taken directly to the Class or Team. From here, you can explore the resources that your Teacher Advisor or classroom teacher has provided for you.
5. Click on the  icon to return to the MS Teams home screen to list all teams you have been added to.

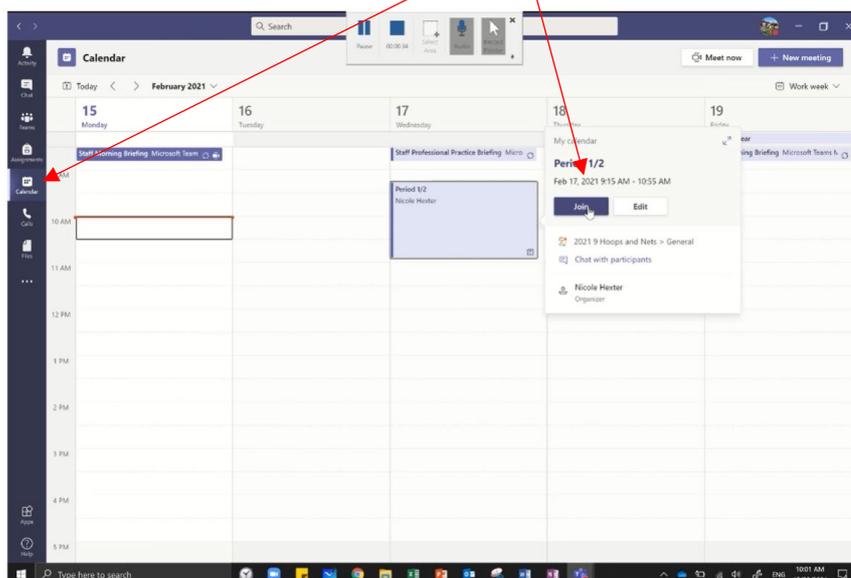


Your Teacher advisor and classroom Teacher will discuss further with you how MS Teams will be used for your class. At TA time Tuesday morning (8.55am), have your MS Teams open on your desktop and ready to join the meeting.

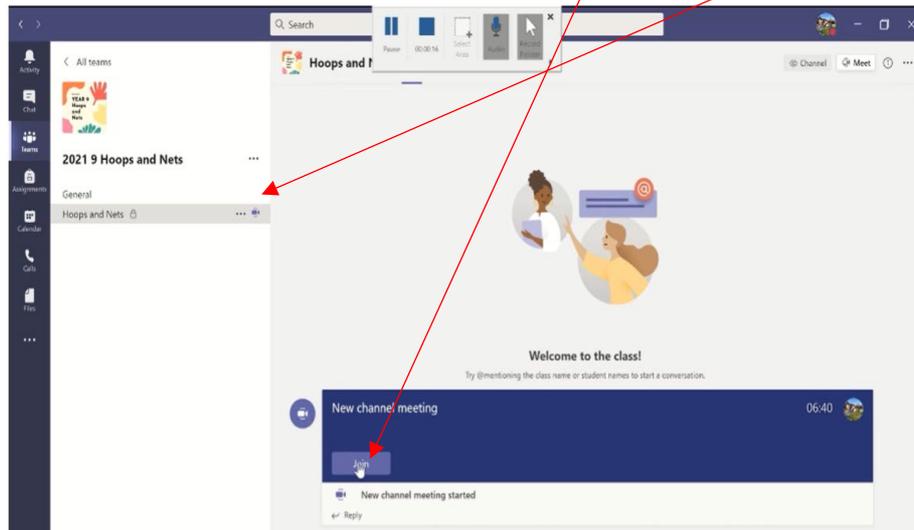
### Connecting to your Video meeting

Your Teacher Advisor or classroom teacher may have scheduled a Meeting for your TA lesson or created a call within the channel.

1. A scheduled Meeting - this can be found in your MS Teams Calendar by clicking on the item and then clicking **join**. This will then open a new window to join the Teams meeting.



2. A call within a channel – Your Teacher advisor or classroom teacher may begin the video within the Team channel. This is represented by a small video camera icon beside the channel name. Following this, click Join to connect to the meeting.



## IT Troubleshooting

Throughout this remote learning period, ICT support is still available to you within normal hours of operation. The contact methods and fixes will change as the main method of physically attending the ICT Helpdesk is unavailable. The main point of contact will be via email;

Please send an email to [Helpdesk@damascus.vic.edu.au](mailto:Helpdesk@damascus.vic.edu.au) However, if you have a Device Fault and you are unable to email the helpdesk through your school or personal email account, please call (03) 5337 2205 and leave a detailed voicemail regarding your issue and contact details.

## General Enquiries

In the period of school closure, the normal channels of school enquiry will continue. We would ask that email be the first avenue of enquiry [info@damascus.vic.edu.au](mailto:info@damascus.vic.edu.au). Please recognise response times may be delayed and, in some cases, up to 24 hours. High needs responses can be addressed through the College switchboard number: 5337 2222.



# REMOTE LEARNING STUDENT CHECKLIST

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## BE PREPARED

- Wake up and get ready for a normal school day.
- At 8.30am, sign into SIMON and MS Teams, check your emails and be ready for TA at 8.55am.
- Attendance will be taken each period.
- Stay organised and keep your apps open throughout the day.

TIP: Check your email regularly. At the end of each day look at the following days timetable so you know what is coming up next.



## WELLBEING

- Step away from your workspace for a few minutes before the start of each period.
- Maintain your regular school routine.
- Get a change of scenery. Avoid spending the day in your workspace.
- Take breaks from your screen at recess and lunch time.
- Eat healthy. Choose nutritious food during breaks and drink plenty of water.
- Spend time outside and make time for your own enjoyment (read a book).
- Stay focused. Get at least 8 hours of sleep at night.
- Exercise regularly: walks, jogging on the spot, be creative!
- Be social, stay in contact with your friends after "school".
- If you are feeling anxious reach out to your TA and ask for assistance

TIP: Be kind to yourself.



## UNIFORM

- If learning from home or at school being supervised, you are to wear an item of uniform throughout the day, this could be a PE top, etc.
- Looking sharp leads to thinking sharp. That's why pyjamas are out.

TIP: Wearing a piece of uniform during school time and taking it off when you're done, helps your brain switch gears so you can relax.



## LEARNING SPACE

- Choose a quiet, well lit space in your home away from distractions.
- Let the household know your schedule and that you are doing online learning.
- Have a pen, paper, and school books nearby.
- Plug your SurfacePro into a wall socket so it remains charged.
- Use headphones where possible.
- Launch the apps you need before class starts.
- Keep your phone switched off and out of site unless you are using it as a Mobile Hotspot.
- A plain background works best for video sessions if possible.

TIP: If possible this space should not be in your bedroom. You should be thinking of this space as your classroom at home.



## ONLINE ETIQUETTE

- Be as respectful online as you are in the classroom.
- Be courteous online, try not to speak over someone else.
- Follow instructions from your teacher.
- Close or minimise windows that you don't want to show before screen sharing.
- When speaking make sure your camera and mic are turned on. Blur your background for personal privacy.
- The same classroom rules apply during remote learning. Be respectful, no texting, no snacks.
- Accept your responsibility for your part in classroom learning.

TIP: Good manners are just a way of showing other people that we respect them, and that we want to be respected in return.



## PRODUCTIVITY

- Practice good time management.
- Stay on task throughout the day, ensuring you make goals to achieve each subjects work program.
- Ask your teachers questions in Microsoft Teams or via email at the allocated time.
- Read and respond to emails promptly when not in class.
- Submit all work on time.
- Spend time revising and reviewing what you have learnt that day.

TIP: Stay connected and stay informed.



## PLATFORMS

- Students should have access to the following learning platforms:
  - SIMON
    - Class Resources
    - Learning Areas
    - Simon Forums
  - Outlook or Webmail
  - Office 365
    - MS Teams
  - Curriculum Support Portals
    - Edrolo
    - Libguides
    - Oxford Digital
    - Cambridge Go
    - Stile

TIP: Familiarise yourself with all platforms before class commences.



## SUPPORT

- For IT issues with your device or platforms contact the IT Team: helpdesk@damascus.vic.edu.au or call (03) 5337 2222
- If you are unwell and unable to attend learning on a day, please ask your parents/guardians to contact the College as they normally would.
- The usual Damascus support mechanisms remain in place. Please email your TA, Subject Teacher, House Leader, School Counsellor as needed.

TIP: Review the Remote Learning Checklist and Manual, for lots of valuable information.