Final Report

National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program

2023 UDL Strategic Project –Advancing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in tertiary education

October 2023

1. PROJECT SUMMARY

Objective

The *Advancing Universal Design for Learning [UDL] in tertiary education 'strategic' project* objective was to expand the knowledge and capacity of educators, learning designers, disability practitioners and other staff about UDL implementation.

2. Project Activities and Key Performance Indicators

Expand and continue the existing **Community of Practice** on key UDL issues.	
Identified Key Performance Indicators	**Key Performance Indicators Outcome**
• At least five Community of Practice meetings held by 31 October 2023. • Addition of at least 20 new participants in the Community of Practice.	The structure of each CoP session consisted of including a key presenter and topic, followed by issuing a practice challenge which usually included a recap of previous presentations, and/or discussions on resources and emerging trends. Over the five CoP sessions presenters included: 1. Elizabeth Hitches, Griffith University – Applying UDL to understand students' academic stresses 2. Naomi McGrath and John Faradoulis, TAFE NSW – Project re Inclusive Design Standards. 3. Joe Houghton – The intersection of AI & UDL 4. Rosario Iguin, Unitec | Te Pūkenga – UDL in vocational education in New Zealand 5. Jane Goodfellow from North Metro TAFE in WA – A course designed for First Nations students – UDL principles coupled with cultural safety Presenters 1 and 3 were also invited to present in the UDL Symposium and Presenter 5 was invited to do a case study. As at 4 December 2023 there are 184 participants – an increase of 52 participants

Develop and deliver **webinars** specific to UDL initiatives.	
Identified Key Performance Indicators	**Key Performance Indicators Outcome**
A minimum of three webinars held prior to 31 October 2023.	To align with the UDL eLearning ADCET has continued to provide webinars to showcase good practice in UDL to the sector. These webinars ranged from using assistive technologies as part of UDL, inclusive assessment and practical implementation. A practical solution to increasing accessible content with Anthology Ally (11 May) Sixty-seven (67) people registered for this webinar with 41 attending. In this webinar 66% of survey respondents said they could apply what they learned immediately and 20% in the next 7 – 12 months. All participants either strongly agreed or agreed that they would recommend ADCET webinars to colleagues with 30% being new to ADCET webinars. Total views of the video presentation: 211. Accessibility in Office 365 - Language and Communication (6 June) One hundred and ninety people (190) registered for this webinar with 135 participating. 86% of survey respondents said they could apply what they learned immediately while the remainder said they could implement changes in the next 2 – 6 months. 70% of respondents said that 75 – 100% of the information presented was new to them. Total views of the video presentation: 463. Inclusive assessment for students with disability (13 June) Four hundred and nine (409) people registered for this seminar with 275 people attending. 73% of survey respondents said they could apply what they learned immediately, 15% in the next 2 – 6 months and the remainder in 7 – 12 months. 65% strongly agreed they would recommend ADCET webinars to others. Total views of the video presentation: 667. *[This webinar] reinforces the benefits of UDL in assessment design to cater for diverse student needs- great idea having students involved in the design/ workshop process.* Implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) at the University of Sydney - Lessons Learned and Scaling Strategies (27 July) One hundred and sixth-seven (167) registered for this webinar with 108 participating. 46% of survey respondents said they could apply what they learned immediately with 46% indicating they would implement this information in the next 2 – 6 months. Total views of the video presentation: 510. *Really enjoyed all the quick demos as features were explained. Thanks for an informative and useful session.* Total registrations across all 4 webinars: 833 Total participants across all 4 webinars: 559 Total views across all 4 video presentations from the release date of each video up to 4 December 2023: 1851 views

April to October 2023	
Develop and deliver **podcasts** specific to UDL initiatives	

Identified Key Performance Indicators	Key Performance Indicators Outcome
A minimum of three podcasts delivered prior to 31 October 2023.	With a focus on international examples ADCET has also produced 3 podcasts on UDL including: Universal Design for Learning in Action - Ireland This podcast was a discussion on UDL with Dara Ryder, Chief Executive Officer, AHEAD Ireland (Released 5 July) 297 people have accessed the podcast. **UDL in Action - USA** This podcast was a discussion on UDL with Lillian Nave, senior lecturer and UDL Coordinator of the Centre for Academic Excellence at Appalachian State University in the USA. (Released 3 October) 122 people have accessed the podcast. **UDL in Action – Dr Thomas Tobin Keynote** This podcast was a discussion on UDL with Dr Thomas Tobin from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Centre for Teaching, Learning and Mentoring. He is an internationally recognized scholar, author, and speaker on technology-mediated education. (Released 11 October) 23 people have accessed the podcast. Total listeners of the three podcasts from each release date to 16 October: 442

Host a **UDL masterclass** event	
Identified Key Performance Indicators	**Key Performance Indicators Outcome**
• Host at minimum one UDL masterclass event prior to 31 October 2023.	Two follow-up workshops were held to flow-on from the December 2022 UDL Masterclass *Beyond Curiosity: Developing a sustainable roadmap for UDL implementation within your organisation*. These additional workshops were again facilitated by international inclusive education expert Fredric Fovet. Invitations to the masterclass were only provided to those participants who had attended the December 2022 masterclass. Workshop 1 had 21 participants and 15 participants attended Workshop 2. Workshop 1: Roadside pitstop – Examining the journey covered. Workshop 2: Planning the next leg – Annotating the map and optimizing the distance remaining Organisations who attended included ADCET, Victoria University, University of Sydney, TAFE NSW, Holmesglen (TAFE), RMIT, Charles Sturt University, University of South Australia, and James Cook University, University of Tasmania and La Trobe University

Host a **UDL Symposium**	
Identified Key Performance Indicators	**Key Performance Indicators Outcome**
• Invite, at minimum, 200 tertiary education practitioners and educators, and equity/professional bodies to the event.	ADCET's inaugural UDL Symposium titled "UDL in Action: the what, the why, and the how" was held over two half days conducted as an online conference style activity with keynotes, short presentation sessions, workshops, and poster-style presentations.

Invitations were issued across the sector through normal ADCET channels including the AustEd mailing list (738), ADCET newsletter (3585), and social media (81k/impressions); peak bodies such as ATEND, EPHEA, TAFE Directors, ASCILITE and NCSEHE; and the UDL Community of Practice. CoP members were encouraged to promote in their institutions.

We used LinkedIn Advertising to promote a range of UDL activities we undertook including webinars, podcasts and our UDL symposium. Through this paid advertising we were able to gain 81,397 impressions on our content and 850 click throughs to the content link with a click through rate of 1.04% on average.

Reflecting a UDL approach presenters were provided with a range of presentation options for either live or pre-recorded presentations. Workshop presenters were provided with longer sessions to engage participants. All presentations and additional materials have been made available following the event UDL Symposium.

The Program included:

■ Keynote speakers (2 speakers in plenary sessions)
■ Concurrent sessions (15 presentations)
■ Workshops (5 workshop choices)
■ Poster Presentations (4 presentations)
■ A student panel (plenary)

The Symposium received over 1020 registrations and 981 participations across 23 sessions.

Survey results

The overwhelming feedback was extremely positive, and lessons learned will be embedded into any future events.

From completed surveys from the participants, 67% originated from higher education and 26% from VET and the remainder from other areas.

75% of respondents has some familiarity with UDL, 17% with advanced familiarity and 9% with no familiarity or preferred not to say.

 88% strongly agreed or agreed that after attending the Symposium they felt motivated to drive uptake of UDL in their institution. |

97% strongly agreed or agreed that after they attended the Symposium, they felt confident to have a conversation about UDL implementation within their institution.

Many participants indicated in their anecdotal feedback that they had learned strategies that could be implemented immediately. Here are some comments which reflect the common feeling amongst participants:

It was great seeing what others are up to at universities across Australia so lots of tips and strategies to think about and implement.

It was great to experience presenters modelling best practices. So many good ideas. Grateful for recordings, as there is more to explore there yet, and especially for this being a free development opportunity. Online made it very accessible. Thank you so much! Was inspired by the presenters and their expertise.

I loved this event. I had no idea what UDL was before attending and can't remember why or how I signed up, but I am so glad I did - it was a wonderful way to learn more and be more inclusive.

Thank you so much for organising this - it should be the next big change for all Universities and government agencies!

I found the Student Voice session to be excellent and felt that this would have been better scheduled for day 1 - our learner's voice is so powerful so why were they the last to be heard?

Promote and engage with practitioners and educators to **increase enrolments and improve completions of Disability Awareness eLearning programs** with a particular focus on the UDL eLearning for university and VET sectors.

Identified Key Performance Indicators	Key Performance Indicators Outcome
At minimum achieve a: • 20% increase in Disability Awareness eLearning program enrolments. • 20% increase in Disability Awareness eLearning program completions.	In 2021 the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET) in collaboration with officers from the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program developed a UDL eLearning Program for the sector. The aim of this program was to build capacity amongst educators to implement UDL as an effective pedagogical response to supporting students with disability, and indeed other equity groups. The UDL eLearning program is housed on the Disability Awareness (DA) website and was released in December 2021. As at 4 December 2023 there were a total of 1510 people registered. Of these, 822 were still completing the program, and 652 people had successfully completed the program. Over 45% had completed the training at this date in December. Overall, there has been an increase of 42% in registrations and 50**%** in completions since the start of the project. **Survey results (for completions on DA website)** ▪ 45% of survey participants were from teaching/learning and 25% learning designers. ▪ 61% were from higher education and 20% from VET with additional responses in dual sector, schools, adult education and disability support services. ▪ 60% of respondents were located in metro areas, 33% in regional/rural areas and 2% in remote. There was a small number from overseas as well. ▪ 90% of respondents said there were very engaged or mostly engaged for the entirety of the course. ▪ Before completing the course only 9.3% felt they had a good understanding of UDL and afterwards this increased to 48%. ▪ 92% of participants indicated they were confident to now apply UDL principles in their work. ▪ Overwhelmingly participants said they would be very likely to make changes to their practice across the principles of UDL. As at 1 October a total of 138 surveys have been completed. Some of the comments from the surveys of users are below: *Very well made. I love that it is free and that I can pass it along to others. We don't have the benefits of a city for connecting and attending affordable training here - so this is an invaluable resource.*

I feel like this is the perfect introduction to this concept. I only have a very beginner understanding of UDL and this really covered the basics. I feel a lot more ready to go and do independent learning now

The course practices what it preaches which I also love - it makes it a useful tool for introducing others to these concepts (and shows them what it can look like).

excellent online course. thank you for the videos with real teachers and students. thank you for the many resource documents and referenced content to show me where to find more resources

very well organised and designed. it was clear and had an excellent balance between the theoretical and practical sides of UDL.

This was an excellent course and I am encouraged to reach out to my educational designer colleagues for support as I take the first steps to adapting my online learning resources. I will be recommending this course to others. Thank you.

I am working mostly in academic administration and student support but will be commencing my teaching journey next year. I am beginning to think about my unit and how I will engage my students and have found the content very helpful and practical. I am hoping to implement UDL principles as I begin my teaching journey.

This course has really started the process of thinking of improvements we (i.e., our RTO) can make to the way we currently offer learning and assessment to our students. A very valuable and insightful course thankyou!

Well put together and enjoyable mix of activities and presentation approaches

Thank you for creating such an engaging and informative course that is itself an exemplar in UDL. My goal is to encourage as many of my colleagues as possible to take the course so we can create a more inclusive learner experience at my university.

SCORM files

In addition to individual completing the eLearning many providers downloaded the SCORM (Sharable Content Object Reference Model) files. All options are free, so cost is not an impediment. The advantage of downloading the SCORM files is that providers can upload the files to their internal learning management system.

As at 3 December 2023, 68 organisations had downloaded the UDL eLearning Program SCORM files

Breakdown of SCORM users

Of the 68 organisations who have downloaded UDL SCORM file, 43 are universities and 18 are TAFE/VET with an additional 7 organisations from outside of Australia.

Survey Results

A total of 41 surveys have been completed.

This course was well structured. I appreciate the transcripts and captioning available for all videos, as I am hearing impaired. The concept of offering options for expression of achievement of learning outcomes is a far more difficult to action than for engagement or representation. I will be looking for more guidance and resources in this area.

It was a good introduction to UDL with some useful practical examples, most of which I already know and try to integrate, however I need to know more about specific types of students and their specific needs - e.g. what is different about neurodivergent students and what are their needs and how can I better design learning to be inclusive for them.

This course help to open my eye to alternatives to use and why one way is not always the best way and it's important for students to have options. This will allow more engage learning

I found the course very engaging and an awesome reflection of UDL in online learning. I want to introduce as many people to the UDL approach as I believe it has to potential for the necessary curriculum reform. Thank you for sharing this brilliant learning resource.

Thoroughly enjoyed this training course. The videos were great in relating others experience in the application of UDL.

I enjoyed the Course and now want to integrate the new learning through application. I believe that once I have started implementing some of the ideas developed during the Course, my confidence and abilities in this area of teaching will grow

Evaluation of the UDL eLearning Program

An additional document has been developed to assess the efficacy of the UDL eLearning Program. Using the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF) from the original 2021 UDL eLearning Module development this analysis shows the efficacy to date of the UDL eLearning module. The MEF was developed to assist educators and practitioners to consider how best to evaluate their own programs. We have utilised the MEF to evaluate the UDL eLearning as a demonstration of the Evaluation Framework implementation. See Appendix 1.

April to October 2023	
Develop **case studies** showcasing best practice in the implementation of UDL in the tertiary education sector.	
Identified Key Performance Indicators	**Key Performance Indicators Outcome**
At least four case studies developed and published prior to 31 October 2023 - two case studies targeting practice in the VET sector and two case studies targeting higher education practice.	ADCET approached a number of educators and practitioners at various stages of their UDL journey and asked them to construct a case study highlighting their UDL practice. We asked authors to consider several areas: Background Context or Challenge Approach Outcomes Impact Lessons Learned Six case studies produced: 1. The intersection of UDL and cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners – North Metro TAFE, WA 2. Understanding UDL (Universal Design for Learning) – Griffith University 3. Empowering all learners: UDL strategies to improve engagement and academic performance – Monash University 4. UDL and Assistive Technology to support students with disability – an international perspective. 5. Designing for Diversity project – The University of Sydney 6. Implementing UDL to support diverse learners in enabling programs – RMIT (dual sector) See UDL Resources – ADCET for details of the Case Studies. The UDL eLearning Evaluation (Appendix 1) could also be included as an additional case study.

Highlights

Highlights of what the 2023 UDL Strategic Project has achieved.

The highlight for the ADCET team was the enthusiasm of the sector to engage with UDL regardless of where individuals or their institutions were on the UDL journey. It was clear that educators, learning designers and disability practitioners value the opportunity to immerse themselves in how to implement UDL – this is particularly the case in terms of improving their own practice where their institution may not be adopting it institution-wide. It is also clear individuals would like more time to learn to implement UDL and could benefit from better support in institutions where it is a 'cottage' industry. Our audiences were often pleasantly surprised how easy it is to make incremental changes (time permitting). We have seen an increase in take up of other activities such as newsletter registrations, CoP members, webinar registrations and general engagement with ADCET.

Recommendations

In future we would recommend the UDL Symposium be an annual event. Additional recommendations include adding a project officer to ADCET to assist individual institutions to implement UDL in a strategic way and benchmarking activities to assess the sector's adoption of UDL.

Issues

Issues or lessons learnt from facilitating the 2023 UDL Strategic project.

This project required dedicated human resources to promote the ongoing implementation of UDL including drawing on our Symposium working group who provided valuable guidance. In addition, having never used the Zoom Events Platform for such an event there are some technical lessons which would improve the experience of presenters and participants in the future. On the whole we believe this project has been very successful.

Recommendations

In any future iteration we would recommend benchmarking to see which institutions are undertaking UDL and how we can directly support institution learning and teaching units to embed a disability inclusive approach to UDL. Ongoing support to the sector to promote implementation would require dedicated ADCET project staff and resources.

Appendix 1.

Evaluating the efficacy of ADCET's UDL eLearning module

Background

In 2021 the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET), in collaboration with officers from the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program, developed a UDL eLearning Program (the Program) for the sector. The aim of this program was to build capacity amongst educators to implement UDL as an effective pedagogical response to supporting students with disability, and indeed other equity groups. The project also developed a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF) commissioned to assist in assessing the efficacy of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) eLearning program.

The UDL eLearning program aims to give tertiary educators and support staff the knowledge and capability to design courses according to an evidence based UDL framework.

> *A UDL approach recognises the diverse prior experiences, abilities, preferences* and needs of learners. Rather than designing a course for the 'average' learner, and making individualised adjustments for learners with additional needs, UDL accommodates a wide range of needs and preferences by design. This reduces the need for reasonable adjustments and enhances the experience of all learners, including those with disability. (CAST, 2018)

The Program aims to provide a scalable and sustainable solution to building capacity amongst educators and professional staff. The MEF allows us to track whether this capacity building translates to actionable change by participants within their sphere of activity. This e-learning training is one element of a broader project which produced a UDL webpage hosted by ADCET, a UDL Community of Practice (COP) and opportunities to showcase UDL implementation (e.g., UDL Symposium, masterclasses, podcasts and webinars).

The ultimate goal of the MEF is to provide a method of measuring the efficacy and outcomes of the eLearning program across four phases of the professional development journey taken from the Kirkpatrick model for evaluating training (Kirkpatrick, 2006):

1. **Reaction:** reaction of the training participants to the e-learning experience
2. **Learning:** changes to training participants' knowledge skills and attitudes
3. **Behaviour:** changes to the teaching/training practice of training participants (and identification of barriers to and enablers of change)
4. **Results**: impact of learning and behaviour change on the participants and their students.

Context or Challenge

One of the significant barriers to retention, success and attainment of people with disability in tertiary education is the ability to participate in all learning and teaching activities fully and seamlessly. Typically, tertiary education providers register students with disability and make adjustments to teaching and learning through reasonable adjustments. While this meets the obligations of providers in relation to the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)*, it tends to promote a more medicalised model of disability.

A UDL approach aligns with a social model of disability by providing the flexibility and accessibility for a wide range of learners thus reducing the need for individualised adjustments and this is. (CAST, 2018)

In order to foster whole-of-sector adoption of UDL ADCET developed a range of strategies including a UDL eLearning Program to support educators on an individual level as well as facilitate whole-of-institution adoption.

The particular challenge for universal adoption in the tertiary education sector includes lack of reinforcement in Government policies in higher education and VET, and subsequent slow adaptation of UDL in these sectors. Those who implemented UDL into their courses identified barriers, such as the time required to prepare, the expense of technology as well as the physical environment of the classroom (Jwad et al, 2021).

A free, scalable, accessible eLearning program was considered as part of the strategy to build and expand capacity in the sector to adopt UDL across the sector. Additional elements in addition to the eLearning program have included implementing a UDL Community of Practice, active promotion of the program to tertiary education providers and ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Approach

ADCET has a very deliberate mode of project engagement with every activity they undertake. Every project, intervention or resource is sector-driven, evidence-based, and collaborative. This includes involving people with lived expertise and lived experience of disability. There are six key steps.

1. **Consider the problem strategically:** through engagement with sector stakeholders.
2. **Research and Analyse:** collect evidence base, within the context including current and emerging trends.
3. **Ideate:** Convene experts and key stakeholders (including people with lived expertise and lived experience), generate ideas and devise key objectives within a project plan.
4. **Engage:** Draw on sector for further feedback from stakeholders including students and staff with disability, Government, peak bodies, sector networks and industry.
5. **Review and Implement:** Test outcomes, implement training, promote to sector.
6. **Evaluate and Report:** draw down relevant data analytics and user-experience feedback.

Using the MEF *Figure 1* shows the program logic (AIFS, 2016) ADCET used to assess the implementation of UDL within the tertiary education sector.

Figure 1: Program logic using the UDL Evaluation Framework
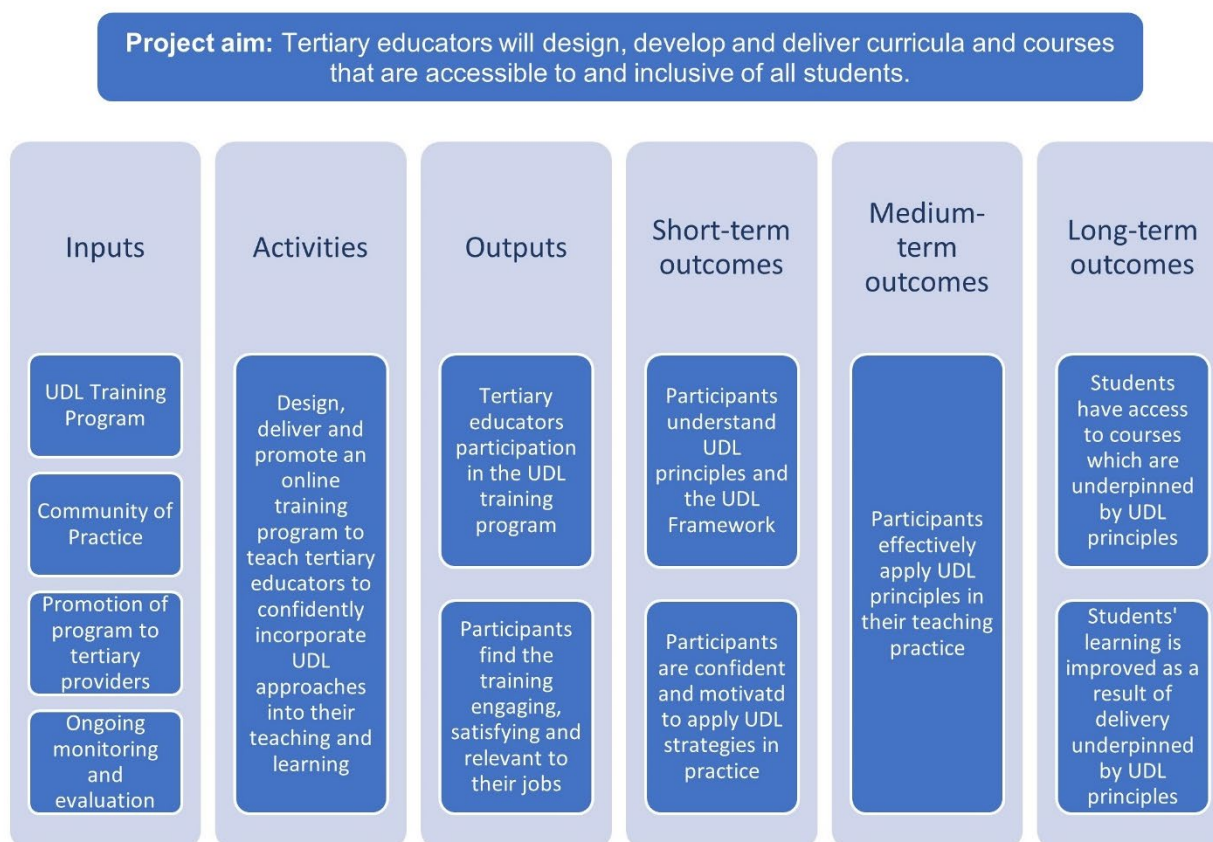
Outcomes

As outlined in Figure 1 the MEF included short, medium and long-term outcomes to demonstrate the efficacy of the UDL eLearning Program and enhanced strategies such as the CoP and other promotional strategies.

There are a number of qualitative and quantitative parameters that this evaluation has included to assess the uptake and efficacy of UDL in the sector to meet the short and medium outcomes in the MEF. These are:

- The number of enrolments in the UDL eLearning Program
- The number of completions in the UDL eLearning Program
- The feedback from surveys from participants of the UDL eLearning program and webinars.

Additional parameters included in this evaluation relate to additional strategies to promote and embed the UDL eLearning including the CoP, webinars and podcasts, and other promotional strategies.

- The number of participants in the UDL Community of Practice
- The number of participants in UDL webinars and podcasts
- The levels of engagement with promotional interventions such as eLearning, CoP, social media and other activities

Out of scope for this evaluation at this point in time is the capacity to assess the long-term outcomes of UDL implementation due to early and inconsistent levels of implementation across the sector and the short timeframe and resources available to evaluate.

Table 1 is an outcomes matrix which illustrates how the project has achieved its short-term goals and what work is needed to progress the medium and long-term goals of the project.
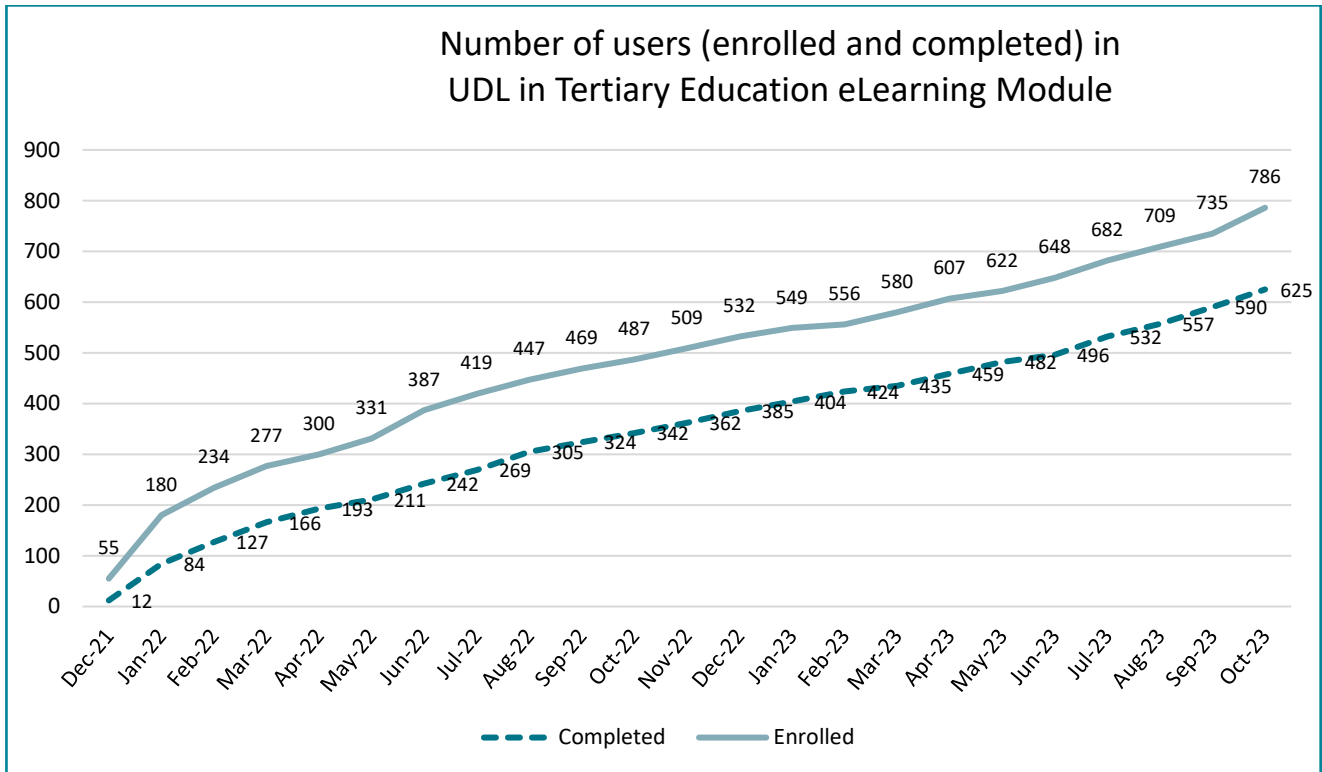
Table 1: Outcomes matrix

Strategies	Short-term outcomes		Medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes	
	Participants understand UDL Principles and Framework	Participants are confident and motivated to apply UDL to practice	Participants effectively apply UDL principles in their practice	Students have access to courses underpinned by UDL	Student's learning is improved as a result of delivery underpinned by UDL
UDL eLearning					
Enrolments	In progress	In progress	N/A	N/A	N/A
Completions	Achieved/ Ongoing	Achieved/ Ongoing	N/A	To be explored	To be explored
Engagement	Achieved/ Ongoing	Achieved/ Ongoing	To be explored	To be explored	To be explored
Community of Practice					
Participation	Achieved/ Ongoing	Achieved/ Ongoing	In progress	To be explored	To be explored
Engagement	Achieved/ Ongoing	Achieved/ Ongoing	In progress	To be explored	To be explored
Implementation	Achieved/ Ongoing	In progress	In progress	To be explored	To be explored
Webinars/Podcasts					
Engagement	Achieved/ Ongoing	Achieved/ Ongoing	In progress	N/A	N/A
Implementation	In progress	In progress	In progress	To be explored	To be explored
Communications					
Engagement	Achieved/ Ongoing	Achieved/ Ongoing	In progress	To be explored	To be explored

UDL eLearning Program

Between its release in December 2021 and September 2023 the UDL eLearning Program had 1411 enrolments. Of these 625 have completed the program and 786 people are still to complete. We regularly email to those who haven't completed to ensure they complete.

Graph 1: Number of users (enrolled and completed) in UDL in Tertiary Education eLearning Module

Number of users (enrolled and completed) in UDL in Tertiary Education eLearning Module

Month	Enrolled	Completed
Dec-21	55	12
Jan-22	180	84
Feb-22	234	127
Mar-22	277	166
Apr-22	300	193
May-22	331	211
Jun-22	387	242
Jul-22	419	269
Aug-22	447	305
Sep-22	469	324
Oct-22	487	342
Nov-22	509	362
Dec-22	532	385
Jan-23	549	404
Feb-23	556	424
Mar-23	580	435
Apr-23	607	459
May-23	622	482
Jun-23	648	496
Jul-23	682	532
Aug-23	709	557
Sep-23	735	590
Oct-23	786	625

In addition to individual completing the eLearning many providers downloaded the SCORM (Sharable Content Object Reference Model) files. All options are free, so cost is not an impediment. The advantage of downloading the SCORM files is that providers can upload the files to their internal learning management system (LMS). As at 16 October 2023 64 organisations have downloaded the UDL eLearning Program SCORM files to embed in their LMS. This includes 38 universities, 15 TAFE and VET providers and five organisations from outside of Australia.

Below are just some of the positive comments about the program.

…very well organised and designed. it was clear and had an excellent balance between the theoretical and practical sides of UDL.
(UDL participant, January 2023)

This course has really started the process of thinking of improvements we (i.e., our RTO) can make to the way we currently offer learning and assessment to our students. A very valuable and insightful course thank you!
(UDL Participant, September 2022)

Strategies to enhance take-up of UDL eLearning

ADCET expanded an existing range of activities and strategies to support the take-up of the UDL eLearning program. This was made possible through grant money for strategic projects entitled *Advancing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in tertiary education* which ran from April to October.

Key activities included:

1. expansion of existing UDL Community of Practice
2. additional webinars and podcasts showcasing good practice in UDL
3. additional social media presence to boost and engage with the sector
4. hosting of additional masterclass workshops and a UDL Symposim.

Key highlights

UDL Community of Practice

The UDL CoP commenced in April 2022 and invitations sent out to the tertiary education sector inviting those who have completed the UDL eLearning Program to participate in regular meetings (approximately every 5 to 6 weeks) to post information, continue conversations, and share good practice. Sessions also include presentations from different members sharing how they have implemented UDL locally. ADCET hosted five additional CoP sessions between 1 April and 31 October resulting in an additional 30 members joining. This brings the total to 162 members.

Of the members 37 represent universities, 19 represent VET providers, 3 are from secondary schools and 26 associated organisations supporting students with disability. There were also 10 overseas providers. A survey has been issued to CoP members to garner their views on the value of this network, however it is too early to analyse at this point.

UDL webinars and podcasts

To align with the UDL eLearning ADCET has continued to provide webinars and podcasts to showcase good practice in UDL to the sector. ADCET hosted four UDL-focussed webinars:

1. [A practical solution to increasing accessible content with Anthology Ally](#)
    Sixty-seven (67) people registered for this webinar with 41 attending. In this webinar 66% of survey respondents said they could apply what they learned immediately and 20% in the next 7 – 12 months. All

participants either strongly agreed or agreed that they would recommend ADCET webinars to colleagues with 30% being new to ADCET webinars.

2. Inclusive assessment for students with disability
   Four hundred and nine (409) people registered for this seminar with 275 people attending. 73% of survey respondents said they could apply what they learned immediately, 15% in the next 2 – 6 months and the remainder in 7 – 12 months. 65% strongly agreed they would recommend ADCET webinars to others.

[This webinar] reinforces the benefits of UDL in assessment design to cater for diverse student needs- great idea having students involved in the design/ workshop process.
(Webinar Participant)

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3. Accessibility in Office 365 - Language and Communication
   One hundred and ninety people (190) registered for this webinar with 135 participating. 86% of survey respondents said they could apply what they learned immediately while the remainder said they could implement changes in the next 2 – 6 months. 70% of respondents said that 75 – 100% of the information presented was new to them.

4. Implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) at the University of Sydney - Lessons Learned and Scaling Strategies
   One hundred and sixth-seven (167) registered for this webinar with 108 participating. 46% of survey respondents said they could apply what they learned immediately with 46% indicating they would implement this information in the next 2 – 6 months.

Really enjoyed all the quick demos as features were explained. Thanks for an informative and useful session.
(Webinar Participant)

With a focus on international examples ADCET has also produced 3 podcasts on UDL including:

1. Universal Design for Learning in Action – with Dara Ryder, CEO, AHEAD Ireland
   (297 people have accessed the podcast since its release in early July)
2. Universal Design for Learning in Action – with Lillian Nave, Appalachian State University, USA
   (122 people have accessed the podcast since its release in early October)
3. Universal Design for Learning in Action – with Dr Thomas Tobin, University of Wisconsin-Madison
   (23 people have accessed the podcast since its release in early October)

Two workshops to follow-up on the 2022 Masterclass series

These invitation-only workshops were offered to those who attended the December 2022 UDL Masterclass *Beyond Curiosity: Developing a sustainable roadmap for UDL implementation within your organisation* facilitated by international inclusive education expert Fredric Fovet. Workshop 1 had 21 participants and 15 participants in Workshop 2.

UDL Symposium

The Symposium received over 1020 registrations and 981 participations across 23 sessions.

1. From surveys to participants 67 originated from higher education and 26% from VET and the remainder from other areas.
2. 75% of respondents has some familiarity with UDL, 17% with advanced familiarity and 9% with no familiarity or preferred not to say.
3. 88% strongly agreed or agreed that after completing the Symposium they felt motivated to drive uptake of UDL in their institution
4. 97% strong agreed or agreed that they felt confidence to have a conversation about UDL implementation within their institution.
5. Many participants indicated in their anecdotal feedback that they had learned strategies that could be implemented immediately.

Below are some comments which reflect the common feeling amongst participants.

It was great seeing what others are up to at universities across Australia so lots of tips and strategies to think about and implement.

It was great to experience presenters modelling best practices. So many good ideas. Grateful for recordings, as there is more to explore there yet, and especially for this being a free development opportunity. Online made it very accessible. Thank you so much! Was inspired by the presenters and their expertise.

I loved this event. I had no idea what UDL was before attending and can't remember why or how I signed up, but I am so glad I did - it was a wonderful way to learn more and be more inclusive.

Engagement with promotional interventions

ADCET utilised its usual range of promotional strategies to promote it. This included features in three bi-monthly newsletter (3 issues), call outs to the AustEd email list 2 – 3 emails, targeted mailouts to key areas and social media.

We used *LinkedIn Advertising* to promote a range of UDL activities we undertook including webinars, podcasts and our UDL symposium. Through this paid advertising we were able to gain 81,397 impressions on our content and 850 click through to the content link with a click through rate of 1.04% on average.

In the period 1 April to 16 October key web pages increased traffic:

URL landing page	No of users
www.adcet.edu.au/udl-symposium	2675
www.adcet.edu.au/inclusive-teaching/universal-design-for-learning	1249
www.adcet.edu.au/udl-symposium/presentations	1104
www.adcet.edu.au /our-work/disability-awareness	619

Impact

As outlined in Figure 1, the MEF included short, medium and long-term outcomes to demonstrate the efficacy of the UDL eLearning Program and enhanced strategies such as the CoP and other promotional strategies.

Apart from the recording of the 'reach' or 'numbers of participants' as outlined in of the UDL eLearning program and other key strategies such as Community of Practice, webinars, podcasts and special events we have measured impact through a series of surveys to selected groups about their implementation of UDL.

While the survey cohorts are small, they are growing as ADCET continues to promote the eLearning and other activities to the sector.

Key results around impact have been measured through the following survey instruments:

1. survey results of those who have completed the UDL eLearning Program
2. survey results of those engaged with the UDL Community of Practice
3. survey results of those who attended UDL webinars and podcasts
4. survey results of those who attended the UDL Symposium and Masterclass workshops
5. levels of engagement with promotional interventions such as social media.

UDL eLearning module

As at 16 October 2023 133 people had completed the survey attached to the UDL eLearning module on the Disability Awareness website. Some key statistics include:

Participant characteristics

1. 65% of participants were involved directly in teaching and learning or learning design. The remainder including staff from areas such as equity/student support, library and information support, executive/leadership roles, information technology or administrative/customer support.
2. 62% of participants were from the Higher Education sector, 21% from VET, 4% dual sector, 4% from adult and community education, 6% from secondary education, and 3% from disability employment organisations.
3. 63% of participants work in metropolitan areas, 27% in regional areas, 5% rural, 1% remote and the remaining 4% from overseas.
4. The spread across states and territories including 21% in each of Queensland and Victoria, 16% in South Australia, 14% in New South Wales, 13% in Western Australia, 10% in Tasmania and 3% in each of Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory.

Participant knowledge acquisition, confidence and application

Participants were asked a series of questions related to engagement, confidence, understanding and future practice. Here are some insights on how completing the UDL eLearning program has helped their practice.

1. 93% said 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' the training course is relevant to their role.
2. Before undertaking the program 8% of participants said they had an 'excellent' understanding of UDL principles and 28% said they had a 'good' understanding of UDL principles.
3. After undertaking the program 48% said they had an 'excellent' understanding of UDL principles and 44% said they had a 'good' understanding of UDL principles.
4. 64% 'strongly agree' that the course met with expectations and 30% 'agreed'.

5. 38% said they were 'very confident' in applying UDL practices and approaches in their work followed by 53% who said they were 'mostly confident'.
6. 93% 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that the course provided them with practical examples of how to apply UDL to their practice.
7. When asking participants how likely they were to make changes to their practice to incorporate just one more option of each of the UDL principles – engagement, representation and action and expression participants said they were 'very likely' or 'slightly likely' at 88%, 91%, and 85% respectively.

The jump from 36% to 92% in terms of 'good to excellent knowledge of UDL principles' is particularly notable as it demonstrates the transformation in knowledge and confidence in understanding the UDL principles. It also shows a high likelihood that participants will adopt this new knowledge into their everyday practice.

It would be useful in the future to consider deeper evaluation into how these changes have a positive impact on the students and that teaching and learning staff continue to be guided to good practice in UDL.

Quotes from participants in UDL eLearning module

I feel like this is the perfect introduction to this concept. I only have a very beginner understanding of UDL and this really covered the basics. I feel a lot more ready to go and do independent learning now.

I have a leadership role in learning and teaching in my institution, and I am also the chair of our inclusion committee. I did the course both to help myself but also to review its potential usefulness in supporting our institution towards applying UDL principles broadly across our courses. Safe to say I'll definitely be recommending it! Thank you for the work put into creating this.

I work as a Teacher of the Deaf with Primary and Secondary students. I found the information in the course relevant to my area of teaching, while giving me an insight as to what can be incorporated in VET/Uni settings that I can share with students.

I thoroughly enjoyed the course and found it very valuable. Easy to follow and a great example of UDL in itself. As a learning designer this exposure to good practise is exactly what I've been looking for. Our team will be working on a UDL project in 2022 and I will be recommending we purchase you course to deliver to academics/ teachers as a part of their UDL journey. Congratulations to everyone involved in producing this great resource! Thankyou.

Very well made. I love that it is free and that I can pass it along to others. We don't have the benefits of a city for connecting and attending affordable training here…an invaluable resource.

The course practices what it preaches which I also love - it makes it a useful tool for introducing others to these concepts (and shows them what it can look like).

Lessons Learned

The implementation of UDL across the tertiary education is a marathon not a sprint. There are a range of challenges before UDL is effectively implemented across education providers in a comprehensive way that will make a difference, not just to students with disability, but to all diverse learners.

As previously stated, we are not yet able to interrogate the long-term goals and outcomes from the Evaluation Framework related to monitoring the impact on students undertaking courses underpinned by UDL given that the uptake of UDL across the sector is still in its infancy.

Key challenges to implementation of UDL include:

Sector wide challenges

These include the lack of attention paid to compliance with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* with no compulsion for education providers to have a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) which clearly outlines strategic intent. A DIAP should include actions which address the physical, digital, cultural and learning and teaching barriers to participation by people with disability. Only 15 out of 38 universities have a formal and up to date DIAP and out of the seven states and territories only New South Wales and South Australia have a DIAP, and one of eight of Victoria's institutes[1].

Funding

The tertiary education sector lacks the appropriate funding to build capacity amongst education providers to adopt UDL as a whole-of-institution mechanism for inclusive teaching. Currently the *Higher Education Disability Support Program (DSP)* is not adequate to support whole-of-institution adoption which includes ensuring that learning management systems and associated ICT is accessible.

The funding provided to ADCET to build capacity amongst the tertiary education workforce is also inadequate and with the cessation of the NDCO Program which underwrites it ADCET will not be able to provide the ongoing capacity-building to support and monitor implementation in the sector. Additional funding could allow ADCET to provide better collaborative opportunities to work closely with individual providers to elevate their disability inclusion strategies and support implementation of UDL.

Learning and teaching capacity

For academics, educators, trainers and learning designers the impacts of competing demands, workloads, an increasingly casualised workforce also impacts the ability to fully embrace UDL. Educators have the will but need additional support to implement changes. Again, this starts with strategic leadership to support wholesale implementation.

Wider workforce capacity-building

Broader adoption of disability awareness training such as that provided through ADCET's

introductory disability awareness training is essential for ensuring that the tertiary education workforce is disability confident and compliant. There have been multiple recommendations to make disability awareness training mandatory within the sector[2]. ADCET's program has seen over 34,000 enrolments and adoption of over 520 organisations across the tertiary education sector and beyond.

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[1] Desktop audit of the AHRC Register of Disability Action Plans

[2] Supporting persons with disabilities to succeed in higher education - NCSEHE and Final Report of the 2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005 - Department of Education, Australian Government both make recommendations for professional development for tertiary education providers

Comprehensive adoption of disability awareness training should be mandatory as a starting point for all staff to better understand disability inclusion with additional training for educators in UDL.

Recommendations

These issues require significant support and commitment through the following recommendations.

1. Extend funding to ADCET to support the ongoing advancement of UDL implementation through the activities in the *Advancing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in tertiary education* project
2. Provide additional funding to ADCET to support closer consultation, liaison and support to educators across the tertiary education sector which would include additional local support to develop Disability Inclusion Action Plans which embed strategies such as UDL, ICT procurement, disability awareness training and monitoring and evaluation into the organisation
3. Promote the Evaluation Framework to tertiary education providers who have adopted the UDL eLearning program into their Learning Management Systems and work with them to improve feedback on the UDL eLearning program.

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