

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Phase	Type	Themes
<input type="radio"/> Early <input checked="" type="radio"/> Implementation <input type="radio"/> Consolidation	<input type="radio"/> Strategy <input checked="" type="radio"/> Tool	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Collaboration & teamwork <input checked="" type="radio"/> Curriculum <input type="radio"/> Design affordances <input checked="" type="radio"/> Design & process <input type="radio"/> Evaluation <input type="radio"/> Leadership & change <input checked="" type="radio"/> Pedagogy <input type="radio"/> Professional development & support <input type="radio"/> School structures & organisation <input type="radio"/> Spatial competencies <input checked="" type="radio"/> Student experience <input checked="" type="radio"/> Teacher experience <input type="radio"/> Technology <input type="radio"/> Time

What does this do?

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework developed by the Centre for Applied Special Technology (CAST) to help improve and optimise teaching and learning using scientific insights into how humans learn. UDL is an approach that aims to minimise learning barriers by providing greater flexibility and utilising different teaching methods based on individual student’s context, skills, and interests. UDL guidelines are anchored on three overarching principles: providing multiple means of engagement (the ‘why’ of learning); providing multiple means of representation (the ‘what’ of learning); and providing multiple means of action and expression (the ‘how’ of learning).

How can it help?

Educators can apply a UDL framework to ensure that the way they organise their learning spaces and the tools and resources they select enable all students to participate in meaningful learning opportunities. Under each of the principles are strategies that educators can consider. Each strategy includes concrete actions, many of which consider how the learning environment can be organised to minimise barriers for learning.

An example in practice

École Forest Hill Elementary School Senior Campus in Canada completed an educator-led initiative of transforming the school into learning spaces fit for modern learners based on principles of UDL. Originally, learning spaces in the school were structured with rows of tables and chairs that oftentimes restricted students’ movements and ability to collaborate. In contrast, the new learning spaces allowed students the flexibility to choose how and where to learn. Some of the changes they implemented included flexible seating options, easy access to learning devices, and areas with furniture for individual or collaborative work. They also considered individual needs of students. For example, students who prefer to work in a quiet environment were given noise cancelling headphones or the option to go to less noisy areas. In common areas, such as hallways, they attached tables on the wall that students can easily flip open and use. There are also boxes of short activities (i.e. badminton) set-up along the hallway walls that students can use as outlets for creativity and excess energy during school hours.

Angela Davison, an educator from École Forest Hill Elementary School Senior Campus, talks about her learning space and students in this video: <http://beyondthetools.com/2017/04/why-flexible-learning-spaces-and-udl-matter-part-1/> [Correct as at 07 April 2020].

Where can I find this?¹

Information about UDL and the UDL Guidelines are available at <http://udlguidelines.cast.org/> [Correct as at 07 April 2020].

1. All Spatial Transition Pathway ‘Strategies and Tools’ are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 International License and available from iletc.com.au

The UDL Guidelines

Welcome to the new home for the UDL Guidelines! In this first release of our new site, we’ve updated the look, but the Guidelines themselves, their descriptions, and the research behind the Checkpoints haven’t changed. We’re looking forward to constantly improving this site with more resources, updated research, and to continue evolving the UDL Guidelines as a living, breathing tool for implementing the UDL framework.

The UDL Guidelines are a tool used in the implementation of Universal Design for Learning, a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn. [Learn more about the Universal Design for Learning framework](#) from CAST. The UDL Guidelines can be used by educators, curriculum developers, researchers, parents, and anyone else who wants to implement the UDL framework in a learning environment. **These guidelines offer a set of concrete suggestions that can be applied to any discipline or domain to ensure that all learners can access and participate in meaningful, challenging learning opportunities.**

