

# PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY THROUGH UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

Tracy Galvin 03/12/21

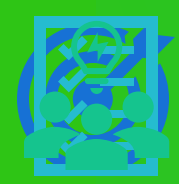


NATIONAL FORUM  
FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING  
AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION



Your presence is appreciated!





# REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

What are your goals for the workshop?

What key takeaways do you want from the session?

Are you willing to share your own knowledge and experiences?

# CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONVERSATION

- Use the chat box
  - Use Emojis
  - Raise your hand and unmute
- Share on Twitter - Be accessibility aware!
  - @TracyGalvin77
  - @UL
  - @ForumTL
  - #UDL\_UL / #UDLHE



# REFLECTIVE QUESTION

What influence do you have in your role?



# CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF THIRD LEVEL



# WHY IS EDI IN THE CURRICULUM IMPORTANT?

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Globalisation and Internationalisation

Diverse Learners

- Widening Participation
- Disabilities
- International Students

Technology and Digital Accessibility

# BIGGER PICTURE

- 4th SDG - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- UN Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities
- Universal Design, UDL and inclusion are key to achieving the right to education and training
- EUA (2021) Importance of EDI, name UDL and Accessibility as two key points





# ADDRESSING EQUITY AND INCLUSION

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## **Challenge 1**

Lack of concrete measures and initiatives to address equity and inclusion at higher education institutions

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## **Challenge 2**

Digital poverty and digital inclusion

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## **Challenge 3**

Training academic teaching staff on inclusion and equity topics, Universal Design for Learning and Accessibility were explicitly called out in the paper (EUA 2021, p3)

**WHAT DID WE DO**  
**WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO**



# ADVANCE HE - EDI PROJECT

2 years

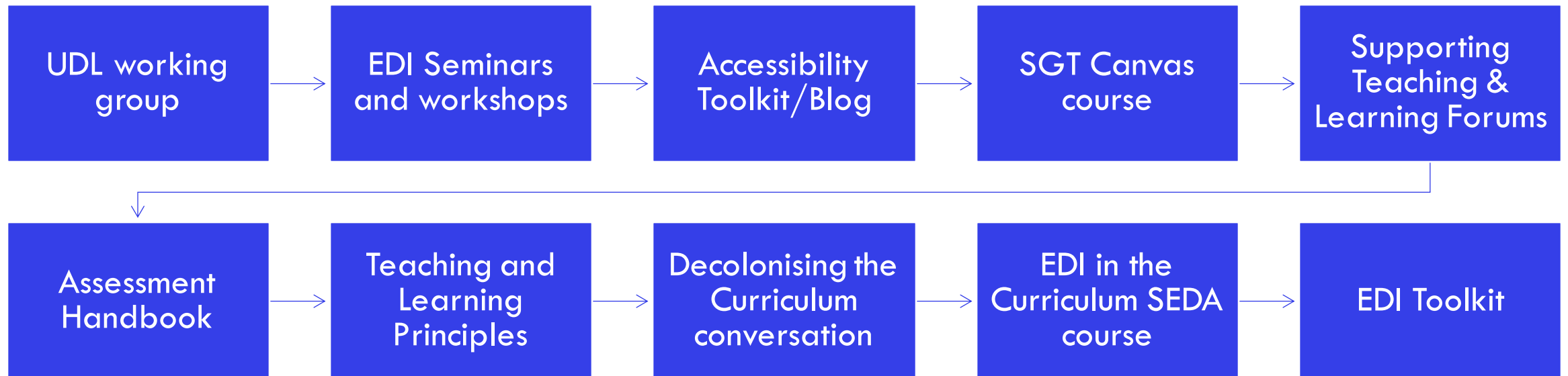
400 consulted

QUB Community / 6 UK Partners

# Advance HE Thematic Framework



# SMALL STEPS BUT INTENTIONAL



# Connected Learning Teaching & Learning Principles

All of the principles below are connected through reflective practice. Self-reflection is about making informed and intentional decisions about changes in practice based on evidence and by drawing from multiple perspectives and sources. In the first year this can include reflecting upon, in depth, multiple aspects of our practice adopted during the pandemic and to consider the implications for policy and practice.

Incorporate a blended approach that actively and intentionally fosters collaboration to ensure an equitable learning experience to build a sense of belonging and welcoming community.

**1. Blended by Design**

Students will experience a blend of onsite and online learning with a range of approaches taken to learning and teaching as well as assessment.

Ensure student voice is promoted through the co-design of content, curriculum and assessment by including learners as partners. Provide multiple ways for learners to engage in their learning by offering choice in learning and assessment activities.

**2. Student Voice, Student Choice**

Students will experience involvement in the shaping of their learning, through co-design, student voice committees and other fora.

Encourage learners to learn together in order to achieve more. This not only applies to the formal curriculum but to extra-curricular activities as well.

**3. Communities**

Students will experience working in diverse groups and be encouraged to engage in communities to support their wellbeing and celebrate cultural differences.

Design and develop an inclusive and equitable quality education to ensure that it serves a diverse and global audience and empowers and nurtures global citizens.

**4. Relevant & Global Curriculum**

Students will experience an inclusive and accessible curriculum that is future-focused in that it is designed around a world that is interconnected that requires active citizenship and genuine collaboration that goes beyond national borders.

Ensure a diverse range of assessment methods are adopted that are well-aligned with intended learning outcomes, are transparent and clearly communicated in order to develop assessment literacy.

**5. Authentic Assessment**

Students will experience a choice in assessment and a range of assessment formats that enable a range of skills and discipline knowledge to be assessed in an authentic and contextual manner.

Provide effective, timely and individualise feedback for learners to identify a progression in their learning.

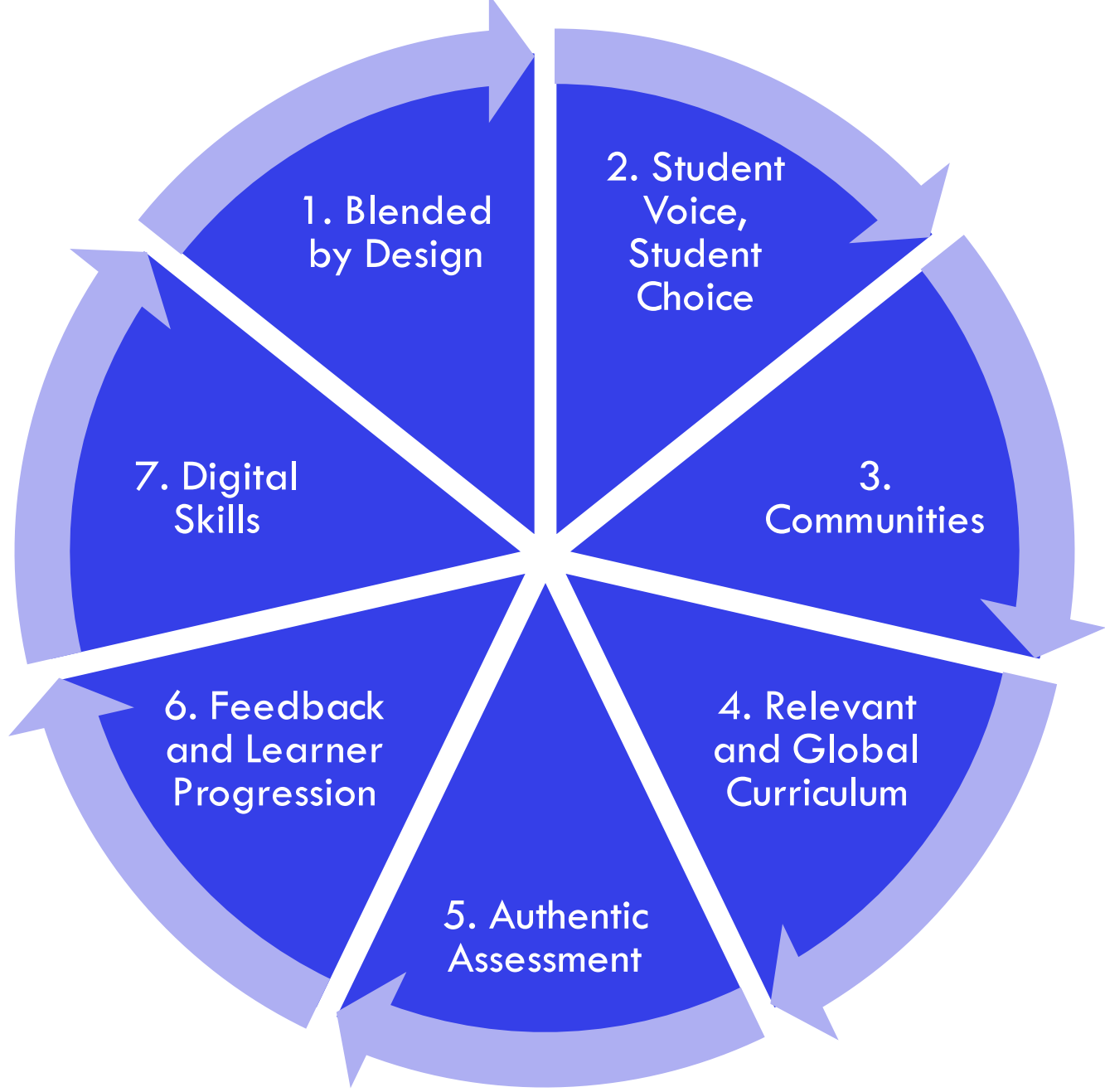
**6. Feedback for Learner Progression**

Students will experience feedback on all of their relevant work that clearly outlines next steps and ensures that they can act upon this before the next similar item of assessment is due for submission.

Enable the development of essential digital skills and provide a focus on becoming digitally literate (to think, to communicate, to learn and to engage with the world around them) to support their time at university and future graduate opportunities.

**7. Digital Skills**

Students will experience the embedding of digital skills and approaches to support their learning and teaching. These skills can be assessed as part of their on-going skills development with a focus on graduate opportunities.



**RELEVANT &  
GLOBAL  
CURRICULUM  
KEY AREAS –  
BIG IDEAS**

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Decolonising the Curriculum

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Digital Accessibility

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Universal Design for Learning

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Antiracism Pedagogy

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Education for Sustainable Development

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Culturally Sustainable Pedagogy

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Internationalising the Curriculum

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Open Pedagogy & Practice

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Active Global Citizenship

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Ethics of Care & Pedagogies of Care

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# Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

## What is it?

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an inclusive framework and philosophy that aims for equitable, accessible and flexible learning. It focuses on three principles (engagement, representation and actions and expression), is learner centred and recognises learner variability.

The framework provides a set of progressive guidelines offering suggestions that can be applied to any discipline to ensure that all learners can access, have a voice and participate in meaningful, challenging learning opportunities (CAST 2018)

## What can you do?

- Embed flexibility throughout your course design.
- Use the UDL framework to review and reflect on your existing practice and identify areas for improvement
- Share the UDL framework with your learners to allow co-design in assessment and rubrics
- Take one or two of the points on the framework and start making some small changes (e.g., represent learning materials in multiple formats, or provide different ways for learners to engage in live sessions etc.)
- Embed student partnership through learner voice and choice.

WHAT IT IS WHAT YOU CAN DO!

## Top 3 UDL Tips for developing a more relevant and global curriculum:

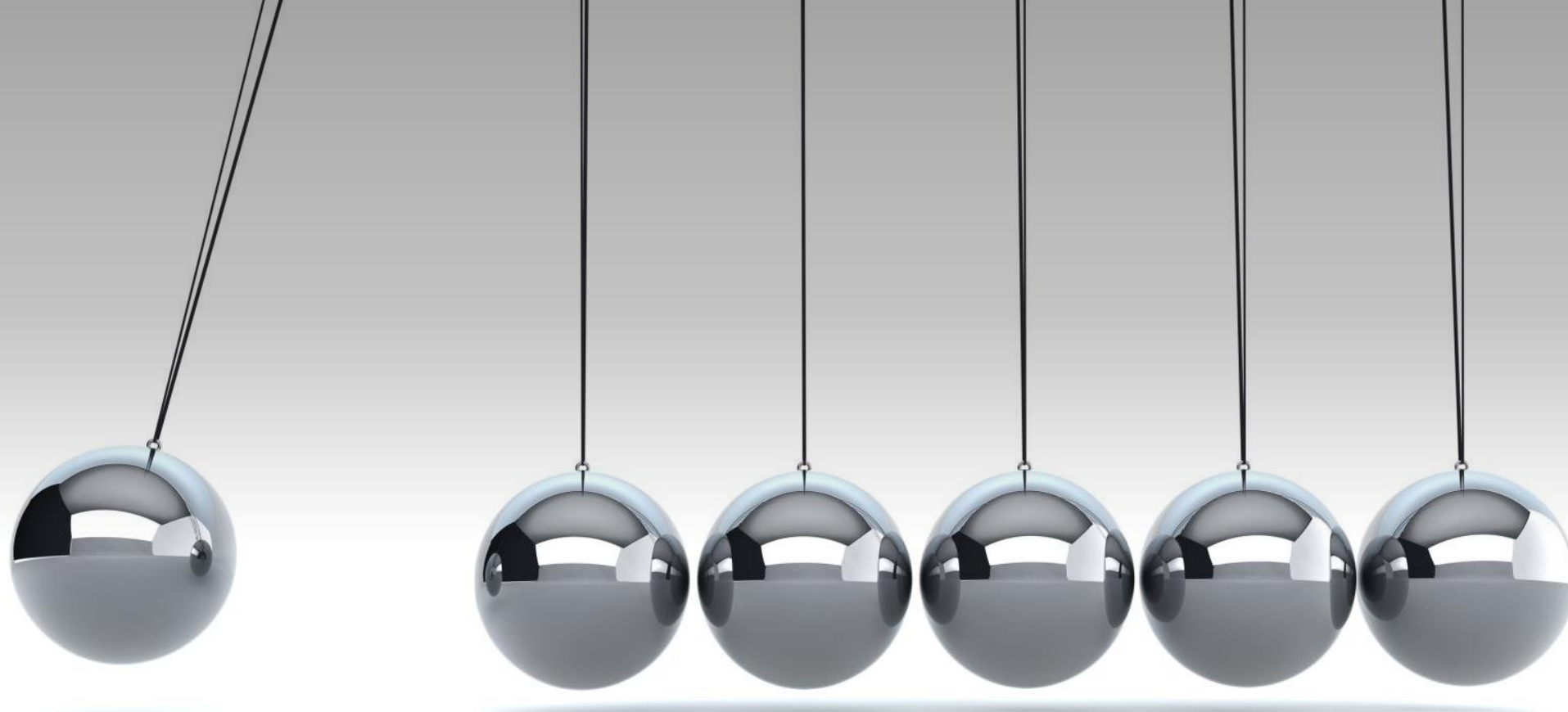
1. Support, trust and honour different learner voices and lived experiences and plan for the **intersectionality of learner variability**. Provide **culturally inclusive and accessible learning materials**. Embed learners' cultural background and prior knowledge as it may impact the level of understanding or interpretation of text, symbols, assessment examples and case studies, emojis or visuals. L  
SEP
2. Use **clear, simple and inclusive language, scaffold academic writing skills** and explain complex terms by providing digital glossaries for key terminology, discipline specific technical language, symbols or vocabulary. Encourage learners to access content in non-dominant languages by using BBally alternative formats and MS Immersive Reader.
3. Provide safe spaces for discussion so learners can critically reflect and self interrogate their own **biases, prejudice, assumptions** and **stereotypes** to be an **ally** to all and be comfortable with their discomfort.

Shared language and terminology

# REFLECTIVE QUESTION

Is there anything in your role that you can identify with or have any influence over?





# **LEARNER VARIABILITY AND BARRIERS**

# WHY EMBED UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING?

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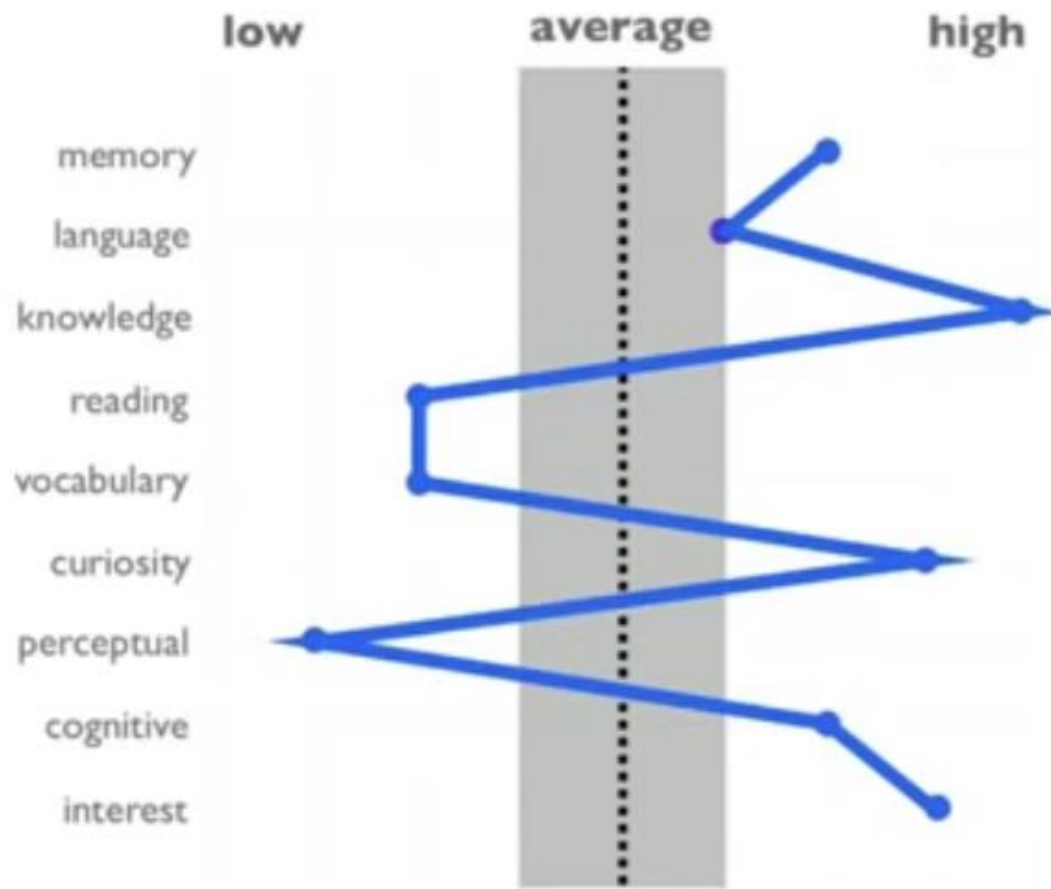
It is a learning design approach that recognises there is no average learner, instead is designed to give all individuals equal opportunities by minimising barriers and maximising learning

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We need to reflect on our curriculum design, teaching, learning and assessment but also technology, physical spaces, processes and how we serve and support others

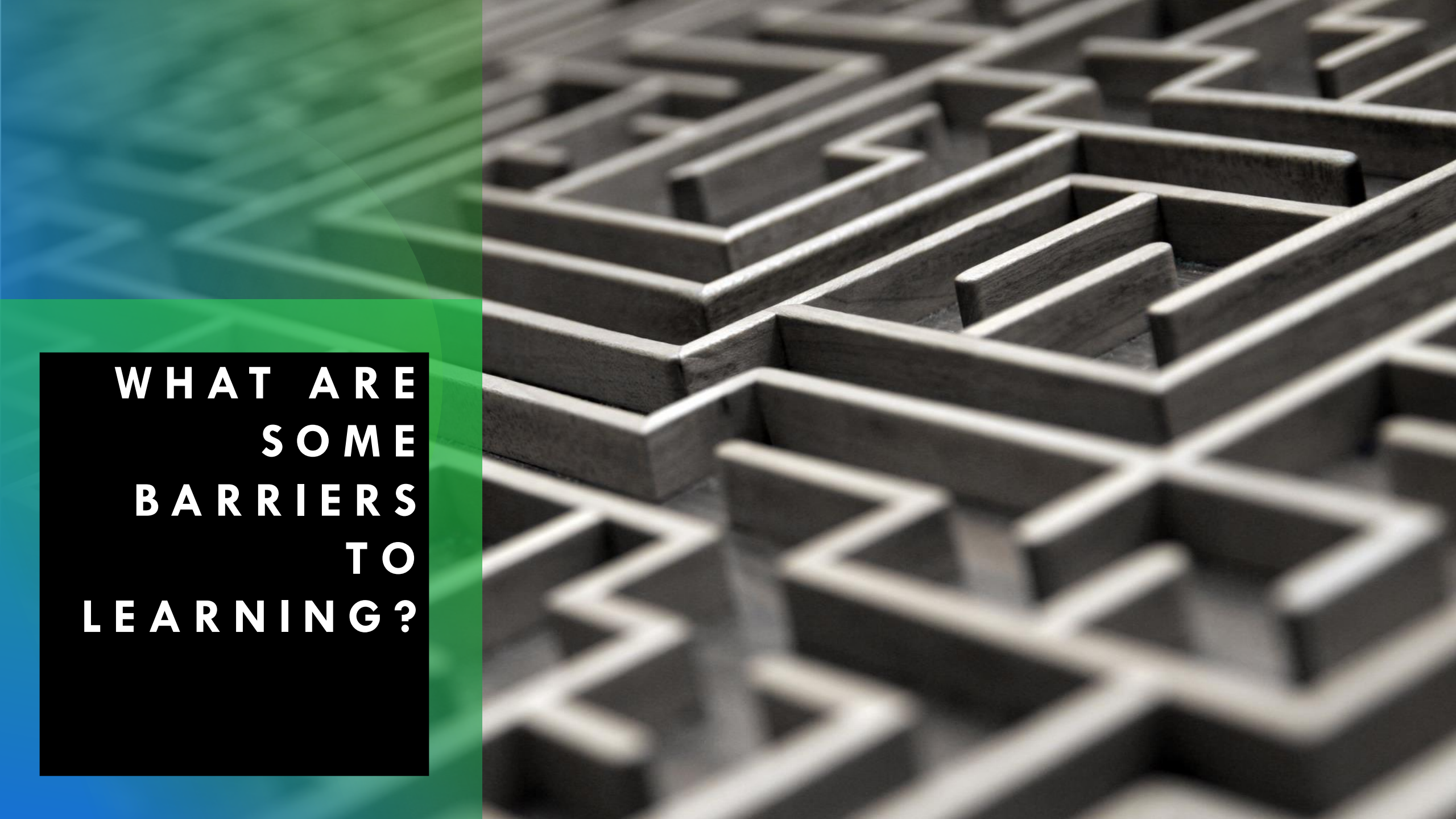
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Learners come from a variety of backgrounds, abilities, skills, responsibilities, experiences, cultures, identities, disabilities, learning difficulties, linguistics, needs and preferences



# MYTH OF THE AVERAGE LEARNER

Todd Rose TED talk

A 3D wooden maze with a green and blue gradient background. The maze is made of dark wood and is set against a background that transitions from green on the left to blue on the right. The maze is complex and winding, with many paths and dead ends. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**WHAT ARE  
SOME  
BARRIERS  
TO  
LEARNING?**

# WHAT ARE SOME BARRIERS TO LEARNING ?

- Inaccessible curriculum design/content
- When people say inclusion but only focus on a particular group
- Segregate or isolate learners in terms of language or ability
- Discrimination, bias and prejudice to some groups and microaggressions
- Crisis, lack of understanding or willingness to change practice
- Being afraid to try new things, especially when something is not working
- Not listening to or excluding the learner voice



**ARE YOU PART OF THE SOLUTION  
OR THE PROBLEM?**





Support staff

Community  
leaders

Systems &  
Environments

Peers/  
Colleagues

Professional  
Experts

Faculty

**IT TAKES A COMMUNITY**

WHEN  
THINKING  
UDL IS  
EQUAL TO  
PREPARING  
FOR ANY  
CLASSROOM

Have I clear goals/learning outcomes?



Is my content accessible?



Are my learners engaged and motivated to learn?



Have I modelled effective evidence-based practices?



Have I scaffolded the learning to prepare my learners to be successful in their assessments?



QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST

CENTRE FOR  
EDUCATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT



# Accessibility **THRIVES**

**T**

Tables



Provide table

**H**

Hyperlinks



Use **descriptive**

**R**

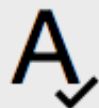
Recordings



Provide a

**I**

Inclusive  
Font



Use accessible

**V**

Visuals



Add **alt text** to all

**E**

Examine



Use built-in

**S**

Structure



Use **heading**

# WHAT EDUCATORS CAN DO...

- Start with accessibility
- Predict barriers in curriculum design, delivery and assessment,
- Design for learner variability
- Model good practice, provide exemplars and scaffold learner progression
- Build intentional, flexible and inclusive curriculum design to include choice
- To be conscious of bias and prejudices
- Find other professional learning communities and support others

**UDL RISING TO EQUITY:  
RE-ENVISIONING THE  
GUIDELINES**

# DRIVING UDL FORWARD

- Intentional support for individual variability and intersectionality
  - Identity, culture, race, age, disability, ethnicity, educational background
- Broader focus beyond the classroom such as systemic inequalities
  - Leadership, administration, structures and processes, learning support, access/recruitment, professional bodies/accreditation, community engagement and technology

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All of us share responsibility for supporting inclusion in our communities. This often means being an ally and accomplice.

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Recognise the barriers of others, actively listen and take an active role in tackling them and dismantling inequalities.

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Start small, be consistent and intentional, unlearn and be comfortable with your discomfort.

**BE AN ALLY, BE AN ACCOMPLICE!**



# SUSTAINABLE IMPACT

- Shared language and terminology around equity and UDL
- Include learners to be UDL and Accessibility ambassadors
- Long term interventions
- Sustainable change
- Committed leaders
- Prioritise UDL through the EDI agenda
- Everyone's responsibility across the institution
- Interconnectivity with the curriculum and the wider institution
- Culture change

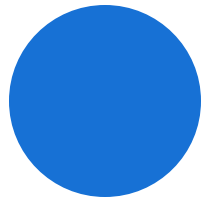


# **YOUR INFLUENCE!**

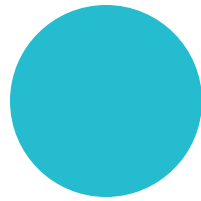
What two to three things can you do to effect change or influence others?



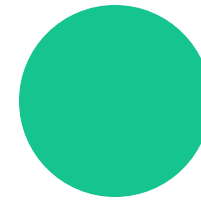
# THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR!



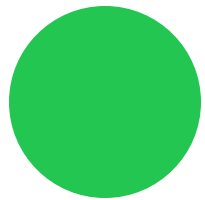
INCLUDE PD  
Seminars



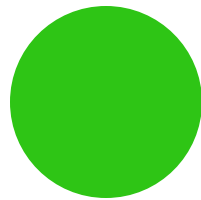
Annual Teaching &  
Learning  
Conference



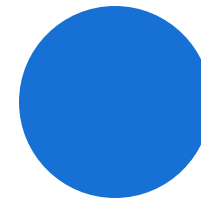
Building  
Communities of  
Practice



UDL & Antiracism  
Book Chapter



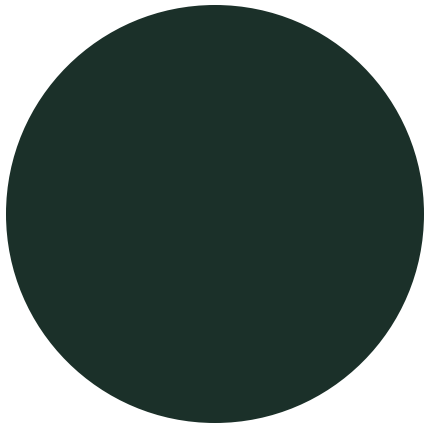
EDI Toolkit



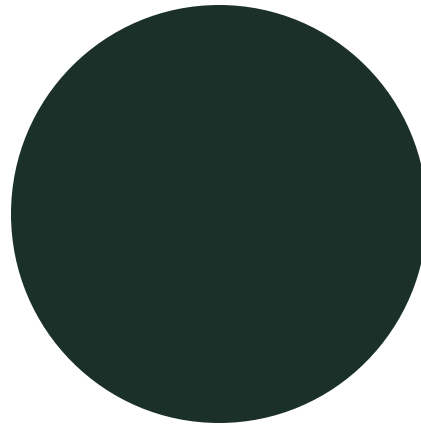
UDL Rising to  
Equity



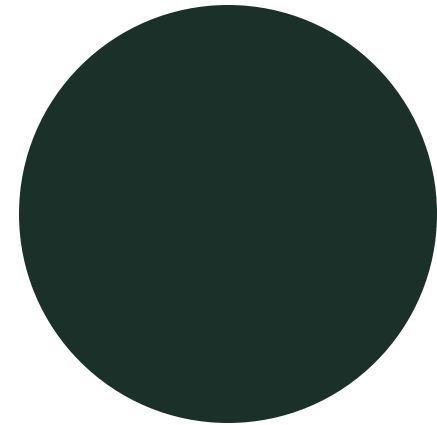
# REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS



DID YOU ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS  
FROM THE WORKSHOP?



WHAT KEY TAKEAWAYS DID  
YOU GET FROM THE SESSION?



DID YOU LEARN FROM OTHERS'  
EXPERIENCES?

Use your influence and voice to empower others!



**THANK YOU!**