KATE ANDERSON: Hi everyone. I think we might get started. So I am really excited for this next session. As you've heard, it's going to be a little bit interactive. We're going to also replicate the session online, so there'll be an online facilitator and Darlene is shortly going to post some of the materials we'll be using in the space to those online and you're welcome to engage in the chat.

So our presenter for this session is Justin Wylie from Central Queensland University who is going to be showing us all about inclusive learning brainstorming UDL ideas to remove barriers to learning. So thank you, Justin.

JUSTIN WYLIE: Thank you everyone for coming today. There is far more of you than I expected, so things have changed a little bit in my planning. I'm a learner designer from Central Queensland University. I have a background in education, in school education, and prior to that I was a multimedia developer and a web developer from the bad old days when everything started. So I've seen the full gamut of change through the internet and technology, et cetera. My role at Central Queensland Uni as a learning designer is to work with academics and VET educators to create resources, also deliver training for online pedagogy, basically help people become more comfortable in delivering resources effectively to students. And part of that journey in the last three years has been working on projects implementing universal design for learning strategies in order to remove barriers to learning.

So what today's session is about, we're talking about scaling up UDL, but often we're at different levels, different institutions are at different places on their journey. I heard RMIT this morning about where you guys are at and that's wonderful to have a university wide program that's underway. But when we're starting to scale up, we need to start thinking about the basics. How do we achieve these things? And as a learning designer that's often my role, working with educators and academics to come up with strategies that are sustainable, because we need to make sure whatever we do or start is something that we can keep doing. So as a learning designer, I have the privilege of being able to work on resources as my job, whereas educators and academics you have very limited time, you have a huge amount of workload and responsibilities, so the transition to start using UDL strategies needs to be sustainable and achievable.

So the goal for today is to have a brainstorming session to work out some common real examples of situations and students and see what you can come up with as a group to sustainably remove barriers for those students. So some of the examples you're going to see that there's nothing you have to do specific things because of the circumstances. There's others where it is a bit of thinking about, okay, where would we put our energy? How can we implement UDL strategies sustainably, but also that caters to as diverse range of students as possible. So beginning to think about, you know, not just students with disabilities because we can have accessibility without UDL but we can't have UDL without accessibility so it's an important part of the process to consider. And please tell me if I'm speaking too quick. I have a tendency to do that. Tell me if you want me to repeat something or speak up. So what we're going to do today sorry, don't worry about moving to the table and filling in your name, but if you don't know each other in your group, feel free to introduce yourselves when we start. Don't worry about the envelope. We're going to be getting some random selections of items from the box that Kate and I will bring around.

So the objective for today is that we're talking about scaling up UDL. Again, I've highlighted achievable and sustainable because we want to make sure that anything we do we can keep doing, because you don't want to put effort into something and then find that you just don't have the time. However, that being said, you also don't want to keep doing something that's ineffective.

So some things you may try and just say, "No, I can't continue with that." So that's okay. You can't get everything right first time. UDL is a journey; it's about trial and error, so feel free to try things and work out why they don't work, because in an iterative process this informs what you do next.

So your job today is to work together to brainstorm and capture the best UDL strategies to remove barriers for the student that you get or students; you'll have multiple and when I say the best, so it's that sustainable you know, make a list of different things you can do, but work out what could we really focus on? What would be the most effective with the biggest result or the best result for specific students? And the goal, as I said, is to improve your skills in evaluating and finding UDL strategies because there's it's so incredibly broad. There's some key ones that you often hear about, but UDL is very open to interpretation, and so your professional experience, your subject matter knowledge, your teaching experience means that you will have your own ideas. So please share those today because that's been one of the most wonderful parts of being involved in the UDL community that's developing here in Australia is the sharing and the networking that's going on.

So some considerations while you're doing the workshop today and thinking of ideas. So some strategies are more achievable than others. So again, there's that evaluating, which one do I go with. Some cater to a greater diversity of students, so you get a wider effect or a deeper effect. Some strategies are mandatory, so there's some things that you just need to do so, you know, for example, some accessibility strategies. They just have to be done, so you've got to work out a way of incorporating them. And think about who needs to be involved, because it's not up to academics and teachers. There's learning designers, there's other staff around the university and, you know, UDL should be an institution wide program, so there should be support and collaboration with other people to get the best results.

The skills for today. Excuse me, I'm going to get a drink of water. The skills that we need today are respect, collaboration and teamwork, empathy and understanding, thinking about our students, but also thinking about the other people you're working with. They may have a different or come from a different context, and so have different understandings and requirements; enthusiasm, and everybody is obviously very enthusiastic because we're here and we're participating. And then critical analysis, so really thinking about those examples and trying to come down to trying to refine down to the ones that are the most effective that will get the best result.

Okay. As I said, it's a bit different from what I planned. What we're going to do is we're going to come around, Kate and I, we're going to hand out a student which gives and these are examples of students, real examples of students with different disabilities or specific learning needs. We're going to get a situation which you need to consider that student about. They're very simple, they're not going into great detail, it's just a situation that needs to be addressed to remove a barrier for that particular student, or you're going to work out how to do that.

I was going to have a shared document, but CQU have put in place new security levels with our documents and my colleagues who are watching know that it's really painful, so my shared document that you were going to be adding into won't let you in, so sorry. But I do have a paper version, and if you could fill that out I'll add that to a digital resource so that everybody can share, because I really want to make sure that we share and collaborate these ideas because you'll get some awesome ideas from other people that you didn't think about, or maybe some pitfalls or things to be aware of that you didn't realise. And we also have, in case you don't have it, a link to the UDL guidelines if you want to refer to those at any point in time, you know, add one of the checkpoints or numbers just to refer to which strategy you're particularly focusing on.

We're going to brainstorm for about 10 minutes. And what I want you to do, as I said, is maybe on another piece of paper, or the back of the page or something, jot down most of your ideas, but just fill out the ones that you think are the most effective. So the first part of the document the first row says, "sustainable and effective UDL strategy or strategies", then "how does this support your student?" I should have said "how does this remove barriers for your student", and then, "Who needs to be involved?" Who are the stakeholders? It's not just going to be you. It's going to be you and maybe someone from learning design, or you and some of your colleagues. What can you actually come up with as an answer? As I said, I'll take these back today, if that's okay, and then add them to an online document and we'll share that after the symposium closes. So Kate, could I get your assistance, please?

KATE: For those of you listening online, there has been some scenarios posted to the Teams chat and you'll also be able to access the Slido soon as well.

[Inaudible - group work 10:48-13:19]

JUSTIN: I can hear a little bit of clarification going on. Just make sure you've got the two sheets. One is the student, one is the situation, and then you fill out that other sheet based on that.

[Inaudible - group work 13:29-20:55]

JUSTIN: I'm very hesitant to interrupt because there's a wonderful conversation and discussion going on, but can we have one more minute and then I'm going to jump on to, you're going to get another student. Same situation, another student to consider. It is brainstorming so I know you'd love to get deep down, but keep it achievable and just nail a few strategies you'd like to explore.

[Inaudible - group work 21:16-22:26]

JUSTIN: Can I have everyone's attention just for a second? Given this is a UDL symposium, we want to be flexible, so I guess I'd like to ask you. My original intent I wanted to hand out another student now in the same situation, but I can hear and see that there's lots of discussion going on about the first one. I did want to do a second situation and a student. Would you prefer to stick with this one and go more in depth with one more student to consider, or would you like to have another situation as well? So the same process, but another one? Show of hands. Stick with how we're doing it now, stick with the one situation? Is that a show of hands? No? Okay. We'll stick with that then. So I'm going to come around now with another student for you to consider in the same situation to see what barriers they would face, to see how their needs may overlap or differ from your current student, and, yep, just to consider the same situation. So I think we might do that because otherwise I'll be asking you to jump on to something else again very soon, so I'll be around shortly.

[Inaudible - group work 23:33-35:38]

JUSTIN: Okay. If we could begin to wind up, and in a minute we'll stop. So if you could just finish your conversations. What we're going to do next is we're going to be sharing between the groups. So in this time as well, if you could decide on a speaker from your group who is going to share your ideas, or a couple of people who might share the ideas, and we're going to do a roving mic.

[Inaudible - group work 36:00-36:54]

JUSTIN: Okay. As I said, I'm very reluctant to interrupt, but if I could get everyone's attention, please, if we could get ready and we're going to start sharing some of our ideas. Back in my teaching days I'd do this (hands on head). Some people have kids and understand. No, if I can have everyone's attention, please, because we want to have the chance to share these ideas now. What we're going to do is a bit of a roving mic. And as I said, if you could work out a couple of speakers or a speaker for your group, and if you could share your student and your situation, and then if you could run through the strategies and justify. And we'll just keep it fairly brief. We've got about 15 minutes, I think, thereabouts. So Kate is also going to share the online feedback from students as well. So did you want to do that first?

KATE: Of course. So I won't read out the specific scenario, but the students that we discussed included a student who was hard of hearing and a student with vision impairment that required screen reader access. I think the main thoughts that came through from this discussion were actually a bit higher level. So people were talking about really good universal design for learning strategies, including things like activating captioning for every session because a lot of students are likely to benefit from that; having good resources, considering environmental issues, like ensuring that there's a hearing loop in the classroom, making sure that you're attending to lighting issues and other competing learning demands.

Some people were saying that if UDL is done well, then it shouldn't ever be the student's responsibility to request accommodations because they should be covered, but other people were saying that working with students individually is important because it allows them to control the way that they want to learn and allows them to be experts in their own experience. So I thought that was a really interesting duality, the balance between providing a universal solution, but also remembering to engage with individual students to give them the opportunity to customise further.

One person on the chat said that students can be presented with a UDL buffet that allows them to choose things that they like, ways that they like to learn, which I thought was a really good way of putting it. And finally, somebody said learning is fundamentally about relationships. Sometimes tech solutions don't cut it. You can do try as hard as you like with things like captioning, but sometimes the caption quality is poor, sometimes, you know, the library just can't turn that PDF conversion around for you quickly enough, and having a good relationship with a student, being able to talk to them about those challenges and come to a solution together is really important. So they were the key insights from online. Thanks, Justin. I'll run around to a microphone to any of the groups who want to

JUSTIN: Can I make a quick comment about something that was said there, about the I think an important part of UDL is also teaching students to be metacognitive about it, understanding that you're doing UDL. So by you actually telling them that "I've set my document up this way, that it's completely accessible, so when you're using it, if you have any special requirements you can use a reader in this way, you can use these features in this particular way, you can dictate, transcribe, et cetera", telling students about that and informing them is also an important part of the puzzle. So at our uni we're beginning to make a series of videos that are going to be accessible to the students, showing them the different ways to use the existing tech, nothing new, in flexible ways so that we can reach those students and make them more independent in their learning process as well.

We're going to start going around. Kate, did you want to go that way first and I'll go over this way for the second group.

SPEAKER: Okay. So I need to use the teacher voice. Interestingly, we had two students, one who has ADHD and is able to learn by watching videos, another who has a hearing impairment and requires transcripts for audio content. Our situation, though, was very much around the assessment, rather than other forms of the learning. So they need to maintain a journal of their off campus learning experiences. These are in no particular order because it's a brainstorm, and if I try to put them in any kind of semblance of order, it won't make sense. We talked a little bit about what the inherent requirements might be genuine inherent requirements might be of the journal. For example, a pharmacy student, that would be quite different to somebody studying mixed media. We also looked at you would need to make sure that you've got a really clear rubric which guides the students and the assessment, clear instructions and guidelines in various formats, providing examples. I'm not sure what that says. Something to various communication train oh, yep, catering to various communication and training styles. Offering a buddy or mentoring system. Suggesting suitable times and clarifying what the requirement or the frequency was. So trying to really make it clear what the parameters were for the students so that they're not sort of left on their own. We think it gives choice and agency to do it this way, allows them self-regulation strategies, creating routines, offering clear advice on where and how to get support, for example, through that buddy mentoring who would need to be involved, and also learning designers, lecturers, support staff, pretty much everyone. I think that's key, isn't it? Universal design, anyone who is involved in that process needs to be involved in the design.

JUSTIN: Excellent. Thank you so much. Look, we've got about 12 minutes, so if we can keep your answers yes, if you can condense it. Who is our speaker here?

SPEAKER: Hi. Our students were with low vision and a rare colour blindness on the one hand, and a student with two broken wrists on the other. And we came up with a lot of strategies. Interestingly, they were common to both students. Beyond things like discussing the needs with the individual students, the point was made that this particular activity, which was interview practice, was part of a broader has a broader curricula context. So the learning activity itself should be based in an inclusive learning management system that already has things like sensitivity to colour blindness and the need to use voice to text solutions into the system so it doesn't have to be added in for every activity manually. We also noted that instructions on role play information could be written down and read aloud as part of the activity itself so that students were not made to feel that they were being a burden to everybody else, and that accommodations were being made for them, rather this was a standard mode of engagement. We also identified the things that students would need to actually be learning could be better focused on through the identification of universal design learning improvements, such as introductory information to the exercise. That was upfront about the fact that often interviews are influenced by people’s engagement style, such as not being comfortable looking people in the eye because of neurodivergence, or because people have low vision or because people experience or face blindness, and so on. And therefore by considering these issues we're actually better focusing students on the quality of their answers and not on some aspect of engagement style itself. And so we noted that the student would be supported also because through this we're creating a welcoming environment where the student doesn't feel like an afterthought, their need for self-advocacy is reduced, and we'd need to involve the coordinator, learning design, student themselves, teaching staff, audiovisual and other IT staff.

JUSTIN: Kate, do you want to

SPEAKER: Hi, yeah, so we had the scenarios of a student being injured in an accident and having two fractured wrists, and a student who has an immune condition and may not be able to attend campus or classes in person. The scenario is you're about to review and update the weekly learning resources for your unit and they are included as a PDF on your unit page. We didn't write anything down and we had a very wide-ranging conversation, because there's academics, learning designers, DLOs. So please jump in, anybody, as we go along.

I suppose, you know, we had a conversation about the flexibility. So we looked at the students initially and what potential barriers to learning were, in terms of, you know, just that choice the things about flexibility and choice. So about attendance, about, you know that sometimes simple solutions like providing somebody with online access doesn't that can create other barriers in terms of isolation, not full access to learning. So there is a need to be looking at nuances rather than just particular solutions. Someone with a fractured wrist, we looked at a simple solution might be about providing accessible content, but producing or expressing information using assistive technology is not intuitive to everybody and not always easy. So the right of choice and the right of informed choice throughout all of these scenarios is really important. And the context of the learning that needs to be happen. It's a big difference between somebody who is an undergraduate first year student in a science subject to somebody who might be a master’s student in an arts subject. So there's a lot of contextual information.

Then we sort of went down the avenue about the reviewing and updating the weekly learning, and the simple thing was about, you know, PDFs are not often accessible for students. Sometimes they are, but not always. And then we went into a broader conversation about the opportunities that reviewing and updating weekly learning resources provide. And so things like readings in themselves, even if they are accessible are not always accessible for students. A lot of students don't come in with a similar knowledge base, so they don't know what they're looking for when they're reading, they don't know what the goal of the reading is, and the opportunity for that weekly review to look at scaffolded learning, I suppose. So those opportunities for things even for time poor academics and they are time poor but something like a simple two minute video that's captioned that maybe has infographics, that has a range of things about this is what the goal of the week is, this is what the goal of that task is, and looking at, where possible, to look at multi modal resources for that week so that it doesn't need to happen always at a course level. People don't always have the time at a unit or subject level, but those weekly opportunities are an opportunity to start building UDL into your course and embracing learners. And not just building their capacity in the content, but building their capacity as learners along the way as well.

SPEAKER: Hello. Our two students we found different scenario some strategies worked for one student, some didn't work for the other. So our first student was a neurodivergent student. Student No. 2 experienced headaches and fatigue from too much screen time. Our scenario was creating an instructional video to demonstrate students how to use a particular software program. So exploring this to try and, I suppose, explore the strategies, having a downloadable transcript, using explicit teaching strategies, so very clear and concise communication. Splitting up the video into shorter videos with that ability to go back to chapters in that video. When the trainer or the teacher or other staff involved are Zooming in on certain functions on the screen, to really emphasise the information being delivered. Having a multi modal delivery structure as well, so to sort of address the student who may experience fatigue having a printout of the transcript with additional detail. So it's another offering for them. And obviously having captions turned on as well.

How does this support the student? So we were addressing the reducing cognitive overload and having explicit teaching strategies at the core of that, and that's where we found that with this scenario it would be very unique to each student. So we were talking about how sustainable this idea is for teachers or learning designers to be able to do specific videos for each student. There is a cost to that, whether it's financial or whether it's time. So we talked about having a style guide. So if a teacher or if a learning department does this for a student, could this be shared across a baseline going forward for other departments. And who needs to be involved? As already previously mentioned, a lot of people can be involved in this process, learning designers, digital accessibility, the inclusion and equity access learning advisers, the procurement as well. So if this is a particular software program that the education provider is getting a licence for, you might bring in external experts or even your subject matter experts inside the institution as well to have some involvement in this. And obviously the students are a key stakeholder in this as well as, generally, you know, this might start off as a specific adjustment for the student, so you might need to develop a learning plan to formalise the adjustment, but then from there you're hoping that this idea becomes part of that core design to courses going forward, specifically if teachers or there might be, you know, new courses that are looking for embedded UDL from the beginning, it's a way of establishing that and formalising it. Kind of going back to what the other group mentioned about inherent requirements of the course, so outcomes are at the core of education, so ensuring that they're also met along with any adjustments being made. That's about it.

JUSTIN: Look, I just wanted to do a quick plug. You mentioned procurement. ADCET have a great accessible procurement guide for institutions, so it's something worth looking at. I'm really sorry, we've run out of time. So the one, two, three groups, that's right, that didn't get to talk? Four groups didn't get to talk. I'm not sure how, but what I'd like to do is collect your information, if that's okay. As I said, I'm going to transcribe that and pop that on a shared document to share with everybody. So my apologies for taking too long with things, but thank you so much for your involvement today and for your enthusiasm and for sharing your ideas, because it's been absolutely wonderful to hear this discussion. So thank you for coming along, and I hope you've got some ideas out of today, just in your own group, but also hearing the ones that we have been able to listen to as well that there's some things that you can take from there as well. So thank you very much.

KATE: Please join me in thanking Justin.