I believe the appropriate level of computer knowledge/experience for a beginning online student can be basic, even for an online learning course, especially with UoPeople as you can learn on the go. UoPeople has a ton of tutorials accessible in the course materials as well as videos on YouTube that help guide you through the mechanics of navigating Moodle for online learning. As for studying computer science while starting at a basic computer level, anyone can learn to do anything with enough dedication.

In the 2014 CS50 Computer Science lecture from Harvard, the professor mentions in his introduction, "Now if you are among those that every year are sitting here with a bit of nerves in your mind, such that you don't think you belong here, you think that most anyone sitting around you knows far more than you, is indeed more comfortable than you at computer science or computers more generally, realize that 78% of the students who now take CS50 have no prior experience." (CS50 2014 - Week 0, 2014). Starting with no experience isn't odd; it's the norm in many places of study. In my opinion, you need not have more than the basic skills of starting a computer and using the internet to study online. If you can use a smartphone, you have the necessary skills. If you were able to sign up to study at UoPeople, you have all the skills needed to get started, even if you are studying Computer Science. You will learn everything else along the way.

Human beings are naturally curious, and when we apply our curiosity, we are capable of learning anything. A prime example of this is the hole-in-the-wall experiments done in India. Sugata Mitra embedded a computer in a wall in rural India, accessible to the public, and was astonished to find uneducated, rural children teaching themselves and others how to use it. Without any coaching or instruction, simply through trial and error, curiosity and teamwork, these children were learning and understanding technology. These experiments prove that even children in India who cannot understand English, learnt to understand technology through self-study. In Sugata Mitra's words "...children in groups unsupervised, teach themselves how to use a computer and how to use the internet, how to use Google..." (Sugata Mitra - The Hole in the Wall and Beyond, 2017).

[Ecole42](https://42.fr/en/homepage/), a university in France, is a pioneer in project-based, peer-to-peer learning. The coursework famously involves no lectures, coaching or instruction of any kind, everything is self-taught in teams through self-study, failing forward and peer-assessment. There are no prerequisites or entry requirements such as matriculation to access the program, and yet you come out the other side being a world class software engineer. How is this possible? By working together and learning from your failures as well as your peers, you can learn even the most difficult concepts over time. All it requires is dedication - to never give up when you struggle or fail but to fail forward.

Any student starting at basic should adopt this attitude of failing forward. Universities have been built on this principle; it is integral to their values for a reason; to learn means to learn from your failures and the faster you fail, the faster you learn. If you never made a coding mistake, you would never have received an error and learnt what that error means. Adopting an attitude of accepting failure as the process of learning is vital to the online self-study environment.

References:

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