



Meet Your New Graduate and Adult Learner

Insights from EAB's Survey of 3,800+ Prospective Students

The proportion of adult learners from Gen Z is expected to double in the coming years, from 31% of the adult learner population in 2024 to 60% of adult learners in 2031. Enrollment teams will need to be nimble to develop marketing messages and strategies that will appeal to this new generation of graduate and adult learners.

EAB's **Adult Learner Recruitment** team surveyed more than 3,800 graduate, online, and adult degree completion students about their preferences, needs, and behaviors. **Here are four trends to know about your next generation of adult learners.**



Search Behaviors and Preferences Are Changing

80% of prospects are unknown to the institution prior to applying, compared to 20% in 2012

Strategy Recommendation

Reach "stealth shoppers" through paid ads and platforms such as Apply Advance

84% of students said a poorly designed website will negatively affect their opinion of a school

Strategy Recommendation

Invest in a user-friendly website that displays need-to-know information clearly and prominently



Students Spend Time Researching, Not Applying

39% of respondents spent at least 12 months searching for information about going back to school

Strategy Recommendation

Use consistent marketing campaigns to reach prospects who haven't engaged with marketing recently

22% of students do not plan to take a graduate admissions test, demonstrating that many students aim to minimize time spent applying

Strategy Recommendation

Evaluate the role of test scores in your admission process



Enrollment Decisions Are Increasingly Based on Cost

50% of surveyed students are willing to spend no more than \$15,000 annually on their education

Strategy Recommendation

Ensure you have a sound financial aid strategy and clearly communicate cost, scholarship, and ROI info

30% of surveyed students who were no longer enrolled said that high cost was the primary reason they discontinued their studies

Strategy Recommendation

Minimize financial barriers to reenrollment to win back stop-outs



Students Seek a Variety of Modality and Schedule Options

56% of students want all online classes, while **28%** want all in-person classes

Strategy Recommendation

Offer multiple course modalities, including a mix of synchronous and asynchronous coursework for online programs

56% of students want all weekday classes

Strategy Recommendation

Where possible, offer multiple course schedule options to expand program appeal



Download the insight paper to explore more findings from our survey
pages.eab.com/insight-paper-your-new-adult-learner