

Sheridan Gray is a Senior Tutor at Tolley Exam Training. He is ACA and CTA qualified and is currently studying towards the ADIT. Sheridan shares some tips on getting the most from studying through online webinars.

It seems amazing that you can study online through an online webinar: you can have a sleep in as you don't have to travel; you can drink your favourite tea or coffee from your own mug and you can even study in your pyjamas. Despite all these positives, you must be organised and self-disciplined to get the most from the experience. I should know better; I've had eight years teaching experience and recently when studying online I initially struggled to take full advantage of the webinar. Learn from my experience.

### **Try to find an area where you won't be disturbed**

I live in a one bedroom flat with my wife who is almost constantly on a call for work so I know how hard that can be. But once you find (or maybe even negotiate) an area, ask not to be interrupted until the session has finished.

### **Avoid distractions on your electronic devices**

Most students in a class wouldn't look at their mobile phone in a classroom environment due to respect for the tutor. However, with the tutor not physically there it is far more tempting to drift towards your mobile phone. I am guilty of checking the football news too regularly. If possible, I would suggest keeping your mobile out of arms reach or if not downloading an app blocker.

### **Imagine that the tutor can see you**

The tutor cannot see or hear what you are doing. As a result, it might be tempting to get on with some other tasks whilst you are studying. I have been known to be distracted by getting some ironing done during a webinar. Try to separate studying from any other tasks so that you can actively learn.

### **Have a break**

Get off your seat during breaks and ideally go into a different room. Try to give your eyes a break and not look at any other screen.

### **Chat tax**

A great way to learn is to teach. Try to interact with other candidates on forums etc.

### **Interact with the tutor**

In a face to face environment the tutor is constantly channelling their inner Darren Brown trying to read your faces to see if you are understanding a concept and adapting their teaching as a result. Ask questions in the chat box and frequently use the status icons such as "speed up", "slow down", "laughter" and "applause".

### **Imagine you can see your fellow candidates**

When a task is set this is not a break. A task gives you the opportunity to reinforce your learning or highlight a weakness. Imagine that all your fellow candidates are doing the tasks set. This replication of the class dynamic will give you the social pressure to try the task now and not be tempted to save it until later.

Hopefully if you follow these tips you will be able to replicate the face to face classroom environment and get the most from your studies.