

# SUSTAINABILITY IN LEARNING & TEACHING

## *Generation Alpha - a brief insight into who is setting the future agenda*

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Moving on from Gen Y and Gen Z, it is anticipated that Generation Alpha, those born between 2010 and 2025, will stay in education longer, start their earning years later and so stay at home with their parents later than even their predecessors, Gen Z and Gen Y (McCrindle 2022). Alphas are the grandchildren of Generation X (born 1965–79), the children of Generation Y (Aka millennials, born 1980–94) and the younger siblings and cousins of Generation Z (1995–2009) (Warren 2021).

Within 4 years they will outnumber the Baby Boomers, and many of them will live to see the 22nd Century (McCrindle 2022). It is still in its infancy, but many believe that when they come into Higher Education, they will be the most educated and technically savvy than any other generation. They will live, learn and communicate with each other almost entirely on a screen by swiping, scrolling and talking to the screens of their smartphones and tablets at home and the increasingly ‘connected’ classrooms and interactive displays. (Warren 2021).

The parents of Gen Alpha and the children themselves will want a responsive and personalised learning environment that focus on critical thinking, problem-solving, cultural sensitivity, and environmental awareness (Goyal 2020). In addition, mental and physical health is likely to be a key consideration in learning & teaching. They will expect a significant percentage of the curriculum to be online, so universities will need to invest in broadcasting and may have course-specific channels.

Finally, many argue that Alpha’s will bring the next wave of environmental revolutionaries (Warren 2021) and universities need to ensure that their credentials are credible and relevant, from policies relating to catering, waste management, transport, and energy usage.

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