

**See the future 2020**

## Experience of the Lockdown

# The student experience of lockdown and what it means for the future

**T**he nature of the business school offer has come under particular scrutiny during the pandemic of recent months with many schools switching to some form of online learning. The student experience of this move to online learning has been mixed. CarringtonCrisp and EFMD have run the GenerationWeb study for 13 years, primarily examining student views of best practice on business school websites. This year the study went further seeking student views on their experience of studying through the lockdown.

Almost three-quarters of students (71%) agree that their school has responded quickly to issues arising from the pandemic, while around two-thirds agree that their school has responded effectively to issues arising from the pandemic (65%) and that their school is making good use of online resources to help continue delivering teaching (66%).

Zoom (47%) and Microsoft Teams (37%) have been the main tools used to deliver online learning. Just over seven out of ten respondents to the survey agree that the system chosen for online learning by their business school has been easy to use. Two-thirds (67%) agree that their business school provided clear guidance on how to adapt to online learning.

However, it's not all good news. Just over six out of ten students (61%) agree that the experience of online learning failed to match that of classroom learning. Almost four out of ten (39%) agree that the experience of online learning left them less interested in their subject of study.

Despite the difficulties that some have experienced, there is positive news about the future of online learning. Almost a third of respondents (31%) agree that the experience of online learning

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## 71%

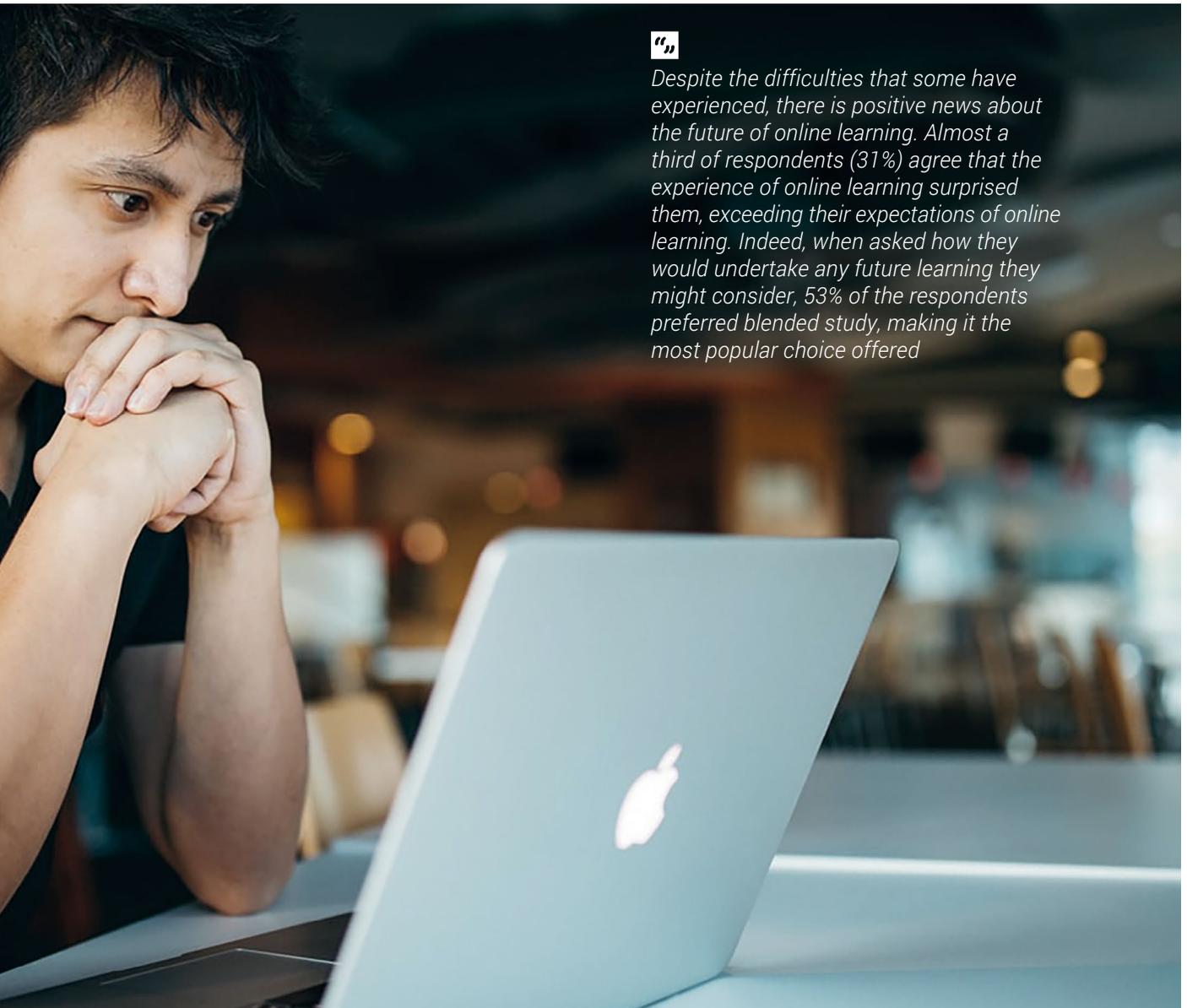
71% of students agree that their school has responded quickly to issues arising from the pandemic, while around two-thirds agree that their school has responded effectively to issues arising from the pandemic (65%)

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## 47%

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*Despite the difficulties that some have experienced, there is positive news about the future of online learning. Almost a third of respondents (31%) agree that the experience of online learning surprised them, exceeding their expectations of online learning. Indeed, when asked how they would undertake any future learning they might consider, 53% of the respondents preferred blended study, making it the most popular choice offered*

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surprised them and exceeded their expectations of online learning, while slightly over a third (34%) agreed that the experience of online learning made them much more likely to consider online learning in the future. Indeed, when asked how they would undertake any future learning they might consider, 53% of the respondents preferred blended study, making it the most popular choice offered.

It is not just current students that express an interest in blended and/or online learning. The LinkedIn study found that those aged over 25 were more likely to embrace online learning than their younger counterparts. Asked how they might address their learning needs in the year ahead, the most popular approach among Generation Z is face-to-face in a university setting (51%). For Generation Y the preference for learning in the year ahead is entirely online (47%), which is shared by 52% of Generation X and 45% of Baby Boomers.

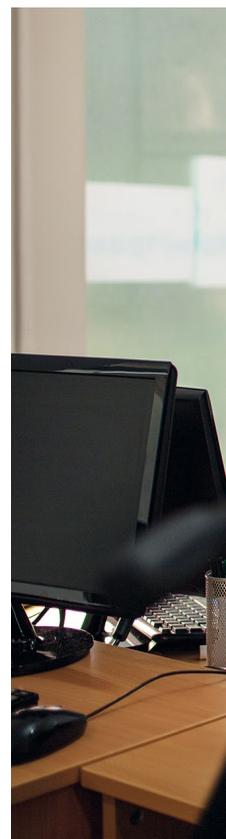
Part of the interest in online learning may be driven by cost. Among both Generation X and Baby Boomers just under half of the survey respondents consider business schools too expensive (45% and 48% respectively), perhaps seeking cheaper or free alternatives that can be taken online.

The transition to online learning has undoubtedly been difficult with schools having to make changes in a matter of days and weeks that would otherwise have taken years to deliver. Consequently, some of the experience of online learning has not always been as good as it might be. Just under four out of ten GenerationWeb survey respondents agree that their School has enhanced its reputation through the actions it has taken in recent weeks; although 40% neither agree nor disagree and 21% disagree.



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With lifelong learning becoming ever more important, today's students will also be tomorrow's learners and schools could do much more to better understand attitudes to future learning by engaging today's students. Just under half of the survey respondents (49%) indicate that their school is engaging them in thinking about the future of the business school, although only 12% definitely agree with this statement.

While a move to online learning has been completed by most schools in recent months, being a student is about much more than academic study. Just over three-quarters of the survey respondents (76%) indicate that advice and support services have been provided online, while 69% said that career services had been provided online. Outcomes of these changes suggest the transition to online provision has been largely successful with 65% indicating that advice and support services were either very good or good, while 61% indicated that career services were either very good or good.

Attitudes to online learning vary around the world. In the See the Future study, respondents from the Americas were most likely to agree that 'Face-to-face learning provides a richer and more effective experience than online learning', while those from Africa and the Middle East were most likely to agree that 'A blended model combining face-to-face and online learning is an ideal skills development path'.

