DARREN BRITTEN: Thank you, everybody, for joining us here today. My name is Darren Britten, National Assistive Technology Officer with the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training, that is ADCET for short. This webinar is being live captioned. To activate those captions click on the cc button in the tool bar that's located either on the top or the bottom of your screen. We also have captions available via the browser, if you prefer, which will now be added into the chat box for you to utilise that way.

I am coming to you virtually today from the lands of the Wurundjeri people in Victoria, along with colleagues on Lutruwita, which is Tasmanian Aboriginal land. In the spirit of reconciliation, ADCET respectfully acknowledges both the Lutruwita and Kulin nations, and also recognises the Aboriginal history and culture of the land, and I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to the many Aboriginal people that did not make elder status. I would also like to acknowledge all the other countries and any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People participating in this webinar today and acknowledge their Elders and ancestors and their legacy to us. If you would like to share where you are coming from, the lands you're on, in the chat, that would be most welcome.

Today's webinar Beyond Accommodations: Why Universal Design Matters for all Learners is presented by Rachel Coathup from TextHelp. Rachel will provide an overview and demonstration of TextHelp's Read&Write and OrbitNote, which are universally designed literacy tools that remove barriers to literacy and learning, while supporting students in everyday tasks like studying, revising and learning.

Before we begin, just a few small housekeeping details. This webinar is being live captioned by Jason ‑ thank you, Jason ‑ from Bradley Reporting, and is being recorded. The recording will be available on ADCET in the coming days after the conclusion of this webinar.

If you have any technical difficulties, please email admin@adcet.edu.au. That's admin@adcet.edu.au. This presentation will run for around 45, 50 minutes. At the end of that, there will be time for any questions you may have for Rachel. Throughout the presentation please feel free to use the chat box with us and to chat with each other, but please remember to choose all panelists and attendees so your messages can go to everybody and people can read what you have to say.

Rachel is happy to answer questions at the end. And if you have questions that you would like asked, please use the Q&A box rather than the chat box and we will read those out at the end.

Thank you everybody for joining us. Very timely topic, given we're all in crunch mode at the moment with students returning across the tertiary sector, have started already for some and some are starting next week, and in the weeks ahead. Over to you, Rachel, thank you.

RACHEL COATHUP: Thank you. Hi, everyone. My name's Rachel. I'm the Customer Success Director here at TextHelp. My email is there. If you do have any questions and want to find out any more information, please reach out. I am also available on X or Twitter @TechMissC.

I would like to start with an acknowledgement of country. I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and pay my respects to the Elders, both past and present, and I extend that respect to First Nations Peoples here today.

As I start today, I would like to sort of bring that awareness to the different adjustments and accommodations that are in place. And this slide has an image of a clock, a student taking some notes, and then just some different file formats. And the reason that I wanted to put this up is that when we think about making those accommodations, this often refers to that idea of the act of changing something to fit a particular need or situation. For example, an educator might make accommodations for a student with a disability by giving them extra time to complete an assignment. Differentiating accommodations and assistive technology are often bridges to support. And it is not to say that there isn't a time and a place for these, but actually why do we always start here? Why do we start as that bridge to support? Actually, what if rather than applying a bandaid solution, we actually started from the ground up when we think about accessibility?

It is that idea around assistive technology that is accessible to everyone. Assistive technology is not just screen readers for someone with low vision. It makes everything accessible to all. When a door opens automatically in a building, it doesn't just have to be for someone in a wheelchair. But maybe when you're carrying your laptop and your coffee and suddenly you have to try and open a forward‑facing door.

We can give pupils a choice when it comes to how they learn. And ultimately, when we think about universal design for learning, we want to be able to make learning accessible to everyone and offer those learners choice of how they interact with resources and how they complete their learning and showing their understanding.

If we make all learners aware of the significant benefits of the use of assistive technology, we can help to create that more personal learning environment. We ultimately want to develop learner agency for everyone, where learners can access what they need, when they need, without that dependence of going and needing to request access to that.

So most of you may have heard of this analogy of the bowling line. That's that idea of the pins that we have with a bowling ball going towards it, ultimately trying to get that strike. And that's that idea around if we are trying to support all learners, we might go full steam ahead in being able to achieve that. But ultimately, in all the will in the world, sometimes that doesn't happen and we end up with that division and that split where we're left with those two pins on the left and right‑hand side of the bowling lane.

When we think about those accommodations, we are then limiting our learners in being able to access that. And when we consider universal design for learning first, we're able to put those systems and supports in place and ensure that everyone is responsible and acknowledges the importance of that.

Ultimately, it's giving students and the learners and yourselves what you need when you need it. Not having to ask and seek out because there are steps in place to go through to request assistive technology.

And we know from the statistics that 1 in 5 people are neurodivergent, with neurodivergence including attention deficit disorder, autism, dyslexia and dyspraxia, to name a few. Across the world, 10% of the population is dyslexic, 6% are dyspraxic, and 5% have ADHD. And it is estimated that less than 50% have that formal diagnosis. So what does that actually mean for us? Well, that's 6.3% when we think about University and 11% at TAFE according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. And we recently conducted a study of Australian adults, and during this 47% lacked the literacy skills to cope with the demands of everyday life and work. And we know that in society, people are judged by their ability to read and write.

Ultimately, we know that that has an impact on learners' ability to complete their courses, whether that's in TAFE or into University. And 3,528 employers found that by providing employees with assistive technology, they have not only benefitted from being able to retain a valued employee at 85%, increase employee and company productivity by 53% and 21%, and have ultimately been able to improve those interactions between colleagues at 34%, and an increase in that company morale by 30%. And the reason for that is that, ultimately, a lot of us don't know the assistive technology that's available.

I often refer to that idea around text to speech. A lot of people don't know that they use text to speech on a daily basis, but a lot of us with smart phones, with more modern cars, will use text to speech to allow us to be able to listen to messages when we're driving, to be able to access information quickly. And then using things like speech to text to be able to save us time and set timers and be able to help us with our daily life.

So if we actually are to go beyond accommodations, what might that actually look like? Equality is this idea around providing the same support for everyone. This is an image of a football game with three people standing behind a fence on the same sized box to be able to see the game, with only one person really visibly able to see, the other one only half, and the other one completely is unable to access and watch that game.

And then if we move into equity, equity is that idea around being able to meet the user, the learner, the person, with what they need to be able to see and be able to watch that game. So in this example, the first person doesn't require that additional step to be able to view the game. The second person is on one step and the child is on two steps, with all of them being able to access and be able to see that game.

But ultimately, we're still providing a support to a particular person. But it's not thinking about accessibility. And so that last image is actually rather than having that fence that you can't see through, why don't we provide that fence that is transparent, and that actually everyone is able to view and see that game regardless of needing to put those additional supports in place.

And so for those that might be completely new to universal design for learning, or just starting to really get on that journey, universal design for learning, or UDL for short, benefits everyone, and that's because we all think and process information in different ways. Once we're able to recognise this, it makes less sense to think about everything that we do as a one‑size‑fits‑all.

Universal design for learning builds on that idea around engagement, representation and expression. The way we engage our learners. The way that we represent content for them to be able to access. Is it always directing them to a website or to a PDF? Can we turn that into an audio file that they might be able to access? And lastly, that expression. How do we actually engage our learners to show their understanding of what they've learned?

And for anyone that is interested in learning more, I do suggest you go to Cast and actually view the UDL framework. And this is an image ‑ and I don't expect you to be able to access any of this information ‑ however, for those that are completely new, this is just a breakdown of the different columns and the way that universal design for learning is broken down.

So when we think about universal design for learning and the student or learner experience ‑ and the reason that I like to use the student and learner interchangeably is because it's that idea of you all, as educators, are still learners, and ultimately that learning process never stops. So on this image here, it's that idea around any device. And so ultimately from a universal design for learning perspective, we want our learners to be able to pick up any device and have that same experience wherever they are. Whether they're on campus and they're using a shared device and then suddenly they switch over to their personal device or their phone, they need to be able to have that consistent approach to being able to use those same tools and supports in place.

Then we think about any platform, whether that's a PDF, on the web, within Chrome, on a website, or into a document, we want learners to have that same experience. Ultimately, that also comes into play when we are creating and sharing resources with our learners. Are we simply reproducing content that we've always used and trying to make that accessible, or actually can we start with accessibility from the forefront and build that content up and knowing that it is going to be accessible in that first instance?

And then we talk about anywhere. That idea of learners being able to access these tools when they're on campus, when they're at home, when they're out in the workplace, when they are out doing any practicum or practical experience.

And this is where we tie into our UDL Unlocked. For anyone that wants to know what this looks like, how you can find more information and resources, please visit our website text.help/udl‑unlocked, and the link will be in the resources section for you.

Ultimately, we come into our Read&Write toolbar, a toolbar that is there to help support all learners in being able to read, write and study with confidence. And yes, this does reference that idea around those supports that are in place for learners. But ultimately, as I go through this session, I want you to think about what is actually going to be useful for you as well. What can help save you time and help support as you're going through.

With Read&Write, I appreciate that some of you may be completely new, others are maybe avid users and know our toolbars. And so we have two different versions, our extension version, which is what I'm going to show today, as well as our Windows version or that desktop software that's available.

So I'm going to jump in and show you what this actually looks like. So when we go on to our website and we're accessing our course information, we want that ability to be able to go through and select any text on a website, in a document wherever that is, and be able to go through and simply have that read aloud to us. So I can select the text and go up and press the play button.

[Computer] Biology of plants is a first-year core unit for students specialising in plant science.

RACHEL: And what you'll notice is as that text to speech reads, it uses that tool highlights which helps in being able to access that information. We're able to personalise the voice that's used and the pace that that is set at being able to create that really personal experience as we're listening to those voices directly.

And whilst it's important that we utilise that text to speech, because not only are we able to actually listen to that, but we're also able to access content far quicker than if we were to go through and read ourselves. Now, one of the things is that when we are going through and reading that, we know that for some learners, not knowing every single word when we're going through and reading our course information, often I find that as we start to use AI, a lot of the texts that we get provided with have all of this new vocabulary, which is fantastic, but it does mean that a lot of our learners won't be familiar with it. So that ability to actually go through and listen to those definitions…

[Computer] adjective, relating to used or promoted in agricultural farming.

RACHEL: … is really important. One of the other big things from an accessibility perspective is that screen masking and that's that ability to either set it as a panel that will appear ‑‑ so when I tap onto this, using the monitor with the horizontal line through, this will bring up a coloured bar.

Now, within my settings, I can actually personalise the colour that's used. I've just set that reading light to yellow, and currently there's a horizontal line across my screen that I can use to be able to focus in on that text as I'm reading and accessing it directly. Alternatively, within my settings using the cog wheel, I can actually select to tint my entire screen. I can go through and set that as a blue overlay, which suddenly means that now when I go on to a website or if I'm in a document, I'm able to actually go through and use that coloured overlay to help me in being able to access that information directly.

One of the other really important things is that we know that when users are going on and accessing information on websites, that sometimes they will come across those words that they're unsure of. And whilst the dictionary is fantastic at being able to give us that definition, it means that sometimes users will come across those words that they're unsure of and either simply skip ahead or they might go and listen to that dictionary definition but still not really know what that word actually means. They can find it hard to then take that comprehension and understand the content that they're reading.

This is where our Rewordify tool comes in. So with Rewordify, when I tap onto this, this is going to then italicise words within my website. So across my passage now, when I then tap onto a word, for example, "photosynthesis", it's going to then put that into a different phrase or word, essentially acting like your Thesaurus. So photosynthesis has changed that now to "making food from light". And I can simply tap to revert that back to that document from there.

In a similar way, if I hover over the word "specialised", it says "made to do one thing very well". And so students and learners can go through and use this as they're accessing those websites and being able to go through and articulate that information down directly.

One of the other big things is often when we're on websites for learners, there can be a lot of information going on. Sometimes the fonts can be really small on a particular website, or it's just simply not in the most accessible font directly. And so one of the things that we're able to go through and do is we can use our simplified page option. So the four lines going down with the arrow pushing. When we tap onto this, this is going to remove all of the additional distractions and bring that down into the simplest format possible.

So you'll see now that I'm simply left with that introduction and the summary as listed on that page. But what I can then go through and do is I can change the way that this text is then presented. So I can go through and make that blue and yellow. I can change that so it's yellow font on a blue background. And I can also change the size of the font to make it easier to be able to go in and access. And I can also go through and select a more accessible font in being able to go through and read that content directly.

One of the other things that we're now able to do is we can use this AI feature, which is still in beta, but what this will do is it will allow you to summarise that website down. And so rather than simply having to go through and read that entire passage of information, it's going to summarise it, and I can then still go back through and I can use that text to speech in being able to go in and listen to that directly.

I'm going to just return those highlights back to white, so that black on white now, just to be able to show you one last thing here. Now, whilst text to speech is great, often we might be working in a document where we want to be able to go through and extract that information to be able to listen to that when we're on the go. Because text to speech is great, but sometimes we might be traveling, we might be heading into campus and we want to be able to listen to that information.

And I can do this from a document. What I can do is I can simply select all of that text from my document or my website…, it doesn't matter where I decide to do this from, and then I can go up to the page icon with the headphones over the top, which is our audio maker. What this will do is it will keep your same text to speech settings and turn that into a downloadable MP3 file that I can go through and listen to directly.

The other thing that I wanted to jump in and show you is what does this actually look like when we come across that inaccessible content? When we think about universal design for learning, one of the big things is that a lot of content as well as we are to actually make that accessible to all learners, we know that sometimes there will be content that learners will come across, either on the web, or directly within their course material, or they may come across that in a PDF as well that's been shared with them, is our screenshot reader. And with the screenshot reader, if we have an image or a scanned document or any content that is essentially locked down, which means that if I was to use a screen reader, if I was to go through and use text to speech, this wouldn't allow me to go through and access that information.

But what I can do is using the incomplete square with the mouse hovering over it, I can draw a box across that inaccessible text. That will then read that aloud to me. I also have the ability to actually copy this text out, so if I needed to go through and use the dictionaries, I would be able to go through and access that. If it was a longer paragraph, I'd be able to then interact and use that text directly as well.

So I'm going to switch back to my slides now and just pull back into that idea around those reading and accessibility tools that I've just highlighted for you. So our text to speech, that ability to go through and use that dual colour highlighting on a document or that screenshot reader to pull out that inaccessible text.

Now, what about from a writing perspective? We know that when learners are completing, they might be doing emails, they might be completing their own responses within their course, and that's where our writing support comes into play. Now, because I'm on a Zoom call, I often will say that it's always unpredictable whether this is going to work. So we'll keep our fingers crossed that this will go through. With dictation, I can simply use my voice and this will type into the document directly for me. This means that I don't need to use my keyboard. I can simply use my voice to be able to enter this into that document directly. And it has gone through. It's always good. We love when technology works.

But whilst speech to text is fantastic, if we are in an environment that is quiet or we're using a microphone, when learners are on campus, we know that this isn't always something that they might feel confident in being able to do or comfortable as well because often talking to a device is seen as being different. And so we want to be able to create that experience for learners where, actually, they're able to use that assistive technology without people seeing, and it's that idea around that discreet use of assistive technology.

So one of the things that we're able to do is we can use our prediction. Now, this is often referred to as this little magic stamp that sits on the toolbar. And what happens is as I start to type, I will be presented with that bank of words. And I can start typing those first few letters of the word. And I can then simply tap to insert it. And it's going to continue to predict ahead. So I can then simply tap using my mouse to insert that word directly into that document.

This is also really beneficial because it means that we don't need to try and type all of the letters. If we wanted to go back and try and write "photosynthesis", I would need to keep typing and going through and using that prediction directly. I'm also able to go into my settings and personalise the size of that input, as well as whether it will read those suggestions as I hover over those directly.

The last thing that I wanted to show is from a highlighting perspective. So one of the important things is that as learners are accessing information on a website, in an e‑book, one of those things is that they're able to actually collect and highlight their ideas directly. So I am currently on a website now. And I can go through and I can select that yellow highlighter to go through and highlight those important parts of information. Now, I might decide to use a different colour, for example, green, as I've just done, to highlight for different purposes. So I might be going through and saying that I want to select important information in a particular colour, and maybe my referencing or additional thoughts that I maybe need to go back and collect in a different colour directly.

What I'm able to do is with all of those highlights, once I've actually finished reading that information directly ‑ and, again, I can do this in a PDF, Word document, or on a website directly, I have this icon which is four arrows in a wheel called Collect Highlights. When I tap onto this, it then prompts me to select whether I want to group those based on colour or position. So I'm going to collect it based on colour. I can then tap OK. And what this will do is it will generate a document for me with all of those highlights that I've just selected. And it will also link back to that reference of where that information has come from. So if it's a website or if it was a PDF, this would also be linked in directly for me to be able to go back through and access that from there.

So coming back to my slides now, I wanted to just highlight ‑ so that's that summarisation tool, that ability to go through and collect those ideas down directly. And that last one that I wanted to mention is that ability to go through and use our voice. So when we think about universal design for learning, we have our own voice that we can use from a dictation perspective, but we also have that ability to actually use voice notes to record our own voice. This will then give us 60 seconds to be able to go through and record our own voice notation that we can use as that alternative way for students and learners instead of having to type or to use that dictation. This will simply mean that it'll capture everything that I've said right now, and I can use as many as I want within that document directly from there as well. Just give it a moment to appear and then I can go through and I can press play to listen to that back. And that's simplifying text.

So as we went through before ‑ and you'll have access to these slides as part of the resource, but I just wanted to highlight that idea of that ability to go through and simplify that text as we access it directly.

So I wanted to move into OrbitNote. So for those that know Read&Write and have been using it for quite some time, one of the things that has always been asked is, actually, what do we do with PDFs? And we want to be able to use those same scaffolds and supports that I've shown you in Read&Write with that added ability to be able to go through and use that OCR scanning when we have inaccessible PDFs, or we might have images of documents or pages that we want to be able to quickly convert using OrbitNote.

So for those that are completely new to OrbitNote, it is our PDF reader and annotation tool that gives you the ability to go through, leave those voice and text comments directly on PDFs, as well as being able to make notes and add instructions and also be able to continue to use those same scaffolds and supports through Read&Write directly.

And so I'm going to jump into OrbitNote now so that you can see what happens. So when we go into OrbitNote ‑ and I've opened a PDF directly ‑ this will then bring up this same toolbar. And what you'll notice straight away is those same tools from Read&Write. So I can go through and I can select the text that I want to be read aloud pressing play…

[Computer] Components of all cells…

RACHEL: And that's going to then go through and allow me to access that directly. I've also got my dictionary so I can go through and select a particular word, come up to my dictionary, and I can go through and I can position this wherever I need to on the screen in being able to go through and access that.

The other thing as well is that I can still come through and use that screen masking or that reading light in being able to access that information directly. So I can go in and I can change that so I can select that colour to be able to overlay that directly, and I can turn that reading light off so it's just going to mask that screen using that yellow colour overlay just now.

As before, if I have any inaccessible text within my PDF, I can use that screenshot reader and ultimately, I've still got those highlights so I can actually go into my PDF directly and I can start to highlight those key points of information directly using those different highlights. And I then have that ability to go through and collect them in the same way and that will then open up that into that document for me to be able to go through and access those notes directly.

The other thing that's really important in OrbitNote is that ability for learners to be able to type directly on that PDF. So actually once they go through and they start reading this information, they can then type on the PDF from here. So actually, rather than simply needing to go and take notes in a different spot, they can start typing their own notes in. So, for example, I could go through and type. You'll also notice that I have the ability to go through and use that word‑based prediction. And you'll notice that that is actually starting to read those suggestions out loud as I'm starting to type.

[Computer] Region of DNA…

RACHEL: And I can go through and do that. I could also use dictation to be able to type my responses in ‑ "and plasma membrane" ‑ and I can use this so that rather than needing to know all of those words and how to spell it, I can actually use that speech to text to be able to help me in being able to respond to those ideas. I can then change the colour of that font that's used as well as increase the size of that on my PDF like so.

The other thing is that often we will come across those times where a lot of PDFs that are shared are locked down. And so that's that ability to not be able to go through and use that text to speech or to be able to access it with a screen reader. And so what we can do is if I open up a PDF and it is inaccessible ‑ so currently if I try and click on to any of the text within this PDF in here, it is just a scanned PDF that I've taken, I'm unable to access any of that information.

So what you'll see is that when this opens in OrbitNote, it's going to prompt you to actually scan that and that will use that OCR scanning. I can then select the language that PDF is in. So if it was a Spanish PDF, I'd be able to actually keep that and it's going to keep that correct formatting when it then goes through and generates that PDF. I can then tap through to scan that directly. That will then prompt me to sign in. And it'll ask me where I want to save that. So I can then just go through. And that will then open that PDF up and what you'll notice now is that I can then go through and I can select all of that text on that PDF. So I can go up and use that text to speech now to be able to go in and listen to that directly.

With those annotation tools that works directly on those PDFs, whether that's a scanned PDF or whether that's a PDF that's been added in, I have that ability to go through and do that directly.

Now, in some cases, we will always have that nice amount of space, which means that we can type directly on that PDF. If we don't have that space available, we also have push pins, which means that actually I can come down on that side part of my PDF, down here, and I can actually type my notes in directly. And then when I tap off, that's going to leave me with a tiny little push pin that I can then expand. So it means that if I don't have that space on the PDF, I can simply tap and I'm going to be able to type and add as many notes as I need on that PDF directly.

So I'm going to just come back to my slides for a moment now and just to talk a little bit around obviously that accessibility. Now, one of the things is that it's so important that we are creating those accessible formats for our learners. But when we think about that universal design for learning, if we go back to that point that I made at the start, when we think about accommodations, we're creating that bridge or putting that bandaid solution on. And so, yes, we can convert those PDFs and make them that accessible format, but often we'll find that there may be words that aren't picked up correctly, or you may go onto a website and try and use a screen reader and because it's been converted, it's not in that most accessible format for our learners.

So actually, one of the things that I encourage you all to actually start to do is consider that accessibility first. And that's that idea around the supports that we actually put in place for everyone. And if we start from that ground up and we start by actually considering when we create a document, when we create a resource, when we're sharing resources, have we checked that accessibility first? And how we've actually been using those accessibility tools through Read&Write and OrbitNote to help scaffold our learners when they are navigating websites, course material, other resources that they'll come across in a daily basis, whether that's through their study, whether that's when they're out in the workplace, and how they can then go through and be able to utilise those tools directly.

We talk a lot at TextHelp around this idea of what's necessary for some is useful for everyone. And with that, it's that idea around, yes, it is important and we need to be able to provide those accommodations and supports in place. But actually, if we think about what can benefit everyone in that first instance and we put those tools and supports in place to help everyone, we can actually start from that ground up and we can think about what might be useful for all learners? How can we actually build in the accessibility and that assistive technology tools that are available so that they can achieve that success when they're going through directly.

So I'm going to open up to any questions, and I know hopefully you've been putting some questions using that Q&A box. I will leave my email up on the screen just there.

DARREN: Thank you very much, Rachel. Yes, there's lots of questions and Barbara has been doing a great job, along with some others, of answering some of those questions in their live already, so I won't retouch on those, necessarily. Barbara has also posted the statistics which we will also put up that was asked about for the research you had at the beginning on statistics on dyslexia and neurodivergent people. So we'll also post that onto the web page with the recordings the links after that research is available.

There's a question here from Neil about the screen masker. Does it meet contrast accessibility requirements? And so I'll probably tack onto that by default, it comes up in that standard white on dimmed grey letterbox.

RACHEL: Yeah, so within your settings, by default it will be set as that. However, you will notice that you have those preselected colours, but you do also have that ability to actually select that specific hex code. So if there is a particular shade of colour that works better for that individual user, this is something that you can go through and personalise, and in addition you have your opacity for your background, your reading light and the height of that as well.

DARREN: Sorry, just on that, that height adjusts the height of the letter box ‑ that is called "letter box".

RACHEL: That's correct. So the height will change the size. So if I reduce that down, you'll see now that that would be in line with a single line of text directly or I can make that bigger so it's going to expand to be the size of almost a paragraph of text on a website.

DARREN: Excellent. All right. Thank you for that. Barbara has answered this but I'll get you to answer as well: is the toolbar only for websites or does it work on a range of different documents as well?

RACHEL: Yeah. So it works on a range of different documents. So whether you're on a website, whether you're in a document, whether you're on a PDF. I also like to reference that it's particularly useful as well if you come across an image with text in it. So I often find that a lot of learners, when they want to find information, the quickest way to do so is actually do a Google image search and just type whatever the topic is that you're looking for. So if it's photosynthesis, just to go back to that same example as before, photosynthesis, tap on Google images, you'll actually get facts and information there, and you could use your screenshot reader to pull that information out to be able to go through and access it. And you can do the same on a YouTube video as well. So if there was information in the video that wasn't being described or wasn't used in that closed captions, you'd be able to extract that information out directly. So yes, it can be used across the board.

DARREN: Excellent. Good to know that that works on videos. That's excellent. Thank you. So yes, just on that, so you could pause the video at a point where there's text on screen that's not being spoken or in audio described.

RACHEL: Yes, that's correct.

DARREN: Neil has a question as well. How does the ‑ I'm assuming this is in relation to the speech to text ‑ how does it go with accents?

RACHEL: So we are an Irish‑based company. That's where we were founded. And, you know, I like to say that, you know, every accent across the globe is different, and so it is always best to try and see how it works and how it actually picks up your own accent. I often like to say I have quite a strong Australian accent and so, you know, it's usually okay. But with any speech to text, it's always something that you know is continuing to be improved from there. And directly within our Chrome extension it is using Google speech to text technology.

DARREN: There's a few questions certainly in here around pricing. I don't know whether you want to get into specifics. Is there individualised, and then institutionalised, and is that done via discussion or are there set rates for that?

RACHEL: Yeah, of course. So in terms of pricing, the best thing to do is to visit our website. And I'll ask if Barbara can pop this into the chat for everyone, but you can then come in and just simply select products, navigate down to Read&Write, and there is the pricing tab directly within here that will provide you for the pricing for a single user. When it comes to institutes, the best thing to do is to contact us directly, and we can then be able to provide you with that information.

DARREN: Thank you. So just scrolling through some questions here. There's certainly a lot around pricing etc. Yeah, some here around free versions, etc. I can comment. There's certainly, you know, some free tools around that do bits and pieces of this. They're not as comprehensive that have them all in one place, that work well together, because Read&Write has been around for a long time now. As long as I can remember.

RACHEL: I should jump in and say, sorry to cut you off there, that if anyone is completely new to Read&Write on this session today and wants to start and wants to experience how Read&Write works, you can simply go on to our website. I'm just going to switch back to our TextHelp website. Tap on to "try Read&Write", and select your relevant platform. This will then start that 30‑day trial for you from there as well.

DARREN: Excellent. Thank you. If you want to find out some more information on Read&Write Gold, you've got ‑ is it the academy? The TextHelp Academy, is that the way?

RACHEL: That is correct. So our academy is just simply academy.texthelp.com. This is where all of our resources sit. So if any of you already know about Read&Write and want to know more, this is our central place to go to. So when I select products, I can navigate to Read&Write. There is a quick five-minute introduction that explains what Read&Write is all about. So if you have anyone that you want to show, give them a bit of an overview of what it's all about, this is the perfect place to go to.

My favourite is our feature tool section. This is every tool that sits on the tool bar and all of these videos are two minutes or less that quickly show you how that particular tool works.

DARREN: Excellent. Thank you. Got a question here from Justin around the annotated files. Can these be saved locally with the notes in place or does the student retain an annotated copy even after they've finished their subscription?

RACHEL: So I'll tackle the first part first. So in terms of those annotations, when I'm within OrbitNote, there is that ability to download all of those highlights, annotations, text, shapes and images that you add to that document directly. That would then be stored locally on your device. You do also have the ability for all of those annotations to be stored via the cloud, either with OneDrive or Google Drive, depending on your preference, and those files would then keep those annotations directly until, obviously, as long as you have that valid subscription.

Obviously if you've downloaded and exported that with those annotations, they would be stored on that locally saved file.

DARREN: Another quick question ‑ and there's a couple of questions a couple of people have asked around this ‑ and that is with locked browsers at certain institutions and security settings that stop certain things from functioning. So how well does it work with that and do you know how well it works in various exam settings where certainly browsers are a lot more locked down and strict about what…

RACHEL: Of course. When it comes to lockdown browsers, the best thing that we advise is to actually test it and see what works and what doesn't work from your side, and because there are so many variations, there are so many different settings, different platforms that are used to lock down browsers, we can't advise on that as a flat rule. We would say the best thing to do is to obviously test that in your exam purposes and then just find out from the relevant teams what provisions you're putting in place from an assessment perspective.

DARREN: Is there the ability to turn on and off various parts of?

RACHEL: Yes, there is. So it is possible to set it up for the purpose of an exam or an assessment, and that can be done directly either within the extension version or within the desktop version directly.

DARREN: Excellent. Thank you. So just a few more things have been answered. There's a couple of questions and some observations around, you know, that this is a vendor product, certainly, and that's what this presentation is on, and the relevance to UDL. There's some people I think came in maybe thinking this was directly a universal design for learning webinar, in that sense, but there's a certain relevance there, and this is about ‑ I think you mentioned ‑ and I really want to re-highlight again ‑ towards the end there, and it's about getting that base right. If you've got some of the tools in place and you've got the right things there for students to make things more accessible, because we know universal design for learning, the best place to start is with accessibility. So I don't know if you want to comment some more on that?

RACHEL: Yeah, of course. So I think the biggest challenge when it comes to universal design for learning is that idea around there are so many elements, and it is a wider conversation that we know is happening across institutes and, you know, it does involve lots of different teams, it's that idea around learning and teaching, it's around technology, it is around assistive technology and accessibility. And ultimately, we want to be able to provide those different supports. And whilst universal design for learning can be done without technology, technology is huge and they love when it comes to accessibility.

So through that use of that assistive technology, we're actually able to quickly provide different ways for learners to be able to represent content in different ways. And so that was really the idea around showing the tools through Read&Write and OrbitNote, is how you can actually give learners choice and agency in their ways that they actually respond to completing task. But also thinking for you, as educators and lecturers, how you actually deliver content to learners. Are you sharing that as an audio file that learners can access? Are you providing voice notes that they can have for the instructions or tasks that's provided, and, you know, being able to provide that holistic accessibility perspective.

DARREN: Excellent. That's a really good point. What's the saying, you can do accessibility without UDL, but you can't do UDL without accessibility.

RACHEL: That's it.

DARREN: They fall together. Thank you. We're running out of time here, but thank you very much, Rachel, for your presentation today.

RACHEL: Thank you.

DARREN: An email will be sent out to everybody that's registered with the recording, or links to the recording of this webinar when it's available on the ADCET website.

And we would ask please share that with your colleagues if you'd like to.

We will also post a link into the chat for a short survey on this webinar, and the option for people to sign up to the ADCET newsletter. Those links will be in the chat box shortly.

Also two upcoming ‑ I've got one listed here, but there's a couple of upcoming webinars on ADCET. There's one next week on Digital Maths in the Future of Inclusion and how we can get there. More details on that will be posted into chat as well. And we've got another UDL and AI, artificial intelligence one coming up next month, I think it is. I haven't got the dates but stay tuned for that. That will be coming up shortly.

But I just ask once again, everybody, thank you very much. Thank you, Jason, from Bradley Reporting for captioning today. And thank you, Rachel, for your presentation today on tools I know many students are certainly using and value highly to help them access education in various ways. But thank you, everybody, for joining us today, and enjoy the rest of your afternoon.