



**Distance Learning at
UWC East Africa**

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Distance Learning at UWC East Africa

We understand that it is impossible to simply replicate the learning that occurs in the classroom in an online environment. The interactions and discussions that occur between teacher and students or among students need to be enacted in different ways.

Our distance learning program aims to adhere to our UWC East Africa values in particular:

- A safe, collaborative and caring community.
- A sense of belonging, acceptance and tolerance.
- A holistic and diverse portfolio of learning experiences.
- An education in a global context that promotes an appreciation and understanding of multiple perspectives and interdependence of individuals, societies and environments.
- Innovation over perfection within a supportive community where learners are motivated to embrace personal challenge and reflection.

Safeguarding During Distance Learning

Please take note that during times of Distance Learning, school policies still apply, particularly in terms of respectful and appropriate dress and interactions. We strongly recommend to parents/guardians that all video conferencing takes place in a common area of the home.

Technology to Support Distance Learning

We have sought support from other schools including other UWCs on lessons they have learned in implementing distance learning. Using this and looking at the school's current technology platforms we have the following FAQs (Frequently asked Questions) to describe our systems of communication and learning.

Q1: How will UWCEA communicate with the parent(s), students, and faculty in the event of an extended campus closure?

A1: We will continue to use the same channels we use for normal day-to-day communications. Below, you will find a table describing these systems.

Q2: Are the learning management systems employed in this plan the same as those used during normal school operations?

A2: Yes, our systems are already built on cloud-based systems, which will continue to work from anywhere in the world at any time of the day, even during an emergency. Our data is not physically hosted on the school's network, which means we can continue to use our systems during a situation when our campus is inaccessible.

Platform	Users	Description & Access
Email/Newsletters	Faculty, Staff, Parents, Students	Email will be used for all major communications and announcements, including those from the Head of School, Heads of Campus and Coordinators. Faculty will also use email to communicate, although they will use other platforms to interact with the parents and students as well.
Google Suite	Faculty Students across all divisions	Google Suite (including Gmail, Docs, Classroom, Hangouts, Meet, etc.) will continue to be a platform used by most teachers.
ManageBac	Faculty, Secondary Students, Parents	ManageBac will be used by teachers for communication, assessment, feedback, and document storage.
UWCEA Website	Everyone	UWCEA will maintain general information on its status for the public at www.uwcea.org
Zoom	Faculty, Students	Teachers will use Zoom for meeting with students one-on-one or in small groups.
WhatsApp	Selected Parents and Students	In some cases where internet connections are limited for students and parents, WhatsApp will be used for communications.
SeeSaw, Google Meet	Primary Faculty, Parents, Students	Primary teachers will use either or both of these to share work and provide feedback
Other programs	Faculty, Students	Specialty programs per subject need

10 Guidelines for Teachers

The transition is not simple, teachers, parents and students will need to look at and think about things differently. As teachers, we will need to think about how to communicate, give instruction, and provide feedback in an online asynchronous setting. We will need to rethink how to design lessons and assignments that are authentic and meaningful; and how to ensure students continue to collaborate and communicate with others. These guidelines below are intended to help you reflect on challenges we will be facing in this new learning environment.

Evaluate your students' readiness to learn. In the switch to distance learning, students may be stressed or worried. It is a good idea at the start and at regular intervals to take time to assess your students' mental and emotional wellbeing. How are they doing? How are their families? If you have concerns, raise them to the counselor and coordinator.

Evaluate your students' conditions for distance learning. We know that many of our students will have reliable online access and the devices to do all the work planned, but some will not. We will share the information we have about this situation, but conditions change. Ask your students and/or their parents to whether their online access is reliable; and if they foresee any problems. Note any issues to the coordinator and keep an eye out for shifting patterns of work that may indicate access issues.

If you are thinking of using videos or similar applications that may be data heavy, please have alternatives for those with limited access. Also, their access abilities will impact when they can receive and submit work, so please take note.

Stick with the familiar. While we want the students engaged in the learning, especially in the first weeks, you should continue using existing communication channels and learning management systems. Don't try too much all at once. If every teacher is attempting many new platforms and programs at the same time, it may get overwhelming for students and parents. You can explore new or different learning platforms that provide different experiences at a reasonable pace.

It is important however that parents can access the platforms for communication. For Google Classroom this means adding them as guardians so they can get updates on work and will be able to access information like in ManageBac.

Less is more. One challenge confronting teachers in the move to distance learning will be how to best streamline content and highlight the most essential learning for students. In other words, you need to take a less-is-more perspective, including the pacing of lessons and assignments. Use the guide for grades later in the document to plan how many hours a week you can expect from students in this format. For many secondary classes this is 1-3 hours each week.

It can also be hard to know exactly how long the school closure might last, which makes longer-term planning difficult.

Embrace new opportunities and possibilities for your students. While distance learning should attempt to bring some normalcy and routine to students' lives, teachers shouldn't ignore the opportunities either. You might require students to keep a daily journal or diary for the duration of the time. Students might use other media as well, including video, drawing, painting, and music. They may be able to use their at-home settings in different situations to bring different perspectives and visuals to the discussion. Short video or audio clips from people in different areas may allow you to design new transdisciplinary learning experiences for our students. How might they share these alternative experiences with their classmates?

Provide space for personalized learning. Distance learning can provide opportunities for students to personalize what, how, and when they learn. Students can move with more flexibility and freely through content when teachers create nonlinear curricula. How might students be empowered to create their own learning pathways and experiences? That said, some students will need structure and help. Regular communication with parents and students will help you to find this balance.

Designers of experience; facilitators of learning. In shifting to distance learning, it is especially important for you to think of yourselves as designers of experiences and facilitators of learning (as opposed to distributors of knowledge). This places a premium on your ability to think more deeply about how to introduce content, design experiences, and coach students with thoughtful, specific feedback. You need ensure students have a clear sense of purpose, opportunities to express themselves, and experiences that allow them to work toward understanding of concepts and mastery of skills. This will help students stay motivated and engaged in learning, even when they are not physically at school.

Design asynchronous learning experiences. When school is closed and students are spread across many time zones, you will need to think and about connecting with them asynchronously. For example, you can use ManageBac or Google discussion forums or tools like [Flipgrid](#), [Padlet](#), and [Wakelet](#) to allow for student responses and dialogue during a set time period, knowing that students might not all be online at the same exact time.

Plan synchronous learning experiences. Relationships matter as much online as they do in person. Planning office hours so students can connect one-on-one with you at different times of the day is a start. Arranging student work groups that are geographically planned for synchronous learning via video chats using Zoom, Google Meet, WhatsApp or other platforms is another tool. Collaboration remains important and there are many ways you can foster it, but it will likely require forethought and planning.

Think differently about assessment. The standard tests will not work when students are working from

home so distance learning should be seen as an opportunity for teachers to look at new methods of assessment in the short term. Students could, individually or collaboratively, complete writing assignments, design infographics, make video presentations, or complete oral assessments via video chat.

Thinking differently about assessment from the start should help prevent frustration on your part when traditional methods do not work. It may even be worth planning these collaboratively with students. It is important to remember however that we will still need to have reports and so long term planning is key.

10 Guidelines for Parents

The transition to distance learning will be challenging for families. Everyone needs to think differently about how to support students; how to create structures and routines that allow children to be successful; and how to monitor and support children's learning. The ten guidelines provided below are intended to help parents think about what they can do to help their children find success through distance learning.

Establish routines and expectations. From the start, parents are highly encouraged to establish routines and expectations that work for their family. We encourage parents to set regular hours for their children's schoolwork but understand that you may have multiple children that need support and have your own work. We suggest that you keep normal bedtime routines for younger children in particular and likely older students as well. Children often work best if they move regularly and take periodic breaks when they study.

Define the physical space for your child's study. Your child may have a regular place for doing homework under normal circumstances, but this space may or may not be suitable for an extended period of time. We encourage families to establish a space where their children will learn most of the time. We would recommend a public space, not in a child's bedroom however, we realize that with multiple children you will need to be flexible. It is best if it is a place that can be quiet at work times and has a strong wireless internet signal, if possible. Importantly for primary students, it should be a space where parents are present and monitoring their children's learning.

Monitor communications from your children's teachers. Teachers in primary will communicate with parents regularly through email though the frequency and detail of these communications will be determined by your children's ages. For secondary students the main communication will be directly with students using ManageBac and Google Classrooms. Parents are able to monitor both to help understand the work requirements. We also encourage the parents to have their children explain the platforms teachers are using.

While we encourage parents to email teachers with any questions, we ask the parents to remember that teachers may be communicating with dozens of other families, and so there may be some time lag in replies. Also due to an expected increase in the number of emails, we suggest that they are clear, short and have a limited number of questions. Then the response can be similar and timely.

Begin and end each day with a check-in. Parents are encouraged to start and finish each day with a simple check-in. In the morning, establish what needs to be done. With younger children this may include setting up a specific daily schedule. It is also a good time to check in on what resources they need and when they will need the most support. One last tip is to go over all instructions with them and see early if there is anything they and you are unclear on. Secondary students may not want to have these check-ins with their parents, but particularly MYP students still should. Not all students thrive in a distance learning environment; some struggle with too much independence or lack of structure, these check-ins are highly recommended for these students.

The check-in at the end of the day is just a quick review of what was accomplished, what went well and any challenges. By doing this daily you and your child(ren) may notice any patterns that occur and may need to be communicated to the teacher.

Take an active role in helping your children. Over the course of a school day students engage with other students or adults dozens if not hundreds of times. These social interactions and opportunities for reflection include turning to a peer to exchange a thought or idea, participating in small or large group discussions, asking questions for clarification, collaborating on group projects, and countless other moments. While some of these social interactions will be re-created on digital platforms, others will not. Beyond the check-ins recommended at the start and end of each day, children would benefit from regular engagement with their parents about what they're learning.

Establish times for work. We recognize that for families with multiple children it will be a challenge to manage all of their children's needs, especially when those children are different ages and have different needs. As you may need to work with your children on some aspects of the work and have your own commitments, establishing what work is done when may be key to all of you being successful. Keep active. On a normal school day students are active several times a day as they play with their friends, have PE lessons or clubs. This helps students in many ways and while the setting may be different, the benefits are still there. Our physical education teachers will recommend activities or exercises, but it is important that you encourage them to exercise.

Remain mindful of your child's mental state. In distance learning the normal structure that children are used to is disrupted and while they may not understand fully why this is happening, they will feel the stress of the situation to some degree. Working with us, you will need to help your child manage this, and the range of emotions they may experience. This is part of the need for as much normal routine as you can provide. Please also communicate with the teachers, mentors and coordinators so that if a student is feeling stress, we work together to minimize additional factors.

Monitor online time. This may be counterintuitive as we are looking at distance learning, but we do not want students staring at computer screens for 7-8 hours a day. We will be trying to plan so this does not happen as you will see in the modified learning schedule below. However, we also ask parents to remember our teachers are not experts in distance learning and that it will require some trial-and-error before we find the right balance between online and offline learning experiences. Coordinators and teachers will periodically check in with you to assess what you're seeing at home and what we need to adjust. We thank you in advance for your patience and partnership!

Keep children social but monitor social media interactions. The initial thrill of school being closed fades quickly and students will start missing their friends, classmates, and teachers. They will actively seek to maintain contact with their friends. It may be possible to see them in person when circumstances permit, but it may also be on social media. Please also monitor your children's social media use, especially during an extended school closure. These social media apps are not school sanctioned methods of communication.

For questions about...	Contact
A course, assignment, or resource	The relevant teacher
A technology related issue	Peter Kamota - peterkamota@uwcea.org in Moshi, Gregory Marisa - gregorymarisa@uwcea.org in Arusha
Any personal, academic, or social-emotional concern	Counselor and/or Mentor in Secondary The class teacher in Primary Counselor moshi@uwcea.org Counselor arusha@uwcea.org
Other issues related to distance learning	The relevant Coordinator or Deputy Head of Campus

Student Roles and Responsibilities

- Establish daily routines for engaging in the learning experiences
- Identify a comfortable, quiet space in your home where you can work effectively and successfully
- Regularly monitor online platforms (ManageBac, Google Classrooms, etc) to check for announcements and feedback from your teachers
- Complete assignments with integrity and academic honesty, doing your best work
- Do your best to meet timelines, commitments, and due dates
- Communicate proactively with your teachers if you cannot meet deadlines or require additional support
- Proactively seek out and communicate with teachers and others as different needs arise (see below)
- Collaborate and support your classmates in their learning
- Comply with the Technology User Agreement, particularly expectations for online etiquette

For questions about...	Contact
A course, assignment, or resource	The relevant teacher
A technology related issue	Peter Kamota - peterkamota@uwcea.org in Moshi, Gregory Marisa - gregorymarisa@uwcea.org in Arusha
Any personal, academic, or social-emotional concern	Counselor and/or Mentor in Secondary The class teacher in Primary Counselor moshi@uwcea.org Counselor arusha@uwcea.org
Other issues related to distance learning	The relevant Coordinator or Deputy Head of Campus

Primary School

- After receiving initial notice from the Director about school closures and timelines, families will receive an email from the PYP Coordinator with division-specific information.
- A general overview of the Primary work for the week will be sent to students and parents by 8am each Monday morning. The regularity of daily bulletins and live classroom sessions will depend on the teacher concerned.
- The primary tools for communication between teachers and families will be email, SeeSaw, Google Meet, Google Classroom, Zoom and WhatsApp. Not every teacher will be using all these tools.
- Students will have both off- and on-screen learning activities designed to engage PYP learners in experiences that connect to current curriculum.
- Learning tasks and activities will provide direction to families on how best to support student learning and the expected level of adult involvement. It is expected that students in grades EC to P3 will need higher levels of support than students in P4 to P6.
- Teachers will contact parents regarding the daily learning. This may include an overview of the day in video or other medium. Daily work may include reading, writing, math and Unit of inquiry-based material. Others including Art, PE, ICT, Music, Swahili, French, will be allocated during the week.

MYP

- After receiving initial notice from the Director about school closures and timelines, families will receive an email from the MYP Coordinator with division-specific information.
- The primary tools for communication between teachers and families will be ManageBac, Google Classroom, Zoom, and email.
- Teachers will either link materials in Google Classroom or ManageBac.
- Teachers will have posted the day’s work no later than 8:00am if possible.
- Distance learning for our early adolescent learners will focus on having a balanced, holistic learning experience. Students will have both off- and on-screen learning activities.
- Learning experiences are designed to be completed independently or in collaboration with other students.
- Resources vary by class and lesson, but will include links to videos, graphic organizers, scanned material to read and engage with, and independent research material.
- Students are encouraged to be proactive in reaching out to teachers when they have questions or assignments are unclear.
- Counselors and mentors are always available to support students with academic, social, or emotional needs.
- Teachers and mentors and coordinators are available as needed. Contact them to set an appointment.

MYP: Daily Schedule

- These daily schedules are to help students organize their time. The first block is 8-9:30am, second is 9:30am-11am, third is 11am-12:30pm and fourth is 2pm-3:30.
- The general expectation is that each subject will have about 1/2 hours worth of zoom connection time during the block one each scheduled day and some non-Zoom work . This may not hold true for every subject but is a general guideline.
- Students should engage in Physical Activities at least twice a week. The timing of which may be dependent on the activity. As well, lifeskills based activities will be sent weekly from the lifeskills teacher.

M1

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Class 1	Math	English	Math	English	English
Class 2	Science	I&S	Science	Math	Science
Class 3	Swahili	French	Swahili	I&S	I&S
Class 4	Design	Music	Drama	Art	French

M2

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Class 1	Math	English	Math	English	English
Class 2	I&S	Science	I&S	Math	Science
Class 3	Swahili	French	Swahili	Science	I&S
Class 4	Art	Design	Music	Drama	French

M3

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Class 1	Math	English	Math	English	English
Class 2	Art	I&S	I&S	Math	I&S
Class 3	Swahili	French	Swahili	Science	Drama
Class 4	Science	Science	Design	Music	French

M4

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Class 1	English	Math	English	Math	English
Class 2	non-Eng Lang	Design	Chemistry	I&S	Math
Class 3	I&S	I&S	Art/Music/Drama	non-Eng Lang	non-Eng Lang
Class 4	Biology	Art	Design	Physics	Music/Drama

M5

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Class 1	English	Math	Math	I&S	Math
Class 2	non-Eng Lang	I&S	English	English	I&S
Class 3	Chemistry	Physics	PE	non-Eng Lang	non-Eng Lang
Class 4	Art/Music/ Drama	Design	Art/Music/ Drama	Biology	Design

Diploma

- After receiving initial notice from the Director about school closures and timelines, families will receive emails from the DP Coordinator with division-specific information.
- The primary tools for communication between teachers and families will be ManageBac, Google Classroom, Zoom, and email.
- Teachers will either link materials in Google Classroom or ManageBac.
- Teachers will have posted the day's work no later than 8:00am if possible.
- Learning experiences are designed to be completed independently or in collaboration with other students.
- Resources vary by class and lesson, but will include links to videos, graphic organizers, scanned material to read and engage with, and independent research material.
- Students are encouraged to be proactive in reaching out to teachers when they have questions or assignments are unclear.
- Counselors and mentors are always available to support students with academic, social, or emotional needs.
- Teachers and mentors and coordinators are available as needed. Contact them to set an appointment.

DP: Daily Schedule

- These daily schedules are to help students organize their time. The first block is 8-9:30am, second is 9:30am-11am, third is 11am-12:30pm and fourth is 2pm-3:30.
- The general expectation is that each subject will have about 1/2 hours worth of zoom connection time during the block one each scheduled day and some non-Zoom work . The general expectation is that each subject will have about 60-90 minutes' worth of work on that given day depending on if it is an SL or HL subject. This may not hold true for every student in every subject but is a general guideline.

D1

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Class 1	English	non-Eng Lang	English	non-Eng Lang	English
Class 2	Group 3 - I&S	Group 3 - I&S	Group 4 - Science	Group 3 - I&S	Math
Class 3	Group 4 - Science	TOK	Math	Group 4 - Science	non-Eng Lang
Class 4	Math	Group 6 Arts/Other	Group 6 Arts/Other	Research & Writing	Group 6 Arts/Other

D2

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Class 1	Group 3 - I&S	Group 3 - I&S	Group 4 - Science	Group 3 - I&S	Math
Class 1	English	non-Eng Lang	English	non-Eng Lang	English
Class 3	Math	Group 6 Arts/Other	Group 6 Arts/Other	EE/IA	Group 6 Arts/Other
Class 4	Group 4 - Science	TOK	Math	Group 4 - Science	non-Eng Lang

* The ASIJ Distance Learning Plan and ISC VLP were heavily utilized in the development of this document.