**:** 0:06

Hello everyone and welcome to this ADCET podcast. This episode is an audio recap of a recent ADCET panel discussion titled Learning Together UDL 3.0 in Action Practitioners Share their Journeys and Insights. Facilitated by Elizabeth Hitches, this 90-minute session brought together three UDL practitioners from across Australia Trina Bianchini, sarah Humphries and John Fadoulis to share their experiences, challenges and successes in implementing universal design for learning. We hope you find this session interesting and engaging, and you can find additional information to support this podcast on the ADCET website. Now over to you, elizabeth.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 0:51

My name is Elizabeth Hitches. I'm a teacher and researcher of inclusive education and student voice, co-host of the A Lot of Things podcast by ADCET and, excitedly today, the host of today's panel session, where we're exploring universal design for learning, or UDL. So thank you so much for joining us, and it is now my very great pleasure to ask our panel to introduce themselves, and, in no particular order, I'm going to throw over first to Sarah.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 1:20

Thanks, Elizabeth, and hello everybody. I'm joining from the lands of the Garagal of the Ora Nation at the University of Sydney on our Camperdown campus. I am a white female with shoulder-length blonde hair, and my black t-shirt is blending into the background of the black chair that I'm sitting on today. And my office is very hot hot, and so my hair is blowing in the breeze to try and keep me cool. My role here at the university is Educational Design Manager UDL lead. I work in the central team, educational Innovation, and our team provides support for teaching and learning across the whole university, and UDL is at the heart of everything that we do. Thanks, Elizabeth.

**Elizabeth:** 2:15

Thanks, Sarah John. Would you like to introduce yourself?

**John Fardoulis**  2:18

Yeah, hi everyone, I am John Fardoulis. I join you from dark and junk country. I go by he, him and I identify as neurodivergent and having low vision. I work for TAFE New South Wales. I've got early salt and pepper, hair used to be dark, brown and I've got a bit of a beard. My position title is Lead Universal Design, which means I advise on all things accessibility, usability and universal design. For learning, I lead the inclusive design framework for online teaching and learning resources. To ensure universal design principles are met, Our team works closely with the language, literacy and numeracy specialists and the cultural customization team to embed inclusive design In 2024,. The ADCET Accessibility in Action Awards honored me as the winner of the Championing Accessibility Award and honored my team with the Championing Accessibility Award and honoured my team with the Championing Accessibility Award. Thank you.

**Elizabeth:** 3:30

Thanks so much, John Over to you, Trina.

**Trina Bianchini. Trina Bianchini:** 3:33

Thank you Hi. I'm Trina Bianchini. I'm a white female with short red hair, and today I'm wearing a green top which is, you know, matching just beautifully with the purple TAFSA background. So a little bit of a clash there, but I'm joining you from the Adelaide Plains, the lands of the Kaurna people, and I'm a teaching and learning specialist in academic development at TAFSA. I lead the work on accessibility and inclusive education and I work very closely with our lead on technology enhanced learning. I also work with Darlene and the team at ADCET managing the universal design for learning in tertiary education community of practice, and we currently have 220 members across Australia, new Zealand and even a member from Africa.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 4:22

Thank you so much. So, as you can see, we have a really diverse panel, all very dedicated to universal design for learning. We'd also love to know what brings you here today. So please let us know in the chat what is your connection to UDL, Do you use it in your workplace, and what are you interested in learning about here today While you're doing that? I think it's really great from a universal design perspective to not assume that any of us are coming with any prior UDL knowledge. So for anyone new to universal design for learning, I'm going to ask our panel how would you summarise what a UDL approach aims to achieve?

**Trina Bianchini:** 5:06

So I'm going to kick that one off. So I'm going to share an analogy that helped me when I was new to Universal Design for Learning and I was introduced to it with the analogy of buying an ice cream truck to start a new business. So if I was doing that, would I just be selling vanilla ice cream? No, I wouldn't. I would need to offer different flavours, different sizes, different cones and cups, different toppings, different dietary requirements, gluten-free, etc. So I would need to offer a variety to cater for all different types of needs and preferences. So when we think about UDL that is, our students we have learners with variability across everything, with different needs and preferences. I'm going to throw in one more food one as well.

**Trina Bianchini:** 5:59

So if we had our ice cream shop operating and now we decided to sell muffins and we thought we might look at blueberry muffins, um, can we just order plain muffins and add a blueberry on the top to make a blueberry muffin? Well, no, we can't, because the experience of a blueberry muffin is biting into the muffin and having the blueberries all the way through, all warm and gooey if it's being heated up, so that we can enjoy the entire experience. So I think that's another great way of thinking about design and that we can't just add something at the end. It's something we have to think about from the beginning. So we need to bake our UDL into our learning so the learner gets that inclusive experience.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 6:50

And I'm happy to jump in from here Trina and I also have a food analogy, but I guess initially, UDL is really about challenging a one-size-fits-all approach. It's really thinking about diversity is the norm and we need to design for it, and we know that one size is not going to fit or work for all of our students. So that's the first thing. The second thing is being proactive versus reactive. So if we're thinking about diversity before our students have even come into the classroom, we can be designing for it. We don't necessarily have to know all of our students' needs, but we can anticipate some of the differences that we can expect to have in our classroom.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 7:40

So my analogy is around bringing biscuits into a meeting and anticipating the diversity of dietary needs in the meeting. So I would bring in a packet of Arnott's family favourites which are fully loaded with sugar and gluten etc. And gluten, et cetera. I would bring in some gluten-free biscuits as an option and also some Oreos, as they are vegan, and I think the most important message to go with the array of biscuits is to say that everyone can choose what works for them. I'm not going to set aside a separate plate so that if you're vegan sorry, if you're not vegan, you can't have the Oreos, and it's taking that analogy into our classrooms. It's building in that choice and flexibility and letting our learners choose what works for them in that moment in time. So UDL is full of analogies and the food ones are great. There are many more, but I think that's enough to get us going. I'll hand over to John.

**John Fardoulis:** 8:47

Yep, thanks, sarah. I don't think that's enough. It's lunchtime, people are getting hungry. Let me add some myself. At a recent family meal at our place, I wanted to put together a Greek salad, but I had to cater for people with different needs. One person couldn't eat tomato, another didn't like olives. What I ended up doing was deconstructing the Greek salad. I cut up all the ingredients the Roma tomatoes, the Lebanese cucumbers, the feta cheese and the Kalamata olives and put them all in different bowls. I then created a vinaigrette dressing and put that in a jug. I put all this on a sideboard along with the rest of the food, and our family members could take their plate around and put together the salad that suited their needs.

**John Fardoulis:** 9:34

On another occasion, I make homemade pizzas. When there is just a few of us, it's easy to customise them to everyone's needs, but when more people are involved, I just get all the ingredients, the pizza bases, both large and small. Different people have different appetites the tomato sauce, the cheese, the olives, the pineapples we're going to have an argument of who wants pineapple on the pizza and who doesn't, ham, mushrooms and so on on, and then get everyone to make their own pizzas before I put it in the oven to cook. So all these analogies go to show that we must be proactive from the start. All right, as Trina said. All right, just adding a blueberry after the fact at the end doesn't make it a blueberry muffin. All right.

**John Fardoulis:** 10:21

Whether we knew it or not, what we were all doing with all these food analogies was implementing universal design principles to make our products and environments more inclusive and user-friendly for everyone. Innovations that are designed to serve the specific needs of some people turn out to have significant advantages for everyone. So a bit more about UDL. Udl is an initialism for Universal Design for Learning. It's an educational framework that applies the concept of universal design and aims to provide all learners with equal opportunities to learn, regardless of their abilities or learning preferences. It does this by creating flexible learning environments that accommodate every learner's diverse learning needs and strengths. The aim is to allow learners to access information in multiple ways, demonstrate their understanding in multiple ways and eliminate unnecessary barriers to learning that any learner may have. We recognise that there is no average learner. All people learn differently. Every person has variable abilities and preferences.

**John Fardoulis:** 11:35

The main three principles of UDL is the way we engage, represent action and express. Represent, action and express. So we design with multiple means of engagement. Learners differ significantly in what sparks their enthusiasm and motivation for learning. Learners must be allowed to bring their authentic selves to the learning environment and find connections to what matters most in their own lives. Training organisations must create a learning environment that motivates and engages learners by offering various options for participating and interacting with the material. We must also recognise and address the individual differences in learners' interests, motivations and backgrounds. That's engagement. Then we design multiple means of representation. Now, learners also differ in the ways they perceive and make meaning of information. Think about disability, think about culture.

**John Fardoulis:** 12:36

Training organisations must honour and value the different approaches. We must present the learning material in multiple ways, for example verbal, textual and graphical. We must provide opportunities for learners to learn the new vocabulary introduced in their coursework. We must reinforce the course narrative by indicating how each part fits together. We must also point out and explain any patterns within the content. So that's representation.

**John Fardoulis:** 13:10

And finally, action and expression. Learners differ in the ways they navigate a learning environment, how they approach the learning process and express what they know. Training organisations must design and honour these varying forms of action and expression. We must help learners plan and execute by making clear and explicit expectations to allow goals to be set, and we must also break down tasks into small chunks so strategies can be chosen. If we've got the option of flexibility, we must let the learner choose the format that they're most comfortable with to demonstrate their learning through assessments, tests, things like that. If flexibility is not an option, then we must set the expectations up front. We must also supply feedback with specific suggestions on how learners can improve and develop confidence. Thanks, elizabeth.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 14:14

Thanks so much to our panel. So, as you can see, that idea is really around designing for diversity from the outset. We wouldn't just serve one flavor of ice cream or one type of biscuits, so why would we do that in our learning environments? How can we anticipate diversity, anticipate those barriers and really proactively design to recognize and value that diversity? Now I'm going to jump into the chat for a few moments because we have a few things that participants have already put in with us. So there's a particular message here from Carla, who says that UDL everyone matters, that UDL empowers all people to participate and bring out their best and, most importantly, that UDL can be applied to everyday life situations. And that's so true that UDL approach proactively, planning for diversity, making that inclusive space. We can take that across all areas of our lives and all areas of our institutions and, as Nicola mentions, it's all about removing barriers. So, thanks so much, keep that conversation coming and I'll keep jumping into that chat as we go.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 15:20

Now, just as a bit of an interesting history to how we got to these UDL 3.0 guidelines, I learned some things from John about how this guideline has actually progressed over these years, particularly when I think I might have come to these guidelines around the 2.0 mark, and there were versions prior to that and since, so I'd love to throw over to John now that and since. So I'd love to throw over to John now. These guidelines have been developed and refined over several years and midway through 2024 we have the latest revised guidelines, udl 3.0. I'd love you to give us just a brief summary. What have those changes really been from the 1.0 through to today's 3.0? And this might also answer some of those questions for people about why the numbering on those guidelines might look slightly out of order if you've just come straight to that, udl 3.0.

**John Fardoulis:** 16:14

Yeah, thanks, elizabeth. Well, we started off with 1.0. We started getting at one. That was the original framework and that just focused on language arts and covered accessibility and inclusion. So the teaching and learning approach of UDL draws from neuroscience to understand how brains learn, and it applies this pedagogy and social philosophy principles. Udl recognises the parts of the brain work together to create learning. The networks and how they work together vary based on various psychosocial and physical factors. The how, the why and the what is introduced in version one.

**John Fardoulis:** 17:01

When we got to UDL 2.0, the term student was changed to learner. This was about emphasising persistent, consistent and lifelong learning. There was a greater emphasis placed on variability rather than just disability, to include learners of all ages, all nationalities and all types. It also broadened the guidelines to include more maths and science. Then we had a minor update, 2.1. This is when we had the numbers move around a bit. The engagement principle, which is guidelines 7, 8 and 9, was swapped around and is now listed first, before the representation principle, guidelines 1, 2 and 3. This weird order is due to an understanding of the central role of engagement in learning. Now we also, in 2.1, change the order of the columns, the principles. All right. So and we also changed the order of the rows, the labels, so the the principles were the engagement going first before a recitation. Now the rows we changed um, access was moved to be presented first and internalized was moved to be last. So then 2.1, 2.2 was kind of stable there, and then we had this big update last year, as you mentioned, 3.0.

**John Fardoulis:** 18:42

Now it engages UDL now with other asset-based approaches and theoretical frameworks. That includes pedagogies that center, value and sustain learners' cultural and linguistic practices, making their intersections and complementary nature more explicit. It emphasises learners' multiple and intersecting identities as part of variability and it weaves in the who of learning across the three principles. It emphasises the value of interdependence and collective learning. Now the goal of UDL was also changed by expanding the idea of expert learning to learner agency with additional reflective, authentic and action directed characteristics.

**John Fardoulis:** 19:37

We must always continually examine the power dynamics when designing learner environments to support learner agency. When designing learner environments to support learner agency, this challenges structures that view the educator as the sole authority and create spaces for learners to make sense of content through interaction and reflection on their own and together. To support this, we need to recognise the dimensions of culture and identity and examine where bias may hinder learners from fully exercising their agency. We must change the environment's design instead of thinking the learner has a problem.

**John Fardoulis:** 20:17

Some of the noticeable changes you'll see in 3.0 is that it makes the guidelines less teacher-centric and adult-centric by changing the language. In version one and two we had language of provide. It's now been changed to design. It uses verbs that can be used interchangeably among and between educators and learners to speak. More flexibility and creativity in applying the guidelines. The language also changed from checkpoints, where it was just a list that people thought they had to check off, to considerations. This reinforces the fact that they could all be mixed and matched according to specific learning goals.

**John Fardoulis:** 21:12

The rows, the labels, were also changed to clarify and emphasize the interconnected nature of executive functions. The build row was changed to support to more clearly articulate its role in the learning process, and the internalized role was changed to executive function to reflect the interconnected nature. Finally, the guidelines and considerations were updated to emphasize themes of centering, affirming and sustaining learners interests and identities, emphasizing the role of belonging in teaching and learning, promoting the role of joy and play and I know that's something you're really interested in, elizabeth for learners and educators, cultivating empathy and repairing harm with restorative practices, authentically representing a diversity of identities, perspectives and narratives, considering perceptions of people, cultures and languages. Valuing multiple ways of knowing and making meaning. Honouring and valuing a wide variety of forms of communication, centring and valuing forms of expression that have been historically silenced or ignored, by addressing those biases. And, finally, challenging exclusionary practices to build more accessible, inclusive spaces and systems.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 22:42

Thanks so much, john.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 22:43

So if you feel like maybe you are just new to udl 3.0, at least now you know the history of where it's come from, how some of that ordering has changed.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 22:53

I always had question marks around the ordering of those numbers and john solved that for me, which was fantastic and, I think, one of the key takeaways of what is really new with UDL 3.0, as John mentioned, there's a much more explicit focus on who our learners are. So who is that diversity of our learners and how can we make sure that they're being recognised and valued at each step of that learning process? What we're going to do now now we have a bit of a history and a bit of an understanding of UDL and those guidelines to do now now we have a bit of a history and a bit of an understanding of UDL and those guidelines I would love to now throw over to our panellists and ask what are some of the aspects of the new UDL 3.0 guidelines that you are most excited about? So, trina, would you like to start us off with that? I would love to.

**Trina Bianchini:** 23:41

Well, there's a lot to be excited about. As john said, it was a really big shift, um, but I'm going to focus on the shift in the language and what that actually means when we look at going from providing to designing. So I'm coming back to the blue dairy muffin. I'm sure everyone's really craving one by now, um, but the need to build it in from the start. So at AFSA, we have implemented an inclusive education framework and we've defined three teaching and learning pillars and they are accessibility, usability and UDL, and I think the new guidelines are encouraging us to consider those pillars as a layered approach rather than three distinctive pillars, and we can look at how each of those are layered across each of the principles rather than as individual provisions, and again come back to how we apply them in design to support learner agency rather than that checklist approach of is our content accessible and so on.

**Trina Bianchini:** 24:43

So one example that I've looked at is looking at accessibility and looking at the access layer across each of the principles. So it's not just about the learning resources meeting that checklist rating, but it's about designing to remove those barriers, to make learning safe and welcoming. If we do that and we have accessible content to support the learners to interact with the resources in a way that will make learning meaningful for them, that enables them to develop new learning skills. So again, it's not just about accessible content. It's about designing to make sure that they can engage in a way that works for them and then from there, having those accessible options for them to interact that will give them the opportunity to apply these new skills in new contexts and with confidence and independence. So again, it comes back to that learner agency.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 25:42

Thanks so much, Trina, and I love how you mentioned that that one thing, that idea of accessibility, can actually feed into so many aspects of those UDL guidelines making learners feel safe, having them have access to materials, but then also the impact that has on being able to interact and engage and communicate using those materials. Thanks so much. How about you, Sarah? What excites you about the new guidelines? Thanks, Elizabeth.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 26:09

What I really like is the increased emphasis on supporting executive function. So in the new structure of the guidelines we often look vertically at the three principles, but you can read horizontally as well. And previously we had access build oh gosh now I can't remember what the last one was and now we have access support and the whole bottom row is executive function. So previously executive function, which can be defined as a set of cognitive skills that act together to help us achieve a goal. Previously you could only see that in the bottom right corner of action and expression and under the strategic network of the brain, so how we plan, how we set goals and how we execute that. But now what we're seeing is this increased emphasis around executive function in engagement and around that affective network of the brain, so how we have the emotional capacity to deal with challenges, develop coping strategies, develop awareness of the diversity of the people we're working with. And then also that receptive network of representation how we build and make knowledge, so how we make connections with prior learning.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 27:39

What I really like about that is, I think at a tertiary level it's easy to assume that students are coming with all of those skills. They know how to plan, manage their time, set goals, deal with emotional challenges. But I think that whole row dedicated to executive function really is a reminder that some students will need support and some explicit direction in terms of how to manage themselves, how to manage themselves with their peers, how to make connections between prior learning and what they're doing now so they can ultimately achieve those goals of being successful in their studies. So, yeah, executive function is the one for me. Oh, it was access, build internalized that's what it was previously, and now it's support and executive function. I knew it would come thanks.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 28:36

There is the executive functioning skills kicking in again, and it's so true. These things can be so easily overlooked in higher education, like that idea of and play, but if we're not really thinking about it and planning for it then we're probably not supporting our learners in having those types of experiences. So I love the idea of bringing that in to that post-secondary space, sarah. How about you, john? What are you most excited about?

**John Fardoulis:** 29:01

Yeah, well, I'm most excited about giving learners agency. Now, what that means is empowering the learners to take an active role in their learning. This can help with their motivation, their satisfaction, their success. I'm also excited about highlighting intersectionality, which is about understanding how the differing aspects of each person's identity overlaps and this creates unique experiences of marginalization and discrimination. Thanks, Elizabeth.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 29:37

Thanks so much. I'm going to give a few moments for anyone who might like to also respond to this in our chat. What excites you most about the UDL 3.0 guidelines and, if you haven't explored it yet, is there anything that our panellists have mentioned that gets you excited about exploring these guidelines? I know for me it might have been John that mentioned the joy in the play. I think when I first saw that come up in the UDL guidelines that really sparked my interest, because so much of why I love learning and engaging in teaching and learning spaces is because of the joy that it brings. But I'd never actually been prompted to explicitly consider how do I plan for joy and play in these experiences? And it can be as simple, as you know, if I'm teaching something around accessibility, turning barriers into a bit of a scavenger hunt and getting people excited, knowing that they are empowered to remove those barriers and find those barriers and go forward without creating those barriers in their resources. And that's such an easy way to build in joy and play and it makes it a really enjoyable experience. So for me that's one that really sparked my interest and I'm thinking about that much more deeply across other learning content.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 30:54

Kinsey. Samantha's mentioning excited about the fact that UDL 3.0 really takes into account intersectionality. I think that's such a great addition to these guidelines. Samantha. Other people saying, yeah, the joy in the play interesting and refreshing. Jane mentioning agency and strategies. Sylvia about making the designing really take account of meaningful learning and what's going to be meaningful for learners. Avis, emphasis on identity as part of that variability. Karen, you know just really loving exploring all these new additions. Um, you know just really loving exploring all these new additions. And Kate, again thinking about intersectionality and really that shift from checkpoints to ongoing considerations. That is fantastic to hear. So now we get to move on to what I think is a really exciting question and I'm really looking forward to hearing the answers. I'd love to ask our panel now what are some of the examples of the application of UDL 3.0 or some of the changes that you've made to incorporate these new guidelines and considerations?

**John Fardoulis:** 32:00

Yeah, hi, it's John. Well, I guess considering all learners when developing or delivering content is important not just developing, but delivering it. So, for example, a lot of these days we record lessons to allow absent learners to catch up on what they missed out on. So what happens if we've got breakout brainstorming groups during the live sessions? All right, we just have a whole bunch of dead air, all right, and people at home or catching up later they miss out on that. So why? Why can't we do something for them as well? So things like speaking to the camera while everyone else is the breakout group this is something I learned from Elizabeth, yeah, and give the learners in the recording a task, an equivalent task to go through and think about while they're waiting for everyone to come back and summarise the discussion, we can also think about all right, everyone's got to be working a different step. So people that are coming later, can we continue these discussions after the lesson, like in a group chat or something? So that's what I think thanks so much, john.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 33:19

So I can see that aligning so well with that guideline around, thinking about the, the modes that people are participating through, and trying to remove some of the bias in those modes. You know, not everyone's going to be in that face-to-face classroom, so how do we actually account for that diversity and make sure that, no matter how people are joining, they get that, that great learning experience? Thanks so much. What do you think, trina um?

**Trina Bianchini:** 33:45

well, I don't know that. I point to one specific change at this point. I'm going to talk about it from our organisational perspective and then from some individual practical examples of how we're implementing that. We're still rolling out our inclusive education framework and we're doing that with a roadmap as our guide and we're really only just starting that journey down the UDL road as an organisation. So at this point we're still very much socialising the guidelines, as I've mentioned. I think the 3.0 guidelines make that very easy to do in how we can relate it to our framework and the tools that we've put in place.

**Trina Bianchini:** 34:25

We've introduced a lot of new initiatives with software and different tools that educators can use. So as we roll each one of those out, we incorporate how they meet UDL. So, for example, with our video platform software, which is a UJA product which we introduced, we've recently started demonstrating how to use it. But alongside of that, we incorporate the UDL framework and show how these tools are enabling that to happen. So if you do use, you know and that plus one approach, if we can get an educator to change their practice one step at a time, use this, look at how it works and the alternative options that it provides.

**Trina Bianchini:** 35:14

But then again, let's take that to the next level and enable the students to use that software as well and encourage them, and then look at the way that we can incorporate it into a playlist. We're supporting executive functioning because they know exactly what's coming up and what's left to go. The little things how many minutes this video is going to take to watch the descriptive links around and introducing an activity to a student, what are they going to benefit from it. So it really is a whole list, bowl list. Throw it out there everywhere we can, the relationships and the links between practice and the guidelines in every conversation and really trying to highlight the examples, one change, one plus one approach and just try to make it as practical as possible.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 36:06

And I love that you're really practicing what you preach in terms of that blueberry muffin approach. You're not putting UDL on top like you preach in terms of that blueberry muffin approach. You're not putting UDL on top like the blueberries on top of a plain muffin. You're really baking it in and baking it into those software conversations. Thanks, Trina. How about you, Sarah?

**Sarah Humphrey:** 36:24

So one of the things I've been thinking about a lot with the new guidelines and you've already mentioned it a a few times is the new consideration about nurturing joy and play, and it fits. It sits in that top first, top left box of engagement under welcoming interests and identities. Um, and I've been thinking about it a lot, not a lot, not only because initially I was a bit cynical about joy and play I just thought, well, you know how's that going to fit in a tertiary education space but also because of where we're currently at in the academic year. So we've been involved with a lot of professional learning in the past sort of four or five weeks and it's really made me reflect on a lot of the practice that we're already doing, but making me more mindful about how we can build in more joy and play. So, for example, we've been running training for our tutors who are part of the large first year units to support transition, and a lot of what we've been doing is sharing activities in the ways that we can be more welcoming with students to set them up for success. So I think for me, joy and play is about taking some time to slow down and actually set the tone of the learning environment. I also think it fits goes sort of neatly hand in hand with addressing biases, threats and distractions, because when you are new to university, there is that fear of everybody's going to know in the imposter syndrome people are going to know more than me, or I don't have any friends here, or this is so daunting, and I think it is a real opportunity to set that environment where so.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 38:17

One example that was given to me last week was using the whiteboards in a classroom. A is a teaching strategy to get students off from their laptops and up collaborating with each other, but if you haven't set the tone for them to talk freely with each other, they're going to stand quietly at the whiteboard. So we were talking about ideas of how you use the whiteboard just to play a game initially, so there's no threats, no pressure of knowing the right answer. It's just injecting a bit of fun. Something else that I've seen recently in training that my team ran with academics was around getting people into groups, and I thought it was such a nice way of handing out playing cards so that people A. You got that sense of oh, what's going on here, a bit of curiosity, but then you ended up with a number and that indicated which group you were going to move to. Again, that takes away that fear or threat of who am I going to partner with, because the decision's been made for you in a really fun and easy way.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 39:29

And another thing is I've got a shout out because I know Sam is in this webinar. So we've been running some UDL workshops as well, sort of introducing people to the structure of UDL. And when we talk about the 36 new or 36 considerations, all those dot points, it's so overwhelming and if you ask somebody, oh, what's your favourite consideration? Again it can be quite anxiety provoking. But what Sam has done is introduce an online picker wheel with all of the codes for the 35 considerations. You spin the wheel, it gives you a number, you jump into the guidelines and the decision making has been made for you and then you just learn about that one particular consideration.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 40:15

So moving forward it's for me it really is finding a place to insert that fun, non-threatening component to teaching and learning. So it's a safe place that learning can then build from. And I think that aligns with John's explanation earlier about why engagement has shifted to the front of the framework we have to set up an environment for students before the learning can happen. So yeah, taking the time to get a bit of fun in there.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 40:49

Thanks so much, sarah. And it's such a great example just to look at what can happen if you set up an activity that sounds really interesting and that students will be collaborating, but the difference between making that a really safe and welcoming space versus what may happen if students don't feel safe to engage. So I think that's a really great reminder to all of us that you can have the same activity planned but how you set up the feeling in that space can make such a difference. Now we've got a couple of things in the chat, and Sarah mentioned the picker wheel, so I'm going to do my best, for those of you who might be watching the recording, to spell out this hyperlink. So bear with me. The hyperlink to the udl 3.0 picker wheel is h-t-t-p-s. Semicolon forward slash. Forward slash. P-i-c-k-e-r. W-h-e-e-l dot com forward slash question mark id equals. So I hope you enjoy that resource.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 42:02

Thank you so much, sarah, for mentioning it and Sam for then sharing it with us. Samantha's also mentioned in the chat that they have an online learning module and when they use the UDL 3.0 guidelines, they've actually provided the most commonly used languages in their tutorials, so they have a version in Mandarin and in Arabic. That's fantastic to hear. Thanks, thanks so much. And Chris is mentioning wanting students to use Teams technology for collaboration. So setting up Teams, whiteboards on which the students can collaborate and document their outcomes as a starting activity. Chris mentioned they pre-warned students that they would ask them to introduce another student in their group and to tell them two things about that student that they wouldn't normally know. So really setting up that space where students can get to know each other and also introduce each other. Thanks so much, chris. Please feel free to keep sharing your examples in the chat as we go. The next question that we have for our panellists is what has been working well in that implementation journey so far.

**Trina Bianchini:** 43:12

So I'm taking that one first. Well, I'm writing down everything that Sarah's just said and Sam's link for the picker wheel, because this is going in our implementation journey and our roadmap as tools that we can use, and I think that's what does work the best in trying to bring people on this journey and make those changes is those simple examples. You've got to be able to give them something that they can put in straight away and use without a lot of thinking around it and again linking back to how that makes a difference and maybe adding some reflection time or asking them to actually consider what was the difference in their educational experience that day both learners and educators so that they can reflect and see just how that little bit of joy and play relaxed the room and got everybody talking. So that does work well for us as well, and we are trying to demonstrate those kinds of things in all the sessions that we do. But overall, I think one thing that's really supporting us is you know, there's nothing like some standards that you have to meet to drive things in an organisation and being part of vocational education.

**Trina Bianchini:** 44:31

The Australian Skills Quality Authority, or ASQA as we know it, have released the draft revision standards for registered training organisations to be implemented in July this year, and quality. Area two is focused on vocational education and training, student support, and it actually calls out that we must provide safe and inclusive learning environments. So it's aligning perfectly with the 3.0 guidelines and the fact that we have our inclusive education roadmap and framework in place, with UDL, our teaching and learning pillar, and we're looking at how that works across everything has really put us in a really good place to show how we're already addressing that. Um, the guidelines, as we've said, place emphasis on identity and variability, so that importance of recognizing learnings multiple and intersecting identities is critical and how they engage with their learning.

**Trina Bianchini:** 45:30

And addressing bias. So, whether individual, institutional or systemic, bias does serve as a significant barrier to learning. So we've looked at a few of these things and we've done some work, producing tools such as an inclusive language guide and also a reflective tool that we're using in our professional development resources on recognising unconscious bias or subconscious bias. So these are things that we've made available across the organisation. So, whilst they might have started as something for educators, you know we're looking at introducing UDL in all of our practices.

**Trina Bianchini:** 46:10

So looking for staff in other areas that might not be in direct contact with students, but how else can they engage with these tools? So I'm really pleased to say that the unconscious bias tool has been introduced into organisational training in other areas, not just with educators, so that's been fantastic. And the other thing that we look at doing is, as everyone's mentioning, the specific tools, so the whiteboards et cetera. So we're looking at our procurement processes and when we adopt a new technology, how does that work with UDL? So it's not just once we've introduced it to the organisation and the educators in their practice, but we're taking it that step back to where does that tool actually fit when we purchase it and make those decisions as well? Standards to me means that we have that organizational buy-in to kind of implement at that high level and then take that down through to the operations perspective as well.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 47:21

So much, trina, and that idea of that strategic alignment really supporting the implementation is definitely resonating in the chat Michelle's even mentioning. There's that focus on demonstrating learner engagement and also the fact that UDL supports wellbeing criteria in the RTO standards. So I think whatever we can leverage to support this inclusive work to happen, that strategic alignment can really help. Over to you, sarah.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 47:48

Thanks, elizabeth. Yes, so when reflecting on what's working well in our implementation journey, I guess I'm going to start from a grassroots level. What I have noticed is the development of UDL literacy across the university, across the university, and what I mean by that is hearing people use the language of UDL, talking about barriers in the learning environment and the plus one thing they're going to do to remove or reduce that barrier. I think that's a key shift, because what that acknowledges is that the mindset is moving away from the student is the problem to there's something about the environment that I can change to see if it'll improve things for their learner. So that's a big thing. The plus one that I mentioned again I'm seeing people embrace this as a way of moving forward with UDL without feeling overwhelmed and swamped by it. I think sometimes you can feel that trying to meet all the needs of all the diverse learners is just too much, but this plus one approach really helps us focus on what can you do now, this semester. Focus on what can you do now, this semester. And then the next most important thing there is being reflecting on what did it have, the desired effect that you were hoping for, and what will you do in your next iteration. So the plus one has been great. I've got a little list in front of me here because there's a few things I'm excited about Sharing stories again.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 49:32

So we're really growing our UDL community across the university where people will come together in different ways or they're online. So Sam this afternoon has just run our monthly UDL chat. It's a 30-minute Zoom conversation where people just come and talk about how they're implementing UDL. The numbers in that chat continued to grow. But also where people have had success stories of changing the design of their teaching and learning environments, gathering feedback and then iterating. We're capturing those as short stories on our Canvas site or publishing on our Teaching at Sydney blog which is accessible to everybody who's in the webinar.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 50:19

So I think the good thing about sharing stories and we're calling them stories of impact is that it's colleagues speaking to colleagues about what they're doing and, I think, often noticing that the intentional, proactive strategies don't have to be huge to have a significant impact for your learners. So one example would be that just how you set up your modules view in Canvas so that content is organized by weeks A simple change but can make a huge difference to supporting executive function to our learners. And then the last thing I just wanted to mention in terms of what's working well is that we keep adding to our suite of training and support that we're offering. So there's no one size fits all. There's a sort of casual community approach, there's online workshops, there's consults. We've been able to support people through strategic education grants, lots and lots of different ways that we're constantly exploring to sort of put UDL into the mix. So, yes, it's exciting. It's slow, but it's exciting.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 51:35

That's such a great reminder, sarah, about that, plus one approach, that that can happen at any level you mentioned. You know you might be a practitioner just doing that one next thing, or you might be an institution and creating one other option for how that training or consultation happens. It can happen across so many levels. I think that's such a good reminder. How about you, john? What's been working well in your implementation journey?

**John Fardoulis:** 51:59

Yeah, yeah. At TAFE New South Wales. I guess the legally mandated accessibility adherence has been much easier to implement. We provide text alternatives for images, video and audio, and that's been working extremely well. And you know what these text alternatives are the start of giving people choice to the Gideon approach. People can choose whether they want to read a video transcript or whether to watch a video. The descriptive transcript isn't just there for people with disability, it's also available to people in noisy environments, those traveling in a quiet train carriage and those where English is not their first language, allowing them to look up the meaning of unfamiliar words.

**John Fardoulis:** 52:46

The more we talk about giving learners choice, the more traction it's getting within the organization. Designers have now started discussing adding spark questions before each lesson just to spark their knowledge and relate it to their own lives. We're getting some buy-in with allowing learners to demonstrate their competency using flexible approaches. Some buy-in with allowing learners to demonstrate their competency using flexible approaches and I know, elizabeth, there is a question in the chat about adhering to inherent requirements and things like that. Do you want to drop me to go through some of that now, or do you want to leave that to later?

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 53:26

I might have missed that question, john. If If you want to speak to that now, feel free to go ahead.

**John Fardoulis:** 53:31

Yeah, so yeah, lyndall basically says that they're interested in finding ways to improve UD implementation in the context of placements and role plays, where meeting inherent requirements can be used to push back on students' requests for flexibility and assessments and so on. And yes, especially in the vocational and education training sector, we have got inherent requirements, but a lot of the times they're sort of misunderstood. Misunderstood. For example, if a learner has to be competent in writing a report, it doesn't mean they have to be able to open up a Word document and use Word to create a report. A report can be anything. It can be a verbal report, it can be a video, it can be a whole bunch of different stuff.

**John Fardoulis:** 54:29

Give people choices. As long as they can do what the inherent requirement is, all right. Sometimes, yes, there is a specific requirement. If you've got a course that says you need to learn how to use microsoft word or you need to learn how to use excel or something like that, well, that is the inherent requirement. But in other cases, when, when it's more general and you just have to produce something, there is flexibility in there. Think outside the square and give people choices of how to do things.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 55:01

Thanks so much, John, and I think that that also really aligns with a message in the chat from Grace mentioning that even that UDL approach, that strengths-based, more social model approach, is also aligning with the recently released guide to applying Australia's disability strategy 2021 to 2031. So it sounds like across this panel what's been working well is looking for those means of strategic alignment, finding those plus ones or those small changes that you can make that could have impact and, as John mentioned, looking for where those options might be. Some things that might seem quite rigid on a first read. There might actually be layers of flexibility and choice that sit underneath that. So now we've thought about all of the positives and what's working in that implementation journey. We're now going to hear a little bit about what some of the challenges are continuing to be and maybe even some of the solutions or ways you've gotten around that. So I'd love to throw over first to Sarah what have you found challenging in the implementation journey?

**Sarah Humphrey:** 56:05

Scaling. So the reason why I say that is across the institution we have isolated pockets of passionate, effective UDL practice, but we don't have a culture across the university of UDL, and so I would say at the moment the challenge is the isolated pockets rather than institution wide, and part of that is fostering the buy in from schools and faculties. There are so many competing priorities, a buy-in from schools and faculties. There are so many competing priorities. How do we put UDL as a focus? And one thing I didn't mention we actually talk about UDL in terms of designing for diversity here at University of Sydney, and the reason behind that is we're trying to avoid the acronym that can sometimes get a response of oh, I tried, that it didn't work. And by talking by saying designing for diversity, we're describing what we're wanting people to do and how it aligns with our strategy. And then the UDL part is actually the tool that we'll use to support us with designing for diversity.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 57:23

So scaling is the big one, and then another one is reward for effort Because, again, people are time poor and if we're asking them to tackle or grapple with a new way of thinking and changing design, even if it's a plus one, it can still be an additional load. How can we acknowledge and reward effort? And there are some things that we have been able to do, but there isn't a big financial bonus. The investment may come through going on being supported to go on the journey and use the impact of your intentional design to submit for a promotion or for a senior fellowship application, you know, or a strategic education grant. So we're looking for opportunities where we can actually support people to see actually it's worth buying into this approach because there is some benefit. There's a trade-off for you as well.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 58:28

Um, yeah, thanks so much, sarah. So almost udl-ing the motivators for actually putting udl into practice. How about you, john? What challenges have you come across so far?

**John Fardoulis:** 58:44

Yeah, the time. Poor thing that towards having it all ready by the time learners are already enrolled and ready to start, and and whenever you've got tight time frames, there's always people wanting to cut corners, um, so it gets challenging because, all right, having extra options is seen as oh oh, that's additional stuff, it's not the minimum we have to do to get it done and things like that. So it's something we've got to continue to work towards and have it embedded in from the beginning, and we're going through and redeveloping our new distributed course development model at the moment course development model at the moment and I'm hoping to sort of try to get all our inclusive design, including UDL, embedded from the start. Start planning it at the beginning, get involved, look at all different options rather than whatever. What always seems to happen they get to the end and say, all right, go and make it accessible. What can we do to add stuff here? We don't have time, we've got to go live. So I think that, think that's what continues to be challenging for us.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 1:00:09

Thanks so much, John, and it's great to think about you know, how do we actually make this a manageable thing and how do we bake this in from the start so that it doesn't feel like that additional load that we're hopefully doing? Some of these things like accessibility is part of habit formation and we're just habitually making things accessible from the start. Perhaps we can do that with UDL as well. How about you, Trina? What's been challenging in the implementation?

**Trina Bianchini:** 1:00:35

I'll say all of the above, everything that John and Sarah have mentioned, have been challenges for us as well. So we are all in this together. For us it is predominantly time, and I would say, lack of it, for educators. Um, and whilst the plus one approach is a win every time they do it, the bigger changes take time to implement. So, for example, we have our learning management system. We provide the educators goodish shell, which has been designed with the old principles behind it, with the idea, with the executive functioning. It's set out in a certain way if every unit of competency that the or we teach higher ed as well. So every course that a student undertakes, if it predominantly looks the same from the start. They know where to go to find things, they know where their you know discussion forum where they ask questions, where their assessment section is how they submit it. The instructions that they're getting are all there pre-populated, so the learners can just use the shell and know where to go, and the educators, you know, have this guide of the different things that they can put into place. So we have still given them flexibility, but also the guide of how to populate it to keep it looking the same. But of course that's a time challenge. So we have a resistance to change which predominantly comes from how much time it's going to take for them to change, because they already have a course which works very well for them and it does, but it looks different to another course, to another course. So you know that rolling that out and getting all of those courses changed would be our major challenge.

**Trina Bianchini:** 1:02:17

We have recently introduced a new digital accessibility platform. It's a huge product called Panorama. So we previously had Blackboard Ally, which was also amazing in that it allows users to generate alternative formats on learning content. But the Panorama product also has a widget which sits on the screen which allows the user to adjust the interface. They can change it to a set setting for a particular need or, you know, play around with the color and content and typeface and everything as much as they they like, and it will hold.

**Trina Bianchini:** 1:02:56

So the next time they open up a learn course it will stay. So of course, the importance of having the learn course is looking a certain way in the first place to and then enable that to work to the best of its ability is really important. So I guess our challenge is is taking everybody on that journey and seeing, once the time is invested, the benefits that they can have. And I pick up on some of the things that John and Sarah have talked about, which is the storytelling and the sharing of successes. So I think that's going to be something that we can use moving forward to try to address our challenge.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 1:03:37

Thanks so much, Trina. It's really interesting to think about that difference between the short-term challenge versus perhaps the long-term gains. And if things are all in a predictable place, maybe that will be a time saver in future when it comes to updating those courses. But yeah, that initial short-term can be quite challenging. Now, before we jump into questions that I can see coming through the chat and the Q&A, we have two final planned questions for our panellists and these are really like they're hot tips on what we can do. So the first question is how might we support and encourage individuals who are new to UDL? I'd love to throw to John first to start us off.

**John Fardoulis:** 1:04:19

Yeah, well, start small. We've already had Sarah mention UDL plus one approach all right. Focus on the pain points that learners are having and think of just one more way to reduce those pain points or those barriers, all right. So using this plus one UDL plus one approach all right takes away what might be viewed as an overwhelming amount of effort and it breaks it down into manageable, approachable chunks. I think that's that's my big advice there thanks so much, john.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 1:04:57

How about you, trina? What's your tip?

**Trina Bianchini:** 1:04:59

and well, definitely everything that John has said and the different things that we've mentioned throughout the session, as usual, and encouraging them and supporting them and letting them know that we're along in the journey with them to help them implement it. But, as I said before, I think the storytelling on the wins is and that you know what's in it. For me approach with educators, they can hear those small changes, what successes they'll have, and then I think once everyone's on that UDL journey, then they're on it.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 1:05:50

Thanks, trina. It's so true, those stories can be so inspiring and it can really make you see, well, if that's possible in this space, in this example, well, maybe it's possible for me too and I could do something similar. But yeah, really powerful, how about you?

**Sarah Humphrey:** 1:06:05

Sarah, yeah.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 1:06:06

So I think if you're new to UDL, one of the things I would really encourage you to do is to not print, not only print off the framework and have it in front laminated or in front of you I normally have a copy behind me here, but I took it down so it wasn't distracting in my background but also engage with the online version of the guidelines, because the more you click into the layers of the framework, the more you'll understand the rationale behind why they are suggesting nurture play and joy or foster collaboration and community.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 1:06:51

And you can delve even further, and there's all the research that informs that advice is available on the online version of the guidelines. It comes up really nicely on a mobile phone, and the reason why I like to have the guidelines physically close by and also accessible online is and I've heard other panel members mentioned this this afternoon is that we'll often overlay a conversation when we hear people talking about their practice and we say, oh, actually what I hear, what I'm hearing you telling me, is that you're fostering collaboration and community here, and this is where it sits in engagement, or I can see you supporting strategy development, and it sits here in action and expression. So you can just very subtly overlay UDL into conversations and guide people that way, and the only way to do it is just to immerse yourself in it. Have it all around you.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 1:07:50

Thanks so much, sarah. And it's so true. There is so much to those guidelines beyond just that surface layer, all the research that sits behind particular considerations, really exciting to explore. Our next question is how might we actually support and encourage broader UDL adoption?

**Trina Bianchini:** 1:08:04

And, tarina, I'd love to throw to you first, yeah, well, I'm going to talk about our community of practice, all of which you are members. It's open and friendly and we share a lot of information and I will say from my perspective, it's really built my confidence in being able to talk to other people about UDL. So hearing and again that has come from the story sharing, but also the presenters that we have, and we have a practice challenge where we actually bring something that is a challenge in our practice and look to each other to discuss and share. Um, you know possible solutions. So, knowing that there's this wonderful community out there, that has supported and encouraged me in my UDO adoption and I've used everything that I can uh from that to pass that on to others. So I'd really encourage anybody uh through the ADCET website to join in with that.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 1:09:07

Thanks so much, trina, and I would absolutely second that it is a very safe space. So even if this is the first time you've heard about UDL, come and join in that community. Listen to those conversations. It's a really supportive group of people. Now, sarah, how about you? How would you encourage broader UDL adoption? What are your tips for us? So?

**Sarah Humphrey:** 1:09:28

I think I'd again have to agree with Trina about community and that sort of broader national community we have, but also build your own supportive community in whatever environment you're in, so that you can debunk this idea of I'm not a UDL expert so I don't engage with it. You don't have to be an expert. Really, it's just about getting involved in the language of UDL I mentioned right at the very beginning and talking and collaborating with others. You don't have to do this on your own. So a simple thing we did here in the early days was have UDL coffee on a Monday morning and it was anyone who was interested could come and join me for a coffee and we would just sort of talk random UDL stuff and that really helps build people's confidence. So, yes, try and bust this myth of you know you have to be a UDL expert to talk about it.

**Sarah Humphrey:** 1:10:24

The other thing is intellectual generosity. I love that term. I first came across it through the UDL community, through CAST in the States and as an international community. People are incredibly generous with their resources. So you know, don't be afraid to ask people if they can share things with you and don't be afraid to share your ideas yourself. I mean, udl is just a framework and we all interpret it in multiple ways. So the more that we can share and foster that intellectual generosity, the better. And I guess the last point that I've got in my notes here is thinking about how we can support academics to see that the work that I mentioned this before, the work that they're doing in this space, they can use it for promotion so that there is there's a win-win. Obviously, we're doing this for our learners, but, um, if we can support people, so it's beneficial. Um, so we can support our academics, so it's beneficial for them as well. Uh, let's do that too thanks so much, sarah.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 1:11:35

I think that's a fantastic tip and, yeah, I've definitely brought practice challenges to people before and said I've solved these barriers, but I've got these ones left over and I don't know what to do about them. And there's been a really supportive community in this space to be able to bounce ideas off and hear examples from. So I love that tip, sarah. And how about you, john? How might we support and encourage broader UDL adoption?

**John Fardoulis:** 1:12:02

Yes, and I echo everything Trina and Sarah said. Yeah, we need to continue to get together, share our experiences and learnings, join communities of practice, attend webinars, listen to podcasts. There's some UDL podcasts out there you can listen to. That includes interviews with different people doing things and discussing ideas.

**John Fardoulis:** 1:12:27

Another thing we're doing in collaboration with TAFE South Australia TAFE New South Wales is putting together some exemplars of what can be done with UDL, and you may have heard about the UDL Level up project that we spoke about at the UDL symposium last year and it's about, yeah, showing different stages, showing what a just a general, plain old lesson could be, and then leveling that up, adding accessibility just one more thing to improve it and then leveling that up again and adding one more thing add some usability to it, some some communication, and then add one more thing, level up again and add a whole bunch of different options and things, choices and things like that, and have the designers start at the beginning and once they've leveled up to the first step and they've got that down pat and know what they're, they've leveled up to the first step and they've got that down pat and know what they're doing they can level up to the next bit and to the next bit and just just encourage people just to add just more, one more way each time they're sort of going in and doing it, and that's, I guess, the best advice I can, I can suggest.

**Elizabeth Hitches:** 1:13:41

Now we've reached our time together for today. An hour and a half felt like a long time, but it flies very quickly, so can we please thank Sarah, trina and John for generously sharing their insights and experiences with us today. We hope that everyone who's joined us today whether live or watching a recording feels really inspired and also feels like a very valued part of this community. We are working together to support inclusive educational experiences for all, including our learners and also our staff.

**Speaker 1:** 1:14:17

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