

Webinar: Evidence-based strategies to keep your learners motivated and engaged – Summary notes

Wednesday 9th September

Recent research and student insight

Online learning is 'here to stay'

The **Pearson's Global Learner Survey 2020**, where 7,000 people were surveyed in 7 countries (published August 2020):

- Reflects the impact of COVID-19 on learning and teaching
- Online learning seen as a permanent fixture in education

The need for human interaction plays a critical role in online learning

Joint Statement on the COVID-19 Crisis from the International Commission on the Futures of Education:

'In the renewal of education, **human interaction** and **wellbeing** must be given **priority**. Technology – particularly digital technology that enables communication, collaboration and learning across distance – is a formidable tool and potential source of innovation.'

Source: A Joint Statement on the COVID-19 Crisis, International Commission on the Futures of Education, April 2020

Supporting this need as educators

- Utilise current learning and teaching strategies
- Adapt for online learning
- Embrace technology for communication, collaboration, and connection

Understanding student motivations to drive engagement

Learners indicate the top outcomes an education should provide:

- Achieving a better life
- Developing professional skills*
- Having confidence in their abilities
- Progressing in their career
- Creating well-rounded citizens

Source: Pearson Global Learner Survey, August 2020

* Indication that up to 1 in 3 people are considering changing jobs after the pandemic

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, May 2020

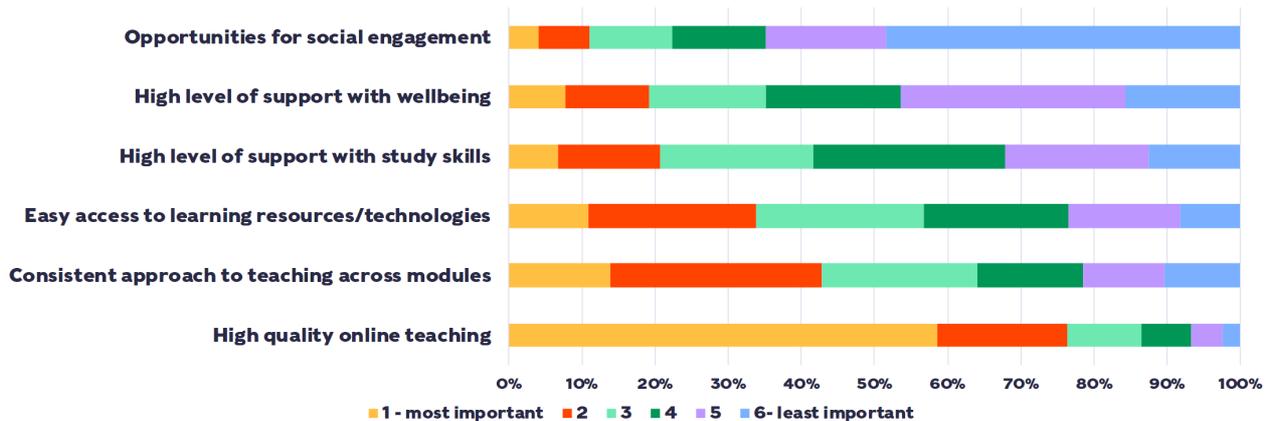
What students are saying about online learning

Together with WONKHE, Pearson conducted a survey of 3,461 Higher Ed students about online learning to release the **Pearson/WONKHE Student Expectations Survey (July 2020)**.

Q: How have you found the transition to online learning?

A: Students need preparing for online learning and teaching as much as lecturers do.

Q: What can your university do to meet these expectations?



Source: Pearson/WONKHE Student Expectations Survey, July 2020

High-quality online teaching keeps students motivated and engaged

Create a safe and connected space for learning

- **Set ground rules**
 - Establish and model expected behaviour and interactions
 - Ground rules that are (co-)created and regulated by students are more likely to gain student buy-in
- **Be compassionate**
 - Not all students will easily adapt to this way of learning
 - Not all students' home environment will be conducive to online study
- **Be present and available**
 - Upload your photo to the online learning platform
 - Post a welcome video at the start of the course
 - Set online 'office hours'
 - Respond to the discussion forum questions
 - Facilitate webinars and log on early to assist with technical difficulties
- **Get to know your students**
 - Use students' names in webinars
 - Respond to students' introductory posts in the discussion forum
 - Acknowledge and validate students' contributions and link to the learning
 - Discussion forums and webinars; tasks and assessments
 - Be personable and share your own experiences; use humour; log onto live sessions early for informal conversation
- **Be knowledgeable** about the **support mechanisms** in place for students – technologically, academically, and personally
- Provide timely and meaningful **feedback** that is growth-oriented and practical, so students can apply it to their learning

Leverage core teaching skills, adapted for online learning

- **Scaffold the learning**
 - Foundational skills are acquired before building up to more complex skills, and the acquisition of knowledge is cumulative and develops logically
 - Articulate how new learning connects to prior learning
 - Explain how new learning lays the foundation for what is to come
- **Frame learning experiences**
 - Ensuring that students understand the purpose and relevance of each learning experience, task and assessment helps sustain student motivation
 - Articulate the 'why', 'how', and 'what' of each learning experience
 - Why should students engage?
 - How will it support their success?
 - How is it relevant to the industry or profession?
 - What will they do with this new learning?
 - Help busy adult students understand which elements of the course content are key, which are supplementary, and which are most relevant to specific assessments
- **Provide clear instructions** – with much of the learning occurring asynchronously, perfect your instructions to reduce cognitive overload and support student success
- **Self-directed learning** – allows students to explore the breadth of your subject and engage with topics in a way that is of interest to them
 - Use focus questions; discussion forum prompts; reflection prompts
- **Plan active, task-orientated learning** – provide opportunities for students to test their knowledge and skills in a safe-to-fail environment; embed formative activities – with feedback – ahead of summative assessments

Keep learning active

- Learning activities and tasks actively involve the student and require them to use higher order thinking skills
- Provide ample opportunities for students to:
 - Critically analyse theories and practices
 - Reflect on their learning
 - Discuss and share with their peers

Utilising online learning platform tools

Online tools	How to support your students
Announcements and introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post an introductory video; be the face of the learning experience; show you are 'present' • Start each course with an introduction – a space or a discussion thread where students can introduce themselves
Content on screen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use headings, bullets and visual representations to break up text • Incorporate interactive learning activities, such as dynamic tables, charts, quizzes, and graphics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Use 'storytelling' to present information or data; make connections; contextualise the learning content e.g. present data by telling the 'story' behind it
Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to external reading materials • Link to or embed media (listening and viewing) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ External texts can be a great way to enhance learning and provide additional perspectives – and there is no need to 'reinvent the wheel' – curating a set of relevant and meaningful texts is a core part of today's teaching practices
Discussion forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support peer-to-peer engagement through discussion forums • Instil reflective practice • Assess where your students are on the learning continuum • Model the type of interaction and engagement you expect from students • Acknowledge students' contributions to the course • Ask thought-provoking questions to challenge students and encouraging higher-order thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ In what ways have your previous assumptions been challenged? ◦ What connections are you making? ◦ What are you still wondering about?
Online collaboration tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing reflections and ideas • Solving problems and develop strategies • Completing a group task or assessment • Providing peer-to-peer instruction and feedback • Tip: To support student achievement and foster engagement, group students for tasks and assessments according to their expressed interests, needs and learning goals, rather than assigning randomly to groups
Webinars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use announcements to preview each upcoming class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Remind students of the topic; set reading/viewing/listening ◦ Ask students to select their favourite learning from the weekly module ◦ Ask students to prepare questions • Including break-out rooms, polls, and Q&A • Schedule regularly and always ahead of each graded assessment to walk students through the requirements • Used to consolidate learning, rather than to introduce new concepts or skills • Plan for peer-to-peer activities and discussions • Prepare to divert from current webinar/tutorial plan to meet students' immediate needs and questions. • At the end of the class, ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ What is your one 'take-away' from today's class? ◦ What will you apply this week to your studies or professional practice? • Encourage personal goal-setting for the forthcoming week to foster autonomy and drive engagement
Online chat and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use online chat or video conferencing for 'office hours' (set regular office hours just as you would on campus) • Be across the online support students have access to – technologically, academically, and personally
Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the different assessment types/formats that can be submitted or delivered electronically • Give students a choice in how they demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes; supports student autonomy and engagement

Measuring student engagement

What does student engagement look like?

- Logging into the online platform
- Participating in discussion forums
- Participating in webinars and peer-to-peer activities
- Completing formative tasks and assessments
- Contacting you with questions; attending 'office hours'
- Applying new learnings to their profession or other aspects of their life
- Conducting analyses of real-world issues and situations
- Discussing learnings with peers and colleagues
- Continuing their studies despite hardship or other impediments

An excellent way to measure student engagement is to ask.

- Student survey; pulse survey; polls; Q&A
- Respond to students so they know they have been heard

Support your students:

- If disengaged, contact the student individually
- Offer remediation for students who need additional support to achieve the learning outcomes
- Refer students to support services – academic, technological, personal

Further reading and related resources from Pearson

[Moving to deliver your course online: Practical tips](#)

[Tips for moving a class online quickly](#)

[9 strategies for effective online teaching](#)

[Planning engaging live sessions](#)

[5 tips to keep learners motivated and engaged when teaching online](#)

[Diversity and inclusion in the online classroom](#)

[Mental gymnastics: Finding the balance in an online course](#)

[Good learning design is more than modern looking videos and apps](#)

Looking for more insight?

We'd love to chat further.

Connect with us to learn more about Pearson Online Learning Services and how we can help your institution.

Simply visit

www.pearson.com.au/educator/university/pearson-online-learning-services/

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