

## My Experience with online learning and life during lockdown

-Esha Phalke

The pandemic has taken the world by surprise. I am sure no one could have imagined that this academic year would have ended this way. But I believe we have to adapt ourselves to this new normal and online learning is definitely not one of them. Although online learning comes with its own positives and negatives it could be something we would see more often in the future.

My course commenced a few months back and I was very excited for the new beginnings looking forward to meet new friends. One of the setbacks of online learning is the face to face interactions with our peers and professors and its disheartening to know that this year it won't be possible. So, the next convenient thing is blended teaching which all of us are acclimatized to by now. Being appointed as the class representative for the year makes me feel elated and responsible towards my class. Days passed by and soon we got to know we were entering into a level 5 lockdown. Oh God, not again! I gave a sigh.

Life came to a halt and everything seemed strange. There was no more socializing and boredom crept in but the flow of content didn't stop. We now have online exams and lectures and as a student participating in online learning is confusing to adjust too and sometimes even more stressful than regular classrooms. Keeping on top of the deadlines and following plans seemed like a newly acquired skill. We now understand the gravity of having friends which makes everything so much more manageable and less stressful. Being able to communicate with professors and peers during classes has made me an active participant. Besides this mentors and buddies help us to stay motivated and keep our morals high.

Just as they say new experiences teach us new things and help us be a better version of ourselves. Life at home has taught me to be a successful distance learner, self-disciplined and to be able to work well on my own. We have understood the importance of taking breaks, staying healthy and creating a workspace. Each day now feels productive and more structured.

The University has provided us tremendous support during these challenging times. They ensured that the situation did not impact our studies and we got the best learning experience. Physical and mental wellbeing played a pivotal role to staying healthy and the university provided myriad opportunities to engage in some amazing events. This pandemic has taught us that the internet can be used studying and the wonders of using technology to connect. Overall, my experience during the lockdown and online learning has been a positive one. The aids delivered to us has made it as smooth as possible helping us tune in these unprecedented times. I hope the world comes back to normal soon and we resume our lives just as before.

Happy Online learning!