JULIE FRY: Thank you. It is good to work with you again for the disability practitioners and the academics across the sectors. I guess we just wanted to start with saying that we are really privileged to be a part of this. We have both done our research around specific learning difficulties, so to be a part of the Opening All Options package is exciting for us. We have been able to apply a lot of knowledge that has come through to us from the voices of practitioners and students. Jo, do you want to add?

JOANNE WEBBER: Yes. Just appreciating the student perspective has been fascinating in ensuring their voices are heard and this group that is often misunderstood is understood a little bit better through today's conversation.

JULIE FRY: To start off, we will go through a contents page. For people who are new, I guess, to the disability role in education, you won't have that historical context of Opening All Options and for me when I was in UDLO many years ago, it was like a Bible. When I came across Opening All Options it just opened my eyes and my knowledge to what students with specific learning disabilities were experiencing. Having moved through many years of experience, I realise now that there were still some shortcomings. What we have done as a project team with Darlene and Jane and Jo myself is looking at what the gaps in knowledge when they come into oo tertiary Ed and even for some experienced, what we're missing in the sector. Opening All Options many provide information about what SLD is. It provides information about a framework to work with students with SLD. It really places emphasis on the relationship between the practitioner and the student. We also included a screening and referral process. DLOs are not practitioners but they need to be smart about picking indicators for specific learning disabilities and understanding the role.

That screening and referral process has been built quite explicitly for the new disability practitioner to use and for the more experienced practitioner to review and utilise. We also talk about what is involved in assessment for SLD. That's really important. That was one of the gaps I found when I started many years ago. I could identify that a person wasn't comprehending what they were reading, but I didn't understand what was happening for them at a cognitive level. So understanding what a psychologist will assess for assists us to determine exactly what adjustments we need to be putting in place for them. So more explicit information about the different profiles of SLD and the importance of collaborating with academics and working with them to develop reasonable adjustments on behalf of the students. There is also tips for new practitioners and that has come through Jo and my research. We spoke directly with practitioners who are experiencing success in the approach they have with SLD. Quite a lot of tips for new practitioners that will be very valuable. The range of profiles, aligning our adjustments and teaching strategies. Jo has a particular bent on design strategies which is important to including all students with disabilities, but creating an environment for students with SLD to not be on the fringe, to be genuinely included and participating in their learning. Lastly, we included academic skills support which wasn't a component of the last Opening All Options and that's a critical factor that Jo can speak on.

So what do we know about specific learning disability, Jo?

JOANNE WEBBER: Yes. I guess you should have in front of you the definition through the DSM-V. It affects specific areas of functioning and importantly it can impact each individual quite differently. So we might find that one person will have strengths in maybe communicating information verbally, but may have weaknesses in processing the written word, whereas somebody else might have completely the opposite profile. So we always encourage you to get to know each individual student and what their processing preferences are, what their strengths are and what their weaknesses are. That's best determined through a formal specific learning disability assessment with the psychologist. Once we know that information, we can work really closely with the student on determining the best supports for them.

Dyslexia is the most common of all specific learning disabilities, impacting 80 to 85% of people with an SLD. An SLD is one of the most common if not the most common disability that we would encounter in society, across any culture or any language. It impacts, approximately, 10% of the population. We don't have consistently accurate statistics in Australia because it's not well supported or not well understood in every context. We know from international research in America and the UK that it impacts, approximately, 10% of the population.

JULIE FRY: Thanks, Jo. Darlene, could you move to the next slide? Excellent. Dot points on what Jo had just covered, I guess.

I guess the key points in there is that people with SLD have a range of abilities as well as a range of difficulties in the area of academic learning and the key for us is to actually harness abilities to build strengths could overcome the difficulties in the academic environment. That's what this Opening All Options resource has been designed to do, to support disability practitioners.

The education context in Australia - I'm not sure - we won't go into this in great detail, but Australia is so far behind the rest of the English-speaking world, we are yet to formally recognise specific learning disabilities such as dyslexia in our primary and secondary systems. We're only just now seeing a really strong federal push down to the States to start to embed awareness. This is occurring in our compulsory education sector regardless of disability discrimination legislation at a federal level. What is happening for the post-secondary sector is that people are arriving, I guess, at TAFE and universities and other providers having very little knowledge about their learning difficulties and having received very little support or academic accommodations around their learning disabilities. Jo wanted to add to that, I know, because of the work you've done with students. You had quite powerful stories.

JOANNE WEBBER: Yeah. Sure. Thanks Julie. I think the work that we have both done and along with my research has shown that students often get quite angry when they suddenly are exposed to a whole range of amazing support in tertiary education to deal with their specific learning university or when first diagnosed in university and TAFE. Looking back on their schooling, they feel frustrated. They will say they were excused from difficult tasks rather than empowered in developing techniques to manage those tasks. So they will get angry that they never learnt to write well until starting university and connecting with disability supports and with the learning skills advices. Many students will come with maybe inappropriate strategies or undeveloped strategies from secondary schools so that transition is even more important in developing the right skills and awareness and support and working through with students, some of their frustrations and anger as well when they reflect back on their primary schooling and second schooling.

JULIE FRY: Yeah. I think one of the stories or a few of the stories I listened to when you were running your focus groups with students, I guess what you just touched on about the anger, that was so deeply entrenched in some of those students. They were so angry at being ripped off through their compulsory education system. While they appreciated the DLO and academics in their new environment, actually sitting down and listening to them, it made them even more aware of what they had lost, the opportunity they had lost in the past. They were really powerful stories. They've really influenced how Jo and I have designed Opening All Options in partnership with Darlene and Jane, really having the student's voice coming through the recommendations for our practice.

If you move on to the disability practitioners in tertiary education slide, the other thing that's coming through quite strongly for us is that disability practitioners in tertiary education are pioneers in Australia. We're doing research at the moment across the primary and compulsory education sector and we have teachers who are trying their hearts out but have not been equipped with the knowledge they need to support students with SLD. They haven't received the training in their pre-service teacher education. They're actually seeking it on their own. What we have in the tertiary education sector is 20 years of practice with them that our DLOs have shared and passed down to new DLOs through their very structured networks state by state. It is a shame that we don't have more research coming out of the tertiary education sector about our practice because our research has revealed that we have quite sophisticated practice coming through our DLO services in TAFEs and universities across Australia.

I guess we really want to emphasise that quite strongly through our presentation. For us to be sharing what we have, we can influence at the compulsory education sector as well. The model of practice that's coming through our disability services that are experiencing success with students with specific learning disabilities and especially through Jo's research where she has worked with students who have experienced success through tertiary education, Jo and I have found very strong synergies between the practitioners' perspectives on what facilitates success and the students' experience of what facilitates success. That can be wrapped up nicely in the framework of personalised learning which is on the next slide there.

The DLOs that are working really well with students with specific learning disabilities, they position the learner at the centre, they build really strong relationships with those students from the very, very early days, and students who say they have developed really strong positive relationships with DLOs will also say that this is the first time somebody has sat down with them and genuinely asked what is your lived experience of dyslexia. They really is the questions that are meaningful for the student and want to know the nuts and bolts of how their life has worked, their educational history, where they have succeeded, where they have had difficulties and really understand the strengths and the deficits, I guess, of each individual student.

The research around personalised learning reflects beautifully, I guess, the model of practice that we have come across as we interview the DLOs that are working successfully with students with specific learning disability. They embed universal design in their practice, they work with academics to talk about universal design, they have a human rights approach to access and genuine participation, they personalise and understand every student uniquely and what their profile, they understand the profile of SLD. They are looking for sustainable solutions and I guess the key to that is it can have support when we're in tertiary education, but how do those solutions travel with that student into their world of employment. Our focus is not on, I guess, expensive and commercial interventions while they're in tertiary education, we have to focus on interventions that become portable and can be moved by students or implemented in different environments. The DLOs working very well have this mindset and framework that they're working to.

Jo, did you want to add anything to that?

JOANNE WEBBER: Yeah. For sure. A nice example given by one of my research participants found it very impressive when she met with her DLO for the first time at TAFE and she said, look, the DLO just asked me do I prefer to listen to things or have information written down, do I need to take my own notes or have somebody else summarise notes for me, and she said it was just such a lovely conversation about her processing preferences, what were her barriers and what were the supports to match her barriers and how to harness her strengths as well within her SLD profile. She was so impressed by that approach, which was simple and straightforward but something she had never had at primary school or high school, but just it stems from that conversation, personal practice and then creating solutions based on individual needs.

JULIE FRY: Thank you. What we have done with the Opening All Options resource has embedded elements of the personalised learning that is critical to building the relationship with the student and to explore and assess for the students' strengths and for the students' difficulties and I guess to explore within the environment how we remove barriers to genuine participation for the individual students. The resource has been designed to step a new DLO, I guess, through the stages of understanding personalised learning, building the relationship, asking specific questions and it goes so far as to give examples of some of those questions.

If you look at the next slide, learner-centred practice, I guess it is about building relationships and becoming the person that really understands the lived experience of SLD for that student and exploring with that student what their strengths are. So strength-based practice is integral to this model of practice, and within that is future oriented interventions. Solution focused practice, the DLOs that we spoke to across Victoria, they're very solution focused. They could harness the strength of students and look to their past where they had success. It didn't have to be in the education environment, but where they felt strong, confident and capable in an environment. They could break that down with the student and pull out the unique skills and knowledge of that student and then apply those strengths to a future in education, applying every unique individual strength of the student to solutions to removing barriers in the education environment. That's specific practice that we came across in our research. It was mind-blowing. I must say I was in awe of the DLOs that we talked to through our research, and to hear the students' stories behind that, that reinforced and identified some DLOs that we were identifying in the other research and it was reinforcing the power of the practice and empowerment that was imposed and supported by the students.

The other dot points on building awareness and advocacy and that comes out of your research.

JOANNE WEBBER: Yeah. For sure. Thinking of some of the students who said at primary school and high school they were just given a whole lot of different ways to avoid doing tasks yet just drawing on your point around building strengths and getting to know the student, they have mentioned many times that at TAFE and university that they were then empowered with different technology or skills or strategies to actually undertake tasks and experience success for the first time and so many, many participants in my research, their very first opportunity to experience success was in tertiary education. Those students were the same students that said "I became the go-to student or the smart student in class in uni". However, they said, "I was always in the dumb-arse class at primary school and high school", and they always felt left behind and unable to show their potential in secondary school. So it's really interesting to see that putting into practice this learner-centred approach and building on strengths and developing strategies to build on weaknesses as well is actually incredibly powerful for the students, that many of them broke down and cried when they said, this is my first time I've felt like I'm intelligent and capable. So it has been quite a powerful story that we hear from these students.

In terms of building self-awareness, rarely the diagnosis was the most powerful factor for these students in my study, and I know a lot of these students have come from a context where they say don't label, don't label, it's going to damage them, but these students are labelling themselves in the playground. The labels that they shared with me before their diagnosis was, you know, I was the dumb kid, I was the stupid kid, I was always told I was lazy and not trying hard enough. We know these children and parents and adults are labelling regardless of a diagnosis. The difference is once students gain a diagnosis, they're saying, wow, okay, I'm dyslexic, that's okay, but I'm really good at this, this and this and I need some assistance in these areas. They understand this profile and so many of the participants in my study said, finally, I'm not stupid, you know, after their diagnosis and they say this is what is going on for them and gained more confidence once they had their diagnosis. One of the factors prior to the diagnosis was that students would globalise their self-identity to say, ooh, I find this difficult. Therefore, I'm stupid, and would globalise that rather than afternoon their diagnosis they would compartmentalise that as who they were and saying I'm not stupid, I'm really smart, but I have some difficulty and need assistance in these areas. So their whole self-identity shifted once they gained their diagnosis.

JULIE FRY: Yeah. That leads really nicely into the next screen on the screening process. This is the first phase, I guess, of supporting students to start to understand what might be going on for them and also assist the DLO in determining whether a referral for a formal diagnosis of dyslexia or other SLD is identified. I struggled with making the referral because of the cost to the people as it's not a funded support that we see for people with SLD. It can often cost up to 11 or 12 hundred dollars for a really, really good diagnosis and report for someone with SLDs. One of the areas that I needed support in when I was a DLO was understanding the screening process, understanding what am I looking for before I make that recommendation. I don't want to send them off and let the recommendation tell me whether they have it or not because that's a burden I'm placing on the student. So the screening process is really important. In the original opening options there was a lovely flow chart that could help you differentiate between whether the person had English as a second language issues or whether the person had an SLD. That was great as a starting point for me and we talked about putting that back into the new package, but we actually haven't. We have actually encompassed it differently by giving the DLO a series of questions. If we're going to align this with personalised learning, we need more than a flow chart to tick off. We need to actually start building the relationship. So we took that flow chart and broke it down into a screening process where the DLO has, I guess, a sample question to ask around particular areas of difficulty that will assist the DLO to determine whether this is an indicator of dyslexia or another SLD or whether this is an indicator of, perhaps, gaps in formative education or impact from comprehension through medication. There's a whole range of issues that could impact learning that are not SLDs. So we have developed a screening process and we've actually researched quite broadly to ensure that the questions we're asking are those that would be endorsed through any SLD assessment process.

Do you want to move to the next slide, Darlene, which goes into the formal assessment.

From the screening process, at the end of a screening process with a student you will have a very clear indication through the tool we've provided whether you need to then move on to formal assessment. That's a really important point because that's where you have some deeper level conversations with the student about, I guess, what they're going to face when they go into a formal assessment, what it entails, what a label might mean to them. You might need to contextualise. You have been carrying a label of stupid or dumb or not competent. An assessment will give you identification of where your learning deficits are but it will determine whether you have average or higher intelligence and that's the discrepancy we see with people with SLD. Jo did you want to add before we go into the formal assessment here? The profiling, for example?

JOANNE WEBBER: Yeah. Certainly for students to really understand, like, typically learning disability, people have average to above average intelligence and certainly developing a specific learning disability profile occurs through a formal assessment and once people know their strengths, and often they fall within the top 5% in certain areas of processing, and so it will identify their strengths and how they use those two improve their ability to study and what strategies they're going to use and then identifying the areas where they might be quite low and for students to then develop the support strategies to help address those weaknesses as well as developing independent learning strategies. So it could be using a assisted technology or developing other techniques to build on their weaknesses is critical when we're looking at the assessment and what that assessment means in terms of academic supports.

JULIE FRY: Yeah. It also endorses intervention. It validates what we can do inside the education organisation. I guess we need to do that for any person with a disability. We need to have that evidence. A formal assessment will actually specify and target the intervention for us. I can't reinforce enough how inadequate I used to feel as a new DLO because I didn't understand sometimes what the profiling of an SLD meant. I didn't understand the terminology, I didn't understand what the cognitive processing deficit really meant. Back then we were still in visual processing. What does that mean to dyslexia? Now we know vision is not connected to dyslexia, it is around sound and hearing. So there's so much that a DLO needs to get their head around. I think the formal assessment is critical. When we have strong indicators of an SLD, we need to move forward to that formal assessment because the map for intervention. If we have a good assessment back and we have included in the Opening All Options resource a referral letter that guides a DLO on how to identify the strengths of the students, the difficulties they are experiencing and what you ask from that formal assessment, and if you go to the next slide, what we need from an assessment we can talk to that more, but we will get evidence on the next slide that it exists but it will profile that SLD. What we didn't have before in Opening All Options was understanding the various profiles that occur for individuals with a specific learning disability, and even for the diagnosis of dyslexia, there are so many profiles and make up for that disability, so what is happening for the individual. I know I was guilty of applying standard interventions because dyslexia means difficulty with the written word. Okay, we will have a note taker. Some people don't need a note taker. Some people need a very different intervention. So it's understanding what that might be. A very good assessment will actually breakdown your interventions and recommendations back in their report to you. So the way we've designed your referral process in Opening All Options demands of the psychologist doing the assessment to give you back very explicit guidance and instructions on what will be the most meaningful and effectual intervention for the individual student's profile.

The other elements to that, internationally we're moving away from the discrepancy model for SLD. We no longer see discrepancy in the formal diagnostic processes, but there was a recent research across Australia last year that shows that Australian psychologists are still assessing against IQ. We have maintained that because 85% of the psychologists across Australia still believe that the IQ assessment is one of their strongest indicators for dyslexia. We agree with that too. The power of diagnosis that has come through Jo's research around, I have average intelligence, but I was labelled slow and dumb and put into special education classes. The power of learning the capability that I have and the potential I have can flip a person's world and just open up all the opportunities there are for them. I remember one of the DLOs telling me that it took quite a while for them to work through the process of referral for an adult woman who believed she was intellectually incapacitated. When she finally got her diagnosis assessment and saw that her IQ was actually above average, she explained it to me that the woman was almost doing cart wheels down the hallway after her assessment. She went on to graduate and move overseas to work in a dream job that she'd had, but prior to that she had limited herself because of her label of dumb. So we agree an assessment is critical, where the indicators show up in your screening process, but we've also included all of those guidance notes and, I guess, referral steps inside the ... you can adopt and change those, but they will guide you what you need to ask the psychologists so you get a clear understanding of what profile of SLD is occurring for that student.

That leads us into reasonable adjustments, I guess, and Jo, did you want to introduce the reasonable adjustments?

JOANNE WEBBER: Yeah. Sure. I guess just launching back from the diagnosis and perceptions that others have people with a specific learning disability, that often there is that discrepancy as well in that space where people with a specific learning disability, especially once they have achieved their diagnosis, will realise, hey, I'm actually really capable and many have quite high aspirations, yet others may still have quite low expectations of people with a specific learning disability. That came through strongly in my research in the secondary education sector where students would consistently put in the special education class where the students in my study called the dumb-arse class, which is pretty common language, and they would just feel as though people didn't think they could achieve much. So when people then applied to get into tertiary education and have been ... it's really shaken that thinking around expectations. We still know that many of the external exam processes that enable people to get into further education are quite a significant hurdle for a person with a SLD because there's no supports. Many will come through TAFE, experience success for the first time at TAFE and then go on to university. So we know that's quite a tip cam transition pathway for people who have come from a space where they have had low expectations and then start to return into education through TAFE and then go on to university. So we often find that identified adjustments can take a while and trial an error. Using the assessment is a fantastic foundation. Some students have reported to me that they don't feel entitled to adjustments, so it's important to work through with the student to say these adjustment rz are in place to create a level playing field for you because in their past education experiences they've either been denied adjustments or been told, look, it's not fair on the others, not realising this is actually a legitimate disability, the others don't need it, the people with the specific learning disability will need specific adjustments to demonstrate their capacity. So really thinking through what adjustments match the learning profile of students, how to harness their strengths but also support their weaknesses. They often worked through that with the student and reference to their learning profile in their assessment.

JULIE FRY: Yeah. I guess the other point with reasonable adjustments is that the DLOs that were, I guess, facilitating whole of organisation awareness and were very good at universal design strategies across the organisation, had come to understand that while they may understand the specific learning disabilities through the assessment that comes back and have a more enhanced awareness of what conceptual processes is and what processing speed is and, you know, understand what's happening for the profile of the student, they also understood that they can't get inside every training package and every university course and understand the academic requirements, the assessment requirement, the inherent requirement that students are actually assessed as they work through those units of competency or units in higher education.

These DLOs work very closely with the academic and I think the creative stories that we got through our research about sometimes the reasonable adjustment report didn't actually happen because sitting down with the student, the DLO and the academic, the academic could identify a universal design approach, I could do this for all students, I could alter this slightly and it would make it different for you but it would benefit all students. So they started to work much more on a universal design approach that moves the student away from special and different things to just having, I guess, participation opened up to them through an awareness by the academic. That was facilitated through the DLO having that very strong self-awareness that while they can be an expert on knowledge about a disability with the student, they need the expert knowledge of the academic to work on building adjustments that don't water down courses. Our students have told us very clearly that - is that a timer? No.

NEW SPEAKER: It's the phone, sorry.

JULIE FRY: One of the strong messages that came through from our students was that if you water the course down or if the adjustments are extreme, I might qualify from this course but I may never believe that I have justly deserved my award. So the more that we could turn things into universal design and open up participation and students felt that they were actually achieving at the same level as their peers through the course, the power for that student on completion was magnified enormously. They believed they had the same skills as their peers, they believed they could apply for the same employment opportunities or advance their study. So how we put reasonable adjustments in place is critical and not always about having a support worker sitting beside that person with a disability.

One of the most powerful strategies is assistive technology and that's on the next slide there. What we included in Opening All Options was the set framework that has been developed and used internationally across a number of universities and vocational education sectors. SETT is a model for determining the appropriate inclusive assistive technology that will work to the profile of a student. I know that across education in Australia in years gone by we've tried our hardest, but I know that we bought expensive commercial products and because we had them rolled out across the institute, we almost tried to fit people into square boxes to use this technology. We didn't have a really good understanding of when is voice to text important, when is text to voice important, when is a graphic organiser more important than any of the speech technologies. So understanding our profile of SLD which comes through our screening and our formal assessment process on Opening All Options, we then begin to apply a SETT framework that looks at the most appropriate inclusive technologies, assistive technology that we can use for that student. What we've done also really poorly in Australia is we've assumed ICT skills. We know that the latest research coming out, and this is not just in Australia, but in English-speaking countries, that this assumption around ICT skills has actually watered down and depleted skills because we've removed IT courses from a number of organisations. We know that while 70% of households might have a computer, only 40% of our population understand how to use a computer for anything other than social media. A lot of people returning to study who have a specific learning disability are people that are second-chance learners and they don't have fundamental ICT skills. So teaching how to use technology alongside teaching someone to use assistive technology is a key ingredient that was sometimes overlooked. That's really, really important when we determine whether assistive technology is the right way go forward. They need to have fundamental skills in computing before we start to introduce them to complex software programs.

On the other hand, we also have very simple programs on our iPhone. Dragon dictation. So introducing them to mainstream software solutions that can be much more universal than commercial products where they have to come to the TAFE to use it or come to the university to use it.

The SETT framework has been stepped out in the Opening All Options resource and at each point of student environment task tools there's guidance notes to support the DLO to work through that assessment with the student.

The next slide moves us into another really important area which is academic and study skills. Jo, I know you had some key points that you wanted to present here.

JOANNE WEBBER: Yeah. Sure. Just on the technology point as well, certainly from my research, it was the mainstream inclusive technologies, really following the universal design principle that the students with the specific learning disabilities embraced far more than any adaptive technology and it just normalised how they used equipment that really targeted their learning profile. So they would use things like word prediction or text prediction applications or things like Dragon on their iPhone or audio record lectures in a way that was quite acceptable for any student to do. So certainly using some of the mainstream technology has been beneficial for students with an SLD.

In terms of the academic study skills, not only using technology but adopting skills like mind mapping or reading strategies, writing strategies. There's a whole range of techniques that students with an SLD develop and often those techniques were really well developed when students met with the learning skills advisers at their universities. So that often occurred through a referral from the disability adviser across to the learning skills adviser and they were able to gain some really targeted one-on-one tuition around what skills they needed to build on and the learning skills advisors were absolute experts for these students in empowering them on skills that they may have never had the opportunity to develop in the past.

JULIE FRY: You said earlier about your students being excused through the secondary school system and not allowed to participate in some of the academic requirement. That's the story that we hear through the DLO office often. The students that - they're already failing in primary school with an SLD. They very quickly fall behind their peers. By the time they get to secondary school, they are almost excused or not expected to participate at the academic level that others their age and year level are doing. When we get them in the tertiary environment, they often have never really constructed an essay. They don't understand the organisation of constructing a paragraph from topic, elaborating, authenticating or linking to the next paragraph. So some very fundamental academic skills. The success that was coming through from the disability research was the DLOs were actually doing what you said and linking with learning support and working collaboratively. They were supporting students to develop fundamental academic skills at the same time as getting their head around the content in their course and sometimes simultaneously introducing some of that mainstream software like dictating your thoughts to Dragon and going back over it later and not losing the thoughts because your working memory is getting in the way of maintaining your thoughts. So there was this quite sophisticated model of intervention. We have included in Opening All Options these strategies and the importance of embedding every element of it depending on the student and the strengths and the difficulties that they're presenting with.

NEW SPEAKER: We're just getting a lot of background noise. I don't know if there's somebody talking in the background, but we're getting a lot of male voices talking and so forth.

JULIE FRY: They're coming through my headset too. They're in my headset too.

NEW SPEAKER: I don't know if it's Jo's environment. We have about ten minutes to go.

JULIE FRY: Excellent. We have really only got two points are the teaching and universal design and then we wanted to talk about the communities of practice.

JOANNE WEBBER: I might let you talk about that and I will see if I can quieten that noise.

JULIE FRY: I might just touch on this slightly because we have included it right across the presentation, but we have emphasised through Opening All Options the power of universal design strategies. One of the, I guess, our findings is that power for the academic. DLOs have knowledge the academics that they don't have appeared vice versa. Drn - and vice versa. When they come up with solutions that can support everybody who is studying in that course, that that is quite a powerful approach. It is also empowering for the academic because it is enhancing their teaching practice as well. So teaching in universal design strategies are core to the whole process. It guides academics to become much more explicit, if we support our academics to understand how to break tasks down and to give explicit instructions. Doing that is important for all the students, changing it for everyone, and making your instructions explicit so there's no confusion to happen. To break a task down and be very explicit, for a person with an SLD means that they can look at part 1 and work on that. They tell us to look at the whole assessment task and everything that is required can be so overwhelming for them that they give up before they start. So working on small parts of an assessment task as they work through is really important.

Teachers giving practical examples, once again, being extremely explicit. It's a learning curve for them. Some DLOs actually worked with their departments that did the teacher or academic professional development and got inside there and started to deliver around practical examples, explicit teaching, explicit development of assessment tasks and the change that came out of that was quite powerful. When you ask an academic to assess their assessment question and hand that out to other peers and have it interoged and brought back, that's quite a powerful process and vulnerable process for many, but for the students the outcome of that was really powerful because the assessment question became very, very clear for everybody. The DLO really does need, and we know this, to work comprehensively and collaboratively across the organisation to embed universal design wherever possible. I guess assistive technology in learning centres is critical as well. We have put different tips up for you to look at on how to do that, but instead of working with one person for text to speech, having information around the organisation that says if you require text to speech or headphones for text to speech, please contact the help desk. Just making it very normal to have information like that available for students.

The last point that we wanted to talk about was, I guess, the DLOs that were evidencing really sophisticated practice with students with specific learning disabilities belonged to a community of practice. In Victoria it was. TDN, the TAFE Disability Network. They share and learnt together, they trusted each other, they talked openly about when they thought they might have made a mistake, when they had imposed an intervention without understanding the profile of the student and through their sharing and honesty they had developed a place where they could really build professional development collaboratively. We can't reinforce enough how important that community of practice is. I know as a DLO many years ago, I went to TDN and I was overwhelmed by the knowledge around the table and I was too scared to say I stuffed up. It took me, I guess, 12 months before I had that level of comfort and could really draw on the expertise around the table. I used to go and suck up the information and take it away, but I didn't openly give of myself and give enough information and guidance back. The DLOs that are at that sophisticated level are calling on each other constantly. They don't have to wait for a meeting. They've made their networks, they're developing themselves and they are practicing through a professional framework which is that personalised learning model.

We might need to leave it there. I think our timing is--

NEW SPEAKER: Do you want to make a comment, Jo?

JOANNE WEBBER: No. We're pretty close to it. If people have any questions.

NEW SPEAKER: One question is what percentage of students in the focus group that you had, Jo, were from Aboriginal backgrounds?

JOANNE WEBBER: None of them from Aboriginal backgrounds, but probably only a small percentage, three or four, from other cultural backgrounds.

DARLENE: The only other question is around the opening options resource. Just to let you know, it is actually on ADCET's website, but it's also in the side button of the website. So there's different pages with different content. If you are wanting to share information with teachers or academics, you can certainly copy the URL and send it to them. You can print pages from that website, from ADCET and from those pages in particular, and as Julie and Jo showcased in their presentation, there are tools in there such as the letter out to the assessed person doing assessment and so forth. Hopefully you will find it very useful because it has been fantastic to work with Julie and Jo on this project.

If there are no other questions, any final remarks, Julie and Jo?

JULIE FRY: No. It was great to share today.

DARLENE: Thank you everybody for your patience. We have people speaking in the background but it has been a challenging webinar. We thank you for that. You haven't seen the stress that we have been feeling here, but once again we're excited to have brought you another webinar and hope you enjoyed it and look forward to getting your feedback about Opening All Options. So thank you and take care, everybody.