

Research into online learning during lockdown

Article date: 19/08/2020 5:00 p.m.

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What was the experience of university students who found their studies shifted online due to COVID-19?

[A study](#) by researchers at AUT and four other New Zealand universities aims to find out.

Dr Dilani Gedera, Senior Lecturer in AUT's Faculty of Business, Economics and Law, says she saw how much care and attention staff put into online teaching, but the researchers want to know what it was like for learners.

“Students’ perspectives will inform us what worked, what challenges they faced and what can New Zealand universities do better or differently in the future,” she says.

“It’s really important that we consider students’ perspectives when we make important decisions about teaching and learning practices.”



AUT Senior Lecturer Dilani Gedera.

Dr Dilani Gedera says there is a difference between carefully planned online learning experiences and courses offered online in response to a crisis or disaster.

“The lessons learned from this unexpected pandemic experience and feedback from students will help us make conscious decisions about how we design and deliver learning experiences.”

The researchers are interested in the experiences of any student enrolled at any NZ university, in any discipline, irrespective of where they were located or their level of study, she says.

More than 600 responses have been received so far, but it is hoped that thousands of students will share their perspectives and experiences by September.

Focus group interviews will then be held in the next phase of the study.

Other researchers involved are University of Waikato Senior lecturer Dr Dianne Forbes, Canterbury University Associate Professor Cheryl Brown, University of Auckland’s Ashwini Datt and Senior Lecturer Dr Maggie Hartnett of Massey University.

Students can [click here to read more about the survey and to take part](#).

You can also read about the research on [Stuff](#).