HYBRID LEARNING: THE FUTURE?
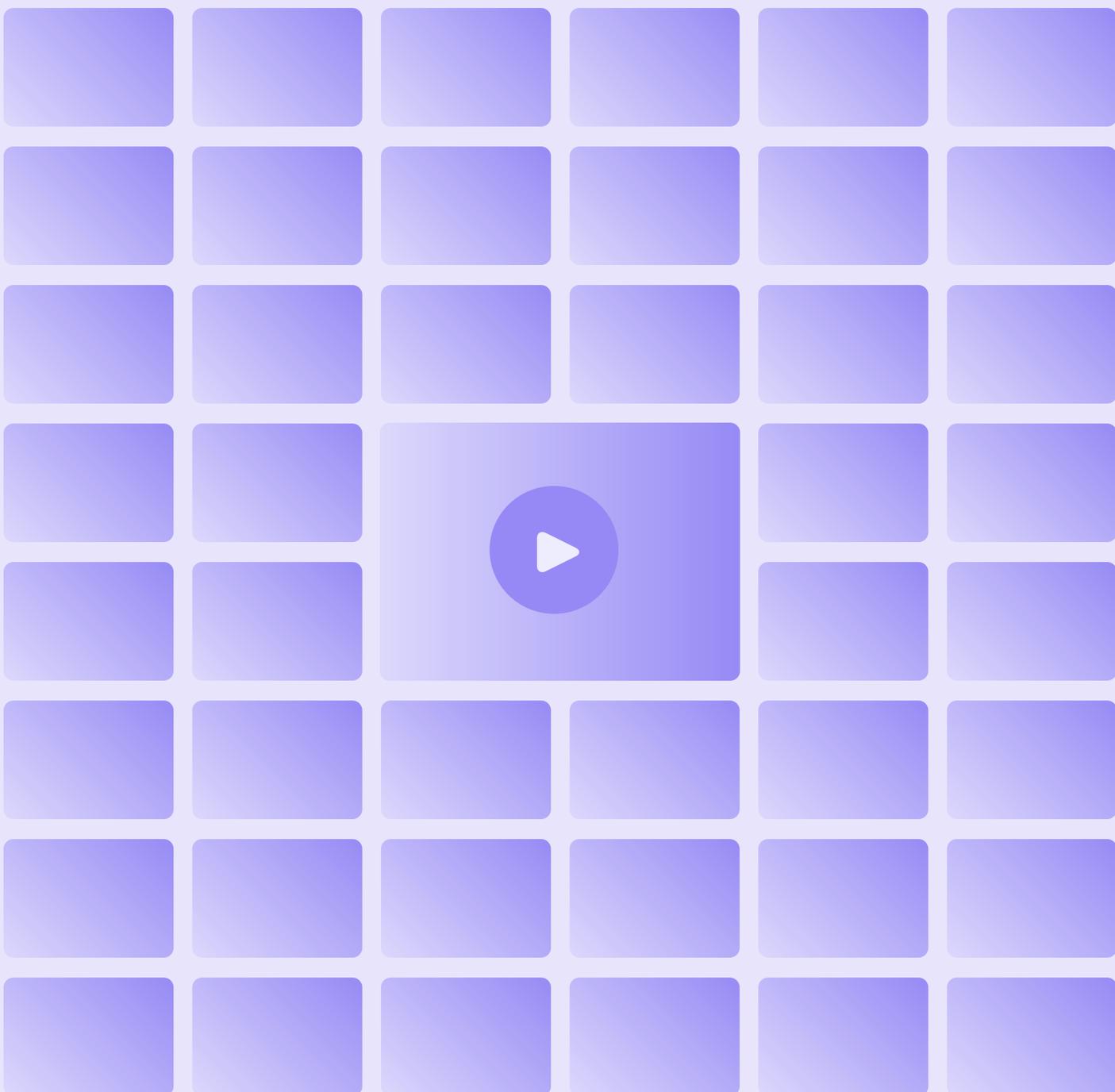
EXPLORING STUDENTS' STUDY PREFERENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF HYBRID LEARNING

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included and inspired.

" I was particularly interested in finding out how students feel a hybrid model of teaching will prepare them for an increasingly hybrid world of work.

The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown many elements of our daily life into sharp relief, causing shockwaves in every sector and challenging preconceptions about how we should order and proceed through our lives. The same is true in the higher education sector.

When thinking specifically about teaching and studying, the most obvious changes have occurred in the classroom, which, in many cases, came to be defined by the lack thereof. As we move through the later stages of the pandemic, in-person learning has returned and to many onlookers the sight of students on campus is a heartening one. Yet to pretend that these spaces are the same as they were before is wrong. Elements of online delivery, including in a hybrid manner, are here to stay.

Digital delivery existed before the pandemic, of course, but since 2020 moves towards online delivery have been galvanised. These changes demand consideration: faculty, students and the world that benefits from highly skilled graduates may not be well served if these changes are not handled appropriately. We hear often that students want the best of both worlds: the accessibility, on-demand nature of digital delivery as well as the personal, close-quarters collaboration of in-person learning.

Yet we do not have a complete grasp of what students want this to look like. Reading students' views in this report, ranging from topics such as digital poverty and to preferences regarding proportion of teaching delivered online and in-person, has been insightful. I was particularly interested in finding out how students feel a hybrid model of teaching will prepare them for an increasingly hybrid world of work. As I look around a half full office and prepare for a call with colleagues around the world, it feels judicious to consider how teaching can prepare our future colleagues for such a world. This report sheds light on these crucial topics and will help universities guide their offerings to cater to the needs and preferences of students in this 'new normal'.

Phil Baty
CHIEF KNOWLEDGE OFFICER
TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION

STUDENTS PERCEIVE THE BIGGEST ADVANTAGE OF HYBRID LEARNING OVER SOLELY ONLINE IS THE ABILITY TO INTERACT WITH A TEACHER FACE-TO-FACE WHEN APPROPRIATE (47%)

44%

of students gave a score of <7 (out of ten) when rating their instructors' digital skills to deliver online/hybrid learning effectively

38%

of students felt that their access to digital resources were not ideal for learning online effectively

76%

of students expect the future work experience to be hybrid in nature, and 64% feel that hybrid learning is more reflective of the modern workplace than learning entirely in-person

48%

of students preferring hybrid learning would want a substantial portion of their learning (between a quarter and a half) to be delivered online

Students perceive the biggest advantage of hybrid learning compared to solely in-person was the flexibility to choose to study remotely or in-person (65%)

63%

of students surveyed say that hybrid instruction is their ideal learning experience

WHEN CHOOSING WHERE TO STUDY, 61% OF STUDENTS FEEL IT IS IMPORTANT FOR A PROSPECTIVE UNIVERSITY TO DELIVER AT LEAST SOME OF ITS TEACHING ONLINE

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic forced an abrupt alteration in how teaching was delivered across all levels of education and all parts of the globe. For an extended period almost all learners were unable to attend school or university, and educators had to adapt at breakneck speed to deliver lessons online. As the COVID-19 vaccine and other measures have reduced the dangers that the virus poses to public health, lockdowns have been gradually lifted across most parts of the world and universities have been able to re-open.

However, it seems that going "back to normal" is neither likely nor perhaps desired. There are many positives from the experiences of online learning during the pandemic which should be built upon, including the flexibility it affords to learners and instructors, increased efficiencies, and the expanded potential to develop digital literacies. Alongside the benefits related to flexibility, the use of online and hybrid delivery may help to increase access in general to tertiary level education.

It therefore seems likely that hybrid combinations of in-person, online synchronous, and online asynchronous learning are likely to form a substantial part of whatever the "new normal" becomes.

However, there are undoubtedly challenges related to online and hybrid learning. Concerns about mental wellbeing, teaching quality and examination integrity have been raised. Moreover, whilst online learning modalities might afford opportunity to expand access to higher education, there are nevertheless concerns around digital inclusion and ensuring that any digital divides in relation to internet access and availability of appropriate technologies are not a hindrance to students' learning.

A number of studies during the pandemic undertook qualitative research about students' opinions of learning delivered totally online, however as universities have now largely resumed in-person education, there is a gap in understanding of what students now desire from their education. Through primary research, in the shape of two online qualitative research communities and a survey, this study aims to shed light on students' perspectives to help direct the future of higher education.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The research, designed and executed by THE Consultancy, was designed to gain a better understanding of students' experiences of online and hybrid learning, as well exploring their study mode preferences and any experiences of digital poverty.

The study consisted of:
- Two qualitative online communities, each with 20 undergraduate students undertaking their studies across 15 different countries
- A follow-up survey of 636 students from 15 countries, as illustrated in the graphic below.

France
(41)

South Korea
(40)

UK
(99)

Germany
(66)

Thailand
(27)

Spain
(32)

Italy
(39)

Japan
(40)

Mexico
(27)

United
Arab
Emirates
(33)

India
(46)

Hong Kong
SAR (34)

Singapore
(46)

Brazil
(40)

Australia
(53)
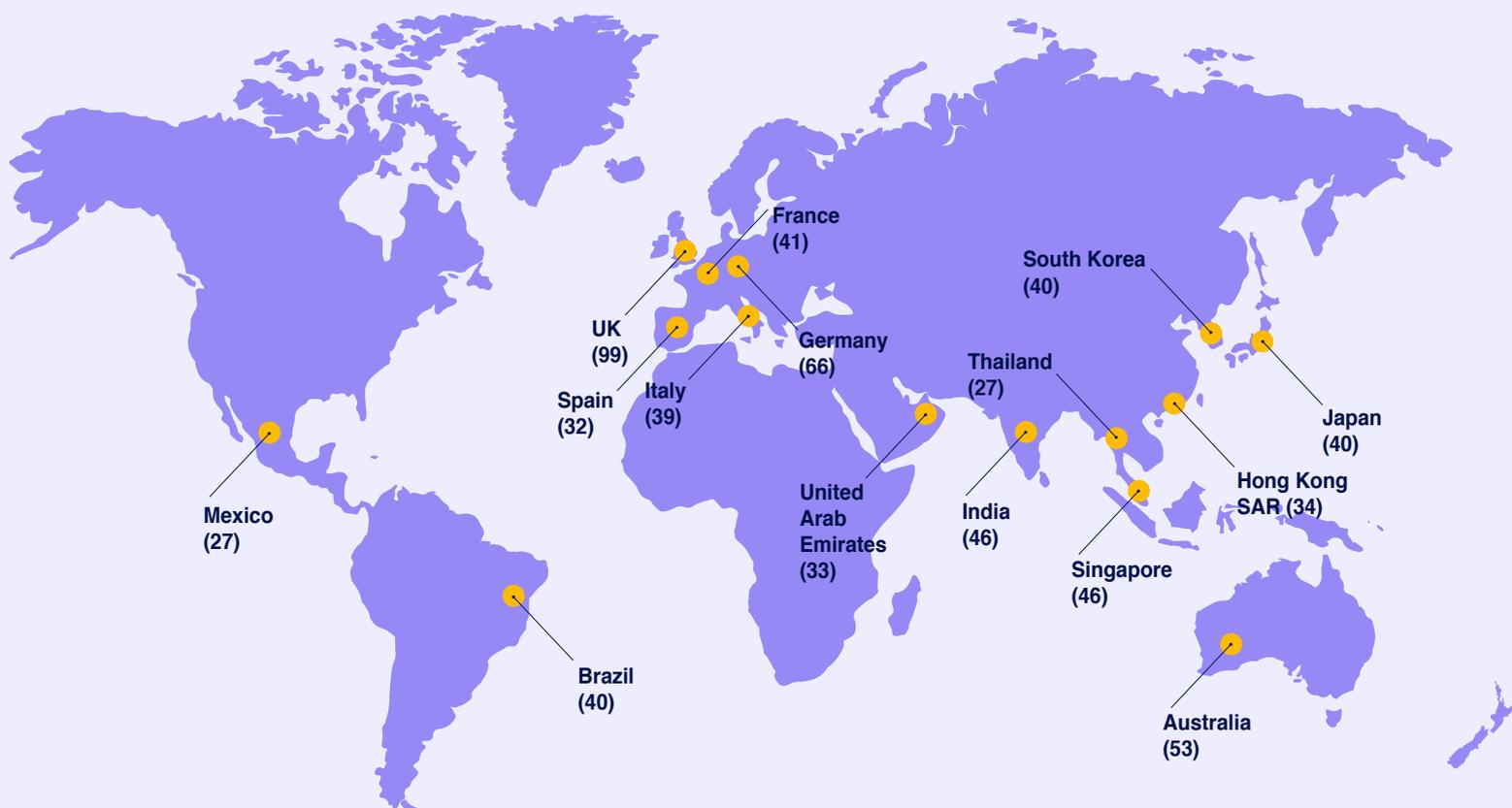
STUDY PREFERENCES

Whilst 2022 has seen a steady return to a semblance of pre-COVID normality across many parts of the world, that does not necessarily mean that students want a return to pre-COVID normality when it comes to their learning experience.

" The pandemic created a sudden necessity to develop and use technology for learning and has opened doors for enhanced and accessible study which should continue to be developed and improved."

- *Undergraduate Business and Management student, Australia*

When asked what their ideal learning experience involves, 6 in 10 students (63%) preferred a hybrid learning experience, compared with 30% preferring an entirely in-person education and 5% preferring one that is entirely online (see Figure 1).

This preference for hybrid learning was evident irrespective of where the students were studying, though to varying degrees: ranging from 53% of students studying in Brazil preferring hybrid, to 73% of those studying in the UAE preferring hybrid. There was a starker difference depending on level of study, with 65% of current undergraduates preferring hybrid compared with 57% of high school students soon to start their undergraduate degree. The preference for forms of hybrid or blended learning was also evident in the qualitative focus groups with a keen desire for the flexibility associated with online elements alongside the more personal face-to-face interactions, particularly for practical classes. (See quotes).

Whilst the preference for hybrid learning may be clear in this research, there may be varying desires with regards to how much learning is delivered online. Among students in our survey who preferred a hybrid learning experience, almost half (48%) would want between a quarter and half of their hybrid learning to be delivered online (see Figure 2). This compares with 20% who would want more than half of their study to be delivered online and 30% who would want less than a quarter of their study to be online. Among this group preferring hybrid learning these findings show a desire for a variety of learning modalities with slight leaning towards in-person learning being the prominent mode of delivery.

" I would describe an ideal learning experience to be accessible anywhere and the content should be downloadable. This is to allow students to study at their own pace and convenience. However set deadlines should be followed to ensure that students follow through on their work."

- *Undergraduate Accounting and Finance Student, India*

" My ideal experience would depend on the type of class it was. For example, if it is a more practical, dynamic lesson, then I would want in-person interaction with group activities for us all to participate and for the classes to be fun. On the other hand, for theory classes, I would give the option of connecting online live, but also the option of simply being able to watch recordings of them later."

- *Undergraduate Business and Management student, Spain*

" I prefer a mix of in-person and online classes, but please don't make the timetable so that students have to take online classes whilst on campus - for example having 1st period in-person and 2nd period online!"

- *Undergraduate Biological Sciences student, Germany*

HYBRID LEARNING:
THE FUTURE?

THINKING ABOUT YOUR IDEAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE, WOULD IT BE...?

Figure 1

2%
Don't know

63%
Delivered through
a mix of in-person
and online delivery
(hybrid learning)

5%
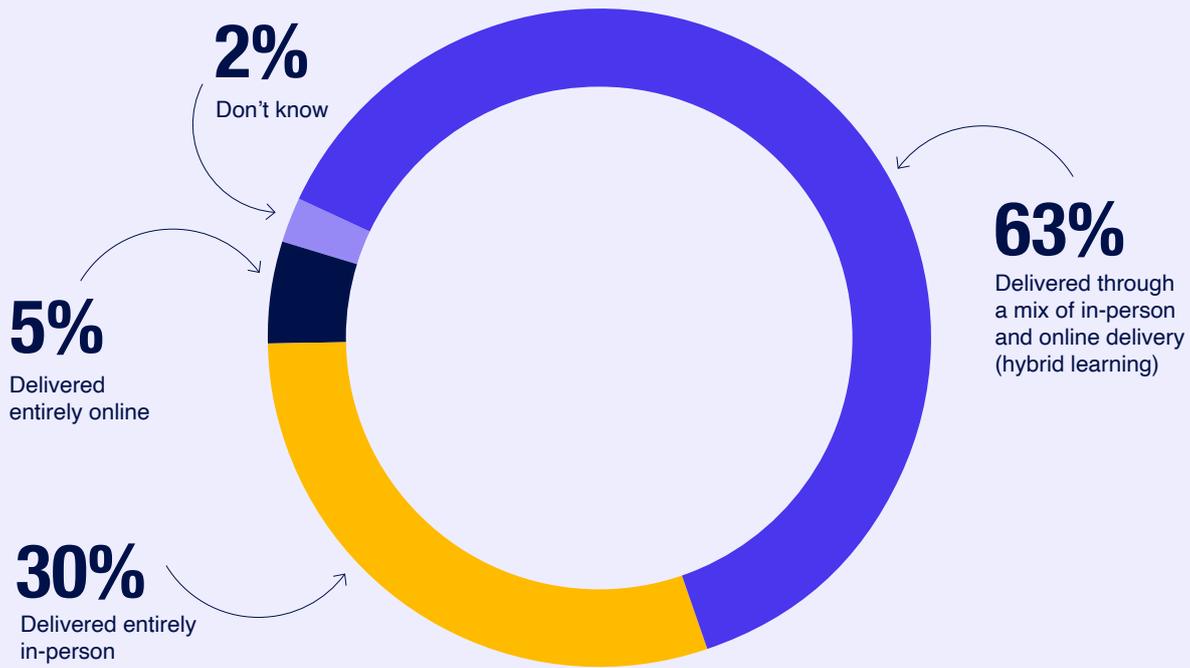Delivered
entirely online

30%
Delivered entirely
in-person

IF YOUR LEARNING WAS TO BE DELIVERED IN A HYBRID WAY, WHAT PROPORTION OF YOUR LEARNING WOULD YOU WANT TO BE DELIVERED ONLINE?

Figure 2

2%
Don't know

48%
Between 25%
and 50%

20%
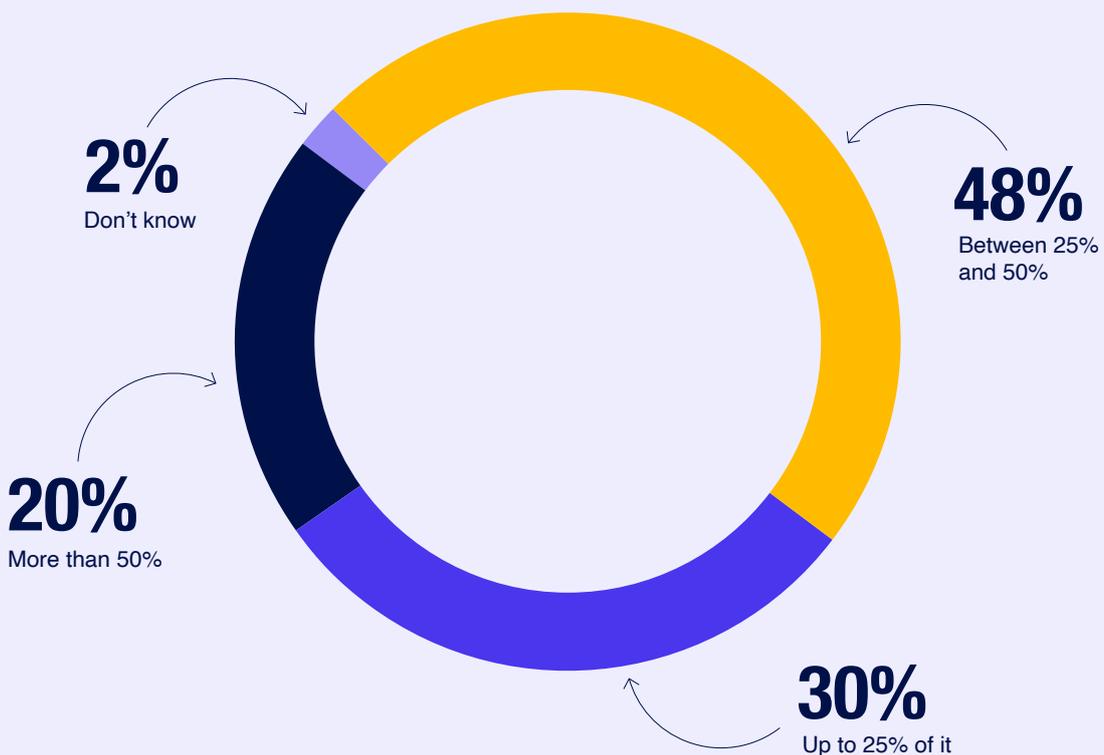More than 50%

30%
Up to 25% of it

(among students preferring hybrid learning, base=417)

Though there may be a preference for hybrid learning among students in this research, would it be a factor in determining where students choose to study?

Previous research by THE Consultancy has shown that perceived quality of teaching is, on average, the most important factor for students when deciding where to study (see Figure 3).[1] However, there are undoubtedly multiple additional criteria which factor into students' decisions.

Based on the current research, the method of teaching – and, specifically, whether at least some of the teaching is delivered online – would be an important factor for 61% of students we surveyed (see Figure 3a). Like the earlier findings regarding preference for hybrid learning, the importance placed upon learning method in deciding where to study was evident irrespective of where students were studying but varied: from 45% of students studying in Brazil placing importance on this factor, to 82% of students in the UAE.

In the qualitative focus groups we explored with students the information they would like to know about a university's online or hybrid offering in order to help form a judgment about its quality and thus inform their study decisions. Most commonly students wanted to know what the split of online vs. in person would be, how practical lessons would be administered, what platforms are used to deliver the online elements (and ideally receive a demonstration of them), and to receive reassurance that instructors are trained and experienced in delivering online learning. (See quotes).

"It would be great to be able to have a demonstration of the university's online learning platform and perhaps attend an online workshop as a guest to see the features and functionality and how lecturers make the content engaging."

- Undergraduate Business and Management student, Australia

"I would really love to know if the university is providing the adequate equipment to and training of my professors to ensure they have the skills to teach us online. I would not want to study in a online university that does not equip their staff adequately."

- Undergraduate Electrical Engineering student, Mexico

"I would like to know if the university has its own platform for sharing lecture material as it shouldn't be just a shared folder, but an interactive place where recordings can be commented on, discussions can be made and maybe include some quizzes. I would also like to see a public recording of an example online/ hybrid lecture, preferably from my department, to see how well the instructors deal with online environments."

- Undergraduate Engineering student, Germany

HYBRID LEARNING:
THE FUTURE?

PLEASE RANK THE FOLLOWING FACTORS IN TERMS OF HOW IMPORTANT THEY ARE IN DETERMINING WHICH UNIVERSITIES YOU HAVE APPLIED TO, OR WILL APPLY TO?

Figure 3

Average score		Ranked most important (%)
4.9	The university's quality of teaching	23%
4.6	Cost of tuition	26%
4.1	Graduate employability prospects	12%
3.9	Position in rankings league tables	12%
3.7	The university's quality of research	10%
3.5	Location of the university	10%
3.3	The university's commitment to, and reputation for, sustainability	7%

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Least important | Most important

Base= all (719)

WHEN DECIDING WHERE TO STUDY, HOW IMPORTANT IS IT THAT AT LEAST SOME OF THE TEACHING IS DELIVERED ONLINE?

Figure 3a

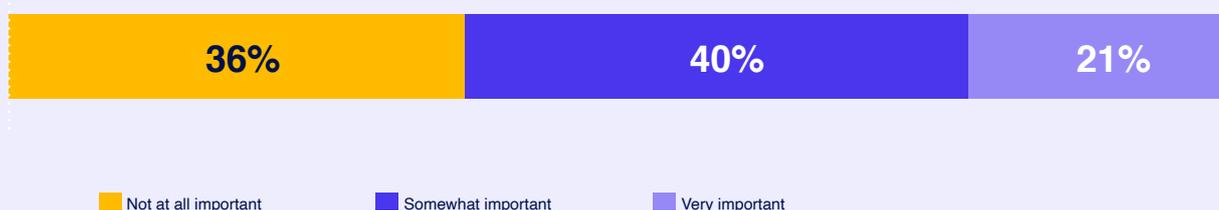| 36%	40%	21%

■ Not at all important ■ Somewhat important ■ Very important

WHAT STUDENTS LIKE ABOUT ONLINE AND HYBRID LEARNING

With students in this research favouring hybrid learning it seems that whilst students want an on-campus experience, they also want the flexibility that comes with a mix of online and in-person learning.

As shown in Figure 4, when asked to consider what are the main advantages of online learning compared with solely in-person learning it is the theme of flexibility which comes through strongest with the three most cited advantages being:

- The ability to view recordings of lectures after they have been delivered (51%)
- The ability to study from anywhere without the requirement to travel (45%)
- The ability to learn at one's own pace, accessing lectures at a time that suits the student (45%)

After these factors relating to flexibility the next most commonly cited advantage of online learning compared to solely in-person learning was the ability to collaborate with people who are not geographically close. This was an important factor which came through from the qualitative focus groups as well, with students valuing diversity among their fellow learners. (See quotes).

When asked what are the biggest advantages of hybrid learning compared to an entirely in-person delivery model, the most commonly cited advantage again focused on flexibility. This time it was the flexibility to study remotely or in-person depending on what is most appropriate (see Figure 5).

There were other commonly perceived advantages of hybrid learning compared to solely in-person learning too. These included the potential for cost savings from studying remotely for elements of the course (45%). This could include, for example, savings on commuting to campus every day. The ability to collaborate with students in other parts of the world was also perceived as an advantage by 39% of students. This again brings to the fore the value students place on learning alongside a diverse cohort of fellow learners.

Another perceived advantage of hybrid learning was the opportunity is affords for students to contribute and ask questions online (e.g. through web chat) when they may otherwise lack confidence to do so in-person (38%). This was also a perceived advantage of online/hybrid learning which came through from the qualitative focus groups. Students felt that having the option to post questions in writing during the lesson – and to potentially do so anonymously – might help increase the levels of engagement of otherwise shy students and improve their learning experience. (See quotes).

"I want to study with a diverse capable cohort - including working people and overseas students - which online/hybrid learning seems to support as it is much more inclusive. A diverse cohort is part of my attraction to my university."

- Undergraduate Architecture student, Australia

"I have always been a shy student in the classroom so I'm reluctant to ask questions by physically raising my hand but I feel comfortable messaging the instructor through my device. It helps ensure more participation in the classroom."

- Undergraduate Law student, India

HYBRID LEARNING:
THE FUTURE?

BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCES, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE THE BIGGEST ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE LEARNING COMPARED TO IN-PERSON LEARNING?

Figure 4

The ability to view recordings of lectures after they have been delivered	51%
The ability to study from anywhere in the world without travelling	45%
The ability to learn at my own pace	45%
Ability to collaborate with people who are not geographically close to me	28%
Studying online would be cheaper than studying in person	24%
Opportunity to practice the skill of self-motivated work/learning	22%
Helps prepare me for hybrid working in the future	19%
Opportunity to practice communicating and collaborating virtually	15%
My ability to concentrate while learning online would be higher than studying in person	11%
No advantages	3%

ADVANTAGES OF HYBRID LEARNING COMPARED TO LEARNING THAT IS ENTIRELY IN-PERSON

Figure 5

Flexibility to choose to study remotely or in-person depending on what is most appropriate for each element of the course	65%
Cost savings by studying remotely for some elements of the course	45%
Being able to learn and collaborate with students in other parts of the world as well as those local to you	39%
The opportunity for students to contribute and ask questions online (e.g. through web chat) who may not be as confident to do so in-person	38%
The ability to communicate and collaborate virtually as well as in-person	24%
Having breakout groups that are interactive and conducted separately (e.g. without being able to hear other breakout groups)	17%
No advantages	7%

WHAT STUDENTS DISLIKE ABOUT ONLINE AND HYBRID LEARNING

Whilst students in our study prefer hybrid learning and identify many advantages to such learning methods, that is not to say that online or hybrid learning comes without its own perceived disadvantages compared to in-person learning.

As shown in Figure 6, students considered the main disadvantages of this learning modality to be:

- Less opportunity to socialise and make friends (51%)
- It being harder concentrate when learning online compared to in-person (50%)
- Less interaction between teaching staff and students when learning is delivered online (48%)
- Less opportunity to engage in extracurricular activities (37%)

In the focus groups, students focused on these perceived disadvantages of online and hybrid learning too, with many focusing on the lack of person interactions and socialising. (See quote).

There are of course ways for universities to address such concerns about socialising, interacting and collaborating with other learners when studying online. In the focus groups we explored with students their experiences of online communities being established outside the classroom. On the whole, sentiment towards such communities was positive thought it was felt that universities can play an important role in establishing such groups.

"Online meetings and ice breakers or quizzes allow people to get to know each other before they embark on learning together will make people feel more comfortable asking questions and contributing in class."
- Undergraduate, politics and international relations student, UK

"For education which has a significant amount of online learning, online communities are an essential part of the system. Social interaction is one of the critical parts of our university education, it should be somewhat present online too. The university can play a useful role in setting up such groups for study purposes (discussion groups and online events), but then also encourage student clubs to create more specific online communities for social reasons."
- Undergraduate engineering student, Germany

"I would say the lack of personal interaction is not a nice thing at all. It's part of the university experience and sometimes can help the learning process as well. Of course you can interact with your colleagues through messages, etc. but it's not the same thing."

- Undergraduate Law student, Italy

"I could be in a position that would feel most comfortable without any social judgement in a classroom. However, the downside of it was that after a while I became way too relaxed. It was also really hard to avoid distractions during lessons (especially if my camera was off). Sometimes I wished teachers could block the button I use for turning my camera off so they can act as my 'accountability partner'."
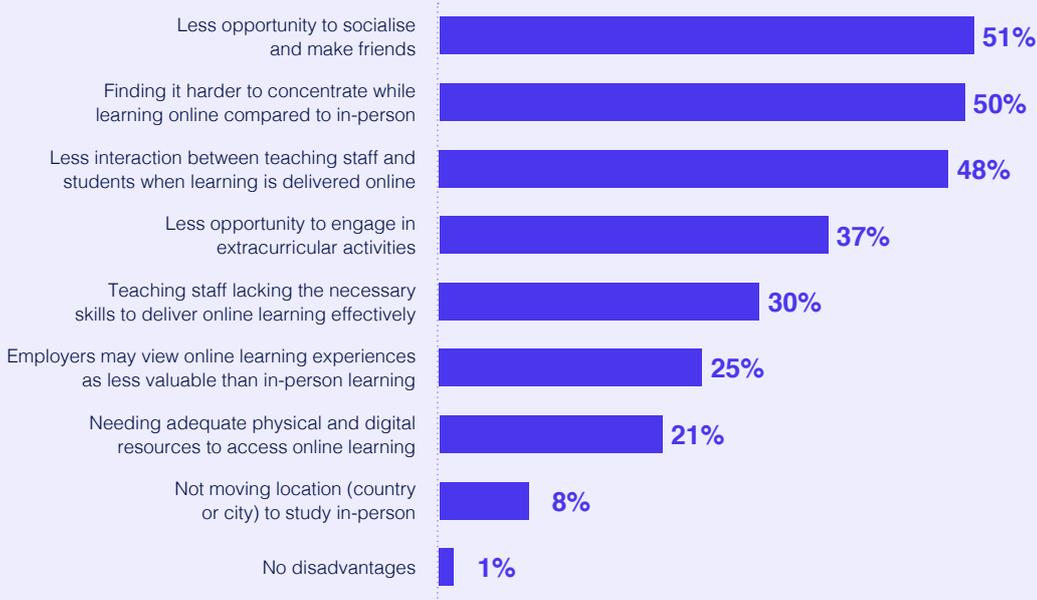
- Undergraduate Sports Science student, UK

"When I used to attend classes online by myself I always felt overwhelmed by all the classes and felt like I wasn't smart enough, forgetting that everyone else had similar issues. Whereas when we go to uni in person, after class maybe we discuss about the class and if any of us has any doubt we immediately help each other."

- Undergraduate Economics student, Italy

DISADVANTAGES OF ONLINE LEARNING COMPARED TO IN-PERSON LEARNING

Figure 6

Category	%
Less opportunity to socialise and make friends	51%
Finding it harder to concentrate while learning online compared to in-person	50%
Less interaction between teaching staff and students when learning is delivered online	48%
Less opportunity to engage in extracurricular activities	37%
Teaching staff lacking the necessary skills to deliver online learning effectively	30%
Employers may view online learning experiences as less valuable than in-person learning	25%
Needing adequate physical and digital resources to access online learning	21%
Not moving location (country or city) to study in-person	8%
No disadvantages	1%

HYBRID LEARNING AND HYBRID WORKING

Not only did the COVID-19 pandemic cause a dramatic change in how students were taught, it also altered how people work with many forced to adopt remote working. It is expected that remote and hybrid working are likely to persist with research by McKinsey Global Institute estimating that up to a quarter of the workforce in advanced economies have the potential to work remotely three to five days a week.[2]

This apparent 'new normal' in how people work may influence what students want and expect for their future careers, and what they want and need from the learning experience to set them up for the modern workplace.
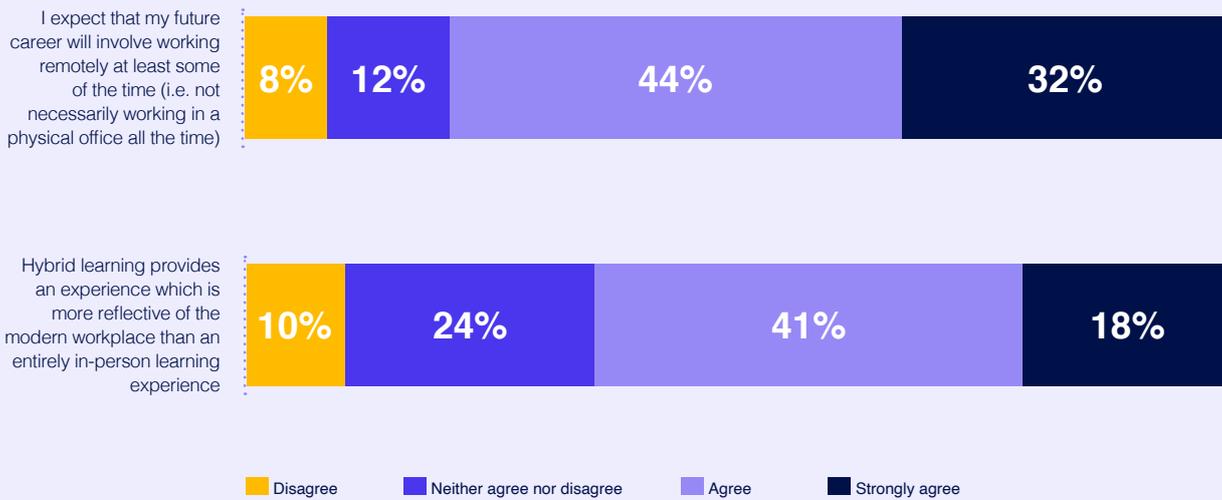
In our research, 76% of students expected that their future careers will involve working remotely at least some of the time. Only 8% did not expect that to be the case – possibly reflecting difference in the expected careers. This high proportion expecting to be working in a hybrid way in future was broadly consistent across country of study, ranging from 64% of students studying in Australia expecting to work in a hybrid way in future, through to 91% in Spain.

Interestingly, when asked to consider if hybrid learning would provide students with an experience that is more reflective of the modern workplace than in-person learning, 59% agreed (18% strongly agreeing) – see Figure 7.

Such sentiments may help explain some of the earlier findings, such as the proportion of students suggesting that a university's online offering would be an important factor in their decisions over where to study. Students place great importance on their future employability prospects and as the world of work potentially becomes more hybrid in nature, students will increasingly expect their learning experiences to reflect the workplaces they enter.

HYBRID LEARNING:
THE FUTURE?

LEVELS OF AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS...

Figure 7

I expect that my future career will involve working remotely at least some of the time (i.e. not necessarily working in a physical office all the time)

| 8% | 12% | 44% | 32% |

Hybrid learning provides an experience which is more reflective of the modern workplace than an entirely in-person learning experience

| 10% | 24% | 41% | 18% |

■ Disagree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree

DIGITAL INCLUSION

With remote learning having become the norm during the pandemic, a need for adequate internet access and digital equipment became a key concern to ensure that students would not be disadvantaged through lack of access.

It is estimated that on average across OECD countries 88% of students have an internet connection at home and a computer that they can use for studying. However, this does vary by country, with half or fewer students in the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam having internet access and a computer for studying.[3]

As noted earlier, 21% of students cited the requirement of adequate physical and digital resources to access learning as a disadvantage of online learning. However, when asked directly about their experience of this, 83% of students surveyed said they had experienced instances of being unable to access online content due to a lack of facilities such as internet coverage or digital equipment. This figure did not notably differ by location of study.

Whilst the severity and impact of such experiences was not determined in this study, the 83% figures breaks down as 27% having experienced a lack of access often, and 56% having experienced this occasionally.

In the focus groups students shared some of their experiences and frustrations with a lack of adequate physical and digital facilities. Though their lack of access may have been temporary and occasional, students described the frustration and detrimental impact that this had on their learning experience. (See quotes).

"
The circumstances that affected my online learning were my network connection, it was a frequent problem."

- *Undergraduate Chemistry student, Mexico*

"
I have missed classes because of network issues, internet access, and electricity. The problem with this is that you cannot predict when which issue will arise. I have missed quizzes because of this and it affected my grade."
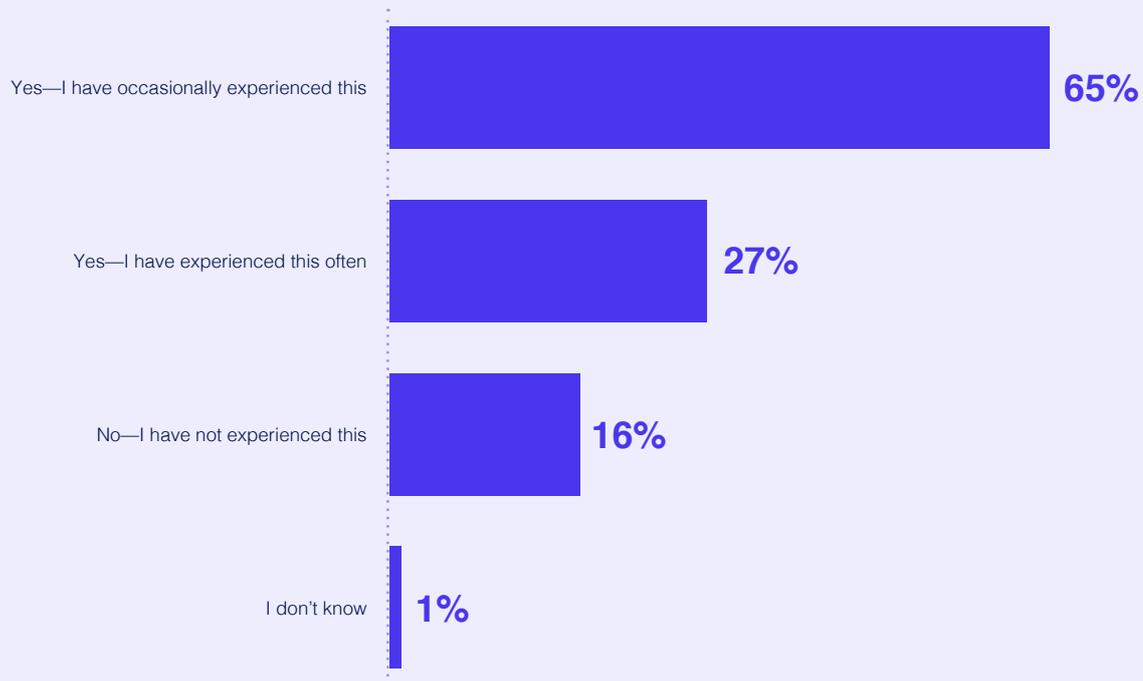
- *Undergraduate Computer Science student, Thailand*

"
Some of the programs we need did not work on my laptop that I have for my working student job and on my iPad so even though I have sufficient access to digital technologies that was still not enough."

- *Undergraduate Business and Management student, Germany*

HYBRID LEARNING:
THE FUTURE?

THINKING ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES OF ONLINE LEARNING, HAVE THERE BEEN INSTANCES WHERE YOU WERE UNABLE TO ACCESS ONLINE CONTENT DUE TO A LACK OF FACILITIES (E.G. INTERNET COVERAGE, COMPUTER, ETC.)?

Figure 8

Yes—I have occasionally experienced this	65%
Yes—I have experienced this often	27%
No—I have not experienced this	16%
I don't know	1%

As well as access to physical and digital facilities having an influence on students' experiences of online/hybrid learning, so do the digital literacies of educators to creatively and effectively deliver such learning. An educator needs to not only master the content of what they teach, but also must be able to master digital technologies to both prepare and apply various technology-based learning models to their learning activities.

When asked to rate the digital skills of their educators to deliver online/hybrid learning effectively, 44% of students gave a score of less than seven (out of ten), including 15% giving a rating of between one and four which we interpret as a proxy for 'poor'. This proportion was broadly consistent across countries with the exception of Singapore, where only 20% of the surveyed students gave a rating of less than seven.

This mixed review of educators' digital literacies came through in the focus groups as well, though there was recognition that educators' abilities generally increased over the course of time after the sudden switch to online learning. (See quotes).

Implicit in many of the students' views is that universities have supported their staff to improve their abilities to deliver online learning. Indeed, research among colleges in the US reported that support provided to faculty in areas such as engaging online students and meeting quality assurance standards has increased since 2020.[4]

In the current survey, when asked what support universities should provide to improve the study experience of students studying online or in a hybrid format, 66% of students felt that universities should provide training for instructors to deliver online/hybrid learning effectively (see Figure 10). Over half (52%) felt that universities should deliver online/hybrid learning through software specifically designed for such purposes.

"
At the beginning, their digital skills were in certain way poor, most of them did not know a lot of the options and tools that the online platforms provided, but they learned really quick and make a great online learning experience."

- Undergraduate Chemistry student, Mexico

"
At the start of lockdown the skills were not very great but as time went on everyone improved however it would have been nice if they did a course/ training session so that they knew all features of Teams."

- Undergraduate Business and Management student, UK

"
Most of my university lecturers tend to struggle sometimes with platforms like zoom or like trying to connect laptops to other exterior devices. But I've noticed an improvement and they've been able to use these platforms effectively now."

- Undergraduate Architecture student, UK
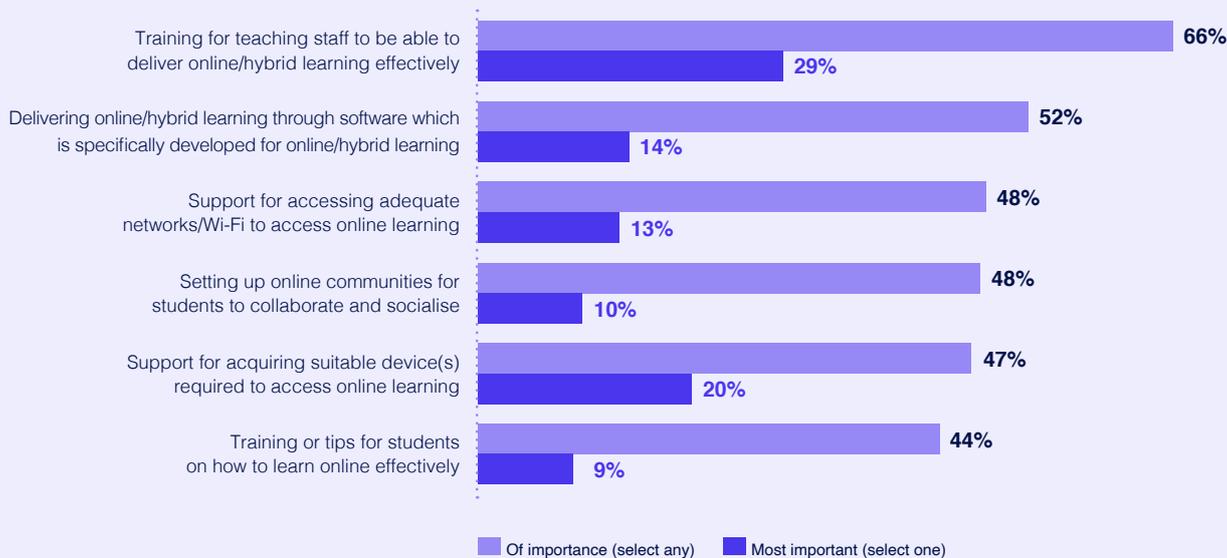
HYBRID LEARNING:
THE FUTURE?

ON A SCALE OF ONE TO TEN, BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCE HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE DIGITAL SKILLS OF TEACHING STAFF TO DELIVER ONLINE/HYBRID LEARNING EFFECTIVELY?

Figure 9

15%	29%	44%	10%

■ 1 (very poor) to 4 ■ 5 to 6 ■ 7 to 8 ■ 9 to 10 (excellent)
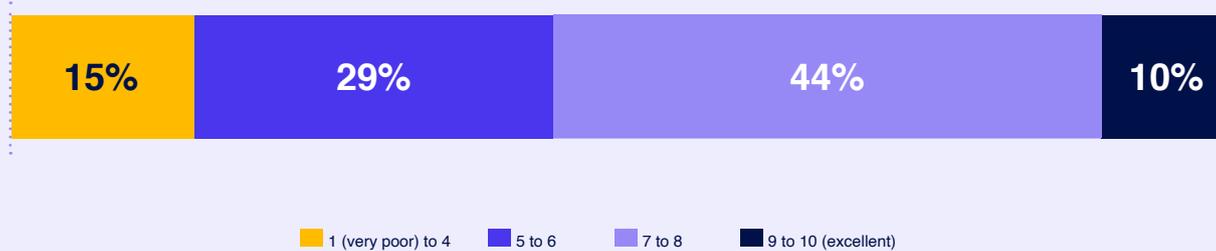
WHAT SHOULD UNIVERSITIES PROVIDE TO IMPROVE THE STUDY EXPERIENCE OF STUDENTS STUDYING ONLINE OR IN A HYBRID FORMAT?

Figure 10

Training for teaching staff to be able to deliver online/hybrid learning effectively — 66% / 29%

Delivering online/hybrid learning through software which is specifically developed for online/hybrid learning — 52% / 14%

Support for accessing adequate networks/Wi-Fi to access online learning — 48% / 13%

Setting up online communities for students to collaborate and socialise — 48% / 10%

Support for acquiring suitable device(s) required to access online learning — 47% / 20%

Training or tips for students on how to learn online effectively — 44% / 9%

■ Of importance (select any) ■ Most important (select one)

CONCLUSION

It is safe to assume that the COVID-19 pandemic has irrevocably changed the face of higher education. Both traditional and online or hybrid mediums of instruction have their advantages and disadvantages, but it seems unlikely that modes of instruction will simply return to a pre-pandemic normal. That is, not least, because students have experienced and benefitted from the positives of online/hybrid learning. Students value the flexibility that online or hybrid methods bring to their studies and feel that the hybrid mix of face-to-face and online instruction is more representative of the modern workplace they will end up entering than solely in-person learning.

Online and hybrid forms of instruction do not come without their challenges, however. Our findings from this research show that students are concerned about the potential for online learning to reduce their opportunities for socialising and having meaningful and engaging interactions with their instructors. They also often experienced disruption in their access to adequate digital facilities and the skills of their instructors to deliver online and hybrid learning effectively. This is a challenge for universities to rise to by upskilling faculty to ensure they can design online and hybrid classes that are effective and engaging, and helping to bridge digital divides to enhance students' ability to study, share, work together, and solve problems collaboratively. ■

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[1] *https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/students-sustainability-survey*

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